"So yes, you've battered me. Yes, you've hurt me. But you know what? I'm not giving up on you": The experiences of Teaching Assistants supporting excluded children in Alternative Provisions

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Abstract

Alternative Provisions (APs) are under increasing pressure, the result of rising exclusions, increasing accountability measures and difficulties with recruitment and retention of educational staff. Described as challenging and emotionally demanding environments, staff within these settings are required to manage a range of diverse needs and complex behaviours. Whilst the significance of their role is emphasised from the level of the government to the Child and Young Person (CYP), a paucity of research exists exploring the experiences of those working within APs, particularly in relation to Teaching Assistants (TAs). Addressing a gap in the literature base, the current study aimed to explore the experiences of TAs supporting excluded CYP within APs.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six TAs supporting excluded CYP within APs. Using an idiographic and interpretative method to explore lived experiences, the study adopted an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach, resulting in the development of five overarching themes: 'Relationships: a complex landscape', 'A juggling act: behaviour, need and strength from the team', 'A rocky road: highs, lows and a journey of development', 'Battles, clashes and superiority' and 'The journey towards a future'. Relational connections and disconnections co-existed alongside the strains of managing challenging behaviour and diversity of need, with TAs experiencing a range of emotive responses and personal change. Adding further complexity, were battles with mainstream schools and parents, with TAs striving to compensate, empower and promote positive change. Findings are discussed in relation to previous literature and psychological theory, with implications for AP settings, school staff and Educational Psychology practice.

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Glossary of terms

AP Alternative Provision

TA Teaching Assistant

CYP Children and Young People/ Child or Young Person

IPA Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

DfE Department for Education

LA Local Authority

PRU Pupil Referral Unit

SEMH Social Emotional and Mental Health

SEND Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

EBD Emotional, Behavioural Difficulties

DfEE Department for Education and Employment

DfES Department for Education and Skills

BESD Behaviour, Social and Emotional Difficulties

SEBD Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

HLTA Higher level Teaching Assistant

LSA Learning Support Assistant

IPPR Institute of Public Policy Research

DfCSF Department for Children, Schools and Families

Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills

QTS Qualified Teaching Status

NASUWT National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers

EP Educational Psychologist

TEP Trainee Educational Psychologist

SLT Senior Leadership Team

1 Introduction

1.1 Chapter overview

This chapter outlines the background and relevance of the research study, providing definitions of key terms to facilitate the reader's understanding. A description of the national context for APs is provided, in addition to an examination of the current context for educational staff within these settings. The chapter concludes with both the study's rationale, aims and overarching research question, alongside the researcher's position and personal interest in the subject area.

1.2 Defining key terminology

1.2.1 School exclusion

School exclusion refers to a:

'disciplinary sanction that prevents a pupil from attending school either for a fixed period or permanently' (Gazeley, 2010, p.294)

As stated within guidance produced by the Department for Education (DfE) (2018a), two types of exclusion exist:

1) 'Fixed term exclusion'

The most common form of school exclusion, whereby a CYP is prevented from attending school for a specified number of days. This form of exclusion can occur on more than one occasion but is limited to 45 school days within a single academic year (DfE, 2018a).

2) 'Permanent exclusion'

A less common type of school exclusion, whereby a CYP is unable to return to their educational setting and is removed from the school roll (DfE, 2018a). In these instances, the Local Authority (LA) has a statutory responsibility to provide educational provision, usually in the form of an AP (DfE, 2017a).

For the purpose of this research, the term exclusion will be used to refer to CYP who have been removed from a mainstream setting on either a fixed-term or permanent basis.

1.2.2 AP and Pupil Referral Units

AP (also referred to as 'alternative education', 'education other than at school' or 'alternative education provision') is an umbrella term utilised to describe the education of CYP in schools outside of mainstream and specialist settings (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills [Ofsted], 2011). Providing a broad definition, the DfE (2013) depicts AP as:

'education arranged by LAs for pupils who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would not otherwise receive suitable education; education arranged by schools for pupils on a fixed period exclusion; and pupils being directed by schools to off-site provision to improve their behaviour' (DfE, 2013, p. 3)

Encompassing CYP with a wide variety of needs, APs exist in a range of different formats, including: LA maintained settings such as Pupil Referral Units (PRUs), hospital and independent schools, charities, vocational learning providers and therapeutic provisions for CYP with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties (House of Commons

Education Committee, 2018; Tate & Greatbatch, 2017). Within these settings, models of education vary, with CYP typically attending on either a part/full-time basis, or joining bespoke programmes (Tate & Greatbatch, 2017). One of the most common forms of AP within England are PRUs (McCluskey, Riddell & Weedon, 2015; Thomas, 2015), defined by Ofsted (2007) as:

'short stay centres for pupils who are educated other than at maintained or special schools, and they vary considerably in size and function. They admit pupils with behavioural difficulties and others who can be identified as vulnerable because of their health or social and emotional difficulties' (Ofsted, 2007, p.4)

These provisions aim to reintegrate CYP to mainstream schools, offering education, therapeutic and behavioural support on a short-term basis (Lawrence, 2011). Designed as an interim provision, PRUs often support CYP for longer-term placements, with many students remaining within the setting until the end of compulsory education (House of Commons Education Committee, 2018; Tate & Greatbatch, 2017; Taylor, 2012).

Whilst government and statistical information describe APs as one synonymous group, the researcher recognises the variability in provider, approach and diversity of need catered for across settings. For the purpose of this research, the term AP will be used to describe PRUs and specialist settings delivering education and support for CYP who have been excluded on a fixed term or permanent basis.

1.2.3 SEMH and challenging behaviour

Research indicates that certain groups of CYP are more likely to be excluded and educated within APs. Disproportionate exclusion rates exist in relation to gender (high exclusion rates in relation to boys) and ethnicity (disproportionate numbers of Black Caribbean

students and those from Roma or Traveller heritage), in addition to increased risk for those who live in poverty, an unsafe family environment (CYP in care or have a Child in Need plan), or have low attainment levels at school (DfE, 2017c; DfE, 2017d; DfE, 2018a; Gill, Quilter-Pinner & Swift, 2017). DfE (2018b) research also indicates that 77.1% of CYP attending APs have an identified Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND), raising concerns about whether school settings are failing to adequately support the inclusion of certain CYP or encompass ableist beliefs; 'a pervasive system of discrimination and exclusion that oppresses people who have mental, emotional and physical disabilities' (Rauscher & McClintock, 1996, p.198; Storey, 2007)

Within APs, the most common form of SEND is SEMH, conceptualised by the Code of Practice (DfE, 2014) as:

'a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder' (DfE, 2014, p.98)

Prior to the most recent Code of Practice (2014), diverse terminology was used to refer to CYP with SEMH needs, such as 'Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties' (BESD); also known as 'Emotional, Behavioural Difficulties' (EBD) and 'Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties' (SEBD) (Department for Education and Employment [DfEE], 1997; Department for Education and Skills [DfES], 2001). This reconceptualisation of the term has indicated a transition away from behaviour-dominated narratives, with mental health acknowledged as a category of need (DfE, 2014; Norwich & Eaton, 2015). For the

purpose of this research and following national trends and DfE (2014) guidance, the term SEMH will be used throughout, subsuming all similar terminology.

The term 'challenging behaviour' was originally coined in an attempt to move away from deficit-driven, within-person discourses, attempting to encourage a more holistic understanding of the individual (Challenging Behaviour Foundation, n.d.). Overtime, the expression has faced increasing criticism, argued to contribute to stigmatisation and exclusion (Emerson, 1995; Reeve & Carr, 2000), in addition to suggesting 'people with challenging behaviours are also people who have exhausted the limits of our knowledge and actions' (Nunkoosing, 2000. p.58). Within the context of Children's Services, the term challenging behaviour is often the dominant nomenclature, as seen within the SEND Code of Practice (DfE, 2014), government documentations (DfE, 2012; DfE, 2017b; DfE, 2018b; DfE, 2019b) and research literature (Broomhead, 2013; Jones, Monsen & Francy, 2013; Swinson & Knight, 2007). Whilst there has been a semantic shift in language (to 'behaviour that challenges') within adult services and disability studies (Chan et al., 2012; National Institute for Care and Excellence [NICE], 2015), the term has not been widely adopted in relation to CYP. For the purpose of this research, the term challenging behaviour continues to be used as 1) it is the terminology of the systems that the researcher is embedded within, and 2) it is a term used by the participants of which this research focuses upon.

1.2.4 TAs

TAs are defined by the 'Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants' (Unison, NAHT, NET & Maximising Teaching Assistants, 2016) as:

'staff based in the classroom for learning and pupil support. The primary role of the TA should be to work with teachers to raise the learning and attainment of pupils, while also promoting their independence and social inclusion. They give assistance to pupils so that they can access the curriculum, participate in learning and experience a sense of achievement' (Unison, NAHT, NET & Maximising Teaching Assistants, 2016, p. 5)

A variety of job titles are used to describe TAs, most commonly: Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs), Learning Support Assistants (LSAs), Special Needs Assistants, support staff, paraprofessionals, key workers and teaching aides (Bosanquet & Radford, 2019; Unison, NAHT, NET & Maximising Teaching Assistants, 2016).

Within this research, TA is defined in line with the 'Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants' (2016) publication, including all staff termed under synonymous job titles.

1.3 National context: A pressure on APs and educational staff

1.3.1 Exclusions: increasing prevalence rates

Increasingly documented within the literature base (Malcolm, 2018a; Power & Taylor, 2018), government evaluations (DfE, 2016c; DfE, 2018a; DfE, 2019a; Graham et al., 2019) and national press and education media (Adams, 2018; Roberts, 2018), is the increase in exclusions from mainstream schools in England. Recent government reviews (DfE, 2019a) indicate that the rate of permanent and fixed-term exclusions have continued to rise, with statistics showing:

- Permanent exclusions: 7,700 in 2016/2017 to 7,900 in 2017/2018
- Fixed term exclusions: 381,900 in 2016/2017 to <u>410,800</u> in 2017/2018 (DfE, 2019a)

Whilst offering indicative figures, the credibility of government reviews has been questioned, with literature claiming that they provide an underrepresentation of true exclusion figures (Gazeley, 2010; Hallam & Rogers, 2008; Malcolm, 2018a). This is connected with a failure to capture 'unofficial' exclusions in the form of:

- Referral: the movement of a CYP to an AP whilst they remain on the school's roll
- Managed moves: the transfer of CYP to other educational settings
- Off-rolling: the illegal direction of CYP away from mainstream sites (Evans, 2010; Gill et al., 2017; Malcolm, 2018a; Power & Taylor, 2018)

Despite this lack of accurate data, it is evident that the number of exclusions is dramatically increasing, with larger numbers of CYP requiring placement within an AP (DfE, 2017a; House of Commons Education Committee, 2018). With this rising demand for placements greater than the public sector can provide, these settings are often oversubscribed, affecting the CYP, staff team and the quality of provision delivered (House of Commons Education Committee, 2018; Malcolm, 2018a).

1.3.2 Growing accountability: government reviews and legislation

With a shift in political focus leading to an emphasis on 'world class education' (DfE, 2016b, p.3), the outcomes of CYP within mainstream, alternative and specialist schools have received increasing interest. In assessing the quality of support provided within APs, government reviews indicate that these settings often fail to meet the appropriate standards to support the diverse needs of a vulnerable population (Department for Children, Schools and Families [DfCSF], 2008; Ofsted, 2011; Taylor, 2012). Documented within Ofsted

reviews, specific issues relate to: insufficient provision for English and Mathematics, restricted curriculum opportunities, low academic expectations and a lack of understanding concerning aspects of child protection (Ofsted, 2016). Enquiries by the House of Commons Education Committee (2018) highlight that the need for change is essential, ensuring 'that pupils in AP are not ignored and left to languish in poor quality provision' (p.5). Resulting from increasing concerns about practice, a number of government documentations have focused on the need for reform and improvement:

- 1) White Paper: Educational Excellence Everywhere (DfE, 2016a): highlighting visions and reforms for AP practice
- 2) <u>AP: Effective Practice and Post 16 Transition (DfE, 2017a)</u>: exploring strategies to improve Key Stage 4 outcomes and transition for post-16 students
- 3) Making the Difference Report: Breaking the link between school exclusion and social exclusion (Gill et al., 2017): recommending a provisional framework to both improve workforce development and trajectories
- 4) <u>Creating opportunity for all: our vision for AP</u> (DfE, 2018b): building on previous publications and highlighting further visions for the future development of AP practice

Providing key strategies and recommendations, these publications place pressure on APs to make substantial changes to ensure positive outcomes for the CYP they support. Within the government spotlight and under scrutiny, growing accountability is placed on the staff within these settings to improve the trajectory of outcomes and quality of provision offered (House of Commons Education Committee, 2018). Highlighted by Weare (2015), this rise in externally driven sources of stress (such as expanding expectations, standards,

inspections and targets) can result in staff members feeling overwhelmed, with a diminished sense of control over their working environments.

1.3.3 Recruitment and retention

Whilst staff shortages are an issue within all types of school in England, difficulties with recruitment, retention and absence are particularly acute within the AP sector (Gill et al., 2017; Willis & Baines, 2018). DfE (2018c) research into these settings indicates that approximately two in five APs experience recruitment difficulties, with one in ten struggling with retention. Staff members were found to leave within the first few weeks of the role, with the experience perceived as unmanageable, intense and too emotionally challenging to continue (Menendez Alvarez-Hevia, 2018). Investigations by the Institute of Public Policy Research [IPPR] (Gill et al., 2017) also highlights that in APs:

- The number of vacancies have <u>tripled</u> since 2011
- There is a 100 150% higher vacancy rate when compared with mainstream schools
- Temporary staff have nearly <u>doubled</u> between the years of 2011 to 2016, with a student twice as likely to be taught by a supply teacher (Gill et al., 2017)

In a recruitment crisis, APs have seen a dramatic increase in the number of unqualified staff members, with approximately one in eight professionals working without Qualified Teaching Status (QTS) (Gill et al., 2017). Whilst strategic reviews (London Leadership Strategy, 2009) highlight that: 'TAs should supplement high quality teaching, not replace teachers' (p. 6), APs have been forced to respond to recruitment difficulties by developing

and upskilling talent internally, increasingly relying on support staff to provide a growing range of duties (Gill et al., 2017). With a workforce of unqualified and temporary members, the impact on practice, relationships, team dynamics and behaviour management is questioned.

1.3.4 Management of SEMH needs and challenging behaviour

Concerns about the health, safety and well-being of AP staff are raised within Union reports (National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers [NASUWT], 2017), describing environments in which violence can be intrinsic. Management of challenging behaviour is a particular concern, with surveys (NASUWT, 2017) indicating that:

- 51% of staff report discipline as problematic
- 39% of staff experience <u>high levels of threatening conduct</u> on a daily basis
- 43% identify physical assaults as an area of concern (NASUWT, 2017)

Stress, mental well-being and burn-out within the education profession become more prevalent for staff working within these settings (Willis & Baines, 2018), described as roles which are 'emotionally draining, physically exhausting and occasionally dangerous' (Cole, 2010, p.1). Evidence indicates that feelings of dissatisfaction, depersonalisation, exhaustion and helplessness are common, alongside low morale and experiences of being deskilled (Partridge, 2012; Rae, Cowell & Field, 2017; Willis & Baines, 2018). Supporting these CYP's needs, staff are also more likely to interact with students on an emotional level (Partridge, 2012), with difficult feelings frequently evoked (Jackson, 2002; Kidger et al., 2010). The use of positive handling (otherwise known as restraint) within APs adds further

complexity, with the act of restrictive intervention also known to influence the health, safety and welfare of staff (DfE, 2019b).

Despite these challenges, research indicates that educational professionals are often provided with inadequate training and limited opportunities to understand the personal and professional impact of working within heightened emotional climates (Rae et al., 2017; Riley, 2011). Capacity to maintain commitment to the role is linked with the ability to cope with its emotional demands (Willis & Baines, 2018), recognising that the needs of staff must be understood and met in order for them to give their best to the CYP (Soloman & Thomas, 2013).

1.4 The importance of AP staff

1.4.1 Agents of change

The importance of educational staff within APs is highlighted from the level of the government to the individual CYP (House of Commons Education Committee, 2018; Malcolm, 2019; Michael & Frederickson, 2013; Nicolson & Putwain, 2015; O'Gorman, Salmon & Murphy, 2016; Tate & Greatbatch, 2017). Described as 'primary agents of change' (Rae et al., 2017, p.201), the role of teachers and TAs within these settings are vital as protective factors enabling positive outcomes (Atkinson & Rowley, 2019; Michael & Frederickson, 2013). Relationships experienced in APs are viewed as a 'fundamental base' (Malcolm, 2019, p.85), involved in the reconnecting and re-engaging of CYP in learning (Cullen & Monroe, 2010; Pillay, Dunbar-Krige & Mostert, 2013). Shaping new experiences of schooling, staff play a key role in the CYP's decision-making, long-term goals and future career progression (Malcolm, 2019).

1.4.2 A key figure: TAs

A key member of educational staff within APs are TAs; a group forming a large proportion of the workforce in these settings (DfE, 2018c). Highlighted within government guidelines, staff to pupil ratios often need to be higher to manage needs, with some settings employing between one to three TAs per class to work alongside a teacher to offer support (DfE, 2015; DfE, 2018c). As highlighted within the literature base, these staff play a vital role, encompassing a range of responsibilities:

- 'Support for teachers and the curriculum
- Direct learning for pupils
- Direct pastoral support for pupils
- Indirect support for pupils
- Support for the school (administrative/communicative)
- Support for the school (physical environment)' (Blatchford et al., 2009, p.76).

Whilst the DfE indicates that schools are 'best placed to make judgements on how they use and deploy TAs', (Unison, NAHT, NET & Maximising Teaching Assistants, 2016, p.5) the 'Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants' (2016) guidance further highlights the multifaceted nature of the TA's function and the standards of expectation that they are required to meet (see Figure 1).

Personal and professional conduct

- TAs must show a regard for the policies and practices of the school and demonstrate a positive attitude towards this
- Follow policies and statutory guidance that ensures CYP are appropriately safeguarded
- Uphold cultural differences and diversity principles
- Show self-awareness and ability to selfevaluate, with a commitment to the improvement of their practice

Teaching and learning

- Show an informed and efficient approach to teaching and learning processes, with an ability to adapt strategies
- Facilitate and promote inclusion, in addition to the encouragement of participation
- Use effective behaviour management techniques
- Contribute to planning and assessment, ensuring that pupil progress is monitored
- Demonstrate effective communication and interaction with the CYP
- Promote a stimulating and safe learning space

Roles, standards and expectations

Knowledge and understanding

- Demonstrate the skills and experience to undertake the role of a TA
- Demonstrate skills and experience that means the TA is able to meet needs and provide support to all CYP
- Have knowledge and understanding that is relevant and up to date
- Have knowledge of subjects and the curriculum, relevant to the TA role
- Understand their responsibilities within the setting and know these may go beyond their role

Working with others

- Be able to liaise effectively with parents, carers and professionals
- Be able to inform planning and decision-making by sharing knowledge
- Have an understanding of their role in relation to working in a collaborative manner
- Communicate their knowledge and understanding of a CYP to professionals for processes relating to planning, decision-making and interventions

Figure 1. Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants. From Unison, NAHT, NET & Maximising Teaching Assistants (2016).

A broad role, with no definitive national standard, role description or level of training, the demands placed on TAs continue to increase, with evidence indicating that these staff undertake a higher number of activities previously performed by teachers (such as planning and whole-class teaching) (Basford, Butt & Newton, 2017; Middleton, 2018; Radford et

al., 2015; Unison, NAHT, NET & Maximising Teaching Assistants, 2016). Alongside this broad range of obligations, TAs working within specialist settings such as APs, are the members of staff most likely to be tasked with the management of complex needs and behaviour, required to support the most challenging and neediest of CYP (Abbott, McConkey & Dobbins, 2011; Blatchford et al., 2007; Unison, 2018). Together with emotional and pastoral support, these staff are also responsible for the implementation of a vast array of strategies, interventions and recommendations stipulated by teachers and outside professionals (Abbott et al., 2011; Cockcroft & Atkinson, 2015).

As a result of challenges related to the role (workload, accountability, diversity of the position, low pay, status and limited opportunities for progression), research highlights that TAs often experience feeling underappreciated in their positions (Cockcroft & Atkinson, 2015; Florian, 2013; Syrnyk, 2018). Whilst much of this literature provides a focus on TAs within mainstream environments, it is likely that this context is further exacerbated when supporting excluded CYP within APs. Union surveys (UNISON, 2013) highlight the range of difficulties faced by these staff members, raising questions about how this impacts on both a professional and personal level (see Figure 2).

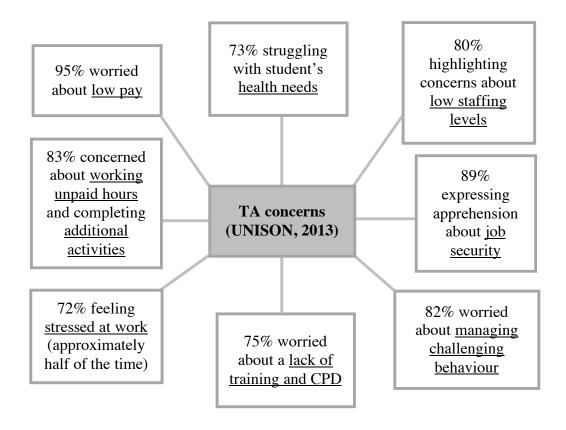


Figure 2. Diagram illustrating the concerns held by TAs. Adapted from UNISON (2013).

1.4.3 An invisible figure

Despite their importance, the voice of educational professionals supporting excluded CYP within APs is under-represented within the education field. This is particularly relevant to TAs; a group recognised as 'separate and peripheral' (Mansaray, 2006, p.68), with limited 'attention to them as groups of people' (Thomas, 1992, p.11). Discourse commonly refers to TAs as tools to be utilised, language which is viewed as having an exclusionary effect, marginalising this population (Lehane, 2015; Veck, 2009). Largely ignored within the current literature base (Blatchford et al., 2009; Lehane, 2015; Wilson & Bedford, 2008) the experiences, views and perceptions of TAs are either seldom sought or collected in conjunction with other groups (such as CYP, parents, teachers, senior leadership) (Abbott, et al., 2011; Groom & Rose, 2005; Slater & Gazeley, 2019). 'Key, yet invisible' (Dyer,

1996, p.187), the amplification of the TA voice is crucial to enhance understanding, offering perspectives that are key for decision-making, policy and future educational change (Roffey-Barentson & Watt, 2014).

1.5 The role of Educational Psychologists (EPs)

Within the body of research, the role of EPs in relation to TAs is limited, with a small number of studies highlighting their function in regard to training (Bowles, Radford & Bakopoulou, 2018; Burton, 2008) and improvements in whole-school practice (Higgins & Gulliford, 2014). Uncertainty concerning this lack of research evidence exists, particularly when the EP's role working with TAs is highlighted in government documentation (DfES, 2001):

'In addition to working with individual children, the Educational Psychologist can work with groups of pupils or teachers and learning support assistants at the classroom or whole school level' (DfES, 2001, p.136)

In challenging and emotionally demanding environments like APs, the EP's function supporting staff is becoming increasingly documented, although a noticeable steer is given to teachers, with minimal references to TAs as a group in their own right (Rae et al., 2017; Soloman & Thomas, 2013; Willis & Baines, 2018). Acknowledging that CYP are best helped by the adults that know them best (Conoley & Conoley, 1982; Kennedy, Frederickson & Monsen, 2008), it is vital that EPs understand the experiences of this staff group, ensuring that their needs are being met to enable them to give their best within their professional roles (Soloman & Thomas, 2013). As EPs play a key function in the support, intervention and identification of provision for excluded CYP (Bagley & Hallam, 2017),

the voice of TAs can also help inform recommendations, providing insight into how these CYP can be supported effectively.

1.6 Research rationale

'Education is a complex arena and one means to unravel that complexity is to listen to all involved: school leaders, teachers, pupils, parents and support staff' (Roffey-Barentson & Watt, 2014, p.20)

Vital to APs, educational staff and the relationships that they form with excluded CYP are highly important in enabling positive outcomes (Atkinson & Rowley, 2019; Malcolm, 2019; Michael & Frederickson, 2013). Despite the significance of their role, there has been a paucity of literature exploring the lived experiences of TAs, particularly in relation to those supporting excluded CYP. Recognising that the inclusion of views from all educational professionals is fundamental in enabling effective practice and future change, understanding the experiences of TAs within these settings is essential (Cohn & Kottkamp, 1993; Roffey-Barentson & Watt, 2014).

Described to be a parallel relationship, in meeting the needs of students, the professional needs of educational staff must also be met (Soloman & Thomas, 2013). This is particularly important within the current context of systemic pressure, whereby TAs exist in environments that are impacted by growing pupil numbers, increasing accountability and understaffing. This is further confounded by the demands placed upon the TA role, a position that is associated with low pay, status and increasing responsibilities. Working in a challenging and emotionally demanding setting, it is important that the needs of TAs are recognised to support their well-being, aiming to improve recruitment and retention of staff.

1.7 Researcher's position and personal interest

The researcher's interest in the perceptions of TAs in APs originated from personal experiences employed within these settings. Through this work, it was evident that recruitment and retention of staff was difficult, associated with the demands of managing emotions, challenging behaviour, SEMH needs and systemic pressures. Finding the act of supporting excluded CYP to be both extremely valuable and challenging, the researcher recognised that the experience had both a personal and professional impact.

As a Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP), the researcher has also spent time as the link EP within APs, recommending provision for CYP who have been excluded from mainstream schools and working collaboratively with educational staff. Despite TAs spending a large proportion of their time supporting these CYP, work was often completed with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENDCo) or teacher, with limited contact with the staff often managing behaviour or facilitating the EP advice and interventions. As a result, the researcher experienced TAs to be an unheard voice, wishing to provide them with an opportunity to share their views, perceptions and experiences.

1.8 Research question and aims

This introduction has highlighted a number of themes that will be further explored through the literature review (chapter 2), offering a context for which the experiences of the individual TA can be understood. The following research question provides the focus of the current study:

What are the experiences of TAs supporting excluded children in APs?

The research aims can be summarised as follows:

Substantive aim:

 To gain a better understanding of the lived experiences of TAs supporting excluded children in APs

Theoretical aim:

To add the voice of TAs working in APs to the current literature base,
 addressing the dearth of research within this area

Methodological aims:

- To utilise the explorative approach of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to discover the meaning TAs impress upon their lived experiences, through analysis of their reflections and descriptions
- To use semi-structured interviews as a method of data collection, creating a collaborative, flexible and comfortable interaction in which TAs can share their stories and experiences

1.9 Chapter summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide definitions of key terminology, in addition to background and contextual information in regard to APs. It has outlined the systemic pressure on these settings and the way in which this impacts staff supporting excluded CYP, alongside presenting the importance of TAs and the inclusion of their voice within research.

The role of the EP in relation to the current study is considered, presenting the importance of understanding and supporting a vital but invisible group. Building on this, chapter 2 explores the research investigating the views and experiences of staff working within APs, evidencing a gap in the literature base in relation to the perspectives of TAs.

Literature review

2.1 Chapter overview

2

This chapter details the literature review conducted by the researcher, identifying and evaluating existing research relevant to the phenomena under investigation. The systematic process used to conduct the review will be presented, including full details of the search approach. The review provides a systematic investigation of research relating to the current topic, synthesising and reporting papers with the aim to:

- Establish what is known about the views and experiences of school staff supporting excluded CYP in APs
- Justify the aims, rationale and research question by undertaking a systematic exploration of the literature base, ensuring that new knowledge can be generated for the profession of EPs

2.2 Search strategy

A systematic search of the following databases was conducted via EBSCOhost, allowing an exploration of a range of disciplines relevant to the research in question (carried out in January 2020 and repeated in April 2020): PsycINFO, Psychology and Behavioural Sciences Collection, PsycArticles, Education Source and Education Resources Information Centre (ERIC). A manual search of the most recent editions of reputable journal articles was also completed (carried out in January 2020 and repeated in April 2020): Educational and Child Psychology, Educational Psychology in Practice and Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties. Additional techniques were employed to ensure a comprehensive search of the literature, including: 1) the screening of reference lists of each identified study and 2) the use of internet search engines (such as Google Scholar).

2.2.1 Search terms

In order to ensure that the most appropriate terms were used, pilot searches were conducted with the above databases. The thesaurus function was also used to identify appropriate terms. To locate the most relevant papers, the following approaches were also employed during the searches:

- Boolean operators 'AND' and 'OR' were used with search terms
- Quotation marks around key phrases were employed to ensure that the exact terminology was used during each search
- Asterisks to truncate words allowing associated terms to be included
- Application of limiters and expanders in accordance with the inclusion and exclusion criteria

The search terms used within the current review are included in Table 1. Systematic searches used a combination of these terms to allow generation of the most appropriate studies (see Appendix A for full details).

Table 1. *Expanded search terms for the literature review question*.

Search term	Туре	Collective search name	Search terms
1	Context	AP	- "Pupil Referral Unit"
			- PRU
			- "Alternative provision"
			- "Education other than at school"
			- "Special education provision"
			- BESD school
			- SEMH school
2	Population	School staff	- "School staff"
			- Teacher*
			- "Teaching Assistant"

			- "Support staff"
3	Outcome	Experience	- Voice*
			- Experience*
			- Perspective*
			- Perception*
			- View*

Whilst the researcher included terms synonymous with 'exclusion' during iterative searches, these were not included in final searches as papers: 1) focused on the wider meaning of exclusion (e.g. relating to social inclusion in schools and isolation from the community), and 2) did not include the views of school staff (e.g. with a focus on the experience of excluded CYP/parents).

2.2.2 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The inclusion and exclusion criteria were determined by the author prior to beginning the searches, ensuring that the selected literature was appropriate and relevant to the current study (as shown in Table 2).

Table 2. Inclusion and exclusion criteria for literature on the experience of school staff supporting excluded CYP within APs.

	Inclusion	Exclusion
1) Includes the experiences and views of school staff supporting CYP excluded from school and		Does not include the views and experiences of school staff
	educated in APs	2) Focuses on mainstream settings
	1) Conducted in the years between 1996 to 2020	1) Published prior to 1996
Time and space	2) Based within the United Kingdom	2) Published outside of the UK

	3) Written in English	3) Written in a language other than English
G. I.	1) Quantitative, qualitative or mixed-method papers	Position papers, periodicals, book editorials
Study type	2) Full text journal articles	2) Limited access journals
	3) Peer-reviewed	3) Non-peer reviewed

As definitions of APs have included settings for CYP identified with SEMH needs (Tate & Greatbatch, 2017), the search strategy was widened to include these provisions. This was also deemed suitable as challenging behaviour and SEMH difficulties are the leading cause of exclusion and the most prevalent need within APs (as discussed in section 1.2.3 and 1.3.4). Papers published before 1996 were also excluded to reflect the publication of guidance ensuring that LAs make provision for students not attending school (Education Act, 1996). Research conducted outside of the UK context or published in languages other than English were also excluded, certifying that literature was relevant to the socio-cultural context in which EPs train and practice. Peer-reviewed papers were also selected, aiming to ensure that the most rigorous research relevant to the current study was examined.

Using the inclusion and exclusion criteria, the titles and abstracts of selected papers were screened to determine suitability. In articles where the abstract was unclear, the paper itself was examined. Tables of search results (comprising of included and excluded papers) are included in Appendix B.

2.2.3 Search returns

The systematic literature search generated a total of 70 unique title references, of which 53 were rejected following a review of the title and abstract (in line with the inclusion and exclusion criteria stipulated in section 2.2.2). Additionally, four papers were identified

through 1) the hand-searches of journals and the inspection of reference lists and 2) the use of internet search engines. After full text analysis and critical examination, 15 papers were deemed suitable for inclusion. Tables of papers included within this review are detailed in Appendix C. Reviewing the body of research excluded from this review, it was evident that papers focused on: exclusion statistics, intervention programmes, the perspectives of professionals in mainstream settings and the views of CYP in APs and their parents.

Demonstrating the process of article inclusion and exclusion, Appendix D displays the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) framework (Moher et al., 2009) utilised by the researcher. Key information such as the author, year of publication, methodological approach and main findings from each paper are detailed in Appendix E.

2.2.4 Critical appraisal

To review the quality and relevance of the selected literature, the Support Unit for Research Evidence (SURE, 2015) tool was employed (see Appendix F); a checklist allowing a thorough and replicable approach to appraisal. As all of the articles included within this review were qualitative papers, this tool was deemed appropriate due to its suitability for evaluating this research methodology. Summarised information about the critical appraisal of studies included within the review can be found in Appendix G.

2.3 Approach to the literature question

To answer the review question, papers were synthesised and a literature map (Creswell, 2010) was created, providing a visual summary of the key themes emerging from the views and experiences of school staff supporting excluded CYP in APs (see Appendix H). This

was used to offer a structure and organisation for the review, in line with the following themes:

- Motivation, commitment and a sense of purpose
- Emotionality of relationships
- Stigmatising the CYP and staff within APs
- Protective factors and barriers
- A focus on practice

As a proportion of the studies included a multi-perspective approach, (incorporating the views of CYP, parents or professionals external to the provisions under review), these experiences were not discussed as they stretched beyond the remit of this review.

2.3.1 Motivation, commitment and a sense of purpose

Three of the included studies highlighted the commitment, motivation and sense of purpose experienced by school staff supporting excluded CYP within APs (Farouk, 2014; Farrell, Duckworth, Reece & Rigby, 2016; Malcolm, 2018b). It was evident that these educators experienced an obligation towards the students within their care, motivated by both the desire to elicit change and the sense of purpose provided when offering support.

Using a phenomenological approach to explore the transition of three teachers in an inner London PRU, Farouk (2014) highlighted that motivation to support CYP within APs was attributed to a growing dissatisfaction and disengagement whilst working within mainstream settings. Evident was the perception that mainstream schools focused heavily on the attainment of students, failing to provide resources for those with SEMH needs. Teachers brought a moral purpose and personal investment to their work, with a hope that

this would elicit change and promote successful reintegration. Whilst strengthened by clarity and transparency of approach (well-defined aims, sampling, methodological approach, data collection and consideration of ethical concerns and reflexivity), the study faced criticism as a result of previous literature directing the process of data analysis. As a key component of IPA involves bracketing-off prior knowledge, ideas and experiences, concerns were raised as to why the researcher did not engage in an open exploration and interpretation of the participants' lived experiences.

Drawing parallels with Farouk (2014), surveys conducted with 20 AP headteachers (Malcolm, 2018b), highlighted that motivation was attributed to a perception that mainstream schools were ineffective and unhelpful. Whilst recognising the challenges posed within APs (such as challenging behaviour, instability of boundaries, lack of support from home, low confidence, self-esteem and trust), heads of these provisions were able to maintain commitment and a sense of purpose due to the intrinsic rewards of the job and a personal motivation to the success of the student. Differing from Farouk (2014) and arguably related to the higher managerial positions of these staff members, motivation was also connected with the opportunity to exert power and control over a setting, further influenced by the highly marketised nature of APs. Whilst offering an insight into the views of educational staff within the current systemic context, it was likely that the senior positions of participants resulted in a detachment from the CYP, with little applicability to staff encompassing the TA role. Limitations of the study also exist as a result of ethical issues relating to the researcher's previous and on-going involvement with APs, increasing the risk of preconceived ideas and bias impacting the methodological process.

Like Farouk (2014), Farrell and colleagues (2016) highlighted the way in which teachers assumed a personal responsibility for the CYP, committed to a process of rehabilitation and the opportunity to repair others. Employing Foucauldian Discourse Analysis with three school staff (two holding senior positions and a trainee teacher), it was evident that narratives were held about being driven and diligent, employing a hardworking ethos that was hoped to transfer to the students and enable their future success. Staff also emphasised how this provided validation and a form of recovery from their own experiences of education, allowing them to work on themselves whilst also being the 'agents' and 'technicians' (p.12) of change for the child. In addition to focusing on the micro-level and exploring the narratives of teachers, this study offered insights at the macro-level, considering the impact of free school policy rationalities; an area particularly relevant in a systemic context whereby the number of AP academies is rising. Despite these strengths, criticism occurred as a result of omissions regarding the reporting of the methodological approach (e.g. insufficient information provided about the sampling strategy, data analysis procedure or relationship between the researcher and topic), in addition to difficulties gaining a comprehensive understanding of the paper due to the technical language utilised throughout.

2.3.2 Emotionality of relationships

Four of the included studies highlighted the emotionality of relationships formed with the CYP within APs and the personal and professional impact on practitioners (Farouk, 2014; Fitzsimmons, Trigg & Premkumar, 2019; Kalu, 2002; Menendez Alvarez-Hevia, 2018). It was evident that whilst these relationships were viewed as a prerequisite to the student's progression and success, the emotional demands experienced by educational staff were vast.

Employing the concept of emotional geography (the closeness and distance that exists in an individual's relationships and emotional interactions, Hargreaves [2001]), Menendez Alvarez-Hevia (2018) explored the educator-pupil relationship in a PRU setting. Undertaking an interpretivist methodological approach comprising of focus groups and observational data with teachers and mentors, researchers highlighted the 'pendulum-like' (p.308) motion of relationships, in which there were times of connection and disconnection. Staff described the fragility of relationships, noting instances whereby they gained closer proximity and trust with the CYP, alongside moments of emotional distance that could feel 'shocking' and 'damaging' (p.308). In attempting to manage these experiences, educators displaced aspects of the student's behaviour as out of their sphere of control, acknowledging that there are limits to their practice. Within these relationships, staff also described a process of emotional learning, whereby they developed strategies to deal with the negative experiences, whilst also finding ways to construct different narratives about the relational difficulties they faced. This was deemed to be a key feature of their involvement, enabling educators to both understand and manage the demands associated with relational engagement and disengagement, alongside the stresses of the role. Whilst this paper was strengthened by its inclusion of mentors within the participant sample, it is arguable that this lacks applicability to the TA; a higher position in which staff were described as holding an organisational role alongside their supportive function. Questions were also raised about the decision of the researcher to restrict their analysis to focus exclusively on relations with the CYP, warranting further study about the other aspects of emotional learning that may exist when working within APs.

Aiming to further explore the teacher-student relationship with CYP excluded from school due to their SEMH needs, Fitzsimmons and colleagues (2019) conducted semi-structured

interviews with teachers and TAs delivering AP in the form of one-to-one support. Drawing similarities with Menendez Alvarez-Hevia (2018), participants highlighted both the importance of a holistic relational connection with the child, alongside the difficult and emotive impact of disconnection. Relationships required an intense investment, with participants noting the emotional labour associated with initiation and maintenance of a connection, a result of challenging behaviour and complex conscious and unconscious demands. An emotional distance was also created due to the multifaceted personal and professional boundaries that required navigation, alongside both the lack of reciprocity within relational interactions and difficulties 'liking' (p.13) those they support. Despite these challenges, this study highlighted how tutors were able to bear the emotional costs associated with working with these CYP, protected by the rewards and satisfaction offered by the role. This study was strengthened by its clear methodological approach and data analysis process, taking into consideration ethics and the position of the researcher in relation to the subject under interest. Questions were raised as to whether the difficulties highlighted by tutors were associated with the nature of SEMH students or if these challenges resemble all teaching relationships; an area that requires future exploration. Drawing similarities with other papers included within this review, a potential bias was also raised due to the researcher's role as a tutor within the same organisation, holding prior knowledge and beliefs about the system which may have impacted the interview and data analysis process.

Alongside commitment and motivation to the role, Farouk's (2014) study also highlights the emotional challenge of maintaining relational boundaries with students, describing the intense nature of interactions and the need for detachment. Whilst the participants highlighted how personal engagement was necessary to aid constructive learning, teachers

experienced a process of self-understanding, in which they began to recognise the need to manage instances whereby they could become enmeshed with the child. Also described within Menendez Alvarez-Hevia's (2018) paper, educators identified the limits of their role as practitioners, re-evaluating the extent of their involvement and accepting their restricted remit to effect change. Stressed within other papers (Farrell et al., 2016; Malcolm, 2018b), it was evident that staff were able to maintain their core belief and moral imperative to contribute and improve their student's lives, due to both the rewards of the role and the journey of self-realisation and understanding they embarked upon.

In a personal case history approach, Kalu (2002) noted the emotional complexities associated with teaching and supporting two excluded secondary-aged young people in different forms of AP (an offsite education centre and a PRU). Through the application of a psychoanalytic lens, Kalu (2002) highlighted the arousal of intense emotions within these relationships, describing how she often experienced painful feelings of 'confusion', 'anger' and 'futility' (p.359 and p.364). For the researcher, the importance of understanding the adult as a container was vital; a concept described by Bion (1985) in which the individual accepts the projections of another and reflects these back in a modified and more digestible manner. In offering support, Kalu (2002) noted the ongoing struggle to understand both what these CYP need, together with what she could offer, highlighting the importance of containment as a way of both aiding the student and reflecting on the self in role. With application to practice, this research highlighted the benefits of staff training in approaches which enable a deeper understanding of the behaviours exhibited by excluded CYP, preparing them for the difficult emotions elicited. Whilst providing a rich, narrative insight into the experience of supporting those described as 'troubled' (p.359), this paper is limited by the lack of basic information about the cases (e.g. background, reasons for exclusion),

researcher (e.g. age, level of experience) and methodological approach (e.g. limited information about data collection and presentation, ethics and informed consent of students), preventing contextualisation of the study. Strengthening the paper and suitable for the psychoanalytic paradigm, the researcher offered detailed accounts of the pupil's histories, observations, theoretical framework and interpretations.

2.3.3 Stigmatising the CYP and staff within APs

Two of the included studies (Broomhead, 2013a; Broomhead, 2016) explored the impact of negative perceptions on the professionals providing support to CYP excluded from school. Whilst these studies did not focus solely on the perspectives of AP professionals (e.g. including parents and mainstream school staff), they offered an insight into the stigma that these educational staff experienced from outside audiences.

Using an IPA approach, Broomhead (2013a) highlighted that educators felt pupils attending SEMH provisions were 'unwanted' (p.6) in mainstream settings. Associated with difficulties managing behaviour, staff perceived outside schools to employ exclusionary practices rather than addressing needs, unable to cope with the challenges presented by students. Educational professionals noted concerns about patterns of disruptive behaviour, stigma and exclusion of pupils from mainstream schools, noting a failure to understand and accommodate for children deemed challenging. Whilst describing a participant sample ranging from senior leadership to TAs, it was evident that the views of headteachers and SENDCos within this study were more pronounced, with minimal information about the lived experiences of other staff members included within the findings. It is also important to note that this paper positioned educators in SEMH provisions as oversimplifying the exclusionary practice of mainstream settings, a perspective which may be amplified in the

current climate of increasing exclusions. Although strengthened by a clear research rationale, methodological approach and data analysis process, the findings were complicated by the inclusion of participants supporting CYP with a range of needs (e.g. SEMH, Downs Syndrome and Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties), with implications for the homogeneity required when employing an IPA methodology.

Considering the stigma school professionals perceived excluded CYP to experience (Broomhead, 2013a), Broomhead (2016) also explored how educators within SEMH provisions felt they were perceived by others. Semi-structured interviews with nine staff (six headteachers and three teachers with additional responsibilities) highlighted frustrations that outside schools felt they were not 'proper' (p.59) teachers, resulting in the need to justify and defend their professional credibility. Educators felt a discourse of care surrounded their provisions, with staff seen as the supporters of social and emotional wellbeing, failing to focus on the CYP's academic development. Pressures were also felt from outside settings, with educators noting the increasing responsibilities and multifaceted role placed upon them as 1) investigators of CYP's difficulties and 2) life coaches required to prepare students for the outside world. Despite appearing passionate and committed to their role, queries were raised (by the author of this thesis) as to how these negative perceptions and additional pressures impacted on staff members' sense of self and well-being, in addition to larger questions about the influence on recruitment and retention within these settings. Similar to the previous study (Broomhead, 2013a) and inclusive of parallel strengths (a clear and structured narrative of the rationale, methodology and data analysis process), limitations arose as a result of a sample focused primarily on headteachers. Although increasing pressure on these senior members was noted, it is arguable that these

findings lack relatability to teachers and TAs, the members of staff most heavily involved in the care of these CYP.

2.3.4 Protective factors and barriers

Five of the papers included within this review highlighted the protective factors and barriers for excluded CYP, experienced by educational professionals in APs (Broomhead, 2013b, Broomhead, 2014; Hart, 2013; Lawrence, 2011; Levinson & Thompson, 2016). Much of this research explored the reintegration process, focusing on the function of school staff in relation to the CYP, with less emphasis on their lived experiences as individuals providing support.

Protective factors contributing to positive trajectories for excluded CYP were explored by Hart (2013), conducting semi-structured interviews with children and members of staff (a Headteacher, class teacher, TA and SENDCo) within a PRU setting. These findings highlighted that both groups had a shared understanding of the provision and support offered, with protective factors falling within four themes: relationships, teaching and learning, expectations and environment. Participants reported that CYP typically arrived at the provision with limited social skills, emphasising their ability to successfully foster relationships (at both the educator and peer level) due to higher staffing levels. A strong learning ethos for students (particularly in regard to Literacy and Mathematics), alongside opportunities to develop life skills were also perceived as protective, in addition to a consistent approach and high expectations, targets, rules, and boundaries. Further factors assisting the reintegration process included having an environment that looked like a school and offered a 'family atmosphere' and a 'nurturing' (p.205) approach. It was evident that perceptions were also held about mainstream schools needing to change their practice away

from child-deficit models to inclusive systems, ensuring they adjusted unrealistic views of the CYP and their behaviour. Within this research, questions were raised by the researcher as to how these factors operated to protect the child, particularly when considering the interlinked and complex systems PRUs are nested within. It was clear that a difference also existed between gaining the opinions of participants and accurately establishing the impact of these factors, a study that would require an experimental design and a focus on outcomes. Whilst the research provides rich detail and strong arguments for the methodological approach utilised, criticisms relate to its research-driven focus (using previous literature as a factor informing the current study), shaping the semi-structured interviews conducted and potentially framing the data into pre-existing themes.

Using thematic analysis to explore protective factors and barriers relating to the reintegration of pupils from an AP, Lawrence (2011) highlighted the multiple levels (e.g. child, parent, systemic or wider organisational) that need to be considered for an effective reintegration to take place. Using semi-structured focus group discussions with educators (e.g. Learning Mentors, Heads of Year, Headteachers and staff with reintegration responsibility) from a PRU, Behaviour Support Service and mainstream setting, staff noted the importance of the child's self-perceptions, views of education and desire to engage, alongside the severity of their SEND. Reintegration was also perceived to be more successful when parents shared responsibility, engaged and supported the AP, with open and clear communication between home and school. At the systemic level, staff noted that reintegration needed to be timely, child-centred, holistic and individualised, in which students were welcomed back into an inclusive mainstream environment. A close-working relationship between the PRU and home school was deemed vital, with clear boundaries and expectations of the roles and duties of one another. The absence of these factors were

barriers to effective reintegration, with participants recommending the need for change in relation to 1) closer working links and relationships, 2) early intervention, 3) holistic analysis of behaviour alongside tailored intervention and 4) improved training for staff. Offering an in-depth analysis of factors contributing to effective reintegration, alongside areas for development and implications for the practice of professionals, this study was further strengthened by its clear methodological design, data analysis approach and attempts to demonstrate the reflexivity of the researcher. Criticisms arose as a result of the amalgamation of a number of staff members from different settings, meaning that it was difficult to both differentiate the views of AP staff or to draw comparisons between groups.

Building on the work of Hart (2013) and Lawrence (2011), Levinson & Thompson (2016) aimed to explore the implicit assumption that reintegration is beneficial through an exploration of the perspectives of teachers and CYP within a PRU setting. Utilising semi-structured interviews, the researchers highlighted that CYP responded to the supportive and therapeutic environments offered within the AP, with teachers tasked with understanding the 'tipping point' (p.40), whereby reintegration becomes unlikely to occur. The narratives of staff suggested a strong sense of progress, with teachers describing a positive reintegration rate for approximately 90% of their students, noting a decline in success with increasing age. Like previous studies (Hart, 2013; Lawrence, 2011), effective reintegration was dependant on smooth, clear structures and strong relationships with mainstream schools, alongside a holistic approach, with sensitivity, flexibility and appropriate timing. Reintegration was also viewed as precarious, requiring the support and input of parents and mainstream school structures. Touched upon within a number of previous studies (Broomhead, 2013a; Broomhead, 2016; Hart, 2013; Lawrence, 2011), this paper also noted the challenges associated with mainstream settings, schools perceived as less supportive,

ill-equipped to manage behaviour, impersonal and lacking inclusivity. Whilst building on the findings of the previous literature base, this paper faced challenges due to a failure to include clear information about the number of participants, data analysis process, ethics or reflexivity of the researcher in role. Further limitations related to the use of percentages within the paper, with little information about where this data was generated from. The researcher's position within the AP added further complexity, increasing the risk of potential bias during both the interview and data analysis process.

Differing from the previous studies, Broomhead (2013b) took a concentrated approach, highlighting the impact of one barrier on educational professionals supporting CYP within APs. Utilising an IPA approach to explore perceptions around SEMH, the authors demonstrated how school staff viewed the CYP's home lives as 'complicated' (p.312), associated with a discourse of family breakdown and lack of responsibility for learning, development and well-being. Associated with these difficulties, staff attempted to compensate for perceived inadequacies by adopting the role of surrogate parents, taking responsibility for addressing the CYP's socio-emotional well-being. This paper was further built on by Broomhead (2014), emphasising a 'disjuncture between the norms and values' (p.136) held by staff and parents, a clash attributed to contrasting caregiving practices and ineffective boundaries and discipline. Social disadvantage, chaotic home circumstances, neglect and abuse were frequently viewed as responsible for SEMH difficulties, with practitioners becoming acclimatised to the difficulties faced when working with CYP and their families. Questions were raised as to whether this desensitisation leads to professional failures in challenging familial circumstances, impacting on the responsibility held by staff

as advocates for their students. Social Graces¹ (Burnham, 2012), are also applicable to this study, with queries as to whether a disjuncture is created as a result of a predominantly middle-class profession attempting to encourage aspirations valued by schools that alienate the traditions of some/many parents and their homes. Whilst these papers provided a rich picture of the views held by professionals in terms of education and parenting, the homogeneity of the samples are questioned due to the large variability in practitioners' titles (e.g. Headteachers, SENDCos, TAs, home-school liaison officers and teachers). It is also important to note that minimal information was provided about the relationship between the researcher and participants, reflexivity which is crucial when employing a phenomenological approach.

2.3.5 A focus on practice

Three of the included studies explored the views and experiences of educators in relation to the different forms of practice in APs (Malcolm, 2018b; Meo & Parker, 2004; Putwain, Nicolson & Edwards, 2015). These papers described both similarities and divergences in approach, noting the way in which school staff manage and adapt their pedagogical practice to facilitate re-engagement of their students.

Employing a sociological enquiry method utilising observations, semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis, Meo and Parker (2004) explored pedagogical practice and the experience of teachers in one PRU setting. Educators considered the National Curriculum and raising standards as a low priority, highlighting the importance of developing the social and personal skills of the students (e.g. self-esteem, engagement,

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¹ Social Graces or Social GGRRAAACCEEESSS, representing an acronym for: 'Gender, Geography, Race, Religion, Age, Ability, Appearance, Class, Culture, Ethnicity, Education, Employment, Sexuality, Sexual orientation, Spirituality' (Burnham, 2012)

trusting relationships, social skills). Due to the temporary and transient nature of the student cohort, teachers experienced an additional time pressure to educate the CYP, in addition to finding methods to modify lesson content to minimise disengagement and challenging behaviours. Teachers were also preoccupied by issues of authority, classroom management and control, with the implementation of systems of punishment and rewards. Finding ways to manage, the paper highlighted a battle between curriculum obligations and institutional survival, in which participants frequently adjusted and redefined difficult situations through the adaptation of their pedagogical practice. While offering a rich, narrative account of 'life' (p.106) within one PRU, it is arguable that the findings of this study may be outdated, situated in a different socio-political context with less applicability to the current environment of systemic pressure and rising academic standards. Noting that teachers were provided with a 'lack of institutional opportunities to reflect collectively on the difficulties and dilemmas within teaching and learning practices' (p.117), it was difficult to differentiate the experiences of staff within this paper, with their views amalgamated with the perspectives of the researcher. Further criticism ensued as a result of limited information about methodological decisions (e.g. number of participants), data analysis and researcher reflexivity, further impacting on the transparency of the paper.

Further exploring practice that enabled re-engagement with disconnected students, Putwain and colleagues (2015) conducted a month-long fieldwork project, comprising of semi-structured classroom observations and interviews with CYP and members of staff (teachers, higher management, behaviour and welfare officers and therapeutic workers) in one AP. Drawing parallels with Meo and Parker (2004), the findings highlighted the adaptation of pedagogical practices for students, including the need for a high degree of individualised learning, instruction and support, mediating for a lack of confidence, self-worth and belief.

Staff understood educational histories, student needs and capabilities, in addition to the importance of adapting their approach away from the replication of 'old-fashioned' (p.8) methods utilised in mainstream education. A high ratio of teachers to students was seen as necessary to manage needs, although the multifaceted roles of staff created tension due to competing responsibilities. The researchers also highlighted how many of the participants described these practices as absent from mainstream schools, fitting with previous research accentuating the comparisons drawn with outside settings by this group of school staff (Broomhead, 2013a; Farouk 2014; Hart, 2013; Malcolm, 2018b; Levinson & Thompson, 2016). Shedding light on the instructional environment that offered support to excluded CYP, little information was given about the other elements of the setting that aided reengagement (e.g. the approach to behaviour management or the relationships built). Whilst a thorough methodological approach and data analysis was conducted, questions were raised as to the potential influence of the researcher's extended presence within the setting and the impact of this on the findings.

In addition to emphasising the motivation felt by headteachers within APs, Malcolm's (2018b) study also focused on the provision available for excluded CYP, exploring the characteristics of their practice and areas of divergence. Contrasting with findings from Meo & Parker (2004), it was evident that whilst APs differed in focus, their approach had become increasingly academic (through the offer of qualifications), a likely response to increasing government pressures to improve. Settings showed deviation in their organisational culture and method to managing challenging behaviour, with the implementation of exclusionary practices and restraint. Headteachers demonstrated a consensus concerning the use of relational practice within their APs, although responded differently in their approach to managing student-staff conflict (e.g. using restorative

practice, finding ways to disengage and diffuse situations). As described within this paper, the experiences and views of staff allowed an exploration of the different forms and structure that exist amongst APs, highlighting areas in which intervention may be necessary. Whilst the voice of educators within these provisions was viewed as 'a priority' (p.3), it is arguable that the use of surveys as a methodological approach prevented any true in-depth exploration of experience.

2.4 Chapter summary

The purpose of this chapter was to explore what is known about the views and experiences of school staff supporting excluded CYP within APs. In a thematic format, it answers the review question, whilst critically analysing included papers and demonstrating gaps within the literature base. Through this review, it is evident that a dearth of literature exists within the UK that explores the experiences of school staff supporting CYP within APs. Whilst papers investigating these settings exist, the majority focus on the experiences of CYP, a result of recommendations that research should centralise their voice. Literature within this area holds a predominant focus on staff's function in relation to the CYP's progress or future, with a limited number of papers directly exploring their experiences as individuals. The views of AP staff are frequently included with the perspectives of CYP or their mainstream counterparts, with a paucity of research focusing solely on this group. Though TAs are included within participant samples, their views are frequently sought in conjunction with other educational professionals meaning their voice as a group remains amalgamated with the perspectives of others. Whilst multiple papers highlight the importance of educational staff and the need to gain their views, this review shows a gap in the literature in regard to TAs, with no papers focusing solely on their experience.

3. Methodology

3.1 Chapter overview

This chapter outlines the study's research questions and aims, providing an overview of the epistemological and ontological positioning of the researcher, alongside the qualitative methodological approach of IPA. Description of the research design, participant recruitment process, data collection and analysis is provided, alongside consideration of ethics. Emphasis is also given to the strategies employed by the researcher to ensure the robustness of the study, promoting high standards of reliability and validity.

3.2 Research aims and purpose

The research aimed to gain a better understanding of the lived experiences and perceptions of TAs working in APs with CYP who have been excluded from mainstream settings. Derived from a gap in the existing literature base, the overarching research question was:

What are the experiences of TAs supporting excluded children in APs?

As little was known about the phenomena being researched, the study was exploratory, taking an inductive approach to explore the participants' views, experiences, beliefs and ideas (Robson, 2002).

3.3 Philosophical underpinnings of the current research

The philosophical assumptions of the researcher influenced the methodological approach chosen to conduct the current research. As described by Maxwell & Mittapalli (2010), an individual's worldview directly impacts alignment to the research paradigm and the methods utilised to collect and interpret data.

3.3.1 Ontology

Ontology is defined as the philosophical enquiry into the nature of knowledge, reality and beliefs about truth (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). Existing as a continuum, whereby the ontological stance of an individual ranges from 'realism'; the ideology that there is one single, objective truth and 'relativism', the view that there are multiple realities, beliefs and perspectives, with knowledge perceived as subjective, relative and based on experience (Willig, 2008).

Believing that the individual's construction of reality is developed through their own subjective experience of the world, the current study took an ontological stance closer to the relativist end of the continuum. In accordance with this ontological position, the existence of a multiverse is argued, with each individual constructing different interpretations of an experience (Bateson, 1979; Willig, 2008). Realist notions of an external reality discoverable through the research process and value-free, detached and objective researchers were rejected (Willig & Rogers, 2017).

3.3.2 Epistemology

Influenced by ontological stance and existing on a parallel continuum (see Figure 3), epistemology is concerned with the theory and nature of knowledge, questioning 'how and what can we know?' (Willig, 2008, pg. 4). Contrasting epistemological positions include 'positivism': the belief that objective knowledge and truth are both measurable and testable (Robson & McCarten, 2016) and 'social constructionism': the assumption that meaning is created through interaction with the world, emphasising the role of culture, discourse and society (Gray, 2013).

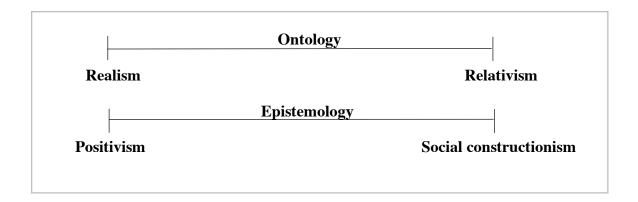


Figure 3. A visual depiction of the ontological and epistemological continuum.

Associated with relativist ontological positions, the current research took the epistemological stance of 'constructivism', emphasising the diversity in interpretations that can be applied to the world (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). As described by Ratner (2008), this argues that the individual's reality is unknowable, with the role of the researcher to develop an impression of their world through a process of co-construction. Becoming 'interactively linked so that the findings are created as the investigation proceeds' (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 111), the constructivist researcher generates meaning inductively, rather than adopting a theory-driven approach. Through engagement with this process of co-construction, it is acknowledged that the researcher must take a reflexive position, aware of the influence that their own constructions of the world may have on the process of interpretation.

3.4 IPA

Taking into account the epistemological and ontological position of the researcher and the study's aim and purpose, IPA (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009) was chosen as a method of data collection and analysis.

3.4.1 An overview and rationale for IPA

Founded by Smith (1996), IPA is a qualitative approach exploring the lived experiences of a small sample of participants in a level of great detail and depth. This approach aims to develop a rich understanding of the 'quality and texture' of a phenomenon (Willig, 2013, p. 179), with particular focus given to the meanings an experience or event holds for the individual (Smith et al., 2009). Recognising the impracticality of gaining direct access to the individual's worldview, the researcher attempts to generate meaning through interpretation of the individual's experience (Willig, 2013).

Identifying the need for an idiographic and interpretative approach focusing on the individual's lived experience, IPA was deemed appropriate to explore the voice of TAs working in APs supporting CYP who have been excluded from school. In line with the ontological and epistemological position of the researcher, this approach allowed a commitment to the individuality in meaning each participant impresses upon an experience, acknowledging the diversity of interpretations. As IPA is particularly suited to investigating 'unexplored territory' (Reid, Flowers & Larkin, 2005, p. 23), this approach fits with the lack of existing literature available focusing on the experiences of TAs. Figure 4 shows a visual depiction of the philosophical foundations of the research approach.

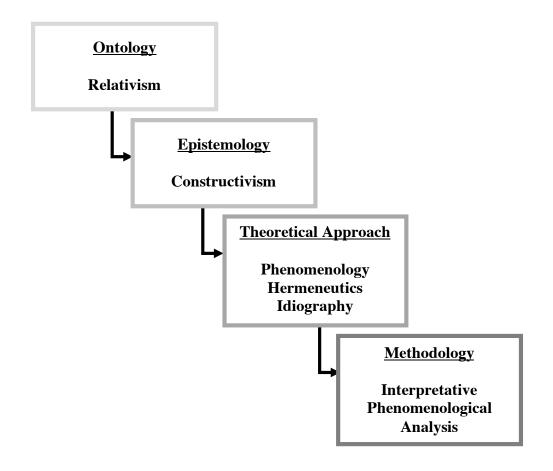


Figure 4. Diagram illustrating the philosophical underpinnings of the research approach.

3.4.2 Theoretical basis of IPA

IPA is underpinned by three fundamental philosophical concepts: Phenomenology, Hermeneutics and Idiography (Smith et al., 2009).

1) Phenomenology

Defined as the philosophical approach to the study of experience (Smith et al., 2009), phenomenology is concerned with 'understanding the world as it is experienced by human beings within particular contexts and at particular times' (Willig, 2008, p.52). Through the contribution of distinct perspectives, phenomenological philosophy can be viewed as a pluralist endeavour, combining the distinct thinking of four leading figures;

Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Satre (Smith et al., 2009). Through the work of these writers, it is accepted that understanding experience invokes a lived process, acknowledging the perceptions and meanings distinctive to the individual, whilst recognising their 'embodied and situated relationship to the world' (Smith et al., 2009, p. 21). The interpretative nature of the meaning-making process is emphasised (Heidegger, 1927), alongside the need for researchers to engage in a process of 'bracketing off' their own thoughts, beliefs and pre-conceptions (Smith et al., 2009, p.16).

2) Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics is described as the theory and practice of interpretation, aiming to 'make meaning intelligible' (Grondin, 1994, p.20). Drawing on the theoretical standpoints of Heidegger, Schleiermacher and Gadamer (Smith, 2007), IPA focuses on the appearance of phenomena, with the researcher adopting an active role in the process of meaning-making (Smith et al., 2009). It is also recognised that interpretations are based on a double hermeneutic, whereby 'the participant is trying to make sense of their personal and social world; the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of their personal and social world' (Smith, 2004, p. 40). As a result, IPA utilises a second-order sense-making process, with the researcher a dynamic facilitator within this method (Eatough & Smith, 2008).

IPA interpretation combines both 1) 'empathic hermeneutics', whereby the perspectives of the participant are understood, respected and accepted and 2) 'critical hermeneutics', in which the researcher engages in curious questioning to examine areas that the participant may be unable, unwilling or unlikely to acknowledge (Eatough & Smith, 2008; Smith, 2007). Through the application of both stances in tandem, it is argued that the researcher is able to engage in a richer analysis, gaining a more representative view of an individual's lived experience (Smith, 2007).

Described as a resonant idea in hermeneutic theory (Smith, 2007), the 'hermeneutic circle', is concerned with the interactive relationship between the whole and its parts across a succession of levels (Smith et al., 2009). This acknowledges that 'to understand the part, you look to the whole; to understand the whole, you look to the part' (Smith, 2007, p. 5). Argued to lend itself to the iterative nature of IPA analysis, the hermeneutic circle provides a beneficial approach to understanding the thought process of moving back and forth with the data, in addition to the shifting relationship of the researcher with the text (Smith et al., 2009).

3) Idiography

A third main element of IPA is idiography, concerned with the particularity of an experience (Eatough & Smith, 2008). Distinguished from nomothetic psychology focusing on determining general laws of human behaviour, IPA is committed to the detail, depth and specificity of a particular phenomenon and how it is understood 'from the perspective of particular

people, in a particular context' (Smith et al., 2009, p.29). Whilst IPA maintains a commitment to the individual and their unique perspective, it is argued that general themes exist, connecting with a common humanity (Eatough & Smith, 2008; Evans, 1993). As a result, IPA attempts to move from 'single cases to more general statements' (Smith et al., 2009, p.23) attending to convergence and divergence, whilst maintaining the importance of the individual voice.

3.4.3 A critique of IPA

Whilst the researcher has defined the rationale for IPA as the methodology of choice, the criticisms of this approach were also noted. Argued by Giorgi (2010), IPA is described as encompassing a range of methodological errors, violating the principles of good science. Claimed to lack intersubjectivity, consistency and a prescriptive method, Giorgi (2010) implies that IPA allows the researcher to adopt a personal approach to analysis, increasing the likelihood of selectivity and bias. In response, Smith (2010) argues for the balance between structure and flexibility, distinguishing IPA from rigid procedures associated with quantitative approaches. It is also noted that IPA provides a clear set of analysis steps, alongside guiding procedures to ensure quality control, evidenced by the researcher in the data analysis section (see section 3.7).

Further limitations of IPA are highlighted by Willig (2008), questioning the degree to which participants are able to express the vivid texture of their experiences, required to provide a level of description that they are unaccustomed to. Whilst this potential difficulty is acknowledged, Smith and Osborne (2008) emphasise the role of the researcher in engaging and interpreting the individual's state (both mental and emotional) through

analysis of the experiences communicated. Attempting to address the difficulties of expressing thoughts and feelings through language, previous studies have returned to participants or engaged in a process of peer-review to gain views on the researcher's initial interpretations (Brocki & Wearden, 2006). Due to the time constraints associated with the current research, it was not feasible to conduct these adjustments, however details of the thorough analysis, judgements and reflexivity employed by the researcher attempt to address this criticism.

Whilst IPA aims to describe and document lived experiences, it is also critiqued as it fails to provide an explanation relating to the occurrence of the phenomena (Willig, 2008). Despite this, Fade (2004) suggests that IPA can be beneficial to develop explanations through the process of 1) comparing themes across a small number of cases or 2) by adopting a theory-building approach to explore relationships and patterns within the data. Whilst it is recognised that cause-and-effect relationships cannot be established (Fade, 2004), the researcher emphasises the value in exploring the lived experiences of TAs supporting excluded children, with this research contributing valuable information to a limited literature base.

3.4.4 Overview of alternative approaches

As part of the research process, alternative methodologies to IPA were also considered. Given the ontological and epistemological position of the researcher, in addition to the exploratory focus of the research, only qualitative approaches were considered.

• Grounded theory

Grounded theory studies aim to generate a theory that describes and explains the phenomena under study (Robson, 2011). Drawing parallels

with IPA, this approach is broadly inductive, assuming that the individual constructs themselves and the world around them through interactional processes. Despite these similarities, grounded theory moves towards a conceptual explanatory level utilising larger sample sizes and therefore does not fit with the idiographic nature of an IPA methodology (Smith et al., 2009). Providing a more comprehensive, rich and nuanced analysis of the individual's lived experience whilst allowing exploration of convergence and divergence, IPA was deemed a more appropriate methodology of choice.

• Discourse analysis

Discourse analysis focuses on the function of language in the construction of social reality (Willig, 2008). With fertile links to IPA, both methodologies share concern about the individual's subjective meaning-making, with reality both conditional and 'constrained by the language of one's culture' (Eatough & Smith, 2008, p.184). Whilst acknowledging social, cultural and linguistic influences on experience, IPA challenges the view of individuals as discursive agents, noting the importance of the cognitive, physical and affective nature of being (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Due to both 1) its strong, singular commitment to social constructionism (Smith et al., 2009) and 2) the study's aim to explore the participant's lived experience rather than how they structure their accounts, discourse analysis was not deemed appropriate.

• Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis is a flexible approach which can be used in both an inductive and deductive manner to identify and highlight themes within a set of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Contrasting with IPA, thematic analysis does not have affiliations with any pre-existing theoretical frameworks and is criticised due to a tendency of the researcher to 1) describe the data with minimal interpretation and 2) create codes which diverge from the true nature of the individual's experience (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Willig, 2013). Recognising these difficulties and noting the importance of a psychological interpretation of the participants' experiences, IPA was judged to be a more appropriate approach.

Narrative analysis

Narrative approaches are concerned with the way in which language is utilised and structured to make sense of an experience, aiming to 'organise the disorganised and give it meaning' (Murray, 2015, p.88). Suggested to have a natural affinity with one another, both methodologies are primarily concerned with the meaning-making interpretative activity of the individual (Eatough & Smith, 2008). Although similarities are shared, narrative approaches have greater emphasis on the linguistic devices utilised by the participant to structure their accounts, with less weight on how an experience felt (Smith et al., 2009). Given that the current study was focused on the how the participant experiences the phenomenon in question rather than the linguistic tools drawn upon, a narrative approach was not considered suitable.

3.5 Participants

3.5.1 Sample size

As IPA studies benefit from a time-consuming case-by-case analysis of each individual transcript, the use of a small sample of between four to ten participants is recommended (Smith et al., 2009). In line with this guidance, six TAs were recruited to provide sufficient data to allow an in-depth interpretative account.

3.5.2 Selection of participants

In line with the research question, epistemological position and methodological approach of IPA, participants were selected purposively rather than recruitment through randomised probability methods. As detailed by Smith and colleagues (2009), recruitment was conducted in a manner which allowed 'access to a particular perspective on the phenomena under study' (p.49). To permit a comprehensive examination of psychological variability through the analysis of convergence and divergence (Smith et al., 2009) across the participant group, the importance of a homogenous sample is emphasised. In order to address this, Table 3 displays the inclusion criteria that was applied.

Table 3. *Participant inclusion criteria*.

Inclusion Criteria	Rationale
The participants must work as TAs within an AP supporting CYP excluded from mainstream settings.	The focus of the current research was TAs experiences supporting CYP excluded from school. Accounting for the limited research conducted with this group, TAs
	in APs were the only participants included within the sample.
Participants must <u>currently</u> work as a TA within an AP.	This was to ensure that the participants were not relying on a recollection of their experiences.

Participants must have been working in the APs for at least six months or more.	This ensured that all of the participants had experienced a significant length of time supporting CYP who had been excluded from mainstream settings.	
Participants must be TAs as their <u>primary</u> role within the AP.	The inclusion of TAs completing additional roles (e.g. such as teaching) was viewed as a factor which may influence their experiences supporting excluded children, introducing heterogeneity within the sample.	
The participants must be located in APs within the London or South-East regions.	This restriction was applied to ensure that the researcher was able to travel to the locations of the APs to conduct the interviews within the time-constraints.	

3.5.3 Recruitment

To recruit participants, initial contact was made with the headteachers of APs to request permission to invite TAs to take part in the research study. This was the most time-efficient approach to the recruitment process and the principal system of communication between the headteachers of schools and EPs within the service. In order to prevent the risk of over-recruitment and the potential disappointment of TAs, settings were contacted in a staged approach, beginning with APs within the LA of the researcher.

Headteachers were emailed a small synopsis of information about the study (Appendix I) and the information sheet (Appendix J). Those that consented to research being conducted in their setting were asked to either: 1) circulate the information with their TAs or 2) arrange a time for the researcher to attend a staff briefing to explain the research project and their role within this. In the case of a limited response rate, follow-up reminders with time restrictions were sent to the headteachers.

Through this process, TAs from two APs agreed to participate in the study. These were:

- <u>AP 1</u>: An academy federation of settings to support primary and secondary CYP who have been excluded from school on a fixed-term or permanent basis. This was located within the researcher's LA.
- <u>AP 2</u>: An independent provision specialising in providing support for primary and secondary CYP who have been excluded on a permanent basis. This was located outside of the researcher's LA.

3.5.4 Overview of participants

Across these provisions, six TAs consented to take part in the research study with mutually convenient dates/times arranged to conduct the interviews. All TAs were asked to read the information sheet and sign the consent form (Appendix K) prior to interviews commencing. Information about the participants is included in Table 4. To ensure confidentiality, all markers of identification have been removed.

Table 4. List of participants.

Interview	Participant	AP
1	Julie*	1
2	Tracy*	1
3	Lily	1
4	Sharon	1
5	Devlin	2
6	Ali	2

Through the interview process, it became clear that two of the TAs (highlighted with an asterisk) were undertaking broader roles within the AP and therefore no longer met the inclusion criteria stipulated by the researcher. To honour their commitment and contribution to the study, the researcher did not feel that it would be ethical to exclude the participants from the sample. To ensure the study maintained commitment to the principle of homogeneity, the researcher made adaptions within the analysis process to accommodate the anomaly (see 3.7.1 for more details).

3.6 Data collection

3.6.1 Semi-structured interviews

Described as the preferred approach for data collection in qualitative research methodologies, interviews facilitate the process of collaboration and rapport building, offering an opportunity for detailed, personal discussions (Reid et al., 2005). Frequently utilised in IPA studies to elicit personal perceptions of the experience under study, Smith and colleagues (2009) advocate that qualitative interviews enable a 'comfortable interaction' (p.59) permitting the participant to tell their story.

Referred to as a 'conversation with a purpose' (Smith et al., 2009, p. 57), semi-structured interviews were selected as they offer a loose structure, whilst permitting flexibility to pursue the ideas, thoughts and feelings conveyed by the interviewee. This format allowed the participant to be involved in leading the interview's content, with the researcher able to explore unexpected data as it arose (Robson, 2011). In addition to meeting the idiographic nature of IPA, this approach ensured essential components of the research question were covered, whilst providing a scaffold for use during moments of difficulty or inflexibility (Smith et al., 2009).

3.6.2 Developing the semi-structured interview questions

Whilst developing the interview schedule utilised in the current study (see Appendix L), guidelines advocated by Smith and colleagues (2009) were followed. This emphasised the importance of encouraging the participant to speak at length about their experiences, employing open and expansive questions to allow both a broad and focused discussion. Individualised, flexible and collaborative in approach, the researcher did not stick to the interview schedule rigidly, adapting the sequence in an attempt to respond to the narratives expressed by each participant. As directed by Smith et al. (2009) the following probes (Figure 5) were used to allow a deeper exploration of the participants' experiences, attending to key words and phrases.

- Can you tell me more about that?
- How did you feel?
- Why?
- How?
- Tell me what you were thinking

Figure 5. List of probing questions. Adapted from Smith and colleagues (2009).

To allow the researcher an attempt to practice their interview technique whilst ensuring the schedule's suitability, a pilot study was conducted with a TA from an AP. Whilst this interview was not utilised in the data analysis, it provided the researcher with opinions about the appropriateness of the questions whilst offering a space for reflection on the process. Feedback focused on the importance of prompts to elicit further information, in addition to a warm-up conversation that allowed the interviewee to become comfortable and open to discussing their experiences.

3.6.3 Interview procedure

Once mutually convenient dates were arranged with the participants, the researcher agreed a setting for the interview to take place. Noting the importance of a location that was comfortable, familiar and safe (Smith et al., 2009), the TAs each chose to complete the interview after school hours within either a classroom or the AP's conference space. The expected duration of the interview was also reiterated to the participants, ensuring that they could both agree to the time commitment and had access a room that was quiet and free from interruption.

Before the interviews, the researcher began an informal discussion asking about the TA's background and how their day had been. Engaging in this process was important in building a rapport with the participant, aiding the development of a comfortable and trusting atmosphere. An introductory script was utilised to describe the interview process, emphasising the research's purpose, aims and the importance of gaining the experiences of TAs. The flexible style of interviewing was also described, with explanation that the researcher may take notes as part of the procedure. Prior to beginning, participants were offered the opportunity to review the information sheets to ensure they understood and agreed to the ethical requirements (e.g. the right to withdraw, the use of audio recording and confidentiality). The opportunity to ask questions and express concerns was also offered, with interviewees requested to sign the consent form if they agreed to proceed.

As part of the interview process, the researcher endeavoured to create an environment in which the participant was able to provide in-depth personal reflective accounts of their experience. Central to this process was the role of active listening, allowing exploration of feelings, thoughts and views, whilst probing spontaneously at certain points to expand and

elicit additional information (Smith et al., 2009). The researcher noted that previous experience of consultation processes was beneficial, supporting the use of non-verbal cues, verbal prompts and a resistance of the urge to interrupt.

Following each interview, the TAs were offered time to reflect on the interview process acknowledging the impact of the personal accounts they had expressed. The researcher explained that the findings would be disseminated within the EPS/LA and available through either a letter or an individual meeting dependant on the TA's preference.

3.6.4 Transcription and reflection

Following each interview, initial notes, reflections and feelings were recorded to both contextualise the analysis and aid the development of interviewing skills (see Appendix M for a sample of the process notes). Transcription was completed by the researcher to produce verbatim transcripts for analysis (see Appendix N for an example interview transcript). To ensure accuracy, the audio recordings were listened to on multiple occasions with any additional reflective comments added.

3.7 Data analysis

The process of data analysis was carried out through a framework developed by Smith et al. (2009), identifying that 'the essence of IPA lies in its analytic focus' (p.79). An iterative and inductive cycle of six steps, this approach focuses on the move from descriptive to interpretative, beginning with the individual and transitioning to the commonalities across cases.

3.7.1 Stages of data analysis

Reading and re-reading the transcripts

Stage 1

As stated by Smith et al. (2009) the first stage of IPA analysis involves active engagement with the data, becoming immersed through a process of reading and re-reading of each transcript. To become familiarised, the researcher chose to transcribe the interviews rather than utilising a private company or online service. This allowed both internalisation of the participant's voice, alongside opportunities to record variations in intonation, hesitations or contradictions. As recommended in IPA guidance (Smith et al., 2009), the researcher is also encouraged to note their own emotional responses, providing an opportunity to 'bracket off' these thoughts to remain focused on the data.

Initial noting

Stage 2

Described as the most time-consuming stage of the analysis process (Smith et al., 2009), the researcher focused on the semantic content and use of language in an exploratory manner. As recommended in IPA guidance (Smith et al., 2009), the transcript was placed into a table to allow exploratory comments to be recorded in an adjacent column. As advised by Smith et al. (2009), these notes were categorised into three areas of focus to allow a deeper understanding of the experience (see Table 5).

Table 5. Description of exploratory comments. Adapted from Smith and colleagues (2009)

Descriptive	A focus on the content of what is spoken about by the participant (e.g. experiences, descriptions, events).	
Linguistic	A specific focus on the participant's use of language (e.g. idioms, tone, pauses, repetition, laughter).	
Conceptual	A focus on interpretation and engagement with the data on a conceptual level. The researcher asks interrogative questions focusing on the participant's understanding of their experiences.	

Developing emergent themes

Stage 3

As part of this stage, the researcher aims to reduce the volume of the data gathered whilst upholding its complexity. This process utilises the exploratory commenting recorded in stage 2, to organise notes into concise statements/themes. As noted by Smith and colleagues (2009), the emergent themes aim to capture the essence of the interview, whilst remaining 'grounded' (p.92) within the transcript.

Developing subordinate and superordinate themes

Stage 4

In stage 4, structure is introduced to the analysis, with the emergent themes categorised and grouped together to create subordinate themes. To aid the researcher, the emergent themes were printed and cut out to allow arrangement into related groups. To search for connections, a series of different approaches documented by Smith et al. (2009) were employed:

- Numeration recording the number of times an emergent theme occurred within the transcript.
- 2) **Abstraction** clustering emergent themes together by putting 'like with like' (p.96)
- 3) **Subsumption** the process in which an emergent theme gains subordinate or superordinate status.
- 4) **Polarisation** developing oppositional relationships by searching emergent themes for difference rather than similarity.

Following this process, the development of superordinate themes for each participant was completed. This involved identifying conceptual connections across subordinate themes and grouping these together.

Repeating stages 1 to 4 for each participant

Stage 5

At this stage, steps 1 to 4 were repeated for each participant, ensuring the same rigorous analysis was applied to all transcripts. Individuality of experience was valued, with the researcher acknowledging the importance of adhering to each of the stages whilst holding an awareness of the influence of previous analyses.

Looking for patterns across cases

Stage 6

The final stage of the analysis process involved searching for connections across cases. This consisted of a process of making links, analysing the convergence and divergence across the participant's accounts. As stated by Smith et al. (2009), superordinate themes were considered recurrent when present in one third to half of the included sample. Whilst the aim of this stage is to identify commonalities, the ideographic qualities of the participant's experiences are valued, with each transcript viewed as individual and unique.

As two of the participants did not meet the full inclusion criteria, they were not included at this stage to ensure that the sample remained as homogenous as possible. Honouring their views and commitment to the research process, their superordinate themes were compared to the main sample group, allowing similarities and differences to be observed. Through this stage, five overarching themes were identified, bringing the analysis together.

Table 6 details the data analysis process and the six steps employed by the researcher, providing the reader with a comprehensive data trail.

Table 6. Details of the six-stage data analysis process and corresponding appendices.

Data analysis stage	Appendix content	Location
Stage 1 – 3: Reading, initial noting and development of emergent themes		О
Stage 4: Development of subordinate and superordinate themes	Example of subordinate and superordinate theme development (Sharon)	P
Stage 5: Repetition of stages 1-4	Overview of data trails for each participant	Q - Lily
		R - Devlin
		S - Ali
		T - Tracy
		U - Julie
Stage 6: Patterns across cases	Table of overarching themes for the main participant group	V
	Comparison of superordinate themes with participants who did not meet inclusion criteria	W

3.8 Issues of validity

3.8.1 A framework to evaluate validity

Qualitative research has been subject to considerable discussion, promoted by a growing dissatisfaction concerning its evaluation utilising the reliability and validity measures suitable for quantitative design (Smith et al., 2009). Due to the various epistemological standpoints and diverse nature of qualitative methodologies, it is not possible to produce one specific criteria for assessing validity (Yardley, 2000). A broad approach recommended by IPA researchers (Smith et al., 2009) and applied to the current research is Yardley's (2000) framework, emphasising four core principles:

1) Sensitivity to context

Yardley (2000) argues that good qualitative research will establish sensitivity to context, through a variety of different means. During the earlier stages of the research process, the importance of demonstrating an understanding of existing literature and the underlying philosophical principles is emphasised. In line with this, a systematic review was conducted, deriving the current study's aims, research question and purpose from an identification of gaps within the current literature base. A thorough understanding and rationale for IPA was also demonstrated, centred upon sensitivity to details of the experience and close engagement with the idiographic.

Sensitivity can also be demonstrated through an appreciation of the interactional nature of the data collection process with the importance of easing the participant, empathy and negotiation of the power differential (Smith et al., 2009). In accordance, the researcher aimed to build a rapport with the participant to facilitate their comfort and allow a rich expression of experience. During each interview, the power differential between the researcher/TEP position and TA was held in mind, in addition to the visible and invisible differences that may have impacted on the process (Burnham, 2012).

Sensitivity to context also continued throughout the analysis process, with care taken to ground the interpretative claims within the data obtained (Smith et al., 2009). To ensure this, the researcher utilised a number of

verbatim extracts, offering the reader an opportunity to hear the participant's voice and check the suitability of the analytic claims.

2) Commitment and rigour

Smith et al. (2009) note that a demonstration of commitment is synonymous with sensitivity to context, emphasising the degree of attentiveness essential to the participant during both the process of data collection and analysis. This was established through the in-depth IPA interviews conducted, ensuring the participant was comfortable whilst actively listening to the experiences expressed. Personal commitment and investment were also shown through the iterative process of analysis, in which prolonged engagement and immersion within the research data was necessary (Shinebourne, 2011).

Rigour refers to the thoroughness of the study, in relation to the suitability of the research question, sample chosen, and comprehensive nature of the analysis undertaken (Smith et al., 2009). To meet this criterion, the researcher ensured that there was a suitable level of homogeneity within the sample, in addition to carefully following the IPA procedure outlined by Smith and colleagues (2009). Meticulous recording and transcription of each interview, alongside frequent checks for accuracy was a further demonstration of the rigorous process applied.

Smith et al. (2009) also highlight the importance of conducting a 'good' interview, creating the appropriate balance between 'closeness and

separateness' (p. 181) whilst delving deeper into the participant's experience. As this is demanding for the novice researcher, the use of both 1) the supervisory space to discuss and reflect on the appropriate interview technique and 2) reflective notes following each interview was essential in ensuring a rigorous approach.

3) Transparency and coherence

Yardley's (2000) principle of transparency refers to the clarity in which each stage of the research process is defined. This can be established thorough descriptions of participant recruitment, the interview process and the steps taken during the analysis of data. The researcher has endeavoured to be transparent by providing rich information throughout the methodology and data analysis sections, utilising tables and an appendix of relevant resources. As part of the findings section, the extracts from transcripts were included, offering the reader an opportunity to consider the interpretations made.

Coherency refers to the way the research comes together as a whole, considering the extent to which the research question, theoretical positioning, methodology and findings present an articulate and logical argument (Smith et al., 2009). In line with this, the researcher has aimed to demonstrate a coherent process for the reader, with the phenomenological and hermeneutic sensitivity apparent throughout. The presence of any ambiguities and contradictions were considered and explained as part of the discussion section.

4) Impact and importance

The final criterion argued by Yardley (2000) is impact and importance, requiring that each piece of research must offer the reader information that is interesting, useful and important. Attempting to influence on a theoretical, practical and socio-cultural level, the researcher gave a space to TAs whose experiences had not been previously sought or investigated within the literature base. The interview process also aimed to provide each participant with a reflective space, an opportunity that many of the TAs noted as favourable.

Within a wider context, the researcher hoped that the findings would have implications for TAs, AP settings and EPs working locally at the individual, group and systemic level. Should the research be published, it is hoped that the findings will have an impact within the broader context of the UK, addressing important areas in which support could be considered.

3.8.2 Audit trail

To further ensure the validity of the current research, an independent audit trail was utilised, offering transparency about the processes, decisions and conclusions made by the researcher (Yin, 1989). To achieve this, thought processes at key points during the supervision process were shared, such as: question formulation, participant recruitment, generation of the interview schedule, analysis and theme generation. Additionally, a colleague was provided with sections of the transcript and analysis to investigate whether

the interpretations were robust and credible. Transparent in approach, Appendix O to W (displayed in Table 6) displays full details of each stage during the analysis process.

3.8.3 Reflexivity

As part of qualitative methodologies, it is acknowledged that the researcher 'influences and shapes' the research process, both as an individual and through their theoretical stance (Willig, 2013, p.25). Whilst it is not feasible for the researcher to be unbiased, neutral and detached, adopting a reflexive position allows consideration of the impact of preconceptions, views and values, alongside personal and professional relationships with the data (Shaw, 2010). As noted by Larkin, Eatough and Osborn (2011), IPA requires the researcher to bracket off one's preconceptions, suspending these to allow examination rather than eradication.

To facilitate reflexivity, a research diary (see extracts in Appendix M) was utilised to record important decisions and events throughout the research process. As IPA requires a search for deeper meaning through the interpretative method, the researcher must draw significantly on personal resources when deciding how the analysis is conducted. To minimise the likelihood of data misconstruction, key reflections, reactions and observations were recorded in an attempt to surface thoughts and feelings that could influence the development of the research process. The following statements are extracts from the process notes of the researcher:

 Over-identifying with the experience of the TAs due to the researcher's own experience working in APs

- Holding beliefs about what the TAs accounts of their experiences would encompass (e.g. supporting the CYP in APs is difficult, TAs receive little support carrying out their role, TAs are subject to high amounts of violence and expected to engage in the act of restraint, TAs may be impacted by systemic pressures)
- Feelings of anger or sadness towards the experiences expressed by the TAs
 and how they are treated by the CYP
- A desire to empathise, advise or reassure the participants
- Feelings of anxiety about how the researcher's role and interview approach may have influenced the participants' accounts

Noting these observations ensured that interpretations were led by the participant's experience, minimising the likelihood of the researcher's own reactions influencing the analysis of their accounts. Whilst it is recognised that an individual cannot truly be impartial due to the complex interplay of unconscious processes (Smith et al., 2004), additional measures to ensure an unbiased and rigorous analysis included the peer-review (completed by a colleague) of an annotated transcript to ensure the interpretations were reasonable. The researcher also conducted the literature review after the data analysis, ensuring that preconceived knowledge and ideas did not impact on the process.

3.9 Ethical considerations

This research complied with the British Psychological Society (BPS) Code of Human Research Ethics (2014), Code of Ethics and Conduct (BPS, 2018) and the Data Protection Act (1998, 2018). Ethical approval to undertake the study was granted by the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust Research Ethics Committee (TREC) (see Appendix Y

for the TREC form and ethical approval letter obtained by the researcher). Willig (2013) identified five principal ethical considerations to ensure the research is conducted in a manner which is respectful, sensitive and fair. These are discussed in relation to the current research study:

1) Informed consent

The BPS (2014, 2018) states that informed consent should be gained from all participants invited to take part in the research process. The importance of providing time for participants to understand the aims and nature of the study, in addition to the use of data following collection is emphasised (Smith et al., 2009). To meet this ethical requirement, the headteachers of APs were contacted with information about the study with permission requested to invite TAs to participate. TAs who expressed interest were provided with an information sheet detailing the study's purpose and procedure, in addition to information about confidentiality, anonymity and data usage. This information was also reviewed in person, providing an opportunity for questions to be asked and concerns to be raised. In addition, the consent form reiterated key points from the research and asked participants to sign that they understood each statement.

2) Anonymity and confidentiality

All of the data collected was stored in accordance with ethical and legal guidelines (Data Protection Act, 1998, 2018). In line with this, participant information was anonymised, with markers of identification removed and pseudonyms applied. Both the headteachers of each AP and all TAs

participating were informed both verbally and in written format that their identity would remain confidential. Whilst it is recognised that the use of direct quotations in qualitative research can provide a challenge to the process of anonymisation, participants were made aware that their identities would not be revealed.

Adding a further degree of confidentiality, each interview was transcribed solely by the researcher and audio recordings were deleted immediately following transcription. Digital files were anonymised and stored on a password protected device with all personal information and hard copies of the data locked securely within a filling cabinet. All information collected was utilised in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998, 2018).

3) No deception

As detailed, the researcher made every attempt to ensure that the research aims, purpose and procedures were open and transparent. Through the information provided (both in written and verbal format) and the opportunity to ask questions, it was ensured that all participants were able to make an informed decision about consenting to take part within the research process.

4) Right to withdraw

Research guidelines (BPS, 2014) highlight the importance of acknowledging the participant's autonomy in both choosing to take part

and withdraw from the research process. All TAs were made aware of their right to leave the research study up until the coding and data analysis stage, without having to provide a reason for their decision. This information was included within the information sheet and consent form and was verbally reviewed prior to the interview commencing.

5) <u>Debriefing</u>

In line with guidelines stated by the BPS (2014), participants were provided with the opportunity to reflect on their experience of the interview process and ask further questions. This information was not recorded but instead allowed a space to discuss both areas of enjoyment and any potential difficulties that had arisen. All participants were also given the contact details of the researcher and offered the option of a further debriefing session if additional issues were raised. It is noted that none of the participants felt this was necessary.

Additional factors considered by the researcher and highlighted within BPS guidance (2014) are included below:

Minimising harm

In accordance with ethical principles, it is the responsibility of the researcher to consider the research process from the perspective of the participant, reflecting on any potential risks to their psychological well-being, values and dignity (BPS, 2014). It is also noted that the benefits for the participant should be maximised, from inception to dissemination of

the results (BPS, 2014). As part of this research, it was hoped that the interview process would be a positive experience, providing a reflective space to consider thoughts and feelings about supporting CYP excluded from school. Through discussion, it was elicited that the majority of participants believed collecting the voice of TAs was beneficial for themselves and the CYP they supported.

Despite the outlined benefits, the researcher also acknowledged that the experience of in-depth discussion and reflection could be difficult, causing upset for some participants. To ensure psychological well-being, the researcher endeavoured to conduct the interviews in a manner that was sensitive and thoughtful. Prior to the interview commencing, the participants were reminded of the topic that would be covered and reassured that the process could be paused or terminated if desired. As discussed above, debriefing was also offered after each interview.

Power

As part of the research process, it is important to address issues of power in relation to the role of the researcher and participant. Acknowledging this, TAs were selected who did not have a previous personal or professional relationship with the researcher. In addition to this, the APs participating did not have contact with the researcher during their role as a TEP, minimising the potential power perception that may be associated with acting as a representative of the LA.

3.10 Chapter summary

The purpose of this chapter was to describe the methodological approach undertaken when exploring the experiences of TAs supporting excluded CYP in APs. The ontological and epistemological position of the researcher is described, alongside the rationale and suitability of IPA, with reference to the theoretical foundations, analysis process, strengths and critiques. Full details of participant recruitment and the process of data collection is provided, alongside the measures used to ensure the study was both ethical and conducted in a manner which considered issues of validity.

4 Findings

4.1 Chapter overview

This chapter outlines the findings of the study's analytic process, as described within the methodology chapter (section 3.7). Aiming to answer the research question, 'What are the experiences of TAs supporting excluded children in APs?', five overarching themes were identified: 'Relationships: a complex landscape', 'A juggling act: behaviour, need and strength from the team', 'A rocky road: highs, lows and a journey of development', 'Battles, clashes and superiority' and 'The journey towards a future'. A full audit trail for this analysis is provided (as described in Table 6). Figure 6 portrays a visual representation of the five overarching themes, with the participants each assigned a different colour to highlight the spread of the superordinate themes.

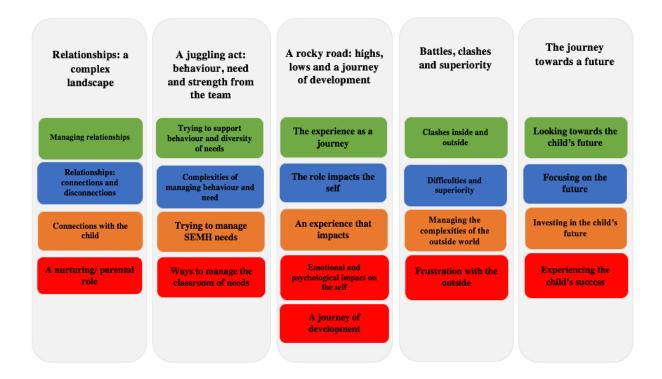


Figure 6. Diagram illustrating the overarching themes generated. Participants allocated colours include: Lily – green; Ali – blue; Devlin – orange; Sharon – red.

After exploring how these themes present within the accounts of Lily, Devlin, Ali and Sharon, the chapter provides a comparison with Tracy and Julie. As described in section 3.5.4 and 3.7.1, these participants did not meet the full inclusion criteria and as such were not incorporated when identifying overarching themes across participants (stage 6).

Evidencing the interpretations developed by the researcher and maintaining the phenomenological core of the research, quotations from each of the TAs' transcripts are shared. Table 7 displays the following typographic features utilised throughout this chapter.

Table 7. *Typographic features utilised throughout chapter*.

Typographic features		
"…"	A pause in speech	
"[]"	Quotation has been cut	
()	Researcher provides contextual information (e.g. laughter)	
Erm/ Ahh	Denotes a non-word/ a sound made by the TA	

The interviews produced a rich data set and it is acknowledged that the subtleties of each account may be lost through the process of inclusion/exclusion for the purpose of the findings section. To account for this and to uphold the individuality of the participants' experience, the researcher has chosen to describe each account in turn when presenting the overarching themes. It is important to note that these themes are not distinct entities and instead are closely interlinked with one another. Nuances exist in the experiences of the participants and the researcher will highlight the commonalities and differences across their accounts.

4.2 Relationships: a complex landscape

As an introduction to this section, Table 8 shows how the subordinate and superordinate themes were drawn together to identify the overarching theme, 'Relationships: a complex landscape'.

Table 8. Overarching theme: Relationships: a complex landscape.

Overarching themes: Relationships: a complex landscape		
	Superordinate	Subordinate
Lily	Managing relationships	 Relating to the child Adapting approach and finding ways to support Difficulties forming attachments and connections
Ali	Relationships: connections and disconnections	 Forming a connection Understanding and accepting the child Struggling to connect and relate
Devlin	Connections with the child	Ups and downs of relationshipsA familial relationship
Sharon	A nurturing/ parental role	- A nurturing/ parental role

4.2.1 Lily: 'Managing relationships'

"[...] because you know them so well and you know how you can help them when you've had them for a certain amount of time" (lines 114-115)

Lily's account of relationships with the excluded children centred on the importance of knowing the individual. Time spent forming a connection was perceived to facilitate her ability to offer support, associated with a deeper understanding of what the child needed. For Lily, these relationships required continuous adaptation, holding in mind the

individuality of each young person and striving to find different approaches to offer support:

"Erm, but yeah, it's always changing. It always changes with every child we have. We have to manipulate the strategies every time so. Yeah" (lines 9 – 10)

Underpinning these relationships, Lily described the importance of being able to "*like*" the child (line 217), with this affection fostering her capacity to accept the difficult behaviours she experienced. Lily's fondness for the children emanated through her dialogue, describing those that were "*favourites*" (line 143) and her compassion and empathy towards them. For Lily, this was further strengthened by developing an understanding of the child's history, promoting her inner desire to care and protect:

"He, he had like you know, things going on in his background and things at home so it helps you like that child even more because you just want to wrap them up in cotton wool sort of thing. So" (lines 218 - 219)

Whilst central to her relationships with the children, Lily highlighted the difficult truth that she struggled to "take a shine to" (line 142) some of the children that she supported. Lily related this challenge to the child's previous experiences of trauma, rendering it demanding for her to form new attachments. Lily's account showed that she felt powerlessness when forming these connections, perceiving the child to be the figure in control:

"Well, we always try and build a relationship but sometimes the children have just got through so much that they can't get an attachment with an adult. Which is completely understandable. You know it's their choice at the end of the day, whether they want to form an attachment with us or not" (lines 147-150)

4.2.2 Ali: 'Relationships: connections and disconnections'

For Ali, relationships were characterised by spending extensive time (line 157) developing a connection with the child, allowing a greater understanding of their needs. The bond he formed with one of the young people was particularly significant, describing how he was able to see past the labels and misunderstandings of others, gaining a sense of really knowing the individual:

"[...] like I knew about all his life. I knew about what he liked, what he didn't like, how to get him to do work, how to not, when he's not going to do any work. When, all without like erm, physically restraining him or anything like that...He would just...I feel like there was a lot, I had a lot about him, he was given to me as the really bad child, but I don't know I really connected with him" (lines 163 - 168)

Central to Ali's relationships with the excluded CYP was his ability to make allowances for their behaviour/actions towards him, adopting an empathetic stance and a position of acceptance. Key to this was the relationship Ali had with his own child, with this new parenting role helping foster a deeper sense of understanding and compassion towards the CYP that he supported at work:

"But I have just had a new born recently and I can't imagine not being therapeutic with her, it's just, it's just, course you are going to give it excuses, excuses, excuses. And even if they aren't my own children, erm I'm not going to try and punish them even if they have just spat at me, punched me [...]" (lines 64-65)

Like Lily's account, Ali also experienced instances where he struggled to form meaningful relationships, impacted by the likability (line 216) of the child. For Ali, this was associated with difficulties discovering foundations to bond over, resulting in a sense of resentment when supporting the young person:

"[...] I've had that, kids you just can't like them, but you just have to grudge along with it" (lines 216 - 217)

The aggressive behaviour Ali had experienced also imposed a barrier between himself and the child, believing that these acts "*push you away*" (line 270). Ali often felt rejected by the young people, working hard to offer support that he experienced as both unrecognised and underappreciated:

"[...] because everything you want to give them they throw it out. Not even if it's work, even if it's something they want to do, they just keep throwing it away" (lines 241 - 243)

4.2.3 Devlin: 'Connections with the child'

Devlin's account also showed the strong sense of connection he formed with some of the young people he supported, fostering responsive relationships where the child felt understood and was able to begin developing (lines 21 - 22). In contrast with the other participants, relationships with the excluded CYP were familial in nature, with Devlin positioned as an older sibling able to offer a sense of protection and care. It was evident that Devlin felt he played a compensatory role within the child's life, filling a void for those who do not have positive influences outside of the school environment:

"So yeah, so yeah, he feels like he's not alone. He feels like he's got a big brother there and he's getting good support here, he's in good hands, that's it" (lines 133 – 134)

"We are the positive role-model for them, because the reality is they don't have actual strong role models" (lines 6-7)

For Devlin, these relationships also replicated one of parenting, a figure who provided boundaries (line 35), alongside help and support. Devlin recognised and understood the

form that his relationship took with the children, demonstrating an acceptance of the position he played:

"[...] they feel like, they will see it as a parent, they want that parent to be there for them as well. And I see, I do see it in a way. So yeah" (lines 61-62)

As with Lily and Ali, Devlin also touches on the challenges of managing relationships with the CYP, experiencing moments in which he felt exploited and struggled to get through to the young people. The TA role was perceived to be a "difficult position" (line 64), with Devlin deeming it necessary to enforce boundaries in his relationships to prevent behaviour he believed was unacceptable:

"However, he knows that...you don't cross lines with me" (lines 127 - 128)

4.2.4 Sharon: 'A nurturing/parental role'

Drawing parallels with Devlin's account, Sharon also experienced a familial relationship with the children she supported, describing her parenting position. She depicted how her nurturing qualities meant that she was viewed as a maternal figure, connected with a sense of validation from being perceived in this way:

S: "So maybe I am just that natural motherly, protective. Maybe I just carry that about me, I don't know. Quite a few of them have slipped up and called me mum.

I: And how does that feel for you when they say...?

S: I think it's quite cute [laughs]. I did have one student in the past. I was his school mum. So, he called me 'mum' a few times and said, 'yeah I have mum at home but you're my school mum'. I thought ok, that's fine but just remember I'm Ms not mum" (lines 198-203)

Here, Sharon also highlighted the need to remind herself of relational boundaries in her work, attempting to maintain a professional self. Unlike the other participants, Sharon's experiences depicted how she struggled to maintain this boundary in her relationships with the CYP, highlighting a deep desire to care and protect:

"Erm...you know I don't think there is a student I've had that I wouldn't have wanted to take home. You know I will feed you, I will wash you, I will give you the bit of love and attention that you desperately...are craving, that's fine" (lines 222 - 224)

There was also a sense that Sharon wished to 'save' the child by providing the nurturing relationships that she believed were missing. Attempting to provide a compensatory role, a crucial element of Sharon's relationships centred around the importance she placed on being the reliable, secure attachment figure:

"[...] we are the one constant in these kids' lives. We are the one thing they know no matter what happens, I am going be here tomorrow. Erm...so they know, no matter what they have done today, tomorrow is a clean slate and I am the one constant thing that they have. And a lot of these children don't have that one constant" (lines 174 – 177)

4.3 A juggling act: behaviour, need and strength from the team

Table 9. Overarching theme: A juggling act: behaviour, need and strength from the team.

Overarching theme: A juggling act: behaviour, need and strength from the team		
	Superordinate	Subordinate
Lily	Trying to support behaviour and diversity of needs	A clash of needsWorking with aggressionImportance of the team/staff

Ali	Complexities of managing behaviour and need	Attempts to manage behaviour and needStruggling with physical intervention
Devlin	Trying to manage SEMH needs	- Trying to manage SEMH needs
Sharon	Ways to manage the classroom of needs	Managing a classroom of needsThe supportive team

4.3.1 Lily: 'Trying to support behaviour and diversity of needs'

Attempting to manage the needs of children within the classroom emanated throughout Lily's account. Experiencing a setting consisting of a diversity of ages, learning and behavioural difficulties, Lily was challenged with supporting CYP whose needs were often juxtaposed with one another. This required her to take on a fluid role, stretching herself between the children in an attempt to fulfil her responsibility to them all:

"Go there, go there, go here. But when you've got 8, it's like 4 to 1. So, you are trying to run around, making sure they are all doing the same thing" (lines 338-339)

For Lily, her ability to manage within the classroom was also connected to the child's behaviour, highlighting how the aggressive acts were both a complex and difficult experience. Whilst Lily recalled the wealth of violent assaults she experienced, she attempted to hold a positive stance whereby she felt gratitude that she was not caused more serious injury. Lily was reluctant to explore any of the negative emotional responses associated with this behaviour, a denial that may indicate that it was painful to recollect:

[&]quot;I had a book thrown at me and I like got a fat lip. Erm, kicked like on the leg and had a big bruise. Chairs thrown. But it's never, I've never broken a bone luckily. Or, like I've never had any serious injuries (crosses fingers and laughs)" (lines 224 -226)

"[...] she had her finger broken by the same child. He had gone to kick her. She's put her hand out to stop him kicking her legs or groin area and she broke her finger (laughs)" (lines 213 - 215)

What also stood out from Lily's experience was the importance of support from the staff team, aiding each other to manage the difficulties they faced in the classroom by "chipping together" (line 12) and finding ways forward. Lily felt held in mind by her colleagues, looking after one another and providing safety and security during challenging moments. For Lily, this led to a sense of dependency, with the experience perceived to be too difficult without them:

"I think my team. My team. I wouldn't be able to do this job without them. Definitely" (line 157)

"So, I think if I didn't have them, if I didn't have that support, I would probably leave, leave to be honest with you [...]" (lines 160 - 162)

4.3.2 Ali: 'Complexities of managing behaviour and need'

"And, yeah those are the ones that are the hardest. When you've got multiple pupils having issues" (lines 128 – 129)

Like Lily's account, Ali's story also recounted the challenges associated with juggling the diverse behaviours of numerous children. This was closely connected with the intensity of difficulties presented by each individual, with Ali seemingly overwhelmed by the multiple facets of the child that required his support. Through the listing of difficulties in the following extract, Ali attempted to emphasise the broad collection of behaviours that he felt he was expected to manage, suggesting that this was an area which was particularly demanding:

"[...] He hits me all the time, but he does it in a sense of like that (shows a slapping movement), he has no awareness of his body. He says words that are really inappropriate. Erm, he's so like confused, as in the sense of he doesn't have an awareness of ... just life in itself in general. He doesn't, like to go to extreme cases, he soils himself at night because he likes that sensation" (lines 190 – 194)

This was further complicated by the constant state of fluctuation in behaviour, with Ali describing both a transformation and loss of the child into an individual that was uncontrollable, both difficult to help and understand:

"Because you can see it in the mornings, where they are fine but by 11 they've like, they've gone. It's not even the same pupil, they're just not existent, it's just a body, they're just all limp, they don't know what they're doing. They are just hitting people and spitting, doing random things" (lines 224 – 227)

What emanated throughout Ali's account was the manner in which he attempted to manage the behaviour he faced, with a desire for boundaries, structure and discipline as a method of control (lines 33-39). For Ali, the use of physical intervention in circumstances of crisis and physical violence provoked discomfort, with a juxtaposition between viewing it as a necessity, alongside a fear (lines 287-288) and uncertainty about when its use was appropriate:

"Because sometimes you have to physically restrain them. It's just a matter of fact you have to do it and there's no two ways about it. Of course, you don't want to do that. So that makes it the most difficult, because when they're the violent side of it, because they are just becoming a hazard to themselves. Like I've seen, I was never there but I have seen children this year have broken bones and things like that and you don't know when to physically get involved" (lines 263 - 268)

4.3.3 Devlin: 'Trying to manage SEMH needs'

For Devlin, juggling the different components of the child's care connected with the multifaceted role of the TA. Devlin recognised that his job extended beyond supporting learning, highlighting the numerous facets he must hold in mind and the need to pinpoint an area to target his support. This was a noticeable challenge for Devlin, highlighting the pressures of attempting to do it all:

"So, we are here to support their education, their well-being and the behaviour at the same time. So, it's hard to, to keep that under the umbrella, but you start with the behaviour and encourage them" (lines 4 - 6)

"[...] you support the education side at the same time, behaviour if they are upset. You do the therapeutic approach, encourage them to go to lesson and support them at the same time. So yeah, it is, it's hard" (lines 48 – 50)

Emphasised throughout Devlin's account was the large proportion of time he spent attempting to manage the CYP's SEMH needs. It was evident that Devlin felt that he had taken up the role of an emotional regulator, attempting to create a stable equilibrium within the AP:

"[...] like maintaining their emotional well-being, their anxiety levels, maintaining, trying to keep it as low as possible" (lines 34 – 35)

As part of this, Devlin felt as though he needed to be vigilant to prevent the escalation of challenging behaviour, always striving to "*keep it down*" (line 93). There was a sense that Devlin was constantly primed for the prospect of challenge, existing in a constant state of vigilance:

"So, you know who's going, going to go from nought to zero, nought to one hundred. We know who's going to go there, so we have to prepare for it at the same time" (lines 94 - 95)

Like Lily's experience, Devlin also connected his ability to manage SEMH needs with the team he worked alongside. In the following extract, Devlin expressed how he felt that the staff were an experienced unit, assured in their capability to cope with the challenges they were facing:

"The team knows...they know what to do and be calm, and it, all I can say is like, we're prepared as a team. We just know what to do and how to do it, how to deal with the issues" (lines 97 - 99)

4.3.4 Sharon: 'Ways to manage the classroom of needs'

For Sharon, managing diverse needs was complicated by the constant state of fluctuation within the classroom, with the composition of CYP frequently changing. This resulted in challenging group dynamics, with Sharon attempting to both mediate and establish boundaries in an attempt to facilitate an environment based on the principles of equality. Sharon struggled within this system of constant change, tasked with continuous adaptation to a shifting landscape of need:

"Erm, so that it can be hard because they don't all come in at the same time and they don't all leave at the same time. So, the dynamics of the classes do change. Erm, that can be a bit of a challenge" (lines 117 - 119)

Drawing parallels with Lily's account, Sharon also struggled to stretch herself across a wide continuum of need, tasked with the differentiation of approach for a range of ages and learning difficulties. Through Sharon's discourse it was evident that she felt the need to defend how difficult this was, emphasising how supporting less children, does not equate to less need:

"It's very difficult to differentiate. And it's, I know that. We've got a class from year 3 til year 6 at the moment. Trying to differentiate for that amount of, you know. So, although we are only doing it for 8, you know actually, we are kind of, they are such different levels. We are working from year 1 to year 6 and trying to break it down" (lines 337 - 341)

Comparable to the other participants, Sharon also managed the difficulties she faced through the support of the staff team, a group who "looked after each other and bounce off each other" (line 384). Crucial for Sharon was the way in which she used the team as an emotional crutch, connecting their sense of unity with the conquering of turbulent times:

"I mean, I would go home in tears but worked through that and got such a good team down there and it all sort of gelled and saw each other through that really tricky stage" (lines 32 - 34)

4.4 A rocky road: highs, lows and a journey of development

Table 10. Overarching theme: A voyage of personal development and complex emotions.

Overarching (Overarching themes: A rocky road: highs, lows and a journey of development		
	Superordinate	Subordinate	
Sharon	Emotional and psychological impact on the self	 An emotional experience The feelings that come with restraints The psychological experience of providing support 	
	A journey of development	 The experience of beginning the role The developing self Separation from role/ experience 	
Devlin	An experience that impacts	Learning in the roleImpact on the self	
Ali	The role impacts the self	Challenges for the selfA positive impact on the selfA need for time and space to think	
Lily	The experience as a journey	- Adjusting and developing in the role	

	-	A positive impact on the self
	_	Strains on the self

4.4.1 Sharon: 'Emotional and psychological impact on the self'/ 'A journey of development'

For Sharon, making the move from a mainstream setting was a "culture shock" (line 26), requiring time to become acclimatised to the different environment within the AP. This process resulted in Sharon becoming desensitised to the extreme behaviours she encountered, with the experience becoming a new normal:

"I've been called a prostitute. I've been called a paedophile. I've been strangled. I've been bitten. You know it's...it shouldn't become normal, but it kind of has. Still challenge it, but it's just the norm. Which is sad. I think it's sad, it shouldn't be the norm. Nothing you say is going to shock me. I have heard it all before" (lines 58-62)

Although Sharon was able to adapt to the role of supporting excluded CYP, her account highlighted the "massive learning curve" (line 50) and journey of personal development she embarked upon. Sharon began to develop an understanding of herself and the qualities she encompassed (as "maternal", "nurturing", "stubborn" [lines 29 and 190]), alongside the growth of an inner-strength and determination to triumph through difficult moments:

"But no, I'm not prepared, I'm not giving in just yet" (line 254)

"[...] and then, it was sort of pull yourself together, you stupid woman" (laughs) (line 246)

"So yes, you've battered me. Yes, you've hurt me. But you know what, I'm not giving up on you. I am going be here tomorrow" (lines 177 – 179)

Whilst developing a sense of resilience, Sharon's account poignantly emanated the emotional impact that the role has had on her. Although Sharon experienced a strong sense of pride in her work, this was juxtaposed with an intensity of difficult feelings, connected with the painful acts of aggressive behaviour towards her. For Sharon, the act of being strangled by a child was a memory which remained difficult to recall, profoundly impacting her both in the moment and upon reflection:

S: "[...] I had one jump on my back and literally was on my back and that really shook me up. That really, really shook me up (voice intonation changes, break in her voice)

I: What were you thinking in that moment?

S: Erm, I'm not sure what I was thinking at the time. Erm...afterwards, I am like I cannot do this. I cannot do this. And I went home and I laid on my bed and I bawled my eyes out" (lines 238 – 242)

It was evident that these emotive experiences had a lasting impact, with Sharon holding onto the acts of violence against her. Throughout Sharon's account there was a sense that "letting go" (line 381) was a difficult process, with the children rarely leaving Sharon's mind. Experiencing excessive thought and rumination, Sharon was unable to separate herself from the job, with this filtering into her home life:

"[...] you go home, and you are constantly thinking. I do, because it's the way I am. Just constantly thinking" (lines 50 - 51)

"You know, I think that's probably why I do lay awake thinking about some of the kids some of the times [...]" (lines 226-227)

In an attempt to manage the intensity of the work, Sharon recognised the importance of time and space away from the CYP to help her process, let go and move on:

"For me, it is just a couple of minutes to go ok, I'm going for a wee, I'm going to get a drink, done. If it's been a bigger thing, then it's going home and just...doing what I need to do sort of with my family – just give me 5 minutes, and just go clean the kitchen. Just that, that 5 minutes on my own. Just to, just that, just that letting go process. Chill out, leave me alone, I just need 5 minutes" (lines 377 – 381)

4.4.2 Devlin: 'An experience that impacts'

Touched on by Sharon and frequently mentioned throughout Devlin's account, was the journey of learning he embarked upon when supporting the CYP within the AP. Devlin began the role feeling unprepared and ill-equipped, emphasising the accumulation of knowledge he developed when learning how to manage the CYPs needs and behaviour:

"It feels like...starting from nothing, stepping in an environment like this. Just got me learning more, more and more and more. About pupils, about how it is, about how they are and how do you tackle them, tackle it" (lines 68 - 70)

Learning was viewed as a dynamic process, a continuous journey in which lessons were built upon one another. Devlin felt that he was always developing, constantly moving forwards rather than back:

"It's like snakes and ladders. That's it. But you just keep going up, no snakes there, but keep climbing the ladder, yeah that's it" (lines 205 – 206)

For Devlin, this was an experience that impacted him in a positive manner, making him "feel good" (line 203). His account also emanated the strong sense of accomplishment and fulfilment he gained through supporting the children, enjoying it "when you get through to them" (line 50) and feeling "like you did your job" (line 74). Like Sharon, Devlin also revealed how these validating moments arose together with more difficult emotions, describing how the challenging aspects of the job impacted on the self. Devlin described

agonising moments in which he felt uncertainty about his capacity to remain working within the AP, leaving him questioning whether he can continue supporting the CYP:

"I asked myself why have I put myself into this? Is this what I was expecting? I wasn't expecting this level, it's getting worse. Like I think, I just do, I do ask myself this. Is this the level you want?...I don't know [...]" (lines 111 – 113)

4.4.3 Ali: 'The role impacts the self'

"[...] they're not getting anything from us as individuals" (Line 183)

Ali's account highlighted the way in which the experience of supporting excluded CYP posed challenges for the self. Through Ali's dialogue it was evident that he often felt restricted in his capacity to elicit change in the young people, leaving him feeling unhelpful, with a sense of redundancy as an individual. As if to defend against these feelings, Ali attempted to attribute these difficulties to the limited capacity of his role as a TA, ascribing responsibility away from the self and accepting that he was unable to do it all:

"[...] we're not therapists, in terms of, we can't be that. Our role isn't that" (line 57)

"[...] we are only here with them until they are a certain age and then after that, they aren't our problem. Of course, we are going to share concern but there's only so much we can do" (lines 91-93)

Touched on within Sharon's account, Ali also identified the need for time and space away from the children and the environment of the AP. It was evident that this offered an opportunity to process his thoughts and emotions, recognising the difficulty associated with reflection in action. The use of the term "hit me" in the following extract indicated Ali's

sudden realisation of more painful feelings (like "sadness" [line 252]), signifying the strong force of these emotions:

"[...] and then it does hit me a couple of days later. When I sort of reflect on it, when I'm not, because when you're not in that instance you're tired, it's natural you are" (line 239 - 241)

Juxtaposed with these challenges, Ali's account also touched on the way in which supporting the children provided him with a sense of "accomplishment" and "satisfaction" (line 306), making him want to stay and continue developing status within the role (becoming "higher" [line 302]). For Ali, the job helped him manage the challenges that existed within his own personal life, exposing the sense of affirmation and hope he gained from observing the child accomplish and triumph through their own difficult moments:

"So, watching them deal with their situations is, it sort of validates your sort of stuff. Like, like you can see it first-hand. That's why" (lines 147 – 149)

4.4.4 Lily: 'The experience as a journey'

"I'm, I'm, quite used to it now" (line 230)

Lily's account highlighted her journey supporting the excluded CYP, in which she adjusted and developed, experiencing both positives and strains on the self. There was a sense that Lily felt that she had become acclimatised to the experience, unphased when "dealing with behaviour" and "challenging" children (lines 112 - 113). Lily also experienced a process of learning, where you "pick up things along the way" (lines 30-31), face new challenges

and gain insight through others, acquiring a sense of competency and self-assurance in her abilities:

"I learnt along the way and now I'm very confident in what I do, so" (line 120)

Emanating throughout Lily's experience were her feelings of pride, connected with being liked and valued by the CYP. Lily also felt a sense of recognition from being the only TA completing specialist interventions, a unique contribution that made her feel special:

"Especially with the speech and language stuff because that's something that I do, just me" (line 236 -237)

As cited within section 4.3.1, Lily's dialogue demonstrated a noticeable steer towards positive experiences and emotions. There was a strong aversion to reflection on difficulties, connected with the desire to display an unflawed picture of the role. It is feasible that this overwhelming positivity afforded Lily with a sense of protection, defending her against the more painful impact of supporting the children:

"[...] I love my job so much (laughs)" (line 250)

"I really like my job that's probably good for you to hear. You probably don't hear that, that often" (line 392 - 393)

Despite this resistance, Lily did experience strains from the role, focusing on the limited capacity of the TA and her feelings of helplessness and frustration when she was unable to elicit change in the young person. Like the other participants, Lily also identified the need

for time and space away from the children, but struggled to sit with this difficulty, endeavouring to find a positive reframe:

"Yeah not having that time to stop, have a quick drink, not be around the children. Erm, that would be nice. But, I'm not fussed about it. I get a free lunch because of it, so can't really complain" (line 257 – 259)

4.5 Battles, clashes and superiority

Table 11. Overarching theme: Battles within and outside the system.

Ov	Overarching theme: Battles, clashes and superiority		
	Superordinate	Subordinate	
Sharon	Frustration with the outside	- Frustration with the outside	
Lily	Clashes inside and outside	Battles with the home environmentUnsuitability of mainstreamThe teacher as a difficult figure	
Devlin	Managing the complexities of the outside world	- Managing the complexities of the outside world	
Ali	Difficulties and superiority	Difficulty within the school systemBetter than the outside	

4.5.1 Sharon: 'Frustration with the outside'

"[...] all you have to do is try. That's frustrating when they don't try (makes growling noise). I do grumble" (lines 341 - 342)

Sharon's account revealed a strong sense of frustration directed primarily towards schools outside of the AP. Sharon held a perception that her input was ignored and undervalued,

with external settings failing the CYP she once supported. She described the lack of unity with these outside schools, failing to work together towards a common goal:

"So, we'll give you a list of strategies, you know and then they don't use them. That is frustrating. It is, you know, you are setting this child up to fail because actually we have said to you this, this and this. And we know these are the triggers, this is what works and then you don't use that" (lines 312 – 315)

Describing a lack of willingness to provide support, Sharon believed that the external world held a negative perception about the CYP and their past behaviours, unable to take up a position of forgiveness. There was a sense that Sharon perceived the staff within the AP to be the only individuals who support and accept the child, superior in their ability to understand:

"People have got to want to work with these children and sometimes actually you can clearly see you can't be bothered. You don't want to try because of the blips and issues they've had in the past. But that's done. That's finished. You need to let that go. You need to see them as they are now and give them that chance" (lines 328 – 332)

"And it's almost as if they think, he's a naughty child and we can't be bothered. And they don't support the child to try and make it work" (lines 310 - 312)

As a result, the AP was felt to be the only place in which the child was offered a second chance to "turn it around" (line 348). For Sharon, there was a belief that external schools position the setting as a place that will save/change the young people, generating pressure on the staff as a result of the responsibility placed upon them:

"They think we are a miracle cure, which we are not. You know, we do our best, but we are not a miracle cure" (lines 307 - 309)

4.5.2. Lily: 'Clashes inside and outside'

Connecting with Sharon's account, Lily also highlighted a frustration towards schools outside of the AP. Her descriptions of mainstream settings as "boring" with staff that "just sort of sit there" (line 82), signified both a negative standpoint, alongside a superior view of the AP and her role. For Lily, these schools were also perceived as unwilling and unable to offer the child support, with the AP tasked with finding more suitable arrangements:

"[...] he couldn't go back to mainstream school. We had to find somewhere that was more suited for his needs" (lines 270 - 271)

"Even the school said he's made such a difference, but the trouble is, we still can't meet his needs, you are going to have to find a different provision for him" (lines 281 - 283)

An additional factor outside of the provision and strongly emanating throughout Lily's account was the frustration she felt towards the child's home environment. Lily experienced a conflict with parents/carers, in which there were different "sides" (line 180) and a lack of unity and togetherness. Like Sharon's experience of external schools, Lily felt that the work of the AP was hindered by the home environment, struggling to break a cycle (line 183) of dysfunctional behaviour. For Lily, this difficulty often left her feeling deceived, disappointed and hurt by the children's parents:

"And sometimes they say everything right but they don't implement it. So, they know they're doing something wrong because they can talk it, they say everything they need to do. They know what they need to do, but when it comes to being at home, they don't do it. Yeah so that's, that's what hurts, they know. They know what's best for their child but they don't do it" (lines 188 - 191)

Unlike Sharon's experience, Lily's account also located a challenge within the AP system that impacted on her ability to support the children. Whilst Lily experienced the importance

of the staff team around her (as described in section 4.3.1), she felt times of conflict with the teachers that she worked alongside, disagreeing with their approach. Power played a role in this dynamic, with Lily describing a lack of autonomy and value from the teachers she worked alongside, feeling excluded from any decision-making processes:

"[...] but it would be like no I'm going to deal with this, I'm going to deal with this. You can do this. So, it was very much oh I don't really know what I'm meant to do in this situation because sometimes I wouldn't be a part of that, because the teacher would go out talk to them, bring them back in" (lines 317 - 321)

"Rather than just shoot you down straight away. No, that idea's not going to work, we will just do this instead, so" (lines 325 - 326)

4.5.3. Devlin: 'Managing the complexities of the outside world'

Drawing parallels with Lily, Devlin also experienced a battle with the outside world, located predominantly within the child's home environment. Devlin felt that this negatively contributed to his experience supporting the CYP, attempting to combat and compensate for a lack of boundaries and structure that existed outside of the AP:

"It's erm, it's a...tough, tough job. In a way, you, we have to be on the ball because what they can't do here, they can do at home" (lines 12 - 14).

"Putting boundaries in place and keeping it structured...is erm...a challenge because they don't have boundaries at home. There is nothing structured, there is no structure at home itself" (lines 35 - 37)

"Erm, boundaries in life. What they see outside, they can bring it in" (line 179)

For Devlin, this connected with a sense of powerlessness, indicative of his limited control and capacity to influence the child once they were outside of the AP environment:

"It's a challenge because what they do at home, is out of our hands. So, but we will try our best, in school we do teach them the lifestyle at the same time" (lines 182 - 184)

Whilst Devlin does not comment on mainstream schools as explicitly as Lily and Sharon, he experienced an incongruity with their approaches and actions. For Devlin, the AP was viewed as a safe haven, with the "pressure" (line 175) in external settings difficult for the children to manage (line 175). Disagreement with the system of exclusion within these schools was also expressed, with a sense that Devlin felt they failed to give the young people a chance:

"[...] and even though they get kicked out, I feel like kicking out the kids is actually wrong at the same time because you aren't giving them opportunities [...]" (lines 20 - 21)

4.5.4 Ali: 'Difficulties and superiority'

Drawing similarities with the other participants' accounts, Ali also emphasised the challenges he faced with schools external to the AP. Comparisons were made with outside settings, with Ali holding a strong belief that his provision was superior, with better adaptations to meet the child's needs:

"So yeah, in that aspect the time-table is better tailored for the children, which I don't feel in mainstream. I feel like we just have to do it because that's the way the system is. But, it's not really beneficial" (lines 25 - 27)

"I mean, I definitely feel there is a more realistic approach of what kids can actually do, especially with their needs" (lines 27 - 28)

"Like we know what we are doing, we do have a better understanding of what the children need to achieve and how we are going to help them achieve that" (lines 97 - 98)

For Ali, this connected with his sense of authenticity when supporting the young people, taking pride in the lack of façade and substance of his work:

"They are actually genuinely doing work and we actually genuinely feel like we are meeting their needs" (lines 110 - 111)

"[...] so, at the end of the day we are not just trying to show Ofsted we are doing this, this and this" (lines 109 - 110)

Like Lily's account, Ali also experienced clashes within the AP system, directing his frustration towards the setting's approach and his lack of autonomy over decision-making processes (line 214). He expressed his perception that the school lacked fundamental rules and "discipline" (line 36), allowing the CYP to exploit the system and its staff. For Ali, this was linked to the AP's therapeutic stance, believing this lacked a clear and explicit structure, resulting in uncertainty about the rules he was required to follow:

"And I feel like, or maybe it's that our therapeutic approach hasn't been said...clearly, hasn't been stated clearly what you can and can't do. What's therapeutic and what isn't?" (lines 34-35)

4.6 The journey towards a future

Table 12. Overarching theme: The journey towards a future

Overarching theme: The journey towards a future			
	Superordinate	Subordinate	
Ali	Focusing on the future	Focusing on the child's progressThinking about the child's future	

Devlin	Investing in the child's future	Personal investment and determinationEmpowering and believing in the child
Lily	Looking towards the child's future	Empowering the child for the futureSeeing the child achieve
Sharon	Experiencing the child's success	- Experiencing the child's success

4.6.1 Ali: 'Focusing on the future'

Emanating throughout Ali's account was the importance he placed on the progression of the young people he supported. It was evident that Ali perceived himself to be a key figure in facilitating development and change, teaching "fundamental" (line 102) skills that prepared the children for their future in the outside world. Whilst playing this crucial role, Ali's discourse illustrated his fears about their prospects, alongside a noticeable loss of hope about the extent to which they could be successful. With the repetition of the word "sad" in the following extracts, it was evident that Ali experienced a sense of grief, emphasising the extent to which he was troubled by this difficulty:

"And it's sad because they are always going to need support for the rest of their life" (lines 112-113)

"And it's sad. It's really sad. I feel really sorry for them, because what can they actually offer to doing any sort of job? How can they keep a job consistently? They can't" (lines 246 – 247)

"And he's going to need support, I feel when he's older, if his parents aren't there to do basic things. And that's sad. That is sad, yeah" (lines 121 – 122)

Juxtaposed with this challenge, Ali also attempted to hold on to the positive developments that he saw within the children. Although he grappled with change being "slow" (line 183), Ali identified the many triumphs through adversity that he witnessed whilst providing support. There was a sense that Ali attempted to give everything to help the child, "bending

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over backwards" (lines 260 - 261) to make a difference that could result in noticeable

successes:

"[...] it was nice to like to see him develop throughout the year. Because he

used to just like have a problem with everyone and he used to have an argument with everyone, everything used to irritate him. He couldn't be in

school, he didn't like authority, he didn't like the school and by the end he,

he was kind of sad to leave" (lines 173 – 176)

Witnessing progress provided Ali with a sense of satisfaction that he was part of the young

person's achievements and journey of change. It was evident that these positive moments

were also difficult to hold on to, with Ali quickly noting that most steps forwards were

associated with steps back:

"It's rewarding when they make a little bit of progress. Really rewarding but

they forget within 30 minutes" (lines 115 – 116)

4.6.2 Devlin: 'Investing in the child's future'

"Basically, we put a belief in them, we give them so much praise and they will

take it on board" (lines 124 – 125)

Like Ali's account, Devlin's experience also highlighted the importance of supporting the

child to achieve, facilitating their success for the future. Devlin perceived that a key aspect

of his role involved empowering the child, offering opportunities and giving them the

foundations to accomplish. His certainty that the young people could change emanated

throughout his dialogue, believing that they were able to "evolve" (line 31) and "accelerate

life" (line 16). Devlin highlighted that in order to "firm their education" (line 8) he must

also shift their attitude towards school, with recognition that this comes with its own challenges:

"So, we just teaching them the ways of learning is a good thing. At the same time, you tell them it's ok to make a mistake to evolve, so we are teaching them. It is ... it is difficult" (lines 30-32)

Emanating strongly throughout Devlin's experience was his personal investment and determination to enable the children's success. Devlin endeavoured to give everything, challenging himself and persevering through difficulties. The following extract highlights how Devlin refused to allow himself to give up, exposing his determination to persist until this became too overwhelming:

"Keep going, that's what I tell myself. Keep going" (line 193)

"[...] give it a shot, keep going. That's it, until you can't do it anymore, keep going. So that's it, yeah" (lines 113 – 114)

Connected with this, Devlin also revealed the pressure he placed upon himself to facilitate change. In the following extract, Devlin's emphasis on the word "best" demonstrated the importance he placed on giving the children his greatest self:

"[...] and be the best, no bring the best, be the best. Bring abilities to them. See what you can do for them" (lines 23 - 24)

4.6.3 Lily: 'Looking towards the child's future'

"Just helping them with their behaviour to help them get back into mainstream school. Giving them the skills and the knowledge so that they can, they know how to behave. Because some children, they don't know what good behaviour even looks like. How can you tell a child to behave when they don't know what that is" (lines 361 - 364)

Drawing parallels with the other participants' experiences, a focus on the children's future was also observed throughout Lily's account. In her role supporting the children, Lily perceived herself to be an empowerer and role-model, believing in the child, listening to their views and providing goals to work towards. Connected with Lily's battle with the home and school environment (section 4.5.2), there was a sense that in providing support to enable the child's future, she was compensating for a lack of provision in the past:

"Because I think these children have such negative things in their lives. They need that, those positive things to outweigh the negative stuff. I suppose there's nothing really for them to strive for, yeah so" (lines 47 – 49)

Drawing parallels with Devlin's experience, this extract also demonstrates how Lily experienced the need to provide for the young people, bringing a positive influence into their lives. In empowering the child, Lily valued the opportunity to witness success, with examples of their progression distributed throughout her account:

"Yeah, like even the twins. One of them has just come such a long way. You know, from weeing on the floor and spitting and not doing any work at all. Being in the corridor the whole day to now doing all of the work, sitting at the table. You know, not really having any issues" (lines 52-54)

Recognising the frustrations associated with having a limited amount of time to support the children ("we only have them for 14 weeks" [line 22]), their achievements were even more pivotal for her:

"Just the, the seeing them, how much they've achieved in such a short space of time" (line 236)

4.6.4 Sharon: 'Experiencing the child's success'

"That's when it's worthwhile. When you actually think we have achieved something here, they're, they're getting there. And that's nice" (lines 86 – 87)

Like the other participants, Sharon described how witnessing success was an important aspect of her experience supporting the excluded CYP. Observing the young people going to "school or into a provision" (line 294), using "coping mechanisms" (line 295) and "becoming part of society" (lines 262 - 263), provided Sharon with a sense of accomplishment, feeling as though she made a valuable contribution. Like Devlin's experience, Sharon's account also conveyed the need for perseverance through difficult moments, expressing how everything becomes worthwhile when you are able to get through to the child:

"[...] but it's just keeping going, keep persevering and at the end you see that little light bulb and that's what it's all about. Seeing that little light bulb" (lines 136-137)

Also emanating throughout Sharon's account was the sense of pride she felt when witnessing meaningful long-lasting change in the children's lives. It was evident that these positive feelings also arose alongside a sense of sadness, recognising that through helping the children move on, she would no longer be part of their lives. Reflected in section 4.4.1, the following extract further demonstrates the complexity of the letting go process:

"Just, we had something to do with that. Look he's doing so well. Look we had a part of that. 20 years' time, he's not going to remember my name. He's not going to know that it was us, but we helped do that. We helped do that...and that's a good thing" (lines 300 - 302)

4.7 Tracy and Julie

As outlined within the methodology chapter (section 3.7.1), two participants met the exclusion criteria as they had additional roles within the AP. As this became clear during the interview process, the researcher decided that their accounts would be analysed separately, retaining the homogenous approach of IPA whilst honouring the participants contributions.

Through the analysis of Tracy and Julie's interviews, it became evident that there was a significant degree of similarity with the main group of participants. As shown in Figure 7, the five overarching themes show a clear connection with the superordinate themes derived from Tracy and Julie's transcripts. Demonstrating a comparison with the main participant group, the researcher discusses the findings by taking each overarching theme in turn.

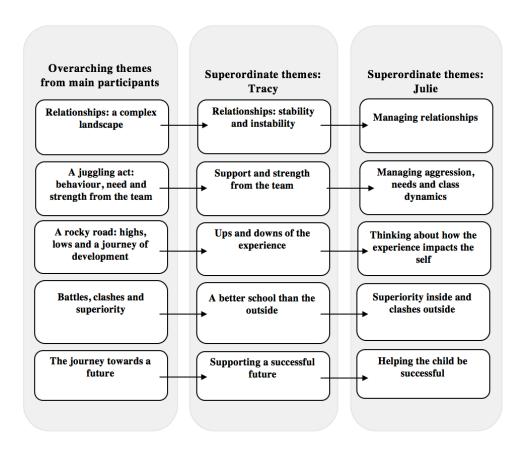


Figure 7. Diagram showing a comparison between the overarching themes of the main participants and Tracy and Julie.

4.7.1 Relationships: a complex landscape

Like the main group of participants, Tracy described the connections and disconnections that she experienced when supporting the young people within the AP. It was evident that Tracy prided herself as being an understanding figure, striving to get through to the child and refusing to give up. Always present, Tracy felt that she provided a consistent, dependable and secure relationship:

"But it was just being the consistency, there and there and there again" (line 502)

Whilst recognising the connections she formed with the child, Tracy also depicted the difficulties that existed when forming relationships, identifying the impact of her older age and the complexities of attempting to empathise with those of a younger generation (lines 306-308). Tracy also described relational breakdowns that felt unrepairable, experiencing both a deep sense of hurt and a feeling that her hard work had been rejected by the young people she cared for:

"Our relationship broke down from there. And that, I found, really hard. Because... everything you've put in, and then you get that, and you walk away and you can practically be in tears" (lines 437-438)

For Julie, connecting with the child and developing an understanding of their needs was crucial, describing how she needed to "cotton on quickly" (line 139) to understand "what pushes their buttons" (line 140). Julie spent time developing a "bond" and "friendship" (line 360) with the young people she supported, finding ways to show that she was a caring and trustworthy figure. The process of knowing and learning about the young person was time-intensive, using the metaphor of "unpeeling the different layers on an onion" (line 346) to describe her journey attempting to truly understand:

"So, it's a slow process, unpicking, unpicking, trying to find out, with the older ones you can say, it's like onions, with lots of layers you know? We're trying to unpick $\lceil ... \rceil$ " (lines 346-347)

Drawing similarities with Tracy and the main group of participants, Julie also highlighted the relational difficulties she experienced when supporting the students. Whilst Julie felt a sense of pleasure when bonding with the young people, it was evident that these relationships impacted her emotionally, leaving her drained and "exhausted" (line 360). Julie also experienced difficulties when attempting to form connections, describing how a key part of her role included battling the barriers imposed by the young people in an attempt to become closer:

"It's, it's, it's, the initial getting through the barriers" (lines 452 – 453)

"It's probably the frustration of trying to get to know them in the first place. Getting them to break those barriers down - cos that takes time" (lines 450 – 451)

4.7.2 A juggling act: behaviour, need and strength from the team

Unlike the main group of participants, Tracy's account displayed a core difference in that she did not highlight experiences where she attempted to juggle the needs of multiple children. Instead, Tracy's narrative was permeated by her references to the staff team, a group who provided her with strength and support during challenging times. Like the main group of participants, Tracy described the sense of security and emotional holding that she felt was offered by her team, creating a dependency in which she "couldn't do the job without them" (line 461). For Tracy, the team also offered reassurance in her abilities and decision-making skills, providing unconditional support and protection in times of uncertainty:

"Or to know that I've made a decision, I can come back...because it was the correct decision, you know we know all the do's and don'ts...but she's got your back. And she has it 110%, you know, we're very, very lucky with her. Which is really, really good" (lines 464 – 466)

Showing clear similarities with the main group of participants, Julie described the complexities associated with juggling the multiple needs of a diverse cohort of students. As highlighted in previous accounts, Julie depicted the "different personalities" (line 135), backgrounds, needs and behaviours of students and the way she struggled managing a classroom where "they all want to rule the roost" (lines 131 – 132). This was further complicated by the system of constant change Sharon experienced, unable to settle and required to adapt:

"So, the dynamics and of course it's like a revolving door, they don't all come together, so we'll have them coming and going. So. You just get it all settled and then someone else comes into the mix, and then of course it all upsets the dynamics again" (lines 145 - 148)

Julie's experience of managing the diversity of needs within the classroom was further complicated by the aggressive behaviour she frequently encountered. There was a sense that Julie found this aspect of the job particularly difficult, stating on multiple occasions that she "hates it" (lines 270 - 273). This was connected to the severity of the behaviour Julie felt she was expected to manage, describing a loss of control that rendered Julie feeling shocked and immobilised:

"If you get a radio come down and it's...well I don't know...I'd say it's like a riot off, it's like a- it's what you'd see off tele. Kids are on the roof, windows are smashed, things are flying out of windows, staff are on the floor...I mean, yeah...when they go, they go big time" (lines 249 – 252)

Drawing parallels with other accounts, Julie felt she was able to manage due to the "close-knit" (line 311) team around her. Offering a sense of security and safety in challenging times, Julie felt she was supported and protected by a group who have "got each other's backs" (line 289):

"[...] everybody's behind you. If you've had a bad day, everyone's there" (lines 306 – 307)

4.7.3 A rocky road: highs, lows and a journey of development

Tracy's account highlighted the fluctuating nature of her role, illustrating the emotional peaks and troughs of the job and the impact this had on her. Focusing on the positive aspects of the job, Tracy noted her feelings of pride, knowing she "had a part in" (line 487) the achievements and successes of the young people. It is evident that the experience provided Tracy with a sense of value and satisfaction, acknowledging the intensity of these emotive moments and the meaning they had for her:

"Erm, I think last week...I mean lots of days, you get very proud moments, sometimes that you could cry. It's like (gasps) they've done that!" (lines 481 – 482)

Whilst Tracy's account demonstrated a noticeable steer towards the positive aspects of the role, she also experienced challenging elements of the experience, particularly feelings of powerlessness when attempting to offer support. Noting on multiple occasions her perception that there was "nothing you can do" (line 422), it was evident that Tracy often felt helpless, immobilised by the school system (line 422), families (line 420) and children's own attempts at self-destruction (lines 339 – 340). Despite her perceived lack of

control over these factors, Tracy depicted her desire to do more and the emotional impact of this:

"[...] but you still feel like you've let them down. It's erm, it's disheartening" (lines 421)

Like Tracy and the main group of participants, Julie also recognised the positive impact that the role has had on her. For Julie, there was a clear sense of job satisfaction, self-recognition and pride connected with supporting the CYP, noting how making a difference means that it was all "totally worth it" (line 426). It was evident that Julie found a way to cope within the AP, illustrating the importance of the small rewards and holding onto their positive impact:

"You gotta really go for the little things, you know" (line 448)

Drawing parallels with the other participants, Julie also highlighted the way in which she experienced an emotional rollercoaster; "all the fun, all the joy, all the sadness" (lines 464 – 465). She explained how some days were "horrendous" (line 246), connecting this with the challenging behaviour she was required to manage and the resulting uncertainty, anxiety and fear she felt. For Julie, it was evident that these moments led her to take a questioning position, deliberating why she continued to do the role:

"You can have really bad days and you think what is the point?" (lines 422 – 423)

Also emanating throughout Julie's account was the trauma she experienced letting go of the children she supported and the grief associated with moving on. The repetition of "very"

and "hard" in the following extracts highlighted the emotional impact this had on Julie, and her desire to hold onto the young people:

"[...] it's very hard when they go back, very, very, hard" (lines 119 – 121)

"[...] it can be hard at the end when you've got to walk away, you know? It can" (line 379)

4.7.4 Battles, clashes and superiority

"But...we have, the more barriers we have are with the schools, not the students. With schools putting things in place for us" (lines 346-347)

For Tracy, the vast array of challenges she faced was perceived to be the result of clashes with mainstream schools and systems. There was a sense that Tracy perceived that these settings exiled the CYP because they didn't want them (line 433) or they didn't fit in (line 427), whilst the AP acted as a place of security, comfort and understanding. It was evident that this resulted in Tracy positioning her school as superior, with more time to invest in the young people, comprehend behaviours and form relationships. For Tracy, this explained why reintegration to mainstream was not always successful, with the children often sabotaging their placements in a desire to come back:

"[...] because this is their comfort place, and they want to come back long term" (line 344)

Julie also highlighted the battles she faced with mainstream schools and the wider system (e.g. the LA), perceiving herself as playing an important role in repairing the damage they had inflicted. What emanated from Julie's account was her belief that these young people

had been let down, resulting in the manifestation of anger and frustration towards the outside. Julie had also lost faith in the education system as a whole, describing the numerous challenges that were becoming more apparent and the resulting feelings of disappointment:

"And to be honest, special educational needs at the moment is...nearly all of them are SEN. Erm, and they need so much support. Schools haven't got the finances, they haven't got the staff...even if they're diagnosed, 'sorry we can't help, we can't give them a one to one, we've got one TA in the classroom in the mornings and that's even in year one and two!' You know?" (lines 115 – 119)

Like Tracy, these clashes appeared to result in Julie's strong belief in the superiority of the AP, a setting that she felt was more experienced at meeting needs. With a smaller setting, individualised approach and a better understanding of background, behaviour and diagnoses, Julie described a definitive split between her school as a place of 'good' and the outside as 'bad'. It was possible that this may also have connected to Julie's difficulties letting the children go (section 4.7.3), displaying a fear that the other school/staff would be unable to provide the support and care she had.

As highlighted by TAs within the main participant group, Julie also described the battles she faced with the children's families, noting: "they don't care", there is "no input" or "they don't know how to parent" (lines 321 – 324). It was evident that Julie felt unsupported and undervalued, wishing to work in unity to support the child and prevent repetitive cycles of dysfunctional behaviour:

"Erm, I think, family, that's sadly...really but, you know, some families are just not supportive. They don't back you up, they don't listen to what you are saying [...]" (lines 317 - 318)

4.7.5 The journey towards a future

Tracy's account illustrated the strong emphasis she placed on helping facilitate the children's success for the future. Like the other participants, Tracy perceived herself to be an empowerer, enabling achievement by removing barriers and showing how they "have the potential to be the best of the best, the best of themselves" (lines 512 – 514). For Tracy, it was evident that she felt it was important to "be positive all the time" (line 310), holding a strong sense of hope and belief in the young person, confident in their potential to progress. There was a sense that Tracy perceived this role as pivotal, saving the child from potential difficulties in the future:

"To actually move on and be successful somewhere else...and it you know, it's so important in their childhood years. Whether they're primary or secondary, as it's how it steers them for the rest of their life" (lines 410 – 412)

Connected with this, Tracy described how she provided the students with core life skills by reframing perspectives, facilitating self-reflection and assisting the recognition of achievements. Whilst Tracy felt self-assured in her ability to prepare the child for the outside world, her narrative also highlighted her experience of the weight and complexity of the role, raising questions about the pressure this created:

"[...] we work out of class, we try and find what the barriers were before when they was in school, what they were struggling with, what they've learnt here, what can be put in place and try and build up that relationship with them before they go back." (lines 13 - 15)

Like Tracy, Julie also highlighted the importance of helping support the young people to achieve, placing an emphasis on her role in providing guidance towards a better future:

"Right now, you can make the choice of going down the pathway that is going to lead to crime and prison, god knows what else. Or, you can think no, this is where I can change my life and I can make a difference" (lines 458-460)

It was evident that Julie also experienced her role as one that empowered the children, showing that they had choices and opportunities, in addition to offering a "fresh start" (line 456) for the future. As highlighted by the other participants, Julie also depicted how she attempted to retain a positive stance, holding a belief in the child's ability and "potential to achieve" (line 125). For Julie, a key part of this journey involved being the child's "voice" (line 354), taking up the position of an advocate and defending the progress they had made to outside schools and systems. Connecting with this, it was evident that Julie felt that in helping the CYP progress, she was both 1) compensating for a lack of positive influence and support in the past and 2) breaking a cycle of dysfunctional behaviour:

"[...] because they don't have any positives in their lives, a lot of these kids. Everything is negative, and then they just feed off this negative attention and they get themselves into a cycle, and it's like...come on (laughs)" (lines 361 - 363)

4.8 Chapter summary

The purpose of this chapter was to present the overarching themes and associated superordinate themes emerging from the analysis of the TAs accounts. A comparison was also provided between the main participant group and those who did not meet the inclusion criteria, highlighting the degree of similarity across the superordinate themes.

The TAs experiences provide an insight into the complexity of managing relationships with the excluded CYP they support, highlighting both the connections that they formed, alongside the difficulties of managing instances of disconnection. Working with these CYP was also complicated by the experience of managing both a range of diverse needs, alongside challenging behaviour, encompassing frequent verbal and physical assaults. For the majority of the TAs, coping with these difficulties was linked to the team that they worked alongside, gaining strength from the network of support around them.

Supporting the excluded CYP was also associated with a myriad of highs and lows, alongside a journey of development. The TAs highlighted the impact that the role had on them as individuals, experiencing emotions that had both a positive and negative influence. For many of the TAs, they also experienced a journey in which they became acclimatised to working within the AP and supporting the excluded CYP, describing the process of learning and adjusting.

The TAs experience supporting the excluded CYP was complicated by the barriers they felt were imposed by the outside world, highlighting clashes with mainstream schools and parents. Connected with this finding was the superiority experienced by many of the TAs, believing that the AP was more understanding and better adapted to meet individual needs. A key experience for all of the participants was their role in facilitating change in the CYP, motivated and committed to improving outcomes and promoting the likelihood of a successful future.

These findings are discussed in more detail in relation to relevant research and psychological theory in Chapter 5.

5 Discussion

5.1 Chapter overview

This chapter provides a review of the overarching themes in relation to relevant psychological theory and previous literature within the area. Implications of the findings for all key stakeholders are offered, alongside a consideration of the role and practice of EPs. The chapter concludes with the strengths and limitations of the study, including implications and directions for future research within the area.

5.2 Summary of findings

The aim of the research was to explore the experiences of TAs supporting excluded children in APs. The analysis process generated five overarching themes (as seen in chapter 4), which the author will discuss in the context of relevant literature and applicable psychological theory.

5.2.1 Relationships: a complex landscape

The importance of staff-pupil relationships for excluded CYP is a central factor recognised at the level of the government, school and individual, providing a fundamental base to promote re-engagement and successful outcomes (Hart, 2013; House of Commons Education Committee, 2018; Malcolm, 2019; Michael & Frederickson, 2013; Nicolson & Putwain, 2015; Tate & Greatbatch, 2017). Fitting with this perspective, a significant theme throughout the TAs' narratives was the relationships they formed with the excluded CYP, with examples of connections filtered throughout their accounts. Whilst areas of convergence and divergence existed across experiences, it was evident that meaningful and responsive relationships were important, with TAs learning to understand the CYP and their needs, enabling them to tailor support and facilitate development.

For the TAs within this study, it was apparent that they felt they were supportive, nurturing and dependable figures for the CYP, with a caring and protective ethos permeating their accounts. In the narratives of Ali and Sharon, a familial relationship similar to that of Broomhead's (2013b) paper was described, in which they felt positioned in the role of a parent or sibling, playing a compensatory function in the CYP's lives. The theoretical foundations of attachment theory are particularly relevant to these dynamics, defined by researchers (Ainsworth & Wittig, 1969; Bowlby, 1969) as the 'deep and enduring affectional bond' (Bergin & Bergin, 2009, p.142) in which a child learns about the reliability, availability and safety of others. In instances where the caregiver fails to meet emotional and security needs, the development of internal working models containing negative perceptions of the self and others are likely (termed insecure attachments), impacting socio-emotional well-being, behaviour, learning and relationships (George, 1996) (see Figure 8).

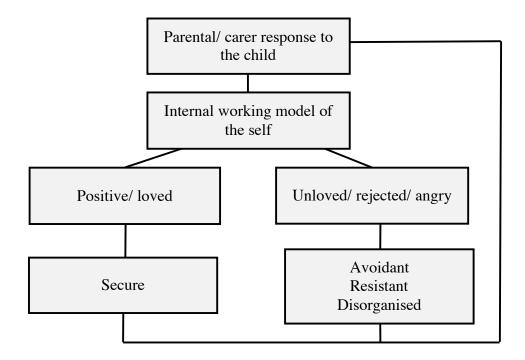


Figure 8. Simplistic depiction of the internal working model and attachment styles. Adapted from Shemmings (2016).

For these CYP, the importance of 'ad-hoc attachment figures' (Fitzsimmons et al., 2018, p.3) are widely recognised, mediating the impact of insecure behaviours through the development of a secure, sensitive, responsive and caring relationship (Bergin & Bergin, 2009; Geddes, 2006). With many excluded CYP identified as having either diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health needs (Gill et al., 2017) (commonly attachment disorders) (DfE, 2014), it is likely that staff within these settings are managing a range of complex relational dynamics. As seen in the context of the current study, the narratives of the TAs provided descriptions of attachment theory in action, compensating for early unmet needs through the development of a secure relationship built on the principles of consistency, understanding, care and support.

Gaining a sense of truly knowing and understanding the child was both a time-intensive and vital element of the TA-student relationship, forming a significant bond that afforded a deeper understanding of the excluded CYP as individuals. This finding resonates with the work of both Fitzsimmons and colleagues (2018) and Menendez Alvarez-Hevia (2018), describing the experience of educators when connecting and tuning in to the child, investing time and energy to enable the development of a trusting bond. Also described are the complexities that exist when attempting to comprehend both the external and internal 'unobservable' (Fitzsimmons et al., 2018, p.7) world of another individual, with staff required to engage their senses to actively listen to nuances in order to gain a true understanding of the student. It is clear within the accounts of the TAs that whilst they endeavoured to 'know' the child, this process was intense and complex, a finding which may indicate the intricacies that exist when attempting to tune in to both the 'seen' and 'unseen' aspects of the CYP they support. Noted within Kalu's (2002) case study, an ongoing battle manifests in attempting to understand what the child requires, alongside what

can be offered by the educator; an experience highlighted by Lily in her descriptions of continuous change and adaptation to meet the CYP's needs.

A common thread throughout the TA's narratives was the fragility of their connections with the CYP, frequently experiencing difficulties with relational formation and maintenance, alongside instances in which there were challenging disconnections. This finding fits with the ideology of the 'pendulum-like' motion of educator-pupil connections (Menendez Alvarez-Hevia, 2018, p. 308); a metaphor of movement that encapsulates emotional closeness, juxtaposed with moments of distance. Creating relational difficulties were the CYP's traumatic histories, alongside the challenging behaviour that was frequently exhibited towards staff. These experiences of barriers, difficulties getting through/making connections and being pushed away, fall in line with the principles of attachment theory (Ainsworth & Wittig, 1969; Bowlby, 1969), demonstrating instances in which the child may appear 'emotionally shut down' (Fitzsimmons et al., 2018, p.11) as a psychological defence mechanism when faced with relational interactions (Perry, 2001). It is evident that this can evoke a range of emotional responses (e.g. powerlessness, resentment, hurt, rejection, exhaustion) for the TAs, highlighting occasions in which the role demands hard work and investment, rather than offering rewards.

Revealed by Lily and Ali, forming connections with the CYP was also complicated by those they found difficult to "like" (Ali, line 216) or "take a shine to" (Lily, line 142), raising questions about the emotional investment required by these staff to ensure that their working relationships with the children remained viable. This challenge resonates with experiences described by Fitzsimmons and colleagues (2018), recounting how educators felt that the most demanding relational experiences related to difficulties developing

positive feelings towards the child, impacting investment and ability to sustain and improve connections. It is arguable that this is reflected in Ali's experience of having to "grudge along with it" (line 216 - 217), illustrating the resentment and exertion that can manifest when attempting to maintain this support. Whilst working with CYP with SEMH difficulties is known to be a psychologically draining experience (Partridge, 2012; Rae, et al., 2017; Willis & Baines, 2018), the presentation of an emotional front incongruent with one's inner feelings delivers an additional complexity (Kidger et al., 2010).

Applicable to these dynamics and the intense emotions felt by the TAs are the principles of 'emotional labour', described by Hochschild (1979, 1983) as the effort that an individual is required to make in response to the feelings of another. This is often viewed in terms of emotion management (see Figure 9), conceptualised as compliance in response to the requirements of the organisation, profession and social norms, regardless of inner feelings (Rae et al., 2017; Ramvi, 2010). This is frequently associated with the education profession and the management of CYP with SEMH needs and challenging behaviour, with staff required to respond appropriately to difficulties, regardless of their internal emotional responses (Isenbarger & Zembylas, 2006; Partridge, 2012; Rae et al., 2017). Whilst the consequences of this varies dependant on the individual, emotional exhaustion, stress, dissonance and burnout become increasingly likely (Naring, Briet & Brouwers, 2006). Considering the TAs within this study, it is arguable that a high degree of labour is spent providing the secure, consistent and dependable figure, whilst managing instances of disconnection, challenging behaviour and aggression. Captured by Julie in descriptions of herself as "exhausted" (line 360), it is evident that working in a context of negative feelings and complex relational exchanges has an emotional impact; an area which has implications for the supportive function and practice of EPs within these settings.

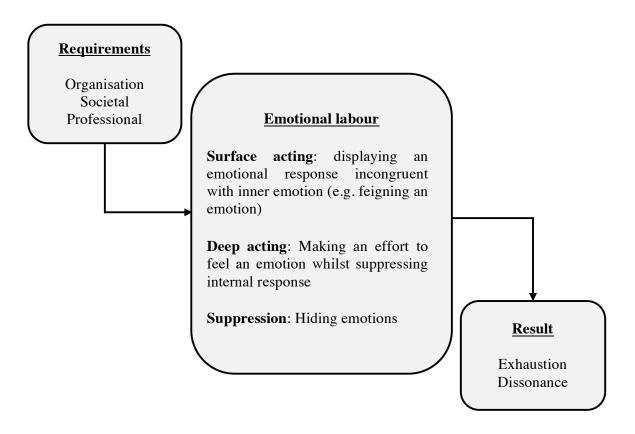


Figure 9. Depiction of emotional labour. Adapted from Vilelas & Diogo (2014).

5.2.2 A juggling act: behaviour, need and strength from the team

TAs hold a variety of responsibilities; a multifaceted role which appears to be broadening in remit (Blatchford et al., 2009; Unison, NAHT, NET & Maximising Teaching Assistants, 2016). Within APs, the function of TAs is further complicated by the range of learning, behavioural and therapeutic needs staff are required to support, whilst attempting to ensure CYP have the skills necessary to reintegrate back into mainstream settings (DfE, 2018b; Lawrence, 2011). Fitting with this context, a common thread within the TAs' accounts was the challenges associated with managing the range of needs presented by the CYP within the classroom. It was evident that they experienced a continuum of difficulties that were both diverse and intense, highlighting the complexities of adaptation to different ages, SEND and behavioural concerns. For Lily and Sharon, this was also linked to the perception that they must stretch themselves in order to offer tailored support, an element

of the role that posed additional challenge. This finding resonates with Broomhead's (2016) paper, stressing the multidimensional role of the practitioner and the additional responsibilities that extend beyond supporting SEMH needs. The literature review also highlights the array of adaptations to pedagogical practice required to ensure a holistic and individualised approach (Meo & Parker, 2014; Putwain et al., 2016), alongside the variety of protective factors facilitated by staff to increase the probability of successful outcomes (Hart, 2013; Lawrence, 2011; Levinson & Thompson, 2016). In attempting to meet this vast array of needs, it is likely that increasing pressure is placed upon the TA, connected with the complexities of a role where you are expected to 'do it all' (Broomhead, 2016, p.61).

The presentation of challenging and aggressive behaviours by the excluded CYP was also a common theme within the majority of the participants' narratives, with examples described throughout their accounts. This finding echoes concerns raised within union reports (NASUWT, 2017; UNISON, 2013) and noted frequently within published literature (Fitzsimmons et al., 2019; Malcolm, 2018b; Meo & Parker, 2004; Menendez Alvarez-Hevia, 2018), stressing the prominence and intensity of threatening conduct and physical assaults that AP staff are expected to manage. It was evident that divergence existed in the TAs' response to this behaviour, ranging from holding a positive stance about the incidents to enforcing boundaries and discipline, remaining vigilant or becoming immobilised by the conduct. Faced with a student's challenging behaviour, Fitzsimmons and colleagues (2018) described how educational practitioners will often respond in distinct manners, impacted by their own internal working models (Bowlby, 1969). It is also feasible that these responses are influenced by the length of time and level of experience held by the TAs,

developing a self-understanding and awareness which better enables their ability to control and manage emotional responses to the behaviours exhibited (Farouk, 2014).

Seldom mentioned within the literature base and a unique finding within this study was the importance that TAs placed on the staff team; a system that supported one another and provided personal strength and emotional holding during difficult times. Within emotionally demanding environments, Vaillant (2000) highlighted that mature defences (such as seeking social support, suppression, anticipation, altruism, sublimation and humour) are often employed to help individuals manage the stressors and anxieties of their roles. For the TAs within this study, it was clear that the social support of their team offered security and safety, working together to manage the challenging behaviour and diversity of needs exhibited by the CYP. It is arguable that the psychoanalytic theory of containment is also applicable to this finding (Bion, 1961), a concept describing the way in which emotional communication is received, processed and communicated back to another, restoring capacity of thought and providing a sense of safety with the knowledge that another is holding the unmanageable (Bion, 1985; Douglas, 2007). Without a containing space, functioning is believed to become impaired, limiting the ability to think and cope with challenging situations and hindering performance towards the task of the organisation (Ruch, 2007). For the TAs, the support of their team may have provided a containing function, able to manage the emotional responses evoked by holding one another and functioning together as a unit; a sense of security that is fundamental for staff required to offer containment to their students (Hulusi & Maggs, 2015). Considering its importance, questions are raised about the impact of relationships between staff teams that are less wellformed or have become fractious, with a lack of cohesion and containment potentially implicated when considering well-being and staff retention within these provisions.

5.2.3 A rocky road: highs, lows and a journey of development

Widely recognised within the literature base is the emotional effect that working with CYP with SEMH needs has on the individual providing support (Partridge, 2012; Rae et al., 2017; Willis & Baines, 2018). In line with this research, all of the TAs within the current study described the impact of their work on the self, a myriad of experiences that could be categorised as highs and lows (see Figure 10).

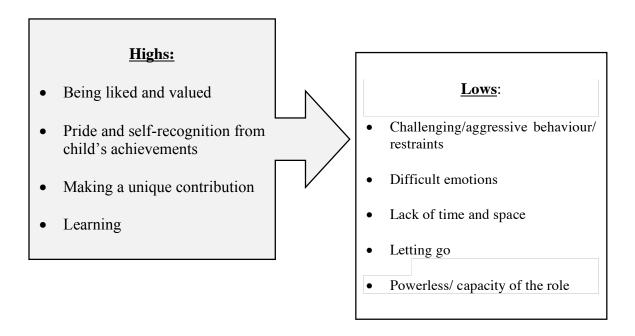


Figure 10. Depiction of highs and lows from TAs' accounts.

Evident within all of the participants' accounts was the sense of pride and satisfaction that they felt whilst providing support, explicitly connected with being liked and valued by the CYP, in addition to experiencing gratification from observing their progress and success. As described in existing research (Farouk, 2014; Farrell et al., 2016; Malcolm, 2018b), staff supporting excluded CYP felt a sense of purpose as a result of the intrinsic rewards of the job, promoting an ongoing motivation to continue within their role. Malcolm (2018b) also noted how participants experienced satisfaction through gaining a mastery of the skills

required to work within an AP, observed through Devlin's positive accounts of learning to support the excluded CYP and Lily's descriptions of her unique ability to complete specialist interventions. Validating feelings also arise for staff recovering from their own personal traumatic events and experience of schooling (Farrell et al., 2016; Menendez-Alvarez-Hevia, 2018), eminent within Ali's reflections on his own identification with the students and the affirmation he experiences through witnessing the CYP manage their difficulties. It is clear for the TAs within this study that their experiences provide them with a sense of reward that enables them to remain motivated and committed, a protective factor mitigating the impact of more challenging emotive experiences. Whilst adaptive, it is arguable that TAs need to understand their own needs and desires for affirmation and gratification, alongside the potential influence on professional practice and emotional responses if these become unfulfilled.

Linked with the stressors of the role (see Figure 10), there was a recognition across all of the participants' accounts that the experience elicited difficult emotions, impacting the self negatively. Whilst the importance of promoting the well-being of educational practitioners is highlighted frequently within the literature base and government guidelines (DfE, 2015; Rae et al., 2017; Weare, 2015; Willis & Baines, 2018), this finding raises concerns about whether the emotional needs of TAs within APs are being sufficiently met. Acknowledging their importance as a vital resource for excluded CYP's outcomes, this also raises broader implications as to whether these TAs are able to retain the energy, commitment and capability to give their best to those they are supporting. For Sharon, Devlin and Julie, it was clear that the experience could feel so distressing that it led them to question their ability to stay within the role, mirroring statistics highlighting the difficulties associated with retention within these settings (DfE, 2018; Gill et al., 2017). For many of the TAs,

the need for time and space away from the CYP was vital in ensuring that they could think, reflect and learn to let go, although this process was clearly complicated by systemic challenges (a lack of time) and difficulties with rumination and separation of the self from the professional role. Building upon the known literature, this finding further accentuates the importance of support for TAs working within APs, providing a voice to an often 'invisible' (Dyer, 1997, p.187) group challenged with managing an intensity of emotive experiences.

In considering emotional needs, it was evident that one of the largest challenges for many of the TAs (Sharon, Lily, Devlin) was beginning work within the AP, associated with feeling unsettled, fearful and shocked by the extremity of the behaviours the TAs witnessed, in addition to perceiving themselves to be under-experienced and ill-equipped. With time, the TAs learnt to adjust, becoming acclimatised and desensitised to the environment and behaviour, developing in confidence. These findings can be likened to the acculturation process (Berry, 1986; Berry, 2003) that is experienced when there is a movement between cultures; a dynamic progression whereby individuals learn to adapt to a new environment, whilst managing their desire to retain previous cultural norms (Handelsman, Gottlieb & Knapp, 2005). This is further complicated by the systemic, economic and political changes which occur within the culture (e.g. pressures on APs, additional responsibilities of the TA role), meaning adaptation is continual and can provoke instances of tension and stress (Berry, 2003). For the TAs within this study, the AP may have been significantly different from their previous working contexts (e.g. from mainstream schools), a transition that required time to adapt to both the culture of a new setting and systemic context. Links can also be drawn to the body of literature from the health industry, indicating that the high prevalence and serious problem of challenging verbal and physical abuse from patients can

lead staff to develop an acceptance that the abuse they experience is an inherent feature of their role (Deans, 2004). As noted by Farouk (2014), it is feasible that staff also develop a realisation of the intensity of pupils 'substantial and persistent psychological issues' (p.26), readjusting prior expectations and developing a true understanding of what their position will encompass.

In discussing their lived experiences, the study also highlighted how many of the TAs found it difficult to reflect on their feelings, struggling to remain focused on the emotional impact of the role and displaying a noticeable steer towards positives. For Ali, Lily and Julie, it was also clear that they found it necessary to set limits to their emotional involvement, describing the restricted capacity of their role and the factors which prevented them from being able to elicit further change in the CYP. As described by Menendez Alvarez-Hevia (2018), educators often attribute aspects of a pupil's behaviour as out of their sphere of control, deferring responsibility to others in a bid to explain the confines of their practice. Drawing on a psychoanalytic lens, this avoidance of thinking about the self and the complex emotions evoked within the role could also be interpreted as an unconscious psychological mechanism, used by the TAs as a defence which protects against feelings that are too painful for them to acknowledge (Obholzer & Roberts, 2019). It is arguable that this allows TAs to better manage and control their emotional labour (Hochschild, 1979, 1983), helping to mitigate the impact on the self.

5.2.4 Battles, clashes and superiority

A common thread eminent within the majority of the TAs' accounts was the frustration that they held towards the outside world, most commonly regarding mainstream schools. These settings were viewed negatively due to their exclusionary practice, difficulties managing

challenging behaviour and lack of support offered to the CYP. This fits in line with the research produced by Broomhead (2013) highlighting the perceptions held by educational practitioners that outside schools are unable to understand and accommodate for excluded CYP. Difficulties were also highlighted in studies investigating barriers to reintegration (Hart, 2013; Lawrence, 2011; Levinson & Thomson, 2016), with staff often experiencing these settings as less supportive, lacking inclusivity, and ill-equipped at managing the CYP's behavioural needs. It was evident that this frustration also extended to the parents of excluded CYP, with many of the participants describing the conflicts that they experience with families who hindered their work and offered limited support. In line with this finding and depicted as a 'clash of two worlds' (Broomhead, 2014, p.136), Broomhead's (2014) paper illustrated the disjuncture that can exist between educational professionals and parents, perceiving their practice to be both 'undone and undermined' (p.145) due to the high levels of chaos, dysfunction and lack of boundaries implemented at home. Concerns raised in this paper and applicable to the current study include the way in which managing these difficulties may lead staff to become desensitised to familial circumstances, failing to advocate for the CYP by adopting a conflict-avoidance approach. These challenges may also impact on the TAs' partnerships with parents, required to balance their disapproval with a recognition that their work needs to be collaborative.

Connected with this finding is the superiority experienced by some of the TAs, believing that the AP is more inclusive, understanding and better adapted to meet individual needs. Within organisations of high stress and emotional labour, institutional defence mechanisms are often apparent, offering protection from the difficult feelings and conflicts associated with their role by attributing blame or negativity to outside individuals/groups (Obholzer & Roberts, 2019). This links with the psychoanalytic theory of 'splitting'; described by

Klein (1929) as the way in which the qualities and intentions of others can often be viewed as wholly good or bad (Obholzer & Roberts, 2019; Pellegrini, 2010). With TAs holding fragmented perceptions of the AP as superior (the 'good') and the outside as useless (the 'bad') it is feasible that this may result in the development of fractious relationships and barriers between mainstream schools and parents. This is particularly relevant when considering the research base that stresses the importance of close working links and relationships when reintegrating CYP (Hart, 2013; Lawrence, 2011; Levinson & Thompson, 2016), with this splitting behaviour likely to be counter-productive for the excluded CYP's long-term outcomes.

In interpreting these findings, systemic theory also provides a framework to help facilitate an understanding of the TAs' experiences, considering the impact of the complex networks and interrelated structures that they work within (Rendall & Stuart, 2005). Applicable to this research is 'Open Systems Theory' (Rice, 1953); a model that interweaves psychoanalytic, group relations and systemic approaches to propose that:

- Organisations are <u>open systems</u> tasked with converting inputs to outputs (e.g. APs take in excluded CYP with the aim to help them reintegrate into mainstream schools)
- 2) Organisations have <u>permeable boundaries</u> to allow regulated interactions with the environment to take place (e.g. APs interact with the Local Authority, mainstream schools, outside organisations and families). Functioning is impaired if boundaries around the system are too tight or too open
- 3) Organisations have a <u>primary task</u> in which all sub-systems within the organisation must be aligned (e.g. aiming to promote positive outcomes

for excluded CYP) (Eloquin, 2016; Obholzer & Roberts, 2019; Rendall & Stuart, 2005)

APs are complex structures, existing as one subsystem that interacts and sits within many others. As outlined within this theoretical framework, the staff placed within these systems are tasked with navigating the complexity of interactions with the environment (families, outside schools), whilst managing both larger systemic influences (such as the LA), and social, political and economic forces (see Figure 11).

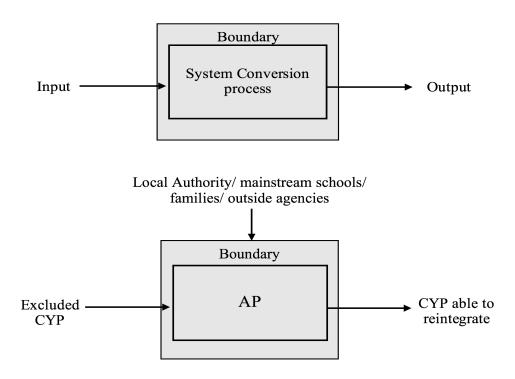


Figure 11. Schematic representation of the organisation: 1) the organisation as an open system and 2) open systems applied to APs. Adapted from Obholzer & Roberts (2019).

Whilst it can be argued that the primary task of these systems is to support the excluded CYP, the TAs' experiences highlighted a lack of alignment with outside schools and families, describing anti-task behaviours that are depicted throughout their quotes ("we'll give you a list of strategies. you know and then they don't use them" [Sharon, line 312],

"the more barriers we have are with the schools, not the students" [Tracy, line 346], "sometimes they say everything right but they don't implement it" [Lily, line 188]). It is feasible that this may be the result of 1) vague definitions of the task and the methods that should be used to support the CYP or 2) conflicting perspectives as to whose role and responsibility it is to promote successful outcomes. With this lack of configuration towards the primary goal, questions are raised about the impact on outcomes for excluded CYP, in addition to the potential systemic conflicts and dysfunction that may arise as a consequence of these differing positions. Resulting from these difficulties, an additional complexity is the way in which boundaries around systems can become impenetrable in a bid to permit interactions and information exchange with outside influences (Obholzer & Roberts, 2019). In describing the difficulties that existed in the outside world, their own superiority and the different "sides" that exist (Lily, line 180), it is conceivable that the TAs were portraying a boundary that was already beginning to tighten. This is particularly concerning for environments supporting vulnerable CYP and staff experiencing high emotional labour, with potential repercussions for the ability of outside agencies (such as EPs) to offer a supportive function.

5.2.5 A journey towards the future

Highlighted within previous literature, was the way in which AP staff perceived a core function of their role as facilitating change in the CYP, a factor driving their personal motivation and commitment (Farouk, 2014; Farrell et al., 2016; Malcolm, 2018b). For all of the TAs within the current study, a strong emphasis was placed on the position of the TA in supporting the development and success of the excluded CYP, ensuring a successful future following placement within the AP. Experiencing themselves to be pivotal figures in the CYP's lives, their role was often perceived as empowering, enabling development,

growth and achievement, whilst overcoming challenging circumstances. It is arguable that this finding draws links with the theoretical framework and body of research proposing that educators are 'change agents' (Fullan, 1993, p.2), noting the personal drive held by these figures to facilitate meaningful difference at the level of the individual to the organisation (Hattie, 2012; Lukacs, 2009; Van der Heijden et al., 2014). This school of thought recognises that teachers are committed, positive and self-assured individuals, displaying a personal responsibility to the CYP's learning, well-being and future outcomes (Van der Heijden et al., 2014). Whilst it is arguable that the participants within this study perceived themselves to be agents of change for the excluded CYP, the theoretical frameworks and literature base within this area centres primarily on teachers, further highlighting an apparent invisibility and lack of importance impressed upon the TA role.

In this journey towards the CYP's future, many of the TAs highlighted the strength of their investment, described by Ali as "bending over backwards" (lines 260 - 261) to give everything to the CYP's future. As highlighted by Fitzsimmons and colleagues (2019), participants considered investment as key when working with the excluded CYP, whilst recognising the emotional labour and energy that is needed to maintain this level of support over time. Whilst this determination and perseverance within the TAs was inspiring, questions are raised about the pressure they placed upon themselves and the feelings of failure that may arise in instances where change and desirable outcomes may not occur. It is clear that the TAs within this study held a strong sense of confidence that the CYP could change, highlighting their belief in a positive future. In roles of high stress and emotional labour, research has highlighted the importance of maintaining a positive psychological state and outlook for the future (Collins, 2007), enabling a more effective coping response. It is arguable that theories of hope and optimism can be related to this research, stating that:

- Hope (Snyder, 2000) is a belief in both 1) 'one's capacity to initiate, sustain action and achieve' and 2) 'one's ability to generate routes, strategies and pathways in thinking and moving towards one's goals' (Collins, 2007, p.263). It is argued that those high in hope are able to accept challenges and succeed, feeling happier and less stressed (Snyder, 2000).
- Optimism is defined as 'positive, favourable expectations and outcomes for the future' (Collins, 2007, p.11). Research has shown that those high in optimism often have good self-esteem, less negative affect and a lower risk of burnout (Dekel et al., 2006).

It is proposed that by maintaining a sense of optimism and hope for the excluded CYP, the TA is able to sustain commitment to their role whilst managing the demands associated with this work. Without this positive stance, there is a potential that dissatisfaction, demotivation and negative affect is more likely to occur, impacting both the TA's emotional well-being and filtering through to their approach supporting the excluded CYP. The ability to effectively maintain this positive stance across time is questioned by the researcher, considering previous research emphasising how optimistic positions can be diminished due to a realisation of the role and its remits (Farouk, 2014).

5.3 Limitations of the study

A number of limitations have been identified by the researcher in relation to the current study. Challenges connected to the methodological approach of IPA are included in section 3.4.3 and will not be included within this section.

- Two of the participants (Tracy and Julie) failed to meet the original inclusion criteria, undertaking broader roles within the AP. Although the researcher made adjustments to maintain both a commitment to the homogeneity of the research, whilst honouring their participation, it is acknowledged that this may have impacted on the experiences, views and perceptions they expressed. Recognising the expansive roles and additional responsibilities of TAs (as discussed in section 1.4.2), it is evident that it is important to fully ensure the exclusion criteria is applied prior to inclusion within research samples.
- The self-selective nature of the sampling process may also pose challenges for this study, with the possibility that TAs volunteered due to an underlying motive to present a particular standpoint (e.g. a desire to show their supportive work and success with the CYP or a wish to describe the difficulties experienced with mainstream schools and parents). Whilst it could be argued that this impacts on the transferability of the findings, the convergence of overarching themes demonstrates that there is commonality of experience.
- As this was the researcher's first experience employing IPA as a methodological approach, there was a lack of familiarity and fluency with the process and design. During the interview procedure, the position of bracketing off was often difficult to maintain consistently and, on some occasions, leading questions were asked. Although this may have had an

impact on the lived experiences expressed, the researcher was able to learn through practice, developing an ease with the interview procedure.

• Whilst the process of IPA has offered an understanding of the lived experiences of the TAs, it is arguable that this is a limited exploration, unable to consider 1) the processes occurring below the surface and 2) the dynamics between researcher and participant (Smith et al., 2005). During the interviews and data analysis, the influence of unconscious processes for both participant and researcher were frequently considered, in addition to the emotional responses that may be evoked (see Appendix M for a reflective diary account). In response to this limitation, the researcher has applied psychoanalytic theory where appropriate within this chapter, attempting to offer the reader a holistic interpretation of the TAs' experiences.

5.4 Implications of the research

The researcher has identified the following implications for policy makers, EPs, and AP staff (see Figure 12 for a diagrammatic overview), utilising a combination of the findings, literature review and psychological theory. Whilst the results are not generalisable, they provide a stimulus for generating hypotheses and focusing on a number of key areas in which support could be provided.

1) Relationships are crucial for excluded CYP (Malcolm, 2018; Michael & Frederickson, 2013; Nicolson & Putwain, 2015; Tate & Greatbatch, 2017) and this was a common theme within the TAs accounts. Considering the

high levels of CYP presenting with attachment difficulties within these provisions (DfE, 2014), TAs, school staff and SLT could benefit from gaining an understanding of the principles of attachment theory, the impact on behavioural responses and the emotional labour and stress that can be provoked for staff acting as ad-hoc attachment figures. There is an important role for both EPs and other LA professionals in advocating regular training within this area, alongside signposting to beneficial resources for additional guidance (e.g. books such as 'Attachment in the classroom' [Geddes, 2006]/'Inside I'm hurting: practical strategies for supporting children with attachment difficulties in schools' [Bomber, 2007]). Support to consider different models of practice and traumainformed frameworks may also be valuable for these settings (e.g. 'Attachment Aware Schools'), helping to embed the principles of attachment within their policies (Parker, Rose & Gilbert, 2016).

Due to the complexities of relational formation, maintenance and disconnection, it is important that TAs are provided with the opportunity to share their thoughts, ideas and feelings, whilst seeking advice and strategies to implement in their future practice. As TAs are often the members of staff spending large proportions of time providing individual support, EPs have a key role in offering consultancy to these individuals (e.g. in the form of consultation cycles or drop-in sessions) in both an individual or group format (e.g. employing approaches such as solution circles [Forest & Pearpoint, 1996]). Within AP settings, the implementation of weekly staff consultation meetings could also be

considered as a regular feature of the timetable. This would provide opportunities for discussion, problem-solving, reflection and strategy planning, aiding staff to find ways to manage the relational difficulties they may be experiencing.

Managing SEMH needs, challenging behaviour, assaults and restraints provokes a range of emotional responses for TAs, which may contribute to stress, mental wellbeing and dropout within the AP profession. In order for TAs to give their best to the CYP and their professional role, it is important that their emotional needs are met. EPs could advocate the importance of regular supervision for staff within APs, ensuring that TAs are key members of these groups. This will allow invaluable opportunities to process and manage their stressors, whilst reflecting on practice in a confidential forum that is containing and validating and can improve morale and self-efficacy (Willis & Baines, 2018). Whilst supervision takes form in a range of modalities, EPs could also consider the use of work discussion groups (Jackson, 2002; Jackson, 2008), using unconscious processes and key psychoanalytic concepts to voice anxieties, support reflection and understanding of strong emotional responses. The EPs role is key when facilitating these supervisory spaces; an external figure that is able to take up a 'third position' (Harris, Rendall & Nashat, 2018) enabling different types of conversation and reflection. Alongside emotional factors, these groups would allow consideration of characteristics that the TAs bring as individuals to the role, in addition to interacting factors that may be influencing their practice.

- 4) Acknowledging the high levels of stress and emotional labour associated with the role, EPs also have a key position in advocating training to help develop emotional competence, resilience and well-being strategies for staff within APs. A systemic role working with SLT and SENDCos is also important, aiding these settings to ensure that they create environments where well-being is prioritised. This could include the introduction of policies and practices that encourage the expression of feeling and emotion as a natural part of the job (termed 'healthy catharsis' by Fineman, 1996 as cited in Mann, 2004, p. 216), alongside the importance of debriefing.
- 5) Beginning to support the excluded CYP within the AP environment was particularly challenging for the TAs and as such it may be beneficial for new members of AP staff to be provided with additional support during this move, ensuring that their feelings are validated and their emotional needs are met. The EP's role in supporting transitions for CYP is recognised within existing literature (Craig, 2009; Morris & Atkinson, 2018) and it is argued that this can also be applied to TAs and other educational staff beginning to acculturate to the AP environment. During planning meetings, EPs could ask explorative questions about new staff, advocating the importance of well-being and support in the form of consultation or supervision. SLT within APs could also engage in regular check-ins with new TAs, providing a space to discuss the role and any challenges that they may be facing. Peer mentoring may also be beneficial within this instance. By holding TAs in mind and offering early support, it

is feasible that this may have a longer-term impact on retention within these settings.

- 6) The staff team was cited by all of the TAs, echoing the importance of the collective support offered. It is clear that within APs, opportunities for staff collaboration with one another should be considered, ensuring that they are able to benefit from the containment and emotional holding provided by the group. The implementation of staff support networks and groups may also be valuable, with structured times in which members can work together and reflect on practice. In instances where group cohesion is problematic, time and space for support through EP facilitated reflective practice groups or supervision may be beneficial.
- 7) Due to the barriers and conflicts that exist when working with mainstream schools, it is evident that policy is needed to strengthen links and expand the exchange of information between these sectors. A guidance document for both schools and AP staff may be constructive, helping to set out their roles and remits to ensure that they offer both effective and collaborative practice. The systemic and organisational work for EPs is also applicable, aiding the development of effective mainstream-AP partnerships by facilitating discussions about their working relationships, systems of communication and functions of their role. By working at this level to offer support, EPs are also able to help school SLT think about the different organisational defences against anxiety and the causes of stress and dysfunction that may occur within systems (e.g. employing a systems-

psychodynamics approach as described by Eloquin, 2016). This may also be beneficial in shifting mainstream-deficit views held by staff members, ensuring that they remain open systems that are able to engage in more effective relationships.

As difficulties with parents were highlighted by both the TAs and previous literature (Broomhead, 2014), it is clear that attention needs to be directed to the development of effective home-school partnerships. EPs should be conscious of these dynamics within their work with excluded CYP, ensuring that there are opportunities for consultations where joint understanding and meaning-making can take place. In these meetings, both supporting staff and families should be provided with opportunities to create dual action plans, ensuring that collaborative working is taking place. AP settings should also consider frequent opportunities for school staff and families to come together (e.g. holding coffee mornings, family days, activity events) ensuring that trust and approachability is developed.

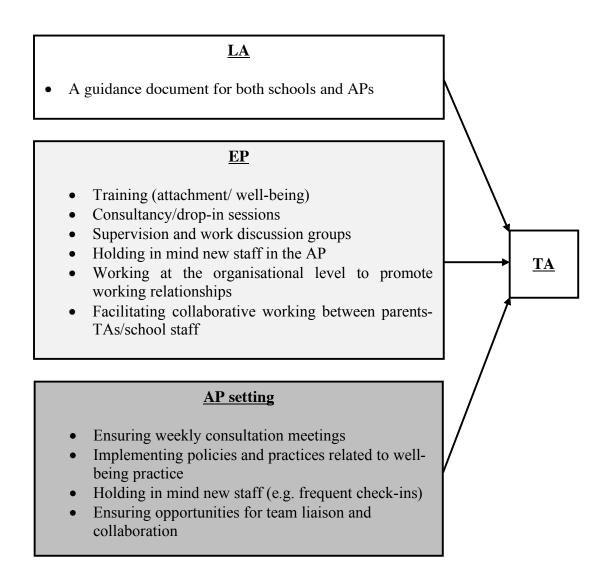


Figure 12. Implications of the research for key stakeholders: LA, EP and AP setting.

5.5 Dissemination of findings

In carrying out this study, the researcher aimed to gain a better understanding of the TAs' experiences, providing this invisible (Dyer, 1996) group with a voice. In order to ensure that the findings of the study are received by key stakeholders and have an influence on future practice, a dissemination strategy has been produced, displayed in Table 13.

Table 13. Dissemination of the findings of the current study.

Population	Dissemination approach
Participants	A synopsis of the findings will be generated and sent to the TAs who requested feedback. They will also be provided with the opportunity to contact the researcher to ask any questions or discuss the research further.
AP Headteachers	A summary of the study's key findings will be sent to the headteachers of the two APs that took part in the research.
LA EP and Early Intervention Team	The researcher will provide the EPs with a summary of the study process, key findings and implications for their practice during a Continued Professional Development (CPD) session. The findings will also be presented at an LA Early Intervention Team training day, ensuring that other professionals working within APs (e.g. specialist teachers, ASD team, communication teams) also have access to the information presented.
SENDCo forum	As the study has applicability to 1) working relationships between mainstream schools and APs and 2) staff who support pupils at risk, reintegrating or displaying challenging behaviour, a summary of the key findings will be presented at the LA SENDCo forum.
Tavistock tutors and students	A presentation of the study, key findings and reflections from the research process will be presented to the cohort of Tavistock trainees, research staff and tutors during a course training day in the summer/autumn term 2020.
Journals	To address the gap in the literature base, the researcher intends to publish the current study in a journal relevant to Educational Psychology (e.g. 'Educational Psychology in practice') or SEMH (e.g. 'Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties').

5.6 Directions for future research

Alongside implications for EPs and other professionals, the researcher also considered areas for future research.

- With TAs describing the disconnections that can occur with the excluded CYP, future research may be useful to explore how these staff can be supported to maintain and manage relational difficulties.
- Acknowledging the barriers experienced between mainstream schools and TAs, a comparative study may be beneficial to explore perceptions of relationships between these key parties. Exploration of the partnerships between TAs and parents could also be considered.
- As the current research explored the TAs' experiences at one point in time,
 a study employing a longitudinal design may be beneficial. This would
 allow investigation of how the TAs' experiences changed, particularly in
 relation to their investment, beliefs and management of emotions.
- Considering the unconscious processes that may underpin relational interactions and emotional responses, a psychosocial methodological approach could be used to explore the experiences of TAs supporting excluded CYP at a deeper level.

5.7 Conclusions

The study aimed to gain a better understanding of the lived experiences of TAs working in APs, addressing a paucity of research within the area. Whilst acknowledging the individuality of their accounts, the researcher was able to encapsulate the diversity of their lived experiences through five overarching themes: 'Relationships: a complex landscape',

'A juggling act: behaviour, need and strength from the team', 'A rocky road: highs, lows and a journey of development', 'Battles, clashes and superiority' and 'The journey towards a future'.

In making sense of the participants' experiences, the research confirmed the importance of relationships with excluded CYP, highlighting the complexities that exist when navigating connections and disconnections. It was evident that whilst there were highs relating to helping the CYP succeed, these co-existed with a range of difficult emotions resulting from managing diverse needs, challenging behaviour and aggression. A contributing factor adding further complexity was the perceived failures of mainstream settings and parents, leading to frustration, barriers in working and conflicts. Considering these difficulties, protective factors enabling the TAs to continue working within the AP included the support and emotional holding provided by the staff team, alongside the rewards of empowering the CYP and witnessing positive change.

A range of implications of the research findings for EPs, other educational professionals, school staff and policy makers were discussed, with a predominant focus on supporting effective practice, promoting emotional well-being and developing working relationships with key stakeholders. In addition to addressing a gap within the literature base, the researcher also offered an invisible group the opportunity to share their lived experiences, ensuring that their voice is heard.

With rising exclusions, increasing pressure on APs and their staff teams, it is vital that work within this area continues to grow. It is hoped that through the combination of these emerging themes, previous literature and psychological theory, the researcher has

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contributed to developing both an understanding and prioritisation of the voices and

experiences of TAs within these settings, giving consideration to how they can be

supported in their role.

WORD COUNT: 36,180

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- Yin, R.K. (1989). Case Study Research Design and Methods, Sage, Newbury Park.

7 Appendices

Appendix A: Combination of search terms

Search	Terms
1	"Pupil Referral Unit" OR PRU OR "Alternative provision" OR "Education other than at school" OR "Special education provision" OR BESD school OR SEMH school
	AND
	"School staff" OR Teacher* OR "Teaching Assistant" OR "Support staff"
	AND
	Voice* OR Experience* OR Perspective* OR Perception* OR View*
2	"Pupil Referral Unit" OR PRU OR "Alternative provision" OR "Education other than at school" OR "Special education provision" OR BESD school OR SEMH school
	AND
	"School staff" OR Teacher* OR "Teaching Assistant" OR "Support staff"
3	"Pupil Referral Unit" OR PRU OR "Alternative provision" OR "Education other than at school" OR "Special education provision" OR BESD school OR SEMH school
	AND
	Voice* OR Experience* OR Perspective* OR Perception* OR View*

Appendix B: Table of included/excluded search results

Search 1

Record	Screened Reason for	
Vlachou, A., & Fyssa, A. (2016). 'Inclusion in Practice': Programme Practices in	Title and abstract	Outside of UK/ Does not focus on
Mainstream Preschool Classrooms and Associations with Context and Teacher Characteristics. <i>International Journal of Disability</i> , <i>Development and Education</i> , 63(5), 529-544.		AP settings
Lehane, T. (2016). "Cooling the mark out": experienced teaching assistants' perceptions of their work in the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs in mainstream secondary schools. <i>Educational Review</i> , 68(1), 4-23.	Title and abstract	Focus on mainstream staff and settings
Woodley, H. (2016). The use of autoethnography in classroom based practitioner research. <i>Annual Review of Education, Communication, and Language Sciences</i> , 13, 44-56.	Full text analysis	Does not include the experiences/ views of AP staff
Broomhead, K. E. (2016). 'They think that if	Full text analysis	Inclusion of AP
you're a teacher here you're not clever enough to be a proper teacher': the courtesy stigma experienced by teachers employed at schools for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD). Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 16(1), 57-64.		staff experiences
Farouk, S. (2014). From mainstream school to pupil referral unit: A change in teachers' self-understanding. <i>Teachers and Teaching</i> , 20(1), 19-31.	Full text analysis	Inclusion of AP staff experiences
Pillay, J., Dunbar-Krige, H., & Mostert, J. (2013). Learners with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties' experiences of reintegration into mainstream education. <i>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</i> , 18(3), 310-326.	Title and abstract	Does not include AP staff experiences
Broomhead, K. E. (2013). Preferential treatment or unwanted in mainstream schools? The perceptions of parents and teachers with regards to pupils with special educational needs and challenging	Full text analysis	Inclusion of AP staff experiences

behaviour. Support for Learning, 28(1), 4-10.		
Lawrence, N. (2011). What makes for a successful re-integration from a pupil referral unit to mainstream education? An applied research project. <i>Educational Psychology in Practice</i> , 27(3), 213-226.	Full text analysis	Inclusion of AP staff experiences/views
Collins, A., & Holmshaw, J. (2008). Early detection: a survey of secondary school teachers' knowledge about psychosis. <i>Early Intervention in Psychiatry</i> , 2(2), 90-97.	Title and abstract	Focus on mainstream settings
Capstick, J. (2005). Pupil and staff perceptions of rewards at a pupil referral unit. <i>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</i> , 10(2), 95-117.	Full text analysis	Does not focus on experiences/views of school staff
Meo, A., & Parker, A. (2004). Teachers, teaching and educational exclusion: Pupil Referral Units and pedagogic practice. <i>International Journal of Inclusive Education</i> , 8(1), 103-120	Full text analysis	Inclusion of AP staff experiences
Norwich, B., Cooper, P., & Maras, P. (2002). Attentional and activity difficulties: findings from a national study. <i>Support for Learning</i> , 17(4), 182-186.	Title and abstract	Does not focus on APs
Garner, P. (1996). A la Recherche du Temps Perdu: Case-study Evidence from Off-site and Pupil Referral Units. <i>Children & Society</i> , 10(3), 187-196.	Full text analysis	Does not include experiences/views of AP staff

Search 2 (minus duplicates from previous search)

Record	Screened	Reason for exclusion
Nicholson, L. J., & Putwain, D. W. (2018). The importance of psychological need satisfaction in educational reengagement. Research Papers in Education, 33(2), 169-186.	Full text analysis	Focus on student's perspectives — whilst the paper states there is a triangulation with staff views, their perceptions are unclear.
Farrell, F., Duckworth, V., Reece, M., & Rigby, P. (2017). The moral frontiers of English education policy: governmentality and ethics within an alternative provision free school. <i>Educational Review</i> , 69(3), 349-365.	Full text analysis	Inclusion of AP staff experiences

Lee, L. W., & Low, H. M. (2013). 'Unconscious' inclusion of students with learning disabilities in a Malaysian mainstream primary school: teachers' perspectives. <i>Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs</i> , 13(3), 218-228.	Title and abstract	Outside of the UK
Golder, G., Jones, N., & Quinn, E. E. (2009). Strengthening the special educational needs element of initial teacher training and education. <i>British Journal of Special Education</i> , 36(4), 183-190.	Title and abstract	Does not focus on APs
Melekoglu, M. A., Cakiroglu, O., & Malmgren, K. W. (2009). Special education in Turkey. <i>International Journal of Inclusive Education</i> , 13(3), 287-298.	Title and abstract	Outside of the UK
Keown, R. (2007). Let Me Fly. <i>Kairaranga</i> , 8(1), 34-35.	Title and abstract	Does not focus on AP settings
Taylor, P. (2004). Pulling No Punches: Young People Talk about Their Experiences at School. <i>International Journal on School Disaffection</i> , 2(1), 5.	Title and abstract	Does not include the experiences/views of school staff
Kalu, D. (2002). Containers and containment. <i>Psychodynamic Practice</i> , 8(3), 359-373.	Full text analysis	Inclusion of AP staff experiences
McKeon, M. (2001). Promoting the inclusion of students at risk of exclusion: An evaluative case study. <i>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</i> , 6(4), 236-250.	Title and abstract	Does not include the experiences/ views of school staff
Parmar, R. S., & Cawley, J. F. (1997). Preparing teachers to teach mathematics to students with learning disabilities. <i>Journal of Learning Disabilities</i> , 30(2), 188-197.	Title and abstract	Does not include the experiences/ views of school staff
Hill, R. (1997). Pupil Referral Units: "Are	Full text analysis	Does not focus on

Search 3 (minus duplicates from previous searches)

Record	Screened	Reason for exclusion
Malcolm, A. (2018b). Heads of alternative provision: committed to realising young peoples' potential in an unregulated	•	Inclusion of AP staff experiences

market. International Journal of Inclusive Education, 1-14.		
Johnston, C., & Bradford, S. (2019). Alternative spaces of failure. Disabled 'bad boys' in alternative further education provision. <i>Disability & Society</i> , 1-25.	Title and abstract	Focus on views of CYP
Cockerill, T. Pupils attending a shared placement between a school and an alternative provision: is a sense of school belonging key to success? <i>Educational and Child Psychology</i> , 36(2), 23-33.	Title and abstract	A focus on shared placements/ with mainstream
Trotman, D., Enow, L., & Tucker, S. (2019). Young people and alternative provision: Perspectives from participatory—collaborative evaluations in three UK local authorities. <i>British Educational Research Journal</i> , 45(2), 219-237.	Full text analysis	Focus on views of CYP and local authority staff
Malcolm, A. (2019). Turning points in a qualitatively different social space: young adults' reflections of alternative provision. <i>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</i> , 24(1), 84-99.	Title and abstract	Focus on the views of CYP
Pechlivanoglou, P., Paulden, M., Pham, B., Wong, J., Horn, S. D., & Krahn, M. (2018). Turning High-Risk Individuals: An Economic Evaluation of Repositioning Frequency in Long-Term Care. <i>Journal of the American Geriatrics Society</i> , 66(7), 1409-1414.	Title and abstract	Does not focus on AP settings
Hamilton, P., & Morgan, G. An exploration of the factors that lead to the successful progression of students in APs. <i>Educational and Child Psychology</i> , 35(1), 80-95.	Title and abstract	Focus on the views of CYP
Jalali, R., & Morgan, G. (2018). 'They won't let me back. Comparing student perceptions across primary and secondary Pupil Referral Units (PRUs). <i>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</i> , 23(1), 55-68.	Title and abstract	Focus on views of CYP
Malcolm, A. (2018). Exclusions and alternative provision: piecing together the picture. <i>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</i> , 23(1), 69-80.	Title and abstract	Does not include experiences of AP staff
Cooke, G., Tapley, A., Holliday, E., Morgan, S., Henderson, K., Ball, J., & Magin, P. (2017). Responses to clinical uncertainty in Australian general practice trainees: a cross-sectional analysis. <i>Medical Education</i> , 51(12), 1277-1288.	Title and abstract	Outside of UK

Ferguson, B. (2016). 'Coming out' as pregnant or having a baby while attending school: Experiences and challenges of Scottish schoolgirl mothers/mothers-to-be. <i>International Journal on School Disaffection</i> , 12(2), 3-24.	Title and abstract	Does not focus on APs
Westwood, S. (2016). 'We see it as being hypersexualised, being put into a care home': gender, sexuality and housing/care preferences among older LGB individuals in the UK. <i>Health & Social Care in the Community</i> , 24(6), e155-e163.	Title and abstract	Does not focus on APs
Waugh, S. M., & Bergquist-Beringer, S. (2016). Inter-rater agreement of pressure ulcer risk and prevention measures in the National Database of Nursing Quality Indicators®(NDNQI). Research in Nursing & Health, 39(3), 164-174.	Title and abstract	Does not focus on APs
Pulkkinen, J., & Jahnukainen, M. (2016). Finnish reform of the funding and provision of special education: the views of principals and municipal education administrators. <i>Educational Review</i> , 68(2), 171-188.	Title and abstract	Outside of UK/ Does not focus on AP settings
Cameron, D. L. (2016). Too much or not enough? An examination of special education provision and school district leaders' perceptions of current needs and common approaches. <i>British Journal of Special Education</i> , 43(1), 22-38.	Title and abstract	Outside of the UK
Dean, C. (2016). Seeking educational excellence everywhere: an exploration into the impact of academisation on alternative education provision in England. In <i>FORUM:</i> for <i>Promoting 3–19 Comprehensive Education</i> (Vol. 58, No. 3, pp. 355-63).		Does not include experiences of AP staff
Trotman, D., Tucker, S., & Martyn, M. (2015). Understanding problematic pupil behaviour: perceptions of pupils and behaviour coordinators on secondary school exclusion in an English city. <i>Educational Research</i> , <i>57</i> (3), 237-253.	Title and abstract	Mainstream focus
Nicholson, L., & Putwain, D. (2015). Facilitating re-engagement in learning: A disengaged student perspective. <i>The Psychology of Education Review</i> , 39(2), 37-41.	Title and abstract	Focus on the views of CYP
McCluskey, G., Riddell, S., & Weedon, E. (2015). Children's rights, school exclusion	Title and abstract	Does not focus on AP settings

and alternative educational provision. <i>International Journal of Inclusive Education</i> , 19(6), 595-607.		
Thomas, D. V. (2015). Factors affecting successful reintegration. <i>Educational studies</i> , 41(1-2), 188-208.	Title and abstract	Focus on mainstream settings/ infant/ mainstream/ secondary settings
Becker, T., & Ruesch, N. (2014). Many miles made and a long way to go. <i>Epidemiology and Psychiatric Sciences</i> , 23(4), 345-347.	Title and abstract	Does not focus on APs
McMaster, C. (2014). An island outside the mainstream? The special needs unit during a period of inclusive change in an Aotearoa/New Zealand high school. <i>Journal of the International Association of Special Education</i> , 15(2), 100-107.	Title and abstract	Does not focus on APs
Broomhead, K. (2014). 'A clash of two worlds'; disjuncture between the norms and values held by educational practitioners and parents of children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. <i>British Journal of Special Education</i> , 41(2), 136-150.	Full text analysis	Inclusion of AP staff experiences
Kehily, M. J., Martens, L., & Ponsford, R. (2014). "I don't really care about me, as long as he gets everything he needs"—young women becoming mothers in consumer culture. <i>Young Consumers</i> .	Title and abstract	Does not focus on AP settings
Broomhead, K. E. (2013). 'Going the extra mile': educational practitioners compensating for perceived inadequacies in the parenting of children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD). <i>Pastoral Care in Education</i> , 31(4), 309-320.	Full text analysis	Inclusion of AP staff experiences
Michael, S., & Frederickson, N. (2013). Improving pupil referral unit outcomes: pupil perspectives. <i>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</i> , 18(4), 407-422.	Title and abstract	Does not focus on views of school staff
Macleod, G., Pirrie, A., McCluskey, G., & Cullen, M. (2013). Parents of excluded pupils: customers, partners, problems? <i>Educational Review</i> , 65(4), 387-401.	Title and abstract	Does not include views of school staff
Hart, N. (2013). What helps children in a pupil referral unit (PRU)? An exploration into the potential protective factors of a PRU	Full text analysis	Includes experiences of AP staff

as identified by children and staff. <i>Emotional</i>		
and Behavioural Difficulties, 18(2), 196-212.		
Cranmer, S. (2013). Listening to excluded	Title and abstract	Does not focus on
young people's experiences of e-safety and	Tine and abbitact	views of school
risk. Learning, Media and Technology, 38(1),		staff/ APs
72-85.		
Fenwick-Sehl, L. (2013). Lessons from	Title and abstract	Does not focus on
elsewhere? The evolution of the Labour		APs
academy school concept, 1997-		
2010. Research in Comparative and		
International Education, 8(2), 176-192.		
Yvonne, B., & Nirmala, R. (2012).	Title and abstract	Does not focus on
Implementation Challenges of Inclusive		AP settings
Education: A Review of Hong Kong's Local		
and International Education Sectors. Asia-		
Pacific Journal of Research in Early		
Childhood Education, 6(2).	min i i	D
Ciao, A. C., & Latner, J. D. (2011). Reducing	Title and abstract	Does not focus on
obesity stigma: The effectiveness of		AP settings
cognitive dissonance and social consensus		
interventions. <i>Obesity</i> , 19(9), 1768-1774. Pirrie, A., Macleod, G., Cullen, M. A., &	Title and abstract	Does not include
McCluskey, G. (2011). What happens to	THE AND AUSTRACT	AP staff views
pupils permanently excluded from special		711 Stall VICWS
schools and pupil referral units in		
England? British Educational Research		
Journal, 37(3), 519-538.		
McLoughlin, C. (2010). Concentric circles of	Title and abstract	Focus on
containment: A psychodynamic contribution		supervision
to working in pupil referral units. Journal of		_
child psychotherapy, 36(3), 225-239.		
Mainwaring, D., & Hallam, S. (2010).	Title and abstract	Does not include
'Possible selves' of young people in a		views of school
mainstream secondary school and a pupil		staff
referral unit: a comparison. Emotional and		
Behavioural Difficulties, 15(2), 153-169.		
Macleod, G., & Pirrie, A. (2010). From a	Title and abstract	Does not include
distance: researching across jurisdictions in		AP staff views
the UK. Educational Review, 42(1), 60-70.		
Cullen, K., & Monroe, J. (2010). Using	Title and abstract	Does not include
positive relationships to engage the		AP staff views
disengaged: An educational psychologist-		
initiated project involving professional sports		
input to a Pupil Referral Unit. Educational		
and Child Psychology, 27(1), 64.	Title and abetic it	Doog not for
Collins, A., & Holmshaw, J. (2008). Early	Title and abstract	Does not focus on APs and excluded
detection: a survey of secondary school teachers' knowledge about psychosis. <i>Early</i>		CYP or staff
Intervention in Psychiatry, 2(2), 90-97.		CII OI Stall
1 mer venuon in 1 sychian y, 2(2), 70-71.		1

Taiwo, H., Ladapo, O., Aina, O. F., Lawal, R.	Title and abstract	Outside of the UK
A., Adebiyi, O. P., Olomu, S. O., & Aina, R.	Title allu abstract	Outside of the OK
B. (2008). Long stay patients in a psychiatric		
hospital in Lagos, Nigeria. African Journal of		
Psychiatry, 11(2), 125-132.	TD': 1 1 1	D C
McConkey, R., McConaghie, J., Barr, O., &	Title and abstract	Does not focus on
Roberts, P. (2006). Views of family carers to		AP settings
the future accommodation and support needs		
of their relatives with intellectual		
disabilities. Irish Journal of Psychological		
<i>Medicine</i> , 23(4), 140-144.		
Heneker, S. (2005). Speech and language	Title and abstract	Does not focus on
therapy support for pupils with behavioural,		AP settings
emotional and social difficulties (BESD)-a		
pilot project. British journal of special		
education, 32(2), 86-91.		
Hoppers, W. (2005). Community schools as	Title and abstract	Outside of the UK
an educational alternative in Africa: A		
critique. International Review of		
Education, 51(2-3), 115-137.		
Allen, D. (2002). Research involving	Title and abstract	Does not focus on
vulnerable young people: A discussion of		AP settings
ethical and methodological concerns. <i>Drugs</i> :		8
Education, Prevention and Policy, 9(3), 275-		
283.		
Cuccia, A. D., & Carnes, G. A. (2001). A	Title and abstract	Does not focus on
closer look at the relation between tax	Title and abbitaet	AP settings
complexity and tax equity		TH Settings
perceptions. Journal of Economic		
Psychology, 22(2), 113-140.		
Wilson, K., & Petrie, S. (1998). No place like	Title and abstract	Does not focus on
home: Lessons learned and lessons	The and abstract	AP settings
forgotten–the Children Act 1948. Child &		711 Scuings
Family Social Work, 3(3), 183-188.		
Morris, J. T. (1996). Excluded pupils—the	Title and abstract	Does not include
	THE and abstract	
1		the experiences of
		AP staff
Difficulties, 35-38.		

Appendix C: List of papers for inclusion

Record

Farrell, F., Duckworth, V., Reece, M., & Rigby, P. (2017). The moral frontiers of English education policy: governmentality and ethics within an alternative provision free school. *Educational Review*, 69(3), 349-365.

Broomhead, K. E. (2016). 'They think that if you're a teacher here... you're not clever enough to be a proper teacher': the courtesy stigma experienced by teachers employed at schools for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD). *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 16(1), 57-64.

Farouk, S. (2014). From mainstream school to pupil referral unit: A change in teachers' self-understanding. *Teachers and Teaching*, 20(1), 19-31.

Broomhead, K. E. (2013a). Preferential treatment or unwanted in mainstream schools? The perceptions of parents and teachers with regards to pupils with special educational needs and challenging behaviour. *Support for Learning*, 28(1), 4-10.

Broomhead, K. E. (2013b). 'Going the extra mile': educational practitioners compensating for perceived inadequacies in the parenting of children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD). *Pastoral Care in Education*, 31(4), 309-320.

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

Lawrence, N. (2011). What makes for a successful re-integration from a pupil referral unit to mainstream education? An applied research project. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 27(3), 213-226.

Meo, A., & Parker, A. (2004). Teachers, teaching and educational exclusion: Pupil Referral Units and pedagogic practice. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 8(1), 103-120.

Broomhead, K. (2014). 'A clash of two worlds'; disjuncture between the norms and values held by educational practitioners and parents of children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. *British Journal of Special Education*, 41(2), 136-150.

Kalu, D. (2002). Containers and containment. *Psychodynamic Practice*, 8(3), 359-373.

Malcolm, A. (2018b). Heads of alternative provision: committed to realising young peoples' potential in an unregulated market. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 1-14.

The following articles were found through hand-searches:

Record

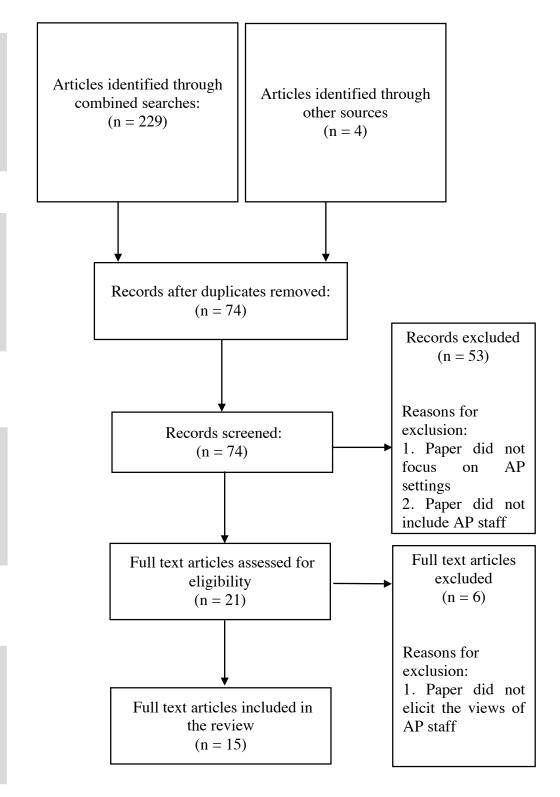
Fitzsimmons, W., Trigg, R., & Premkumar, P. (2019). Developing and maintaining the teacher-student relationship in one to one alternative provision: the tutor's experience. *Educational Review*, 1-18.

Menendez Alvarez-Hevia, D. (2018). The emotional learning of educators working in alternative provision. *Educational Studies*, 54(3), 303-318.

Levinson, M., & Thompson, M. (2016). "I don't need pink hair here": Should we be seeking to reintegrate youngsters without challenging school cultures? *International Journal of School Dissatisfaction*, 12(1), 23-43.

Putwain, D. W., Nicholson, L. J., & Edwards, J. L. (2015). Hard to reach and hard to teach: Supporting the self-regulation of learning in an alternative provision secondary school. *Educational Studies*, 42(1), 1-18.

Appendix D: PRISMA Framework



Appendix E: Studies included in total literature review

Author	Article title and	Participants	Design	Measures and data	Findings
Broomhead (2013a)	preferential treatment or unwanted in mainstream school? The perceptions of parents and teachers with regards to pupils with special educational needs and challenging behaviour	School staff (n = 15)	Qualitative study IPA approach	Semi-structured interviews Smith and colleagues (2009) IPA analysis	A stigma exists towards CYP with challenging behaviour – staff feel they are 'unwanted' in mainstream schools A perception mainstream settings cannot cope/did not want to accommodate
	Learning Support, 28(1), 4-10				for needs
Broomhead (2013b)	'Going the extra mile': educational practitioners compensating for perceived inadequacies in the parenting of children with behavioural,	Mainstream school staff (n = 7) SEMH school staff (n = 8)	Qualitative study IPA approach	Semi-structured interviews Smith and colleagues (2009) IPA analysis	Educators perceived parents as lacking responsibility, associated with a discourse of chaos and familial breakdown. School staff viewed their role as one which

	emotional and social difficulties (BESD). Pastoral Care in Education, 31(4), 309-320.				compensates for the perceived inadequacies of parents, becoming surrogate parents.
Broomhead (2014)	'A clash of two worlds'; disjuncture between the norms and values held by educational practitioners and parents of children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties British Journal of	Mainstream school staff (n = 7) SEMH school staff (n = 8)	Qualitative study IPA approach	Semi-structured interviews Smith and colleagues (2009) IPA analysis	Differing norms and values were perceived to be held by parents and educational staff. Parents deemed to deviate from the expected norms/ thought to have dysfunctional and chaotic home lives De-sensitisation and
	Special Education, 20(1), 19-31.				acceptance of the home lives of CYP with SEMH needs
Broomhead (2016)	'They think that if you're a teacher hereyou're not clever enough to be a proper teacher': the	SEMH school staff (n = 9)	Qualitative study IPA approach	Semi-structured interviews Smith and colleagues (2009) IPA analysis	Educational staff perceived stigma towards themselves – felt that they were not

courtesy stigma experienced by teachers employed at schools for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties Largerienced Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 16(1), 57-64. Largerienced Courtesy stigma teachers. Felt a pressure to prepare pupils and manage their SEMH needs – additional responsibilities Experienced confusion from others as to why they would want to work with challenging CYP Courtesy stigma felt to be associated with the wider stigma on CYP with SEMH needs and exclusion
teachers employed at schools for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 16(1), 57-64. Experienced confusion from others as to why they would want to work with challenging CYP Courtesy stigma felt to be associated with the wider stigma on CYP with SEMH needs and
schools for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 16(1), 57-64. Courtesy stigma felt to be associated with the wider stigma on CYP with SEMH needs and
with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties Experienced Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 16(1), 57-64. Courtesy stigma felt to be associated with the wider stigma on CYP with SEMH needs and
emotional and social difficulties Experienced Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 16(1), 57-64. Courtesy stigma felt to be associated with the wider stigma on CYP with SEMH needs and
difficulties Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 16(1), 57-64. Courtesy stigma felt to be associated with the wider stigma on CYP with SEMH needs and
difficulties Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 16(1), 57-64. Courtesy stigma felt to be associated with the wider stigma on CYP with SEMH needs and
Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 16(1), 57-64. Courtesy stigma felt to be associated with the wider stigma on CYP with SEMH needs and
Special Educational Needs, 16(1), 57-64. Special Educational want to work with challenging CYP Courtesy stigma felt to be associated with the wider stigma on CYP with SEMH needs and
Needs, 16(1), 57-64. Want to work with challenging CYP Courtesy stigma felt to be associated with the wider stigma on CYP with SEMH needs and
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be associated with the wider stigma on CYP with SEMH needs and
be associated with the wider stigma on CYP with SEMH needs and
wider stigma on CYP with SEMH needs and
with SEMH needs and
exclusion
Farouk From mainstream Female teachers in Qualitative study Semi-structured The teachers found the
(2014) school to pupil one PRU setting interviews (n = 6) change working in
referral unit: a change (n=3) IPA approach (investigating these settings as a
in teachers' self-
understanding significant events)
Theme of sen-
Teachers and Smith and colleagues realisation: the teacher (2009) IPA analysis realised they wanted to
(2005) Il II amai job I romato di tro
Teaching, 20(1), 19-
31. students/becoming

Farrell, Duckworth, Reece & Rigby (2016)	The moral frontiers of English Education Policy: governmentality and ethics within an alternative provision Educational Review, 69(3), 349-365.	AP staff: Headteacher (n=1), Deputy Principal (n=1), trainee teacher (n=1)	Qualitative study Foucauldian discourse analysis	Two interviews (addressing: why teachers wished to work in an AP and about their free school status) Use of Foucault's ethics as a framework for analysis	disengaged with mainstream Theme of self-understanding: realisation that they can't 'turn' the children around/ or rescue them — necessary for detachment/ need to understand the self to help the CYP Desire to be a teacher relating to drive/ hardworking ethic/ a self- constituting moral conduct Challenging students are the prime focus of all three-teacher's ethical self-constituting practices as AP practitioners Elicited feelings towards
					government/ DfE,

					market rationalities/academisation
Fitzsimmons, Trigg & Premkumar (2018)	Developing and maintaining the teacher-student relationship in one to one alternative provision: the tutor's experience Educational Review, 1-18	Six AP tutors – Teachers (n=4) and TAs (n=2)	Qualitative study IPA approach Purposive sampling technique	Semi-structured interviews investigating the views of one-to-one AP tutors on their relationships with students Interviews coded and analysed using steps described by Larkin and Thompson (2012)/ Pietkiewicz and Smith (2014)	find a "mutual

Hart (2012)	What helps children in a pupil referral unit (PRU)? An exploration into the potential protective factors of a PRU as identified by children and staff Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, 18(2), 196-212.	PRU staff (n=4) in one setting - included a Headteacher, Behaviour Support Assistant, class	Qualitative study Thematic analysis	Use of semi- structured interviews/ Children's views were supplemented using scaling and picture sheets Interviews were coded and analysed	Supportive factors: Relationships: between staff-pupil and pupil-pupil and pupil-pupil and pupil-parent Teaching and learning: a strong learning ethos to help make large gains/ personalised learning experiences Expectations: High
	190-212.				expectations - targets/rewards/ boundaries and behaviour Environment: small secure base – calm and family-like – felt to be nurturing
Kalu (2002)	Containers and containment. Psychodynamic Practice, 8(3), 359-373.	One researcher reflective account	Qualitative study Case history approach $(n = 5) - 2$ applicable to PRU settings	Psychoanalytic case study – reflective accounts of work with CYP	Arousal of intense emotions within these relationships, often experiencing painful feelings of 'confusion', 'anger' and 'futility'

Lawrence (2011) What makes for successful integration from pupil referral unmainstream education? applied resproject Educational Psychology	re- m a PRU staff (n = 9) – with learning mentor	Thematic analysis Reflexive approach	Semi-structured focus groups - carried out at a teacher centre EP acting as a moderator for both sessions – using key prompts for discussions Integrated picture of	Understanding the adult as a 'container' was vital Staff need to be trained in approaches which enable a deeper understanding of the behaviours exhibited by excluded CYP helping to prepare them for the emotions they experience Supportive factors: Child factors: Successful reintegration when – young person wants to return and be successful, reflective, active engagement and positive self-esteem Parent factors:
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Levinson & Thompson (2016)	I don't need pink hair here': Should we be seeking to	teacher from the Behaviour support service One PRU setting Interviews with	Qualitative study	Semi-Structured Interviews (CYP interviewed together	Systemic: timely, tailored, clear communication, inclusive setting, child centred and individualised Barriers: Opposite to the supportive factors Teachers highlighted positive factors and barriers to
(2010)	'reintegrate' youngsters without challenging mainstream school cultures? International Journal on School Disaffection, Journal of School Dissatisfaction, 12(1), 23-43.	children and staff (teachers and TAS)		and staff interviewed separately)	reintegration for CYP Stated 90% integrated positively when the CYP were younger. Importance of the relationship between school, home and the AP/ importance of timing of reintegration
Malcolm (2018b)	Heads of alternative provision: committed to realising young people's potential in an unregulated market	Headteachers of AP settings (n = 20)	Exploratory Qualitative survey (n = 20)	Interviews were conducted with headteachers trialling the survey using a cognitive	The differences in alternative provision practice that exist across APs – including

		13 females, 7	and interviews (n	interviewing	relational aspects and
	International Journal	males	= 3)	technique	restraint use
	of Inclusive Education, 1-14.			Snowballing was used to develop a list of AP settings. Headteachers were asked to complete surveys with 20 out of 28 settings responding. Responses to the survey were categorised into different themes	commitment of heads relating to the rewards of the job, impact on the CYP and market
Menendez –	The emotional	Teachers (n=2) and	Interpretivist	14 semi-structured	Relationships have a
Alvarez-Hevia	learning of educator's	mentors $(n=2)$ and $(n=5)$ from	approach influenced	interviews of 30-45	pendulum-like
(2018)	working in alternative provision Educational studies, 54(3), 303-318.	one PRU setting	by postcultural ideas Qualitative and explorative	minutes in the format of focus groups and observations examining educator's emotional	movement: they are fragile with good and bad times Educators learn an
			Semi-structured interviews/ observations	labour with pupils who had been permanently excluded or at-risk	ability to cope with negative experiences and perceive them differently. Educators become 'openminded'.

Meo & Parker	Teachers, teaching	Whole school PRU	Qualitative study	Range of methods	Establishing a connection based on own background stories/ or developing other ways to connect Educators learnt to construct different narratives Teachers shared a
(2004)	and educational exclusion: Pupil Referral Units and pedagogic practice. International Journal of Inclusive Education, 8(1), 103-120.	focus including teacher's views	A sociological enquiry traditionally associated with ethnography Observations, semistructured interviews and documentary analysis	used to collect data - Observations, semi- structured interviews and documentary analysis, field-work journal Data analysis guided by a symbolic interactionist perspective	commitment to the general plight and welfare of excluded CYP A focus on the pupils themselves was important — the national curriculum was a low priority Understanding of nature of lessons/aims varied Teachers spent a large proportion of time attempting to control challenges — use of punishment and reward

Putwain, Nicholson	Hard to reach and	Students aged 14-16	Field work project	Use of a previously	Practices helped
& Edwards	hard to teach:	years (n=35)	1 3	designed schedule to	students to re-engage
(2015)	supporting the self-		Qualitative study	investigate	in learning
	regulation of learning	Staff (n=37) –		instructional	
	in an alternative	teachers/ student	IPA approach	practices	Practices to support
	provision secondary	teachers/ admin/			students included:
	school	Behaviour/ welfare/		Range of	
		management/		observations/ semi-	Breaking tasks, using
	Educational	therapeutic staff		structured interviews	prompts,
	Studies, 42(1), 1-18.			with staff and pupils	encouragement of self-
					belief, stating the
				Data coded using	-
				IPA analysis by	of education,
				Smith and colleagues	feedback, scaffolding
				(2009)	and providing help
					quickly – both groups
					highlighted the
					differences to
					mainstream schools

Appendix F: SURE checklist

Questions to assist with the critical appraisal of qualitative studies

1.	Does the study address a clearly focused question/hypothesis	Yes	Can't tell	No
	Setting?			
	Perspective?			
	Intervention or Phenomena			
	Comparator/control (if any)?			
	Evaluation/Exploration?			
2.	Is the choice of qualitative method appropriate?			
	Is it an exploration of eg behaviour/reasoning/beliefs)?			
	Do the authors discuss how they decided which method to use?			
3.	Is the sampling strategy clearly described			
	and justified?			
	Is it clear how participants were selected?			
	Do the authors explain why they selected these particular participants?			
	Is detailed information provided about participant characteristics and about those who chose not to participate?			
4.	Is the method of data collection well described?			
	Was the setting appropriate for data collection?			
	Is it clear what methods were used to collect data?			
	Type of method (eg, focus groups, interviews, open questionnaire etc) and tools (eg notes, audio, audio visual recording).			
	Is there sufficient detail of the methods used (eg how any topics/questions were generated and whether they were piloted; if observation was used, whether the context described and were observations made in a variety of circumstances?			
	Were the methods modified during the study? If YES, is this explained?			
	Is there triangulation of data (ie more than one source of data collection)?			
	Do the authors report achieving data saturation?			

5.	Is the relationship between the researcher(s) and participants explored? Did the researcher report critically examining/reflecting on their role and any relationship with participants particularly in relation to formulating research questions and collecting data). Were any potential power relationships involved (ie relationships that could influence in the way in which participants respond)?	
6.	Are ethical issues explicitly discussed?	
	Is there sufficient information on how the research was explained to participants?	
	Was ethical approval sought?	
	Are there any potential confidentiality issues in relation to data collection?	
7.	Is the data analysis/interpretation process	
	described and justified?	
	Is it clear how the themes and concepts were identified in the data?	
	Was the analysis performed by more than one researcher?	
	are negative/discrepant results taken into account?	
8.	Are the findings credible?	
	Are there sufficient data to support the findings?	
	Are sequences from the original data presented (eg quotations) and were these fairly selected?	
	Are the data rich (ie are the participants' voices foregrounded)?	
	Are the explanations for the results plausible and coherent?	
	Are the results of the study compared with those	
	from other studies?	
9.	Is any sponsorship/conflict of interest	
	reported?	
10.	Finallyconsider:	
	Did the authors identify any limitations? Are the conclusions the same in the abstract and the full text?	
Sur	nmary	
Add	comments relating to areas of concern that were avoidable	and a statement indicating if the results are reliable
and,	or useful.	

Specialist Unit for Review Evidence (SURE) 2018. Questions to assist with the critical appraisal of qualitative studies available at: http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/specialist-unit-for-review-evidence/resources/critical-appraisal-checklists

Appendix G: SURE critique of papers included in systematic review

Citation: Broomhead (2013a)		
FOCUS	Yes Can't tell No	COMMENTS
Does the study address a clearly focused question/hypothesis? -Setting? -Perspective? -Intervention or phenomena? -Comparator/ control? -Evaluation/ exploration?		-Clear focus/hypothesis of the study: Mainstream and SEMH schools/ perspective of educators and parents/exploration of stigma experiences
Is the choice of qualitative method appropriate? -Is it an exploration of e.g. behaviour/reasoning/ beliefs)? -Do the authors discuss how they decided which method to use?		-Methodology is appropriate and described: allows an exploration of beliefs/ perceptions/ experiences
Is the sampling strategy clearly described and justified? -Is it clear how participants were selected?		-Selection is clear: Participants from mainstream and SEMH schools within locality of where the researcher was located – using a postal method
-Do the authors explain why they selected these particular participants? -Is detailed information provided about participant characteristics and about those who chose not to participate?		-Participants characteristics are described: various job titles (SENDCOs, teachers, TAs, headteachers), working in the setting for at least five years. Participants supporting range of challenging behaviours – (various different needs of CYP)
Is the method of data collection well described? -Was the setting appropriate for data collection?		-Methods were clear: individual, semi-structured interviews conducted with all of the participants -Interviews between 30 minutes to
-Is it clear what methods were used to collect data? Type of method (e.g., focus groups, interviews, open questionnaire etc)		three hours in length and audio transcribed -Triangulation between parent and educator's perspectives

and tools (e.g. notes, audio, audio visual recording). -Is there sufficient detail of the methods used (e.g. how any topics/questions were generated and whether they were piloted; if observation was used, whether the context described and were observations made in a variety of circumstances?) -Were the methods modified during the study? If YES, is this explained? -Is there triangulation of data (i.e. more than one source of data collection)? -Do the authors report achieving data saturation? the relationship between -No information given about the researcher's relationship to the researcher(s) and participants explored? data and the reflexivity required when undertaking IPA -Did the researcher report critically examining/reflecting on their role and any relationship with participants particularly relation to formulating research questions and collecting data). -Were any potential power relationships involved (i.e. relationships that could influence in the way in which participants respond)? Are ethical issues explicitly discussed? -Ethical issues in relation to the research ado not seem to be -Is there sufficient information on how the explicitly discussed research was explained to participants? -Some evidence that the researcher followed ethical principles (e.g. -Was ethical approval sought? anonymising the names of -Are there any potential confidentiality participants) issues in relation to data collection? Is the data analysis/interpretation -Use of Smith, Flower and Larkin's (2009) IPA analysis to process described and justified? generate themes --Is it clear how the themes and concepts were identified in the data? -Comparison provided between parents and educational professionals perspectives -Was the analysis performed by more than one researcher?

-Are negative/discrepant results taken into	
account?	
Are the findings credible?	-Sufficient rich data is provided
	about the results-alongside
-Are there sufficient data to support the	interpretations from the researcher.
findings?	
	-Quotations are provided to offer
-Are sequences from the original data	evidence for any interpretations of
presented (e.g. quotations) and fairly	the researcher
selected?	
	-Explanations are plausible and
- Are the data rich?	coherent
-Are the explanations for the results	-Criticism as the voices of
plausible and coherent?	headteachers and SENDCos are
And the manufer of the atraday command with	more pronounced in comparison to the other included participants
- Are the results of the study compared with those of other studies?	the other included participants
	Tid is
-Is any sponsorship/conflict of interest	-Little information provided in
reported?	relation to this criterion
-Did the author identify limitations?	-Limitations of the study are not
	described in detail
-Are the conclusions the same in the	
abstract and full text?	-Conclusions are consistent in the
	abstract and full text

Citation: Broomhead (2013b)		
FOCUS	Yes Can't tell No	COMMENTS
Does the study address a clearly focused		-Clear focus/hypothesis: SEMH
question/hypothesis?		and mainstream schools/
		perspective of educators focused
-Setting?		on/exploration of supporting CYP
-Perspective?		with SEMH needs
-Intervention or phenomena?		
-Comparator/ control?		
-Evaluation/ exploration?		

Is the choice of qualitative method appropriate?	-Methodological approach is appropriate and justified: allows an exploration of beliefs/ perceptions/
-Is it an exploration of e.g. behaviour/reasoning/ beliefs)?	experiences
-Do the authors discuss how they decided which method to use?	
Is the sampling strategy clearly described and justified? -Is it clear how participants were selected? -Do the authors explain why they selected these particular participants? -Is detailed information provided about participant characteristics and about those who chose not to participate?	-Selection is not clear: Part of a larger study conducted but little information is given about the process of selecting participants -Participants characteristics are described (e.g. their demographics and different roles) but little information is provided about why these staff were selected.
Is the method of data collection well described? -Was the setting appropriate for data	-Methods were clear: individual, semi-structured interviews conducted with all of the participants
-Is it clear what methods were used to collect data? Type of method (e.g., focus groups, interviews, open questionnaire etc) and tools (e.g. notes, audio, audio visual recording).	-Interviews between 30 minutes to 90 minutes in length and audio transcribed -Triangulation between educators in mainstream and those in SEMH settings
-Is there sufficient detail of the methods used (e.g. how any topics/questions were generated and whether they were piloted; if observation was used, whether the context described and were observations made in a variety of circumstances?)	
-Were the methods modified during the study? If YES, is this explained?	
-Is there triangulation of data (i.e. more than one source of data collection)?	
-Do the authors report achieving data saturation?	
Is the relationship between the researcher(s) and participants explored?	-No information given about the researcher's relationship to the

-Did the researcher report critically	data and the reflexivity required
examining/reflecting on their role and any	when undertaking IPA
relationship with participants particularly	man and standing 11 11
in relation to formulating research	
questions and collecting data).	
questions and concerning data).	
-Were any potential power relationships	
involved (i.e. relationships that could	
influence in the way in which participants	
respond)?	
Are ethical issues explicitly discussed?	-Ethical issues in relation to the
	research do not seem to be
-Is there sufficient information on how the	explicitly discussed
research was explained to participants?	
	-Some evidence that the researcher
-Was ethical approval sought?	followed ethical principles (e.g.
	anonymising the names of
-Are there any potential confidentiality	participants and gaining consent
issues in relation to data collection?	etc)
Is the data analysis/interpretation	-Use of Smith, Flower and
process described and justified?	Larkin's (2009) IPA analysis to
•	generate themes -
-Is it clear how the themes and concepts	
were identified in the data?	-Comparison provided between
	mainstream and SEMH
-Was the analysis performed by more than	educational professionals
one researcher?	perspectives
0110 1000 111011	
-Are negative/discrepant results taken into	
account?	
Are the findings credible?	-Sufficient rich data is provided
	about the results-alongside
-Are there sufficient data to support the	interpretations from the researcher.
findings?	1
8	-Quotations are provided to offer
-Are sequences from the original data	evidence for any interpretations of
presented (e.g. quotations) and fairly	the researcher
selected?	
	-Explanations are plausible and
- Are the data rich?	coherent
-Are the explanations for the results	
plausible and coherent?	
1	
- Are the results of the study compared with	
those of other studies?	
-Is any sponsorship/conflict of interest	-Little information provided in
reported?	relation to this criterion
I	TOTAL TO MINO VIIION

-Did the author identify limitations?	-Limitations of the study are not described in detail
-Are the conclusions the same in the abstract and full text?	-Conclusions are consistent in the abstract and full text

Citation: <u>Broomhead (2014)</u>		
FOCUS	Yes Can't tell No	COMMENTS
Does the study address a clearly focused question/hypothesis? -Setting? -Perspective? -Intervention or phenomena? -Comparator/ control? -Evaluation/ exploration?		Clear focus/hypothesis: SEMH and mainstream educational professionals/ Perspective of educators focused on/ Exploration of supporting CYP with SEMH needs
Is the choice of qualitative method appropriate? -Is it an exploration of e.g. behaviour/reasoning/ beliefs)? -Do the authors discuss how they decided which method to use?		-Description is given about choice of method – researchers note the ability of IPA to allow the researcher to reflect in depth about topics that are sensitive (e.g. SEN) -Exploration of beliefs/ perceptions/ experiences -Use of IPA methodology to
Is the sampling strategy clearly described and justified? -Is it clear how participants were selected? -Do the authors explain why they selected these particular participants? -Is detailed information provided about participant characteristics and about those who chose not to participate?		explore lived experiences -Part of a larger study conducted – information is given about selection (e.g. approaching schools in different LAs and managing the sample based on response rate) -Participants characteristics are described (e.g. their demographics and different roles) but little information is provided about why these staff were selected.
Is the method of data collection well described?		-Methods were clear: individual, semi-structured interviews conducted with all of the participants

-Interviews between 30 minutes to -Was the setting appropriate for data collection? 90 minutes in length and audio transcribed -Is it clear what methods were used to collect data? Type of method (e.g., focus -Triangulation between educators groups, interviews, open questionnaire etc) in mainstream and those in SEMH and tools (e.g. notes, audio, audio visual settings recording). -Is there sufficient detail of the methods used (e.g. how any topics/questions were generated and whether they were piloted; if observation was used, whether the context described and were observations made in a variety of circumstances?) -Were the methods modified during the study? If YES, is this explained? -Is there triangulation of data (i.e. more than one source of data collection)? -Do the authors report achieving data saturation? the relationship between the -No information given about the researcher(s) and participants explored? researcher's relationship to the data and the reflexivity required when undertaking IPA -Did the researcher report critically examining/reflecting on their role and any relationship with participants particularly relation to formulating research questions and collecting data). -Were any potential power relationships involved (i.e. relationships that could influence in the way in which participants respond)? Are ethical issues explicitly discussed? -Ethical issues in relation to the research are not discussed -Is there sufficient information on how the -Some evidence that the researcher research was explained to participants? followed ethical principles (e.g. anonymising the names -Was ethical approval sought? participants and gaining consent etc) -Are there any potential confidentiality issues in relation to data collection? Is the data analysis/interpretation -Use of Smith. Flower Larkin's (2009) IPA analysis to process described and justified? generate themes

-Is it clear how the themes and concepts were identified in the data? -Was the analysis performed by more than one researcher?	-Comparison provided between mainstream and SEMH educational professionals perspectives
-Are negative/discrepant results taken into account?	
Are the findings credible? -Are there sufficient data to support the findings? -Are sequences from the original data presented (e.g. quotations) and fairly selected? - Are the data rich? -Are the explanations for the results plausible and coherent? - Are the results of the study compared with	-Sufficient rich data is provided about the results—alongside interpretations from the researcher. -Quotations are provided to offer evidence for any interpretations of the researcher -Explanations are plausible and coherent
those of other studies? -Is any sponsorship/conflict of interest reported?	-Little information provided in relation to this criterion
-Did the author identify limitations? -Are the conclusions the same in the abstract and full text?	-Limitations of the study are not described in detail -Conclusions are consistent in the abstract and full text

Citation: Broomhead (2016)		
FOCUS	Yes	COMMENTS
	Can't	
	tell	
	No	
Does the study address a clearly focused		-Focus/hypothesis is clear and
question/hypothesis?		justified: Perspective of SEMH
		school staff/ Exploration of
-Setting?		stigmatisation experiences
-Perspective?		
-Intervention or phenomena?		
-Comparator/ control?		
-Evaluation/ exploration?		

T /1 1 ' 6 1' /' /1 1	D : /: ' 1 / 1 :
Is the choice of qualitative method	-Description is given about choice
appropriate?	of method: Use of IPA
**	methodology to explore lived
T '4 1 4' C	
-Is it an exploration of e.g.	experiences. Researchers note the
behaviour/reasoning/ beliefs)?	ability of IPA to allow sense to be
	made of key life experiences
	made of key fire experiences
-Do the authors discuss how they decided	
which method to use?	-Exploration of perceptions/
	experiences
	1
Is the sampling strategy clearly	-Clear sampling strategy
described and justified?	described: approaching SEMH
	schools for participants
	schools for participants
-Is it clear how participants were selected?	-Participants characteristics are
is it clear now participants were selected:	1
	described (e.g. their demographics
-Do the authors explain why they selected	and different roles) but little
1 .	,
these particular participants?	information is provided about why
	these staff were selected.
-Is detailed information provided about	
participant characteristics and about those	
who chose not to participate?	
1 1	-Methods were clear: individual,
Is the method of data collection well	
described?	semi-structured interviews
	conducted with all of the
-Was the setting appropriate for data	participants. Use of open-ended
collection?	questions.
	•
	T
-Is it clear what methods were used to	-Interviews on average 60 minutes
collect data? Type of method (e.g., focus	long – explanation and justification
1	of different terms used in interview
groups, interviews, open questionnaire etc)	
and tools (e.g. notes, audio, audio visual	questions providing additional
recording).	transparency.
iccording).	tanoparonoj.
-Is there sufficient detail of the methods	
used (e.g. how any topics/questions were	
generated and whether they were piloted; if	
observation was used, whether the context	
•	
described and were observations made in a	
variety of circumstances?)	
-Were the methods modified during the	
study? If YES, is this explained?	
study: If 1Lb, is this explained:	
-Is there triangulation of data (i.e. more	
than one source of data collection)?	
-Do the authors report achieving data	
1	
saturation?	

Is the relationship between the - Little information given about the researcher(s) and participants explored? researcher's relationship with the data -Did the researcher report critically examining/reflecting on their role and any -Some information is given about relationship with participants particularly the process of reflection used to relation to formulating research think about the participant's questions and collecting data). experiences, however little detail is given -Were any potential power relationships involved (i.e. relationships that could influence in the way in which participants respond)? Are ethical issues explicitly discussed? -Ethical issues in relation to the research are not discussed -Is there sufficient information on how the research was explained to participants? -Was ethical approval sought? -Are there any potential confidentiality issues in relation to data collection? Is the data analysis/interpretation -Use of Smith, Flower and process described and justified? Larkin's (2009) IPA analysis to generate themes -Is it clear how the themes and concepts were identified in the data? -Themes are described in detail, taking into account convergence -Was the analysis performed by more than and divergence one researcher? -Are negative/discrepant results taken into account? Are the findings credible? -Sufficient rich data is provided results-alongside about the interpretations from the researcher. -Are there sufficient data to support the findings? -Quotations are provided to offer evidence for any interpretations of -Are sequences from the original data the researcher presented (e.g. quotations) and fairly selected? -Explanations are plausible and coherent - Are the data rich? -Are the explanations for the results plausible and coherent? - Are the results of the study compared with those of other studies?

-Is any sponsorship/conflict of interest	-Little information provided in
reported?	relation to this criterion
-Did the author identify limitations?	-Limitations of the study are not
	described in detail
-Are the conclusions the same in the	
abstract and full text?	-Conclusions are consistent in the
	abstract and full text

Citation: Farouk (2014)		
FOCUS	Yes Can't tell No	COMMENTS
Does the study address a clearly focused question/hypothesis? -Setting? -Perspective? -Intervention or phenomena? -Comparator/ control? -Evaluation/ exploration?		-Clear question, aim and approach of the research: exploring teacher's understanding of themselves in transition from a mainstream environment to a PRU
Is the choice of qualitative method appropriate? -Is it an exploration of e.g. behaviour/reasoning/ beliefs)? -Do the authors discuss how they decided which method to use?		-Detailed account of the use of IPA as an approach to investigate how self-understanding changes over time -A clear rationale is given about the choice of IPA over other methods (e.g. discourse analysis)
Is the sampling strategy clearly described and justified? -Is it clear how participants were selected? -Do the authors explain why they selected these particular participants? -Is detailed information provided about participant characteristics and about those who chose not to participate?		-Sampling strategy is described: selection was based on having taught in a mainstream school and moved to a PRU -Three participants and their backgrounds/ characteristics are described in-depth by the researcher
Is the method of data collection well described? -Was the setting appropriate for data collection?		-Data collection approach is detailed (e.g. semi-structured interviews occurring on two accounts), in addition to the tools used (e.g. audio recording)

-Is it clear what methods were used to collect data? Type of method (e.g., focus groups, interviews, open questionnaire etc) and tools (e.g. notes, audio, audio visual recording). -Is there sufficient detail of the methods used (e.g. how any topics/questions were generated and whether they were piloted; if observation was used, whether the context described and were observations made in a variety of circumstances?) -Were the methods modified during the study? If YES, is this explained?	-Information is provided about the interview process and the approach to investigation
-Is there triangulation of data (i.e. more than one source of data collection)?-Do the authors report achieving data saturation?	
Is the relationship between the researcher(s) and participants explored? -Did the researcher report critically examining/reflecting on their role and any relationship with participants particularly in relation to formulating research questions and collecting data). -Were any potential power relationships involved (i.e. relationships that could influence in the way in which participants respond)?	-The researcher provides a description of their own interests in the study (e.g. their work as an EP in PRUs), in addition to their previous research interests. -Issues of bracketing off and personal experiences are also noted and discussed
-Is there sufficient information on how the research was explained to participants? -Was ethical approval sought? -Are there any potential confidentiality issues in relation to data collection? Is the data analysis/interpretation process described and justified?	-Ethical issues (e.g. rights to confidentiality, anonymity, withdrawal) are noted by the researcher, alongside consent forms and information sheets. -The researcher details the data analysis process and the themes
-Is it clear how the themes and concepts were identified in the data?	developed – convergence and divergence between participants is explored

-Was the analysis performed by more than one researcher?	
-Are negative/discrepant results taken into account?	
Are the findings credible?	-Sufficient rich data is provided
-Are there sufficient data to support the findings?	about the results—alongside interpretations from the researcher.
-Are sequences from the original data presented (e.g. quotations) and fairly selected?	-Quotations are provided to offer evidence for any interpretations of the researcher
- Are the data rich?	-Explanations are plausible and coherent
-Are the explanations for the results plausible and coherent?	
- Are the results of the study compared with those of other studies?	
Are the findings credible?	-Sufficient rich data is provided
-Are there sufficient data to support the findings?	about the results–alongside interpretations from the researcher.
-Are sequences from the original data presented (e.g. quotations) and fairly selected?	-Quotations are provided to offer evidence for any interpretations of the researcher
- Are the data rich?	-Explanations are plausible and coherent
-Are the explanations for the results plausible and coherent?	
- Are the results of the study compared with those of other studies?	
-Is any sponsorship/conflict of interest reported?	-The researcher was an EP in the school where the research took place, with this potentially impacting on the analysis. Consideration of this was reported by the researcher and they engaged in a process of bracketing off
-Did the author identify limitations?	-Incomplete information about the limitations of the study are given,
-Are the conclusions the same in the abstract and full text?	although there was some attempt to consider criticisms of IPA as a methodological approach

Citation: Farrell, Duckworth, Reece & Rigby (2016)		
FOCUS	Yes Can't tell No	COMMENTS
Does the study address a clearly focused question/hypothesis? -Setting? -Perspective? -Intervention or phenomena? -Comparator/ control?		-Difficult to understand the focus/hypothesis of the research – information that is provided is unclear -Clear setting: an AP free school
-Evaluation/ exploration? Is the choice of qualitative method appropriate? -Is it an exploration of e.g. behaviour/reasoning/ beliefs)? -Do the authors discuss how they decided which method to use?		-Clear qualitative method employed: exploration of experiences and discourse about the AP free school -Clear rationale of methodology chosen – although description of method could be unclear
Is the sampling strategy clearly described and justified?		-Clear sampling strategy: participants were volunteers from one AP site
-Is it clear how participants were selected?-Do the authors explain why they selected these particular participants?-Is detailed information provided about		-Detailed information is given about the three participants (Headteacher, principal and trainee teacher)
participant characteristics and about those who chose not to participate?		
Is the method of data collection well described? -Was the setting appropriate for data collection?		-Clear information is given about the data collection approach: semi- structured interviews (two sets of interviews) -The researcher gives detail about
-Is it clear what methods were used to collect data? Type of method (e.g., focus groups, interviews, open questionnaire etc) and tools (e.g. notes, audio, audio visual recording).		the interview questions asked and any changes made to the approach (e.g. modification of the interview questions)
-Is there sufficient detail of the methods used (e.g. how any topics/questions were generated and whether they were piloted; if		

observation was used, whether the context described and were observations made in a variety of circumstances?) -Were the methods modified during the study? If YES, is this explained? -Is there triangulation of data (i.e. more than one source of data collection)?	
-Do the authors report achieving data saturation?	
Is the relationship between the researcher(s) and participants explored? -Did the researcher report critically examining/reflecting on their role and any relationship with participants particularly in relation to formulating research questions and collecting data).	-No information is given about the researcher's relationship to the data
-Were any potential power relationships involved (i.e. relationships that could influence in the way in which participants respond)?	
Are ethical issues explicitly discussed? -Is there sufficient information on how the research was explained to participants?	-Researcher notes that ethical issues are considered and that the study follows the Ethical guidelines
-Was ethical approval sought? -Are there any potential confidentiality issues in relation to data collection?	-The study also uses Foucault's Ethics as a framework to understand narratives of the participants
Is the data analysis/interpretation process described and justified? -Is it clear how the themes and concepts	-Themes are clear in the researcher's findings – comparison is given between the different participants
were identified in the data? -Was the analysis performed by more than one researcher?	
-Are negative/discrepant results taken into account?	
Are the findings credible?	-Findings are complicated by
-Are there sufficient data to support the findings?	complex jargon

-Are sequences from the original data	-Quotations are provided to offer
presented (e.g. quotations) and fairly	evidence for any interpretations of
selected?	the researcher
- Are the data rich?	
-Are the explanations for the results	
_	
plausible and coherent?	
Are the results of the study compared with	
- Are the results of the study compared with	
those of other studies?	
-Is any sponsorship/conflict of interest	-Little information provided in
reported?	relation to this criterion
-Did the author identify limitations?	-The author does not address
	limitations in the discussion of the
-Are the conclusions the same in the	research piece.
abstract and full text?	1
	-The abstract and conclusions are
	consistent although the use of
	technological language makes
	understanding the paper's findings
	difficult.

Citation: Fitzsimmons, Trigg & Premkumar (2018)		
FOCUS	Yes Can't tell No	COMMENTS
Does the study address a clearly focused question/hypothesis? -Setting? -Perspective? -Intervention or phenomena? -Comparator/ control?		-Clear question, aim and approach of the research: exploring the teacher-student relationships with excluded CYP in APs
-Evaluation/ exploration? Is the choice of qualitative method appropriate? -Is it an exploration of e.g. behaviour/reasoning/ beliefs)? -Do the authors discuss how they decided		-Detailed account of the use of IPA as a qualitative approach to investigate relationships -Researchers give clear rationale for methodological stance
which method to use? Is the sampling strategy clearly described and justified?		-Information is given about the sampling strategy (e.g. recruitment via email) and the

characteristics of the participants (e.g. in a detailed table of -Is it clear how participants were selected? participant information) -Do the authors explain why they selected these particular participants? -Reference to the homogeneity of the participants is provided, -Is detailed information provided about influencing how sampling was carried out participant characteristics and about those who chose not to participate? Is the method of data collection well -Data collection approach described? detailed (e.g. semi-structured interviews), in addition to the -Was the setting appropriate for data tools used (e.g. audio recording) collection? -The researcher details -Is it clear what methods were used to procedure that was undertaken collect data? Type of method (e.g., focus and the location of interviews groups, interviews, open questionnaire etc) (e.g. in researcher's office or participants home) and tools (e.g. notes, audio, audio visual recording). -Is there sufficient detail of the methods used (e.g. how any topics/questions were generated and whether they were piloted; if observation was used, whether the context described and were observations made in a variety of circumstances?) -Were the methods modified during the study? If YES, is this explained? -Is there triangulation of data (i.e. more than one source of data collection)? -Do the authors report achieving data saturation? Is the relationship between -The researcher details their own the researcher(s) and participants explored? interests in the research and their connection to the data. The -Did the researcher report critically process of bracketing off is examining/reflecting on their role and any considered to ensure that prerelationship with participants particularly existing assumptions do relation to formulating research impact on theme development questions and collecting data). -Were any potential power relationships involved (i.e. relationships that could influence in the way in which participants respond)?

Ana othical issues avaliaitly discussed	Clear information is given shout
Are ethical issues explicitly discussed?	-Clear information is given about ethics and the approval gained
-Is there sufficient information on how the	from the University in which the
	research was undertaken
research was explained to participants?	research was undertaken
W 41' 1 1 140	
-Was ethical approval sought?	-Reference is also made to BPS
	guidelines
-Are there any potential confidentiality	
issues in relation to data collection?	
Is the data analysis/interpretation	-The researcher describes the
process described and justified?	process of generating three
	superordinate themes and four
-Is it clear how the themes and concepts	subordinate themes and notes the
were identified in the data?	convergence and divergence
	between participants
-Was the analysis performed by more than	range paragraphic
one researcher?	- The use of a combination of
one researcher.	steps from Larkin and Thompson
-Are negative/discrepant results taken into	(2012) and Pietkiewicz and Smith
	· · · · · ·
account?	(2014) are noted with the use of a
11.0	pre-existing relational framework
Are the findings credible?	-Sufficient rich data is provided
	about the results-alongside
-Are there sufficient data to support the	interpretations from the
findings?	researcher.
-Are sequences from the original data	-Quotations are provided to offer
presented (e.g. quotations) and fairly	evidence for any interpretations of
selected?	the researcher
- Are the data rich?	-Explanations are plausible and
	coherent
-Are the explanations for the results	
plausible and coherent?	
praduction and concrete.	
- Are the results of the study compared with	
those of other studies?	
	-Researcher was also a tutor
-Is any sponsorship/conflict of interest	
reported?	within the same organisation,
	although their closeness to the
	research is reflected upon
-Did the author identify limitations?	-The author identifies limitations
	of the study in relation to
-Are the conclusions the same in the	assumptions made by the
abstract and full text?	researcher and lack of
	generalisability.
	-Consistency is observed between
	the conclusions of the study and
	the abstract
	and abbitable

Citation: Hart (2012)		
FOCUS	Yes Can't tell No	COMMENTS
Does the study address a clearly focused question/hypothesis? -Setting? -Perspective? -Intervention or phenomena? -Comparator/ control? -Evaluation/ exploration?		-Clear question, aim and approach of the research: exploring the protective factors and risks for excluded CYP – using CYP and staff members
Is the choice of qualitative method appropriate? -Is it an exploration of e.g.		-Clear choice and suitable methodological approach (using thematic analysis)
behaviour/reasoning/ beliefs)? -Do the authors discuss how they decided which method to use?		-Authors give limited information about choice or comparisons of methodological approach
Is the sampling strategy clearly described and justified? -Is it clear how participants were selected? -Do the authors explain why they selected these particular participants?		-Information is given about the sampling strategy (e.g. from one PRU in a small purposive sampling approach) and the characteristics of the participants (e.g. their job roles)
-Is detailed information provided about participant characteristics and about those who chose not to participate?		-Choice of staff is described: the use of a sample reflecting one third of the PRU staff
Is the method of data collection well described? -Was the setting appropriate for data collection?		-Data collection approach is detailed (e.g. semi-structured interviews) and the tools (e.g. Dictaphone) and programmes used (e.g. QSR NVivo Version 8)
-Is it clear what methods were used to collect data? Type of method (e.g., focus groups, interviews, open questionnaire etc) and tools (e.g. notes, audio, audio visual recording).		-The researcher details the procedure and approach to data collection for both staff and CYP
-Is there sufficient detail of the methods used (e.g. how any topics/questions were generated and whether they were piloted; if observation was used, whether the context		

described and were observations made in a variety of circumstances?)	
-Were the methods modified during the study? If YES, is this explained?	
-Is there triangulation of data (i.e. more than one source of data collection)?	
-Do the authors report achieving data saturation?	
Is the relationship between the	-Little information is provided
-Did the researcher report critically examining/reflecting on their role and any	about the relationship between the researcher/ participant or the power differential
relationship with participants particularly in relation to formulating research questions and collecting data).	
-Were any potential power relationships involved (i.e. relationships that could influence in the way in which participants	
respond)?	D - 11 C - 11 1 1
Are ethical issues explicitly discussed?	-Details of ethical approval process
	is provided by the researcher
-Is there sufficient information on how the	Tal: 1 19 1 9 1
research was explained to participants? -Was ethical approval sought?	-Ethical dilemmas are described and addressed (e.g. the interviews of CYP)
The state of the s	
-Are there any potential confidentiality issues in relation to data collection?	
Is the data analysis/interpretation process described and justified?	-A clear description of the process of data analysis is described (e.g. the generation of codes)
-Is it clear how the themes and concepts were identified in the data?	-Exclusion and rationale of data unrelated to the questions is
-Was the analysis performed by more than one researcher?	provided
-Are negative/discrepant results taken into account?	
Are the findings credible?	-Sufficient rich data is provided
-Are there sufficient data to support the	about the results-alongside interpretations from the researcher.
findings?	-Explanations are plausible and coherent

-Are sequences from the original data presented (e.g. quotations) and fairly selected?	-Tables are used to present findings in accessible format
- Are the data rich?	
-Are the explanations for the results plausible and coherent?	
- Are the results of the study compared with those of other studies?	
-Is any sponsorship/conflict of interest reported?	-No information given about conflicts of interest
-Did the author identify limitations? -Are the conclusions the same in the abstract and full text?	-The researcher describes the limitations of the study (e.g. the small sample size and the use of opinions from staff)
	-Consistency is observed between the conclusions of the study and the abstract

Citation: Kalu (2002)		
FOCUS	Yes	COMMENTS
	Can't	
	tell	
	No	
Does the study address a clearly focused		-Clear description is given by the
question/hypothesis?		researcher about the questions
		being addressed (e.g. the task of
-Setting?		the teacher with challenging CYP)
-Perspective?		
-Intervention or phenomena?		
-Comparator/ control?		
-Evaluation/ exploration?		
Is the choice of qualitative method		-Research was descriptive,
appropriate?		following the approach of
		psychoanalytic case studies
-Is it an exploration of e.g.		
behaviour/reasoning/ beliefs)?		-Qualitative approach is suitable
		for the work undertaken
-Do the authors discuss how they decided		
which method to use?		-Little information is given about
		the rationale of the researcher in
		choosing approach
Is the sampling strategy clearly		-The researcher provides no
described and justified?		information about how the students
		were selected for the research

-Participant characteristics and -Is it clear how participants were selected? descriptions of their background are provided by the researcher -Do the authors explain why they selected these particular participants? -Is detailed information provided about participant characteristics and about those who chose not to participate? Is the method of data collection well -The settings were appropriate for described? the data collection (e.g. taken place in schools/APs) -Was the setting appropriate for data collection? -Little information/detail is given about how the data was collected (e.g. little reference is given to -Is it clear what methods were used to collect data? Type of method (e.g., focus whether it was predominantly observations groups, interviews, open questionnaire etc) reflections. and tools (e.g. notes, audio, audio visual individual work) recording). -Is there sufficient detail of the methods used (e.g. how any topics/questions were generated and whether they were piloted; if observation was used, whether the context described and were observations made in a variety of circumstances? -Were the methods modified during the study? If YES, is this explained? -Is there triangulation of data (i.e. more than one source of data collection)? -Do the authors report achieving data saturation? Is the relationship -The researcher includes their own between researcher(s) and participants explored? reflections. emotions and questions posed whilst working -Did the researcher report critically with the CYP examining/reflecting on their role and any relationship with participants particularly -Power relationships may have relation to formulating research existed in relation to the researcher being a teacher working with the questions and collecting data). **CYP** -Were any potential power relationships involved (i.e. relationships that could influence in the way in which participants respond)?

Are ethical issues explicitly discussed?	-Little information is given about
	whether ethical issues are
-Is there sufficient information on how the	considered/ethical approval
research was explained to participants?	process
-Was ethical approval sought?	-It is unclear how the researcher
	ensured confidentiality as limited
-Are there any potential confidentiality	information is provided
issues in relation to data collection?	
Is the data analysis/interpretation	-No information is given about the
process described and justified?	process of interpretation
	-
-Is it clear how the themes and concepts	-One researcher's reflective
were identified in the data?	accounts of their work whilst
	applying psychoanalytic ideas
-Was the analysis performed by more than	
one researcher?	
-Are negative/discrepant results taken into	
account?	
Are the findings credible?	-Rich data is provided about the
	cases -alongside interpretations
-Are there sufficient data to support the	from the researcher.
findings?	
	-Reflections are provided to offer
-Are sequences from the original data	evidence for any interpretations of
presented (e.g. quotations) and fairly	the researcher
selected?	
	-Explanations are plausible and fit
- Are the data rich?	with the psychodynamic paradigm
Are the explonations for the results	-Comparisons are not drawn as this
-Are the explanations for the results plausible and coherent?	does not fit with the approach of
prausible and concrent:	case studies
- Are the results of the study compared with	cuse studies
those of other studies?	
-Is any sponsorship/conflict of interest	-No information is given about
reported?	this.
-Did the author identify limitations?	-Limitations of the study are not
	discussed
-Are the conclusions the same in the	
abstract and full text?	

Citation: <u>Lawrence (2011)</u>		
FOCUS	Yes Can't tell No	COMMENTS
Does the study address a clearly focused question/hypothesis? -Setting? -Perspective? -Intervention or phenomena? -Comparator/ control? -Evaluation/ exploration?		-Clear question, aim and approach of the research: exploring the factors facilitating reintegration of excluded CYP (using mainstream and PRU staff)
Is the choice of qualitative method appropriate? -Is it an exploration of e.g. behaviour/reasoning/ beliefs)? -Do the authors discuss how they decided which method to use?		-Researchers provide a description of the use of focus groups as a qualitative methodological approach – clear description and rationale is provided -Research takes an explorative focus
Is the sampling strategy clearly described and justified? -Is it clear how participants were selected?		-Researcher provides clear description of the sampling strategy employed and location of focus groups (e.g. neutral location for both groups)
-Do the authors explain why they selected these particular participants?-Is detailed information provided about participant characteristics and about those who chose not to participate?		-Role and descriptions of the staff included are provided by the author -Rationale for the selection of these participants is limited
Is the method of data collection well described? -Was the setting appropriate for data collection?		-Author provides a clear description of the data collection (e.g. location and focus group arrangements)
-Is it clear what methods were used to collect data? Type of method (e.g., focus groups, interviews, open questionnaire etc) and tools (e.g. notes, audio, audio visual recording).		-Questions and areas of discussion for the focus groups are provided, in addition to the use of probes and open-ended prompts -Unclear whether this was piloted as a measure prior to study
-Is there sufficient detail of the methods used (e.g. how any topics/questions were generated and whether they were piloted; if observation was used, whether the context		commencing

described and were observations made in a variety of circumstances?	-Data was triangulated – mainstream and AP views are provided
-Were the methods modified during the study? If YES, is this explained?	provided
-Is there triangulation of data (i.e. more than one source of data collection)?	
-Do the authors report achieving data saturation?	
Is the relationship between the	-Limited information is given
researcher(s) and participants explored?	about the researcher's relationship
	to the data.
-Did the researcher report critically	
examining/reflecting on their role and any	-Researcher describes the reflexive
relationship with participants particularly	approach undertaken to ensure
in relation to formulating research	transparency (e.g. the use of a
questions and collecting data).	reflective diary)
-Were any potential power relationships	
involved (i.e. relationships that could	
influence in the way in which participants	
respond)?	NT : C : 1.1.1
Are ethical issues explicitly discussed?	-No information is provided about ethics or approval processes
-Is there sufficient information on how the	ethics of approval processes
research was explained to participants?	
-Was ethical approval sought?	
-Are there any potential confidentiality	
issues in relation to data collection?	
Is the data analysis/interpretation	-The approach to data analysis is
process described and justified?	clearly described, with the
	rationale for thematic analysis
-Is it clear how the themes and concepts	detailed and justified (e.g. used as
were identified in the data?	it provides clear, rich findings)
-Was the analysis performed by more than	-Theme generation was clear,
one researcher?	through the use of thematic maps
one researcher.	anough the use of thematic maps
-Are negative/discrepant results taken into	
account?	
Are the findings credible?	-Sufficient rich data is provided
	about the results-alongside
-Are there sufficient data to support the	interpretations from the researcher.
findings?	

-Are sequences from the original data presented (e.g. quotations) and fairly selected?	-Quotations are provided to offer evidence for any interpretations of the researcher
- Are the data rich?	-Explanations are plausible and coherent
-Are the explanations for the results	
plausible and coherent?	-Amalgamation of staff views make it difficult to differentiate
- Are the results of the study compared with	perspectives and draw
those of other studies?	comparisons
-Is any sponsorship/conflict of interest	-No information is provided in
reported?	relation to this criterion
-Did the author identify limitations?	-The researcher does not detail
	limitations of the study
-Are the conclusions the same in the	
abstract and full text?	

Citation: <u>Levinson & Thompson (2016)</u>		
FOCUS	Yes Can't tell No	COMMENTS
Does the study address a clearly focused		-Study addresses a clearly defined
<pre>question/hypothesis? -Setting? -Perspective?</pre>		question – looking at reintegration and providing a voice to those working and educated in APs
-Intervention or phenomena? -Comparator/ control? -Evaluation/ exploration?		
Is the choice of qualitative method appropriate?		-Study takes an explorative stance using interviews with those in APs
-Is it an exploration of e.g. behaviour/reasoning/ beliefs)?-Do the authors discuss how they decided which method to use?		-Little information is given about the rationale of the researchers for using this methodology of choice
Is the sampling strategy clearly described and justified? -Is it clear how participants were selected?		-The authors provide clear information about the school and the participants included within the study (e.g. characteristics of the students and staff)

-It is difficult to tell the number of -Do the authors explain why they selected these particular participants? participants included within the sample -Is detailed information provided about -Limited information is given participant characteristics and about those sampling strategy about the who chose not to participate? utilised to obtain participants Is the method of data collection well -The method of data collection is described? suitable and in-depth information about the procedures used are -Was the setting appropriate for data given (e.g. the use of interviews with both student and staff groups) collection? -Is it clear what methods were used to -The researchers provide collect data? Type of method (e.g., focus information about the focus of the groups, interviews, open questionnaire etc) interviews, with staff asked about perceptions of reintegration and and tools (e.g. notes, audio, audio visual recording). liaison between schools/ pupils experiences of these settings were also elicited -Is there sufficient detail of the methods used (e.g. how any topics/questions were generated and whether they were piloted; if -Data is triangulated, with observation was used, whether the context comparison between staff and pupils to facilitate understanding described and were observations made in a of the phenomena under variety of circumstances? investigation -Were the methods modified during the study? If YES, is this explained? -Is there triangulation of data (i.e. more than one source of data collection)? -Do the authors report achieving data saturation? Is the relationship between -The authors highlight their own researcher(s) and participants explored? work within AP settings and with marginalised groups, noting how this evoked their interest -Did the researcher report critically examining/reflecting on their role and any relationship with participants particularly -Little information is given and considered about the interaction of in relation to formulating research questions and collecting data). these characteristics -Were any potential power relationships involved (i.e. relationships that could influence in the way in which participants respond)? Are ethical issues explicitly discussed? -Ethical issues are not explicitly discussed by the researchers and core ethical standards are not

-Is there sufficient information on how the research was explained to participants?	included (e.g. the process of gaining informed consent)
-Was ethical approval sought? -Are there any potential confidentiality issues in relation to data collection?	-Some information about anonymity of the school and the CYP is provided
Is the data analysis/interpretation process described and justified? -Is it clear how the themes and concepts were identified in the data? -Was the analysis performed by more than one researcher? -Are negative/discrepant results taken into account?	-The researchers do not provide information about the data analysis process and it is unclear how this was completed -There is some mention of an ethnographic framework being applied, although information is minimal -Perspectives of staff/students are grouped together
	-Two researchers collected data separately (e.g. one focusing on pupils and one on staff)
Are the findings credible? -Are there sufficient data to support the	-Sufficient rich data is provided about the results—alongside interpretations from the researcher.
findings? -Are sequences from the original data presented (e.g. quotations) and fairly selected?	-Quotations are provided to offer evidence for any interpretations of the researcher -Explanations are plausible and
- Are the data rich?	coherent
-Are the explanations for the results plausible and coherent?	-Mention of percentages but unclear where this data is generated from
- Are the results of the study compared with those of other studies?	
-Is any sponsorship/conflict of interest reported?-Did the author identify limitations?	-No information is given on this criterion -The researchers do not discuss
-Are the conclusions the same in the	limitations of the study

Citation: Malcolm (2018b)		
FOCUS	Yes Can't tell No	COMMENTS
Does the study address a clearly focused question/hypothesis? -Setting? -Perspective? -Intervention or phenomena? -Comparator/ control?		-Study addresses a clearly defined question – exploring the views of AP headteachers
-Evaluation/ exploration? Is the choice of qualitative method appropriate? -Is it an exploration of e.g. behaviour/reasoning/ beliefs)? -Do the authors discuss how they decided which method to use?		-The use of a survey and interviews is appropriate and choice of methodological approach is clearly defined -The researcher provides information about their rationale for the approach, although there is no comparison with other methodologies
Is the sampling strategy clearly described and justified?		-The researchers clearly define the sampling strategy (e.g. snowballing)
 -Is it clear how participants were selected? -Do the authors explain why they selected these particular participants? -Is detailed information provided about participant characteristics and about those who chose not to participate? 		-Information is given about the characteristics (e.g. the length of time they worked in an AP) and demographics of the headteachers taking part (e.g. gender) -Information is provided as to why headteachers were chosen as the sample
Is the method of data collection well described?		-The methods of data collection are well described
-Was the setting appropriate for data collection? -Is it clear what methods were used to collect data? Type of method (e.g., focus groups, interviews, open questionnaire etc) and tools (e.g. notes, audio, audio visual recording).		-Information is given about the pilot used (e.g. how cognitive interviewing was used prior to sending out the surveys to headteachers)

-Is there sufficient detail of the methods used (e.g. how any topics/questions were generated and whether they were piloted; if observation was used, whether the context described and were observations made in a variety of circumstances? -Were the methods modified during the study? If YES, is this explained?	
-Is there triangulation of data (i.e. more than one source of data collection)?	
-Do the authors report achieving data saturation? Is the relationship between the	-The researcher noted their
-Did the researcher report critically examining/reflecting on their role and any relationship with participants particularly in relation to formulating research questions and collecting data).	ongoing involvement within APs and the risk of bias. Amendments were made to minimise this (e.g. the use of reflection and supervision)
-Were any potential power relationships involved (i.e. relationships that could influence in the way in which participants respond)?	
Are ethical issues explicitly discussed?	-Ethical issues are discussed -
-Is there sufficient information on how the research was explained to participants?	primarily in relation to the risk of bias as a result of the researchers ongoing involvement within APs
-Was ethical approval sought?	-Information about ethical approval is provided (obtained
-Are there any potential confidentiality issues in relation to data collection?	through the university)
Is the data analysis/interpretation process described and justified?	-Limited information is given about the data analysis and interpretation process. The
-Is it clear how the themes and concepts were identified in the data?	interpretation process. The researchers note that they undertake a simple thematic analysis with no further
-Was the analysis performed by more than one researcher?	information provided
-Are negative/discrepant results taken into account?	

Are the findings credible?	-Sufficient rich data is provided
-Are there sufficient data to support the	about the results-alongside interpretations from the researcher.
findings? -Are sequences from the original data	-Quotations are provided to offer evidence for any interpretations of
presented (e.g. quotations) and fairly selected?	the researcher
- Are the data rich?	-Explanations are plausible and coherent
-Are the explanations for the results plausible and coherent?	
- Are the results of the study compared with those of other studies?	
-Is any sponsorship/conflict of interest	-No information is provided about
reported?	this criterion
-Did the author identify limitations?	-The author does not highlight any limitations of the study undertaken
-Are the conclusions the same in the	
abstract and full text?	-Conclusions in the abstract are
	brief and do not encompass all of
	the key findings described in the discussions

Citation: Menendez Alvarez-Hevia (2018)		
FOCUS	Yes	COMMENTS
1 0 0 0 0	Can't	0 0 1 21 221 (1 2
	tell	
	No	
	INO	
Does the study address a clearly focused		-Researchers provide a description
question/hypothesis?		of the research aims and question –
		exploring the emotional learning of
-Setting?		educators within APs
-Perspective?		
-Intervention or phenomena?		
-Comparator/ control?		
-Evaluation/ exploration?		
Is the choice of qualitative method		-The use of the qualitative
appropriate?		methodology is appropriate to
		allow exploration of the
-Is it an exploration of e.g.		phenomena under study
behaviour/reasoning/ beliefs)?		
,		-The authors discuss the choice of
-Do the authors discuss how they decided		interviews and observations as a
which method to use?		combination - providing a clear

	rationale for the methodological approach
Is the sampling strategy clearly described and justified? -Is it clear how participants were selected? -Do the authors explain why they selected these particular participants?	-Limited information is given about how the participants were chosen and minimal information is given about the characteristics of the staff employed (e.g. the researchers mention teachers and TAs but do not provide further information)
-Is detailed information provided about participant characteristics and about those who chose not to participate?	-Detailed information is given about the PRU context in which the research was situated
Is the method of data collection well described?	-Process of data collection is described in detail (e.g. focus groups, interviews and
-Was the setting appropriate for data collection?	observations) – clear rationales for their use are provided
-Is it clear what methods were used to collect data? Type of method (e.g., focus groups, interviews, open questionnaire etc) and tools (e.g. notes, audio, audio visual recording).	-Whilst the authors describe the use of observations – they do not describe the contexts in which these were undertaken -Observations are used to
-Is there sufficient detail of the methods used (e.g. how any topics/questions were generated and whether they were piloted; if observation was used, whether the context described and were observations made in a variety of circumstances?)	-Observations are used to triangulate with the interview data to offer a broader picture
-Were the methods modified during the study? If YES, is this explained?	
-Is there triangulation of data (i.e. more than one source of data collection)?	
-Do the authors report achieving data saturation?	
Is the relationship between the researcher(s) and participants explored?	-The researcher notes their own role within the research and their

influence on the construction of the -Did the researcher report critically examining/reflecting on their role and any data relationship with participants particularly relation to formulating research questions and collecting data). -Were any potential power relationships involved (i.e. relationships that could influence in the way in which participants respond)? Are ethical issues explicitly discussed? -Ethical issues are not explicitly mentioned by the researchers. No -Is there sufficient information on how the information is given about ethical research was explained to participants? approval or ethical adherence (e.g. consent processes) -Was ethical approval sought? -Are there any potential confidentiality issues in relation to data collection? Is the data analysis/interpretation -The researcher provides minimal information about the data analysis process described and justified? this process and how was -Is it clear how the themes and concepts undertaken were identified in the data? -Themes are discussed in relation -Was the analysis performed by more than to the participants narratives one researcher? -Are negative/discrepant results taken into account? Are the findings credible? -Sufficient rich data is provided results-alongside about the interpretations from the researcher. -Are there sufficient data to support the findings? -Quotations are provided to offer evidence for any interpretations of -Are sequences from the original data presented (e.g. quotations) and fairly the researcher selected? -Explanations are plausible and coherent - Are the data rich? -Are the explanations for the results plausible and coherent? - Are the results of the study compared with those of other studies? -Is any sponsorship/conflict of interest -No information is provided in reported? relation to this criterion

-Did the author identify limitations?	-No informatio	n is provided about
,	the limitations	1
-Are the conclusions the same in the		-
abstract and full text?		

Citation: Meo & Parker (2004)		
FOCUS	Yes Can't tell No	COMMENTS
Does the study address a clearly focused question/hypothesis? -Setting? -Perspective? -Intervention or phenomena? -Comparator/ control? -Evaluation/ exploration?		-Researchers provide a description of the research aims and question – exploring pedagogical practices, strategies and definitions
Is the choice of qualitative method appropriate? -Is it an exploration of e.g. behaviour/reasoning/ beliefs)?		-Qualitative method is appropriate and described – combination of observations, semi-structured interviews, documentary analysis and field-work journals
-Do the authors discuss how they decided which method to use?		behind methodological approach
Is the sampling strategy clearly described and justified? -Is it clear how participants were selected? -Do the authors explain why they selected these particular participants?		-Limited information is given about the sampling strategy and participants involved (e.g. how many participants) -Detailed information is given about the PRU setting
-Is detailed information provided about participant characteristics and about those who chose not to participate?		
Is the method of data collection well described? -Was the setting appropriate for data collection? -Is it clear what methods were used to collect data? Type of method (e.g., focus groups, interviews, open questionnaire etc)		-Process of data collection is described – although some of the detail is limited -Multiple different measures are used ensuring that the data is triangulated

and tools (e.g. notes, audio, audio visual recording). -Is there sufficient detail of the methods used (e.g. how any topics/questions were generated and whether they were piloted; if observation was used, whether the context described and were observations made in a variety of circumstances?) -Were the methods modified during the study? If YES, is this explained? -Is there triangulation of data (i.e. more than one source of data collection)? -Do the authors report achieving data saturation? the relationship between -The researchers use a field-work researcher(s) and participants explored? journal but do not provide information about any reflections in relation to the data -Did the researcher report critically examining/reflecting on their role and any relationship with participants particularly relation to formulating research questions and collecting data). -Were any potential power relationships involved (i.e. relationships that could influence in the way in which participants respond)? Are ethical issues explicitly discussed? -Ethical issues are not explicitly mentioned by the researchers. No -Is there sufficient information on how the information is given about ethical research was explained to participants? approval. -Researchers -Was ethical approval sought? mention ethical procedures in the notes of the paper -Are there any potential confidentiality (e.g. anonymity) issues in relation to data collection? -Researcher describes how the Is the data analysis/interpretation analysis is guided by a symbolic process described and justified? interactionist perspective -Is it clear how the themes and concepts were identified in the data? -It is unclear whether both researchers engage in the analysis -Was the analysis performed by more than process one researcher? -It is unclear how the data is amalgamated (e.g. staff views are

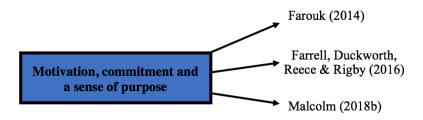
-Are negative/discrepant results taken into	not separated from those of the
account?	researcher)
Are the findings credible?	-Rich data is provided about the
	results–alongside interpretations
-Are there sufficient data to support the	from the researcher – it can be
findings?	difficult to understand what is the
	researcher's reflections or data
-Are sequences from the original data	generated from observations or
presented (e.g. quotations) and fairly	interviews
selected?	
	-Quotations are provided and
- Are the data rich?	embedded in the findings section
-Are the explanations for the results	
plausible and coherent?	
- Are the results of the study compared with	
those of other studies?	
-Is any sponsorship/conflict of interest	-No information is provided in
reported?	relation to this criterion
-Did the author identify limitations?	 -Researcher notes the difficulties
	with small scale qualitative studies
-Are the conclusions the same in the	
abstract and full text?	

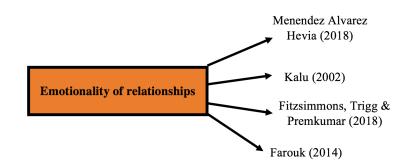
Citation: Putwain, Nicholson & Edwards (2015)			
FOCUS	Yes Can't tell No	COMMENTS	
Does the study address a clearly focused question/hypothesis? -Setting? -Perspective? -Intervention or phenomena? -Comparator/ control? -Evaluation/ exploration?		-Researchers provide a clear description of the research aims and question – examining instructional practices in an AP context	
Is the choice of qualitative method appropriate? -Is it an exploration of e.g. behaviour/reasoning/ beliefs)? -Do the authors discuss how they decided which method to use?		-Choice of methodological approach is appropriate and detailed: month-long fieldwork visit	

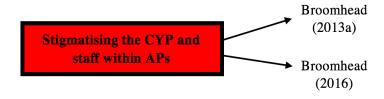
Is the sampling strategy clearly described and justified?	-Sampling strategy is clearly defined and justified by the researcher
-Is it clear how participants were selected?-Do the authors explain why they selected these particular participants?	-Details and characteristics of the participants are provided (e.g. for both students and the staff)
-Is detailed information provided about participant characteristics and about those who chose not to participate?	
Is the method of data collection well described? -Was the setting appropriate for data collection? -Is it clear what methods were used to collect data? Type of method (e.g., focus groups, interviews, open questionnaire etc) and tools (e.g. notes, audio, audio visual recording). -Is there sufficient detail of the methods used (e.g. how any topics/questions were generated and whether they were piloted; if observation was used, whether the context described and were observations made in a variety of circumstances? -Were the methods modified during the study? If YES, is this explained? -Is there triangulation of data (i.e. more	-The data collection process is described (e.g. semi-structured interviews) -Information about the interview schedules for students and staff (e.g. based on models of student engagement) are given and described in-depth -Semi-structured classroom observations are described with the schedule included in the appendix to provide transparency -All interviews are triangulated with classroom observations
than one source of data collection)? -Do the authors report achieving data saturation?	
Is the relationship between the researcher(s) and participants explored? -Did the researcher report critically examining/reflecting on their role and any relationship with participants particularly in relation to formulating research questions and collecting data). -Were any potential power relationships involved (i.e. relationships that could	-The researcher notes their extended presence in the setting but limited information is given about the impact of this on the data collection process

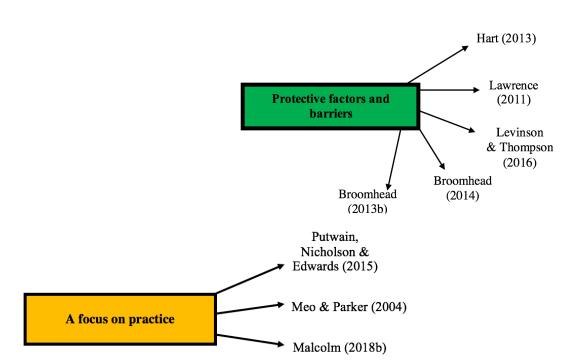
influence in the way in which participants respond)?	
Are ethical issues explicitly discussed? -Is there sufficient information on how the research was explained to participants?	-Ethical issues are not explicitly mentioned by the researchers. No information is given about ethical approval.
-Was ethical approval sought?	арріочаі.
-Are there any potential confidentiality issues in relation to data collection?	
Is the data analysis/interpretation	-The process of IPA used to
process described and justified?	analyse the interviews is described
-Is it clear how the themes and concepts were identified in the data?	in-depth (e.g. detailing the core steps undertaken) – the generation of themes is clear
-Was the analysis performed by more than one researcher?	-Information about both authors in the analysis process is given, ensuring that the data was checked
-Are negative/discrepant results taken into account?	thoroughly
	-Member checks were conducted on two separate occasions
Are the findings credible?	-Sufficient rich data is provided
-Are there sufficient data to support the findings?	about the results—alongside interpretations from the researcher.
-Are sequences from the original data presented (e.g. quotations) and fairly selected?	-Quotations are provided to offer evidence for any interpretations of the researcher
- Are the data rich?	-Explanations are plausible and coherent
-Are the explanations for the results plausible and coherent?	
- Are the results of the study compared with those of other studies?	
-Is any sponsorship/conflict of interest reported?	-No information is provided in relation to this criterion
-Did the author identify limitations?	-Information about limitations are not provided by the authors
-Are the conclusions the same in the abstract and full text?	

Appendix H: Literature map









Appendix I: Synopsis of study sent to headteachers

Dear X,

I would like to introduce myself and share with you why I am getting in touch. I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist, currently in my second year of training. I am emailing about a research study I am currently conducting as part of my doctoral thesis. I am investigating teaching assistant/support staff's experiences supporting children who have been excluded from school.

There is very little research into support staff's views on working with children with these experiences, and I am hoping to generate research which can promote an understanding of the experience of alternative provision staff. Additionally, my interest stems from my own experience working as a teaching assistant in alternative provisions for a number of years, and my wish to give staff a voice.

I am looking for support staff/teaching assistants/LSAs who would be willing to take part in one interview for a period of around 45 minutes. This would involve a conversation where staff can talk anonymously about their experiences supporting children who have been excluded from school.

I am attaching an information sheet about the study for you to look over. If this is something you may be interested in, please feel free to share the information sheet with your staff. I can also give you a call to talk about this further or I can come to speak to staff to discuss participation in person.

I am mindful of the work and time pressures that staff may face, so I am happy to come to school to conduct the interviews and can look for times that will suit their needs. I would be very grateful if any of your support staff would be willing to take part.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thanks and kind regards,

Hollie Danby

Trainee Educational Psychologist

Appendix J: Participant information sheet



The following information is provided to ensure that you have a clear and thorough understanding of the current research and what participating would involve. This information is shared with you so that you can provide informed consent should you wish to take part.

Research title

Exploring the experiences of teaching assistants working in alternative provisions with children excluded from mainstream settings: an Interpretative Phenomenological Approach.

Who is doing this research?

My name is Hollie Danby and I am currently studying a course in Educational Psychology at the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust. I am carrying out this research as part of my doctoral thesis and my qualification in Educational Psychology.

What is the aim and purpose of this research?

The research aims to explore the experiences of teaching assistants working in alternative provisions supporting children and young people who have been excluded. It aims to offer teaching assistants a voice and to further understand their perspectives. It may also inform the ways in which support can be provided in these settings.

Who has given permission for this research to take place?

The Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust Ethics Committee (TREC) has given ethical approval for this research to be conducted. Additionally, the head teacher of the provision you work within has also agreed to staff participating.

Do I have to take part?

It is your decision as to whether you wish to participate or choose not to participate in this research. This information sheet has been provided to help you make an informed decision, so you can give informed consent about your participation should you wish to participate. Even if you do decide to participate, you are free to withdraw from this research at another point, up until a stage where the data is analysed, and you do not have to give a reason for this decision.

What happens if I take part?

An interview will be scheduled at your school, or the Local Authority offices for a time that is convenient to you. At the beginning of the meeting, I will explain the process we are going to follow and then I will ask questions about your views/experiences supporting young people in an alternative provision who have been excluded from mainstream settings. This interview will last between 45 to 60 minutes and I will record this on an audio-tape. If you feel it is necessary, you will be able to stop the interview at any time.

What are the possible benefits and risks?

Currently, limited research has been completed exploring the experiences of teaching assistants working with children and young people in alternative provisions. Views and experiences from TAs are really important in helping us provide insight into this area and to add to our limited understanding. At a more personal level, participation will provide you with a forum to think and reflect on your experiences. There is little risk associated with this research. However, should there be an unexpected outcome (such as distress or upset), you will be offered the opportunity to withdraw from the study and signposted to services that can provide further help and support.

What will happen to the findings of this research?

The findings from this research will be used for my thesis as part of my Educational Psychology doctorate qualification and for the Psychology Service and Local Authority. A summary of the key findings will be sent to you or if you prefer we can meet to discuss them further.

What will happen if I do not want to carry on with the research?

If you decide you do not wish to take any further part in this study, you are welcome to withdraw at any time and you will not have to provide further explanation. You are able to ask for your contribution to be withdrawn up until the point of analysis, when I will not be able to extract the influence your data has had on the findings. Prior to this, you can request your data is not included and is destroyed.

What about confidentiality?

In accordance with ethical and legal practices, all information collected from you will be handled securely and kept strictly confidential. Personal information, consent forms and audio-recordings will be stored in a secure location, with your identity on these records changed to a pseudonym rather than your name. As I am meeting with a small sample of teaching assistants, it is possible you may recognise something you have said in the research findings. To ensure that your identity is protected, your name will be changed to a pseudonym and any identifiable information will be removed to ensure that you remain unidentifiable. All data will be kept for a minimum of 6-10 years as specified in the Data Protection Act (1998, 2018).

I cannot keep data confidential if you tell me something that makes me worried about you or someone else. In this case, I will have to share this information with other individuals to maintain safety. If possible, I will aim to discuss this with you first.

What if I complain?

If in any instance you have a concern about the research or your treatment by the researcher you can speak these through with myself, my supervisor, the course director or contact Academic Governance and Quality and Assurance (email below).

Further Information:

This research has received formal approval from the <u>Tavistock and Portman Trust Research Ethics</u> <u>Committee (TREC)</u>. If you have any concerns about the conduct of the researcher or any other aspect of this research project, please contact Simon Carrington, Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance (<u>academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk</u>)

Appendix K: Consent form



Name of researcher: Hollie Danby

Title of study: Exploring the experiences of teaching assistants working in alternative provisions with children excluded from mainstream settings: An Interpretative Phenomenological Approach.

Please	Please initial the statements below if you agree with them:			
1.	I confirm that I have read the information sheet for the have been given the opportunity to ask questions.	ne study and		
2.	I understand that my participation in this study is vol able to withdraw at any point, up until the data is ana providing a reason.			
3.	I understand that my role in this research will involve with the researcher which will be audio-recorded.	e an interview		
4.	I understand that my data will be anonymised so that linked to the original recordings.	I cannot be		
5.	I understand that my data will only be used solely for the purpose of this study and will be destroyed following the competition of this research.			
6.	I understand that the findings from this research may and available for the public to read.	be published		
7.	I have read and understood the above and agree to take part in this research			
Name of participant: Name of researcher:				
Signature: Signature:				
		Date:		

Appendix L: Interview schedule

1. Can you tell me about your experiences supporting excluded children in alternative provisions?

(Prompts:

What has that been like?

Can you tell me more about X?

How did it feel during that?)

2. Could you describe one of your typical days for me? / an atypical day for me?

(Prompts:

What was different about these days?

Why was it typical or atypical?

How did these days feel?)

3. Have any days particularly stood out for you?

(Prompts:

Why was this day different?

How did it feel when X happened?

What were you thinking?)

4. Can you tell me about a recent time you've worked with an excluded child?

(Prompt:

What happened

How did you feel?)

- 5. For you, what is the best thing/ worst thing about working with excluded children?
- 6. Are there any factors that help you to support excluded children/ make it difficult?
- 7. If you have to describe what supporting excluded children means to you, what would you say?

8. Is there anything that we didn't cover today which you think is important? (Prompts:

Is there anything I didn't ask which you think is relevant for me to know? Is there anything you want to expand upon which you haven't had the opportunity to today?)

PROMPTS:

- Can you tell me more about that?
- How did you feel?
- Why?
- How?
- Tell me what you were thinking

Appendix M: Sample of process notes from reflective diary

The following reflections are extracts from the researcher's reflective diary:

• Reflections following interview 3 (June 2019)

Just finished doing an interview. I was nervous throughout and had to keep reminding myself that I need to let the participant talk and not interrupt. I found myself struggling with the silences and on occasion felt the need to speak and ask something else – reflecting on it, I know I need to let them think and process. When the participant was speaking, there were moments in which I asked leading questions and suddenly thought have I ruined the process of IPA? This is something that I need to remain conscious of when conducting my next interview.

Whilst listening to the participant, I noticed that it was extremely difficult to get them to delve any deeper into their experiences. I felt as though a front was put up and no matter how much I tried I couldn't get past it. I wonder if this experience of probe questions was just so unfamiliar that the participant found it challenging to engage with. I was also struck by how positive they were being at times when difficulties were mentioned and I wondered what this was related to – was it hard to talk about feelings or challenges with someone you do not know? Reflecting on this, my own experience could also be interacting and perhaps the participants were able to retain this positivity. It is hard at moments to disentangle the two. I can see first-hand the importance of reflection on this and the process of bracketing off.

• Reflections following development of emergent themes

I am shocked by how difficult the generation of emergent themes is and am struck by the lengthy process of the analysis. I keep falling into a pit of wondering whether I am doing it right or wrong and this is paralysing me. Hours are being spent thinking about these themes and how to create a pithy statement that highlights an often-complex thought/idea.

I have found myself looking at other student's theses to get an idea of how to do it 'right' and it's clear this is variable – some seem to be more interpretative than others and I don't know what to do. I am struck by how sometimes interpretation and generation seems easier than other times – and know I need frequent breaks away to help myself generate meaning and 'see the wood through the trees'. Will take this to supervision to reflect further. Perhaps when I finish one transcript it will begin to feel easier.

• Reflections following development of superordinate themes

At each stage of the analysis I hope it will get easier and it doesn't seem to. I am happy I am at the superordinate stage – it feels like an end is in sight, although this comes with its own difficulties. Sometimes it feels as though a superordinate theme does not fit anywhere succinctly and I cannot work out of it stands alone or there is a link. Again, I am struck by the 'am I write or wrong debate?' I know that this is my interpretation but am becoming stuck in these binary arguments with myself – I definitely need time away to take a break.

Appendix N: Interview Transcript: Sharon

- 1 I: So, if we could start and you could tell me a little about your role in the class and your
- 2 experience?
- 3 S: So, I am a progress coach, erm it's a TA really, but they've just renamed us. Erm, and I
- 4 mainly support the children on a one to one basis where it's needed. I do some interventions.
- 5 Erm, at the moment I am doing a Dyslexia intervention, a programme called Toe by Toe.
- 6 Erm and when they are struggling we sort of go outside and talk to them and try and get
- 7 them back into class. Erm, I never really expected myself to end up working in this kind of
- 8 environment. It happened completely by accident (laughs).
- 9 I: How did that happen?
- 10 S: I was working in a mainstream school and I don't really know how I fell into the role
- but it kind of got to the stage where if a student was having an issue, then I would be found.
- 12 I was just a TA, but it would be like 'oh right let's go and get Mrs', and Mrs would deal
- with, and I would sort of take the student off and calm them down and have a chat. And
- 14 then we had a student referred here, erm he was a year 1 student and to me it's really
- important that the home schools still have contact with the students while they're here. So,
- in my eyes, I think because the children still need to feel that their part of their home-school,
- and I think that is really, really, important. Erm, so I would come down a couple of times a
- 18 week just show my face and say 'hi, how are you, how you getting on, this is what's
- happening at school, can't wait to have you back' and the next thing I know I am being told
- that there's a role coming up, would you like to apply and I am like 'oh no, no, no haven't
- 21 got the experience, I can't do that' and erm, a couple of the people working here, Yasmin
- from reintegration and Tina erm, were like 'no, no you should apply' and I left it right until
- 23 the last day and next thing I know I'm here and I'm like ok, and that's kind, it all kind of
- 24 fell into place really, it kind of fell in my lap.
- 25 I: And what's it like being here I suppose and what's that difference like?
- 26 S: When I first started it was huge. Erm it was a real culture shock for me. Erm, because
- 27 the students that we had when I very first started here. There was aggression, there was

- 28 violence, and I would go home covered black and blue in bruises. Erm, and sort of my 29 children got a bit upset because they are seeing me going home in bruises. My husband 30 wasn't too happy about it, but I kind of, I don't consider myself a stubborn person but I 31 must be because I am like no. I am not having a 7, 8, 9-year-old, 10-year-old even, get the 32 better of me. It's just I am not having it. I mean I would go home in tears, but worked 33 through that and got such a good team down there and it all sort of gelled and saw each 34 other through that really tricky stage. Because it was a transition stage for everybody. Erm 35 we were all new, the students were coming into a completely new setting and completely 36 new set-up, so they had gone home on the summer break thinking one thing and come back 37 and everything's changed and everything's new, so it was hard for everybody. Erm, but 38 yeah it was a real eye-opener. It really was. Erm...
- 39 I: And is that because of...?
- S: Just everything, some of the things they would come out with, you are 6, you are 7. How
- do you know, how do you know that language? (laughs) I suppose I lived in a little bubble
- for, because in a mainstream school yes you hear it, but not to the extent I was hearing it
- here, I suppose. Where, where do you pick that up from, you're still a child, where
- 44 you it, it was a massive culture shock for me.
- 45 I: How did you feel in that time?
- 46 S: Heartbroken that children aren't allowed to be children anymore and they were having
- 47 to grow up so quick and they didn't know. They didn't understand what they were feeling,
- 48 they didn't understand even to some extent now, they were so young, they don't
- 49 understand the emotions that they are feeling. And it's, it's heart-breaking sometimes and
- you go home and you are constantly thinking. I do, because it's the way I am. Just
- 51 constantly thinking well what can I do to help that one, how can I make that one feel a bit
- more comfortable and at ease? And yeah, it's, it's been a massive learning curve it really
- has for me.
- I: How is it now I suppose?

- 55 S: Erm, yeah come September, I would have been here 4 years, [whispers], 4 years, god.
- And I suppose now nothing really, it's awful to say, but nothing really shocks me. Nothing
- 57 that they say. It still upsets me sometimes thinking you know, you're 5, you're 6. You
- shouldn't, nothing really shocks me now. I've been called a prostitute. I've been called a
- 59 paedophile. I've been strangled. I've been bitten. You know it's...it shouldn't become
- 60 normal, but it kind of has. Still challenge it, but it's just the norm, and which is really sad.
- I think it's really sad, it shouldn't be the norm. Nothing you say is going to shock me. I
- have heard it all before. Well, I remember on one of my first weeks, we had a student and
- he was 6 at the time, and he was going right off into one, and the, the language. I am not
- going to repeat the language but being the way I am, I went 'pardon' because you know
- it's just manners and you think I can't have heard that right and he repeated the whole lot
- again. That day I learnt never to say pardon again (laughs). You don't say it because they
- 67 just throw it all back and I, I just couldn't believe what a 6-year-old was coming out with.
- If I was to hear it from an 18-year-old drunk down the pub, I am like yeah ok, yeah, you're
- 69 18. You're drunk you, you know, but a 6-year-old. Wow.
- 70 I: And what were you thinking at that time?
- S: Yeah, it's just, I just...I think I stood there with my mouth open for a couple of minutes
- because I was just like, I can't believe you've just said that. Where have you heard that
- 73 from? What have you been watching? What have you been seeing? To yeah. It was
- shocking, but now it doesn't shock me so much. So, the dynamics are constantly changing
- because we have a revolving door policy. We kind of have these students for 14 weeks erm,
- it's just erm, yeah. The students we have now are nothing like what we had before, so.
- 77 I: What is it like now I suppose?
- 78 S: The students we've got now are just a bit more needy. Academically they're very low.
- 79 Erm not seen any real aggression from these ones. You kind of go through stages where
- you have some really aggressive pupils and then you'll have some that are just really low.
- 81 Self-esteem is just...through the floor. They haven't got any, they've got no confidence in
- what they can and can't do, and it's just trying to build that up and saying, 'you can do this,
- you know, you can, you just have to believe in yourself'. And again, that can be really
- 84 upsetting sometimes thinking, well they just have no belief in themselves and it's trying to

- build that up and when all of a sudden you see that little light bulb moment with them.
- That's when it's worthwhile. When you actually think we have achieved something here,
- 87 they're, they're getting there. And that's nice.
- 88 I: Could you tell me about a recent experience you've had supporting an excluded child,
- 89 one that stands out to you?
- 90 S: Oh god, they all stand out (laughs).
- 91 I: You can tell me about more than one, or just any that stand out to you, that's fine. Any
- experiences that you've had that are particularly...
- A recent one. I think. I have a couple (laughs). It's not a good thing. I have got a bit of a
- 94 reputation, a lot of them call me 'Ms chocolate', because they know I really, really like
- chocolate. I have a couple, and one of the ladies from reintegration go 'they've been asking
- 96 about you and your chocolate'. And it's nice knowing they are still thinking of us, and
- 97 thinking and you know. I have had an impact on them because they still remember me.
- 98 Erm, and they now are thriving and they're doing really well at school, and you think we
- had a part in that, and that in itself is rewarding. Knowing that we've had a part and they
- are able now to move on with being able to show them some coping strategies and actually
- when you are struggling, you can do this, you can do that. You know, you need to, erm got
- them thinking about how they can help themselves, and knowing that we've had something
- to do with that.
- I: And how does that feel, I suppose for you, when you've been part of it?
- 105 S: It is so rewarding, so rewarding. It's like yeah, we did that. We did that, that was us.
- Yeah, yeah, that is, yeah, it's a massive feeling, I can't really put it in to words, it's just
- 107 yeah, yeah.
- 108 I: And I know you mentioned a 'revolving door policy', so what's it like having that 14
- weeks?

- S: Sometimes I get a bit frustrated because I find this isn't long enough. Other times they come into us and where they have struggled in a class of 30, because we are so much smaller, I don't actually understand why you are here, you know you are settling down and doing everything we are asking. Yes, you are very low ability, but why are you here? But because they've got that smaller setting and they've got, not 1:1 support because we have got 8 students to a class, but they aren't having to wait as long for a bit of support. And the work we do is differentiated so that they can reach it, they can obtain that level to build their confidence up. Erm, so that it can be hard because they don't all come in at the same time and they don't all leave at the same time. So, the dynamics of the classes do change. Erm, that can be a bit of a challenge. If you get, we haven't got it at the moment but sometimes you have that, where they are trying to find their pecking order. At the moment, we have a really nice group and they are not doing that, they are just all one. But, when you have got one coming in who is like, 'I am top dog' and it's 'mm, like no we are all equal, we are all the same', and it's getting them to all work as a team aswell.
- 124 I: And how is managing that for you?

- S: It can be hard, it can be a challenge. Erm, but again when you see it working, then it, it, then that again in itself is rewarding. So, it's erm, when you see actually see we are making a difference. He's now able to socialise, he's now able to interact without having to feel like he's got to be top dog or she. Erm, yeah, it's, it's really reward- it can be draining, it can be so, so, tiring. But the other side of that is, it is really rewarding when you see them succeeding, so yeah.
- I: So, what's a typical day like here for you?
- S: At the moment, it's very calm. So, a typical day is early morning, we work doing some interventions, supporting. I have one student at the moment who has no confidence in what he can and can't do, really, really, low ability. I am spending a lot of time with him, erm, and just the encouragement and that in itself. When you know that they really don't want to do the task and you are like you can do, you can do. It can be tiring...but it's just keeping going, keep persevering and at the end you see that little light bulb and that's what it's all about. Seeing that little light bulb.

- 139 I: And what would an atypical day be a different day?
- S: Where we've had kick off? Erm, that would be me spending quite a lot of time in the corridor, which is frustrating. Because that's their learning time going awry. Erm, so today we had a student that didn't go on his golden time reward because he didn't earn the credits and he had done some silly things today and he was just really rude. And, he did get a bit aggressive, not towards me. It was towards another member of staff. Erm, so I stayed back with him and I done, he had to do his catch-up work. I did his work with him. But, erm a typical day is just settling them in, doing some work with them. Like I say, this group I

have at the moment, we aren't having any real issues with, it's the odd blip here and there.

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- I: What does an odd blip look like or mean?
- S: Normally, its throwing a book across the room. Refusing to work. Erm, giving them time out, so we have time out rooms. So, 'you need time out, go and take yourself off, calm yourself down, then we can have a chat about it afterwards'. Erm...maybe occasionally a chair will go over. But, like I say we have no real aggression at the moment. It's more like work refusal, it's having a sulk, they are good sulkers we have at the moment (laughs). Erm, and trying to bring them out of that. The main way to do that is to remind them of the rewards and consequences of what they will do because none of them like missing out on the trips. None of them like missing out on credits. They don't like missing out on the credits. They don't like not seeing them moving up on the reward chart. You know, they want the rewards. It is all about rewards and praise. Erm, and that's how, they need the praise, they need that confidence boost. So, yeah, it's hard to describe a normal day at the moment because it is, as it would be in a mainstream school. You're there, you're supporting them in class, you're giving them the encouragement, support and coping mechanisms to help them get through their work. Which is exactly what I would have done in a mainstream. Getting the resources ready. Getting the class ready, is exactly what I would have done when I was in mainstream.
- I: And when it, when you said about the days with the other group that were difficult, what were the days like then for you?

- 168 S: (Sighs) Restraining. Writing up reports. Doing safe-guarding reports [laughs]. Putting
- 169 cold compresses on where I was battered (laughs) and I needed to get a erm, like the
- bruising. Erm, they were exhausting. They, they were more tiring in a lot of ways because
- it was a lot more physical, so they were long days.
- 172 I: What did you think on those days, what were your typical thoughts?
- 173 S: Erm, I can't do this anymore. Why am I doing this?... And then its ok, I am doing this 174 because actually, we are the one constant in these kids' lives. We are the one thing they 175 know no matter what happens, I am going be here tomorrow. Erm...so they know, no matter 176 what they have done today, tomorrow is a clean slate and I am the one constant thing that 177 they have. And a lot of these children don't have that one constant. So yes, you've battered 178 me. Yes, you've hurt me. But you know what, I'm not giving up on you. I am going be here tomorrow. So, in my mind, if I... had as a parent, because I was actually asked why do you 179 180 do this job one time. In my mind if I have, I have two children and if I was struggling and 181 if my student, my child, one of my girls was struggling. I would like to think that there is 182 somebody out there who actually gives a toss and that would be there. That I can go and 183 talk to and that would be there to support my child through that difficult time. How could 184 I ask someone else to do that, if I am not prepared to do it myself? So, I'm fortunate, I don't 185 have those issues with my children, I am very lucky. It's just knowing that there is 186 somebody out there that actually cares and that actually can be bothered. And I don't think 187 you can ask that of somebody else if you are not prepared to try yourself. That's just my 188 outlook. So..., it was always a case of when I had the children, I was either gonna be going 189 into a caring profession – whether it was an OAP carer, or doing what I am doing now. 190 Erm, but again, I couldn't. Sort of if I was going into an elderly person's home. Why would 191 you want to do that? Because, at some point I am going to be old and at some point, I will 192 need some looking after. I can't ask someone else to do that if I'm not prepared to do something like that myself. It's just the way I look at things, that's just my outlook. So 193 194
- 195 I: No, I understand and I suppose from your experience, what factors do you think help you
- support these children, have you noticed anything that's really helped you?

- 197 S: Erm, I don't know really. Erm, I like to think I am quite approachable. And a couple of
- time they go 'oh mum'. So maybe I am just that natural motherly, protective. Maybe I just
- carry that about me, I don't know. Quite a few of them have slipped up and called me mum.
- 200 I: And how does that feel for you when they say...?
- S: I think it's quite cute (laughs). I did have one student in the past. I was his school mum.
- So, he called me 'mum' a few times and said, 'yeah I have mum at home but you're my
- school mum'. I thought ok, that's fine but just remember I'm Ms not mum. Erm, it doesn't
- bother me if they call me mum. I just, I must have that natural, without even realising it,
- 205 nurturing bit about me. Erm... never considered myself very maternal. Ever. In comparison
- to some people I know. Erm, but obviously I just have that, because they do talk to me.
- They do. I don't always get the response I am looking for. I don't always get them out of
- that mood. Especially, if I've been the one that's told them they have done the wrong thing.
- But that's the nature of the job, so you do have to adult swap and things. But, for the most
- part, I don't know. I think it's just about being patient and saying, 'that's done and dusted,
- let's move on'. And being able to move away and letting that bit go. If you hold on to it
- then you not going to be able to... so.
- 213 I: Is there any more difficult factor about supporting them?
- S: If they spit at me, that one I do hold on to that, I can't abide being spat at. I would rather
- be kicked or punched than being spat at. And so erm, that I find difficult. Erm, it doesn't
- bother me the name calling, and all that sort of stuff, because I'm like whatever. You know.
- You can't say it's just a name, but you don't know me well enough to be able to, so get on
- with that. Erm, I think the most difficult thing is when they do spit, or if they for me, I find
- 219 it quite hard if they make a disclosure. I do struggle with that. I'm not going to lie. I do
- want to go and batter whoever it is that's done whatever. But you have to be professional,
- but I do find that difficult. I just want 'Come home with me, come home with me, I will
- look after you'. Ermyou know I don't think there is a student I've had that I wouldn't
- have wanted to take home. 'You know I will feed you, I will wash you, I will give you the
- bit of love and attention that you desperately ... are craving, that's fine. Erm, so sometimes
- that side of it does gets to me. And I do sometimes find that hard to let go, but you have to.
- As difficult as it is. You know, I think that's probably why I do lay awake thinking about

- some of the kids some of the times, because I know what they are going through at home.
- I know what their background is... And some of it's not very nice (laughs) and that is. That
- is hard, that I do find hard.
- 230 I: That would be a more difficult kind of factor. I suppose, have you had any days here that
- 231 particularly stand out for you could be for anything.
- S: Erm...the day that I was strangled. That, erm. Like I say, when I first started here four
- years ago. We had some students who I would refer to them as the lifers. They had been
- here for quite some time and they were a very, very, volatile group and on this particular
- 235 day, every single one of them was having issues. Erm, so the class teacher was sort of trying
- 236 to restrain two and the then head of our department had another two. I had one and I was
- very new to it all. I had only just recently done my restraint training as well. Again, that
- was all very new and alien to me and erm, I had one jump on my back and literally was on
- my back and that really shook me up. That really, really shook me up (voice breaks)
- 240 I: What were you thinking in that moment?
- S: Erm, I'm not sure what I was thinking at the time. Erm...afterwards, I am like I cannot
- do this. I cannot do this. And I went home and I laid on my bed and I bawled my eyes out.
- Erm, I thought I don't know what I can do to help this little boy, or, or any of them at that
- point. How do we reach these children? They are so damaged, broken, however you want
- 245 to put it. I don't know how to connect with these kids. I don't know where we go from here.
- And then, it was sort of pull yourself together, you stupid woman (laughs). And then it was
- 247 at that point I thought, I am not having a 10-year-old. I think he was actually 8 at the time,
- get the better of me. You are a child, you need to know that this is not ok. You cannot
- behave this way. This is, this is not ok. This is not the answer for you getting what you
- want. This is never ever ok. He's actually now doing really, really well.
- 251 I: And that thought change, what did you do after that?
- 252 S: I remember coming in the following morning, and my then boss said to me, 'you aren't
- 253 going to leave, are you?' And erm, I said 'it has crossed my mind you know, I'm not going
- 254 to lie'. But no, I'm not prepared I'm not giving in just yet. It wouldn't be fair on them and

- I think I will always regret it, if I give up now. Erm, so I am glad I didn't, because we ended
- up having a really good rapport with these kids. After we had got over that initial,
- everything's changing. We actually ended up having really good rapports and really good
- 258 relationships with these kids. And most of them moved on into mainstream schools and
- done really well and those that didn't go into mainstream, provisions were found for them.
- And they have actually done ok, and it's you know, we had a part in that.
- 261 I: How did that feel?
- S: Yeah, knowing that they've moved on and now they're, they're actually becoming, part
- of society rather than being...sort of frowned upon. It's a nice, it's a good feeling, it's a
- 264 good feeling. But that was erm... but yeah, I did struggle with that initial, initial. It was
- quite frightening. I mean, bearing in mind, I work with the primary students, so to see them
- 266 going into that rage and not knowing what to do with it and they become so strong. So,
- strong. It's like they've got the strength of 20 men. It's erm...yeah it was. It frightened me
- 268 to start off with. It did frighten me and even now I haven't had to do a restraint for a very
- long time. Touch wood (touches wood), so that's good. But even now you get that
- adrenaline rush. Even now I still get the shakes and the jitters afterwards. Because, it is all
- adrenaline and you know. I'm frightened of, I guess I am frightened of doing the restraint
- wrong and hurting. Even now, four years down the line, in case I make a mistake and they
- get hurt or, you know, that does still worry me, but it is what it is, it's part of the job. Erm,
- I don't like doing the restraints. They don't like it. I don't like it. Erm, but sometimes you
- have to.
- 276 I: And what's that like I suppose?
- S: I personally always get the shakes after. Like I say the adrenaline, getting them to calm
- down and the de-escalation of it all. Erm, I do get the shakes afterwards. And it's like, I
- have a stash of chocolate in the cupboard, because I am Ms chocolate (laughs). I don't like
- doing them, and it's not part of the job that I…like doing. Erm, like I say thankfully I have
- 281 not had to do one for a very long time. I'm talking it up now (laughs). Now I'm going to
- have to do one tomorrow (laughs). Now, I'm going to end up doing one. Erm, yeah, it's
- 283 not, I don't enjoy it. It, it's distressing. It's distressing for them and its distressing for us,
- especially if it's a big restraint. And I mean, most of them literally a couple minutes, done

- finished. But when it's a big one, its horrible, it's horrible. I don't like it. Don't get me
- wrong I don't step away, I don't run away from it, you can't do that. Because that doesn't
- help them. It doesn't help them de-escalate and calm down. It's not fair on other members
- of staff. It's not fair on anybody to walk away and just going to ignore that. You can't do
- that, you are part of the team. You have to work as such. So, but yeah. No, it's certainly not
- 290 part of the job that I enjoy. I don't know anyone that would. But yeah, I don't like having
- 291 to do it. And if I can avoid it, I will (laughs). Yeah, it's not something, it's a very, very,
- very last resort. So...
- 293 I: I suppose, what's the best thing about supporting excluding children?
- S: Seeing them succeed when you do get them back into the school or into a provision.
- Seeing them, using the coping mechanisms that we've tried to teach them. And actually, it
- is working. And in the nicest possible way not actually hearing bad reports when they are
- being reintegrated. Actually 'so and so is doing really well, this has worked, this has
- worked, they've become a monitor', 'they've done this'. That's the best thing.
- 299 I: How does that feel for you when you hear those things?
- 300 S: Just, we had something to do with that. Look he's doing so well. Look we had a part of
- that. 20 years' time, he's not going to remember my name. He's not going to know that it
- was us, but we helped do that. We helped do that...and that's a good thing.
- 303 I: And the parallel, is there a worst thing for you?
- When it doesn't go quite so well, and it's just like...How do we reach out to this child?
- How do we? It's finding something that works for them and that can be sometimes be really,
- really difficult. Erm, and another worst part is. Funding is always a massive issue. In any
- school you go to, but its knowing that the students come from the school...They think we
- are a miracle cure, which we are not. You know, we do are best, but we are not a miracle
- 309 cure. But then when they go back to school, the school hasn't actually done anything or put
- anything in place to help make that child succeed. And it's almost as if they think, 'he's a
- and make naughty child and we can't be bothered. And they don't support the child to try and make
- it work. So, we'll give you a list of strategies. you know and then they don't use them. That

- is frustrating. It is, you know, you are setting this child up to fail because actually we have 314 said to you this, this and this. And we know these are the triggers, this is what works and 315 then you don't use that. I know it's down to funding and a lot of schools don't have...the right funding or the staff. But then there are ways around that, you know. I think for the 317 type of children that we work with, I think it's really important that they have a keyworker. 318 So that if they are struggling it's one person, that one point of contact that they can go to, 319 say 'you know what, I am struggling today', can I, you know. Or even if a member of staff can see that they are bubbling and instead of ignoring that and letting them go bang. You, you address it. Easier said than done and I do appreciate that its easier said than done. But 322 sometimes I just feel that you've decided you don't want this student back. So, you're not actually even going to try.
- 324 I: Yeah.

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- 325 S: That gives me the hump.
- 326 I: What are you thinking then?
- 327 S: I get really frustrated with the schools. I get really frustrated that there isn't the funding 328 in the schools. Money isn't the answer to everything. People have got to want to work with 329 these children and sometimes actually you can clearly see you can't be bothered. You don't 330 want to try because of the blips and issues they've had in the past. But that's done. That's 331 finished. You need to let that go. You need to see them as they are now and give them that 332 chance. Children are very perceptive, they know ... They know if your frightened of them, 333 they know if you don't really want them in the room, they know if you're angry. They are 334 not silly. They will feed off that...So, its erm, it does frustrate me when you could have just. 335 You know he's got an issue at break time. So why not have someone there monitoring it. 336 And, you know literacy is a massive blip so why not put something in place to help them 337 through that. I understand a class of 30 children. It's very difficult to differentiate. And it's, 338 I know that. We've got a class from year 3 till year 6 at the moment. Trying to differentiate 339 for that amount of, you know. So, although we are only doing it for 8, you know actually, 340 we are kind of they are such different levels. We are working from year 1 to year 6 and 341 trying to break it down. So, I do understand, but all you have to do is try. That's frustrating 342 when they don't try. (Makes growling noise) I do grumble.

- 343 I: And, if I were to say, what does supporting excluded children look like or mean for you,
- what would you say?
- 345 S: Erm, to me?
- 346 I: Yeah
- S: Oh, that's really hard. Giving that child a chance. Saying 'ok, you've made a mistake
- but this is your chance to turn it around'. This is, the choices you now make will define
- what happens for your future and we're here to help you try and make the right choices.
- 350 It's all about choice now. So, this is your chance to get on a different path and make
- different choices. Use it. Use the opportunity. That's what we're here for. I think that's the
- main thing. Showing them actually, you don't have to take this route, try this one.
- 353 I: How is that for you, how does that work for you the 'different route'?
- 354 S: Every child is different, so every approach is different. You've got the basic approach.
- Sort of right, wrong. You know, erm, this is an area for you that we need to work on. But
- every child is different so it changes for each child.
- 357 I: What's that like for you to do that?
- 358 S: I think you just. For me, it's just become the norm now. You just automatically do it.
- So, I can't really put that into words (laughs), because it's just an automatic thing (laugh).
- 360 It's really hard actually to put that into words, you just, you just, you just do it. You just
- automatically, I don't know how to put that into words really. Sorry that's not very helpful
- 362 I: No don't worry that's ok.
- 363 S: Sorry that's not very helpful.
- 364 I: It's all helpful.
- 365 S: But you just go with the flow and just adapt to what their needs are.

- 366 I: Yeah.
- 367 S: You just do, you just do (laughs).
- 368 I: Is there anything that I haven't asked today that you think is particularly important to
- know about your experiences doing this and supporting these children?
- 370 S: I think the main thing for me is you need to be able to...draw a line. If there has been an
- issue. You need to be able to draw a line and say look, it's a fresh start now. Look we had
- an issue this morning, it's done, its' finished, we're moving on. And you need to be able to
- let that go. Because if you can't and you hold onto it, you are not going to be able to support
- that child. Then like I say, you just have to adapt with each situation, you need to be able
- 375 to adapt and just roll with it and that is the main thing you need to be able to do.
- 376 I: And that letting go process, what is that?
- 377 S: For me, it's a case of food, that's really bad (laughs). For me, it is just a couple of minutes
- 378 to go ok, I'm going for a wee, I'm going to get a drink, done. If it's been a bigger thing,
- then it's going home and just...doing what I need to do sort of with my family just give
- me 5 minutes, and just go clean the kitchen. Just that, that 5 minutes on my own. Just to,
- just that, just that letting go process. Chill out, leave me alone, I just need 5 minutes. And
- for the most part, that's what I do. And here, we all talk through things. So, at the end of
- 383 the day, we have that briefing at the end of the day and we talk through things. We have
- that briefing and we look after each other and bounce off each other. If I have the hump, I
- will bounce off of Tommy, if Tommy has the hump he will bounce off of me. We have that
- kind of relationship now, and that's the biggest thing we are there for each other. We phone
- each other and say, 'todays been a grotty day, you ok, yeah, I'm ok, you ok, yeah'. And
- that's kind of what we do.
- 389 I: Yeah.
- 390 S: It's a bit of a mother-son relationship with the teacher that I work with (laughs).

Appendix O: Example of an analysed interview schedule with emergent themes (Sharon)

Stage 1 – 3: Reading, initial noting and development of emergent themes

Emergent themes	Original transcript	Exploratory comments
Emergent themes	I: So, if we could start and you could tell me a little about your role in the class and your experience? S: So, I am a progress coach, erm it's a TA really, but they've just renamed us. Erm, and I mainly support the children on a one to one basis where it's needed. I do some interventions. Erm, at the moment I am doing a Dyslexia intervention, a programme called Toe by Toe. Erm and when they are struggling, we sort of go outside and talk to them and try and get them back into class. Erm, I	Description of the role 'It's a TA really' – A sense there has been little change to the role since the re-naming. 'In this kind of environment' The alternative provision is different to other environments she has been in? 'By accident' – was this good or bad? Wanted or
	never really expected myself to end up working in this kind of environment. It happened completely by accident (laughs). I: How did that happen?	unwanted?
	S: I was working in a mainstream school and I don't really know how I fell into the role but it kind of got to the stage where if a student was having an issue, then I would be found. I was just a TA, but it would be like 'oh right let's go and get Mrs, and	Gaining the role A sense she has always dealt with the difficult aspects of behaviour. Has she been positioned as the person to manage this by others?

Mrs would deal with, and I would sort of take the student off and calm them down and have a chat. And then we had a student referred here, erm he was a year 1 student and to me it's really important that the home schools still have contact with the students while they're here. So, in my eyes, I think because the children still need to feel that their part of their home-school, and I think that is really, really, important. Erm, so I would come down a couple of times a week just show my face and say 'hi, how are you, how you getting on, this is what's happening at school, can't wait to have you back' and the next thing I know I am being told that there's a role coming up, would you like to apply and I am like 'oh no, no, no haven't got the experience, I can't do that' and erm, a couple of the people working here, Yasmin from reintegration and Tina erm, were like 'no, no you should apply' and I left it right until the last day and next thing I know I'm here and I'm like ok, and that's kind, it all kind of fell into place really, it kind of fell in my lap.

I: And what's it like being here I suppose and what's that difference like?

S: When I first started it was huge. Erm it was a real culture shock for me. Erm, because the students that we had when I very first started here. There was aggression, there was violence, and I would go home covered black and blue in bruises.

Lack of belief in the self

'I can't do that' – was this related to a lack of confidence/ fear about this kind of environment 'Fell into my lap' – was this received unexpectedly for her?

The environment was very different/unfamiliar 'Real culture shock' – feelings of disorientation within this new culture.

A sense that she feels mainstream and alternative provisions are two different cultures/worlds. Was this a difficult change? 'Covered black and blue' – an indication of the severity of the injuries.

An attempt to stress the extremities of the violence?

1. Personal disorientation at the beginning

2.	Impact on others	Erm, and sort of my children got a bit upset because they are seeing me going home in bruises.	A sense the transition had a wider impact than just herself.
3.	New sides of the self	My husband wasn't too happy about it. But I kind of, I don't consider myself a stubborn person, but I must be because I am like no. I am not having a 7, 8, 9-year-old, 10-year-old even, get the better of me. It's just I am not having it. I mean I would go	'But I must be' - an indication that she realised something about herself. 'Get the better of me' - a refusal to allow the children to beat her. A sense of a battle between the TA and child.
4.	Support systems in difficult times	home in tears but worked through that and got such a good team down there and it all sort of gelled and saw each other through that really tricky stage. Because it was a transition stage for everybody. Erm we were all new, the students were coming	Working through a difficult period She begins with the difficulty and ends with a more positive account. A sense you work through a process? 'Gelled together' – it came together/ united together
5.	Managing transitions	into a completely new setting and completely new set-up, so they had gone home on the summer break thinking one thing and come back and everything's changed and everything's new, so it	'Saw each other through' – The importance of support from the team Transitions
6.	Eye-opening beginning	was hard for everybody. Erm, but yeah it was a real eye-opener. It really was. Erm	A difficulty experienced by everyone 'Eye-opener' – a surprise/shock. A sense this was more difficult than expected?
7.	Loss of security	I: And is that because of? S: Just everything, some of the things they would come out with, you are 6, you are 7. How do you know, how do you know that language? (laughs) I suppose I lived in a little bubble for, because in a mainstream school yes you hear it, but not to the	Shock at behaviours displayed Questioning to the children – a sense of dismay, disappointment in tone 'Little bubble' – a bubble of security A sense she had left the safety/security of the mainstream environment
8.	Eye-opening beginning	extent I was hearing it here, I suppose. Where, where, where do you pick that up from, you're still a child, where you – it, it was a massive culture shock for me.	Repetition of 'where' 'I' – sense of struggling to articulate a complex, emotive experience. 'You're still a child' A sense the child is behaving in a way that is different/atypical – the child is lost?

		I: How did you feel in that time?	
9.	Grief	S: Heartbroken that children aren't allowed to be children anymore and they were having to grow up so quick and they didn't know. They didn't	Children growing up quickly 'Heartbroken' – a sense this experience has touched her. Is she articulating that there has been a loss of
10.	Excessive thought; rumination	understand what they were feeling, they didn't understand - even to some extent now, they were so young, they don't understand the emotions that they are feeling. And it's, it's heart-breaking	childhood? Repetition of 'didn't understand' – an attempt at struggling to articulate the experience – is she emphasising the importance?
11. 12.	Questioning the self A learning journey	sometimes and you go home and you are constantly thinking. I do, because it's the way I am. Just constantly thinking well what can I do to help that one, how can I make that one feel a bit more comfortable and at ease? And yeah, it's, it's been a	'It's, it's' – stumbling over words, an emotive experience 'Constantly thinking' – It's hard to switch off and let it go Asking questions A sense she is asking herself what more she can do.
		massive learning curve it really has for me. I: How is it now I suppose?	Does she take the job home? Learning 'Massive learning curve' – A sense she gained experience and skills? Is there a learning process? Climbing is difficult and takes effort?
13.	Loss of time	S: Erm, yeah come September, I would have been here 4 years, [whispers], 4 years, god. And I suppose now nothing really, it's awful to say, but nothing really shocks me. Nothing that they say. It	Time Whispers – sense of disbelief as if questioning self– tone sounded shocked.
14.	Becoming desensitised	still upsets me sometimes thinking you know, you're 5, you're 6. You shouldn't, nothing really shocks me now. I've been called a prostitute. I've	A sense of realisation at the length of time. It went quickly, it was lost?
15.	Sadness	been called a paedophile. I've been strangled. I've been bitten. You know it's () it shouldn't become normal, but it kind of has. Still challenge it, but it's just the norm. Which is sad. I think it's sad, it shouldn't be the norm. Nothing you say is going to	Becoming unshockable She has become acclimatised, accustomed to this culture – have the extremes become normal? Everything has happened

Normalisation of extremes shock me. I have heard it all before. Well, I Use of listing – becoming more extreme – 16. emphasising the difficulties that have happened to remember on one of my first weeks, we had a student and he was 6 at the time, and he was going She is no longer shocked by these behaviours – do Difficult lessons at the right off into one, and the, the language. I am not 17. you lose feeling? going to repeat the language but being the way, I beginning 'Sad' – repeated to emphasise the meaning to her? am, I went 'pardon' because you know it's just manners and you think I can't have heard that right Shocking language use and he repeated the whole lot again. That day I Laughter – an attempt to lighten what was a difficult learnt never to say pardon again (laughs). You learning experience. A sense that learning can be a don't say it because they just throw it all back. And painful experience with these children. The more I, I just couldn't believe what a 6-year-old was difficult lessons? coming out with. If I was to hear it from an 18-Younger children behaving older year-old drunk down the pub, I am like yeah ok, More acceptable if it is from someone older? yeah, you're 18. You're drunk you, you know, but Eye-opening beginning 18. Acceptable behaviour versus not acceptable? a 6-year-old. Wow. 'Couldn't believe' - Shock, disbelief, unexpected 'Wow' - as if reflecting on this story has made her I: And what were you thinking at that time? realise how shocking the experience was Do TAs usually have time to reflect on these S: Yeah, it's just, I just...I think I stood there with experiences? Shock my mouth open for a couple of minutes because I 19. was just like, I can't believe you've just said that. Where have you heard that from? What have you 'I just, I just' – hesitations indicating an experience that was difficult to articulate been watching? What have you been seeing? So A sense joining the alternative provision and the 20. Becoming acclimatised yeah. It was shocking, but now it doesn't shock me behaviour she saw was more extreme than expected. so much. So, the dynamics are constantly changing Too shocking for words? because we have a revolving door policy. We kind of have these students for 14 weeks erm, it's just Questioning the child – A sense that she is attempting erm, yeah. The students we have now are nothing to understand? like what we had before, so. Becoming less shocking

I: What is it like now I suppose?

21.	Managing	difference
41.	Managing	uniterence

- 22. Managing low self-esteem
- 23. A sense of pride
- 24. Experiencing success

S: The students we've got now are just a bit more needy. Academically they're very low. Erm not seen any real aggression from these ones. You kind of go through stages where you have some really aggressive pupils and then you'll have some that are just really low. Self-esteem is just...through the floor. They haven't got any, they've got no confidence in what they can and can't do, and it's just trying to build that up and saying, 'you can do this, you know, you can, you just have to believe in yourself'. And again, that can be really upsetting sometimes thinking, when they just have no belief in themselves and it's trying to build that up. And when all of a sudden you see that little light bulb moment with them. That's when it's worthwhile. When you actually think we have achieved something here, they're, they're getting there. And that's nice.

- I: Could you tell me about a recent experience you've had supporting an excluded child, one that stands out to you?
- S: Oh god, they all stand out (laughs).
- I: You can tell me about more than one, or just any that stand out to you, that's fine. Any experiences that you've had that are particularly...

A sense there is a process of acclimatisation and normalisation to these experiences

Going through stages

An attempt to categorise the children – aggressive versus academically low/needy

Progress

Pause – difficult to find the words

'Through the floor' – their self-esteem is unbelievably low

A sense it upsets her when she sees the children with no confidence – painful to watch?

'Light bulb moment' – something clicks/ a revelation 'Worthwhile' – validating experience for her

She gets through to them - A sense of validation. Does it help you get through the job when there are these moments?

A sense she remembers them all. Do they stay in your mind?

A recent one. I think. I have a couple (laughs). It's An attempt by the researcher to narrow the not a good thing. I have got a bit of a reputation, a participant's answers A sense of pride lot of them call me 'Ms chocolate', because they 25. know I really, really like chocolate. I have a couple, and one of the ladies from reintegration go 'they've been asking about you and your chocolate'. And it's nice knowing they are still thinking of us and thinking, and you know. I have Being remembered had an impact on them because they still remember A sense of pride 26. It is nice to not be forgotten and know the work she me. Erm, and they now are thriving and they're did has had an impact? Validating for her. She meant doing really well at school, and you think we had something to the children? a part in that, and that in itself is rewarding. Being part of their journey Knowing that we've had a part and they are able Repetition of 'had a part' - An emphasis on its now to move on with being able to show them importance to her some coping strategies and actually when you are A sense of pride in her role in their development. struggling, you can do this, you can do that. You Validating moments for her. know, you need to, erm got them thinking about 'Rewarding' -These instance makes her feel good? how they can help themselves and knowing that 'We've had something to do with that' - it was 'us' we've had something to do with that. I: And how does that feel, I suppose for you, when you've been part of it? S: It is so rewarding, so rewarding. It's like yeah, Feelings associated with change we did that. We did that, that was us. Yeah, yeah, Repetition of 'so rewarding' - an attempt to An intensity of emotion that is, yeah, it's a massive feeling, I can't really 27. emphasise the meaning this has for her. 'We did that' put it in to words, it's just yeah, yeah. - She feels a sense of pride and validation from this change. Does she want to emphasise how much they I: And I know you mentioned a 'revolving door do and the progress they make? policy', so what's it like having that 14 weeks?

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			S: Sometimes I get a bit frustrated because I find	'Massive feeling' – cannot articulate the feeling/ or
			this isn't long enough. Other times they come into	find the words. A sense it's intense and difficult to
			us and where they have struggled in a class of 30,	describe to another.
	28.	Frustration with placement	because we are so much smaller, I don't actually	
		system	understand why you are here, you know you are	
			settling down and doing everything we are asking.	Short placements
			Yes, you are very low ability, but why are you	They haven't had enough time to make a difference/
			here? But because they've got that smaller setting	or to do the work that's needed? What is it like to let
			and they've got, not 1:1 support because we have	them go when you feel they are not ready?
			got 8 students to a class, but they aren't having to	
			wait as long for a bit of support. And the work we	
			do is differentiated so that they can reach it, they	Attending children
	29.	Managing a constantly changing	can obtain that level to build their confidence up.	'Why are you here?' – tone of voice sounds resentful
		classroom environment	Erm, so that it can be hard because they don't all	A sense of confusion/frustration the CYP placed
			come in at the same time and they don't all leave	within the setting – it has been done wrong in her
			at the same time. So, the dynamics of the classes	eyes? It's either too short or not necessary?
			do change. Erm, that can be a bit of a challenge. If	Children come and go
			you get, we haven't got it at the moment but	She must manage an environment which is
	30.	Managing group dynamics	sometimes you have that, where they are trying to	constantly changing. What is it like when the
			find their pecking order. At the moment, we have	children come and go?
			a really nice group and they are not doing that, they	
			are just all one. But, when you have got one	
			coming in who is like, 'I am top dog' and it's 'mm,	
	31.	Facilitating equality	like no we are all equal, we are all the same', and	
			it's getting them to all work as a team aswell.	
				'Pecking order'/ 'Top dog' – A period of time where
			I: And how is managing that for you?	there are attempts to establish dominance?
				'All just one' - A sense she must manage group
	32.	A sense of pride	S: It can be hard; it can be a challenge. Erm, but	dynamics create an equal environment
		•	again when you see it working, then it, it, then that	
			again in itself is rewarding. So, it's erm, when you	
				1

33. Observing change34. Feeling drained

35. Feeling drained

36. Persevering for positive moments

see actually see we are making a difference. He's now able to socialise, he's now able to interact without having to feel like he's got to be top dog or she. Erm, yeah, it's, it's really reward- it can be draining, it can be so, so, tiring. But the other side of that is, it is really rewarding when you see them succeeding, so yeah.

I: So, what's a typical day like here for you?

S: At the moment, it's very calm. So, a typical day is early morning, we work doing some interventions, supporting. I have one student at the moment who has no confidence in what he can and can't do, really, really, low ability. I am spending a lot of time with him, erm, and just the encouragement and that in itself. When you know that they really don't want to do the task and you are like you can do, you can do. It can be tiring It's just keeping going, keep persevering and at the end you see that little light bulb and that's what it's all about. Seeing that little light bulb.

I: And what would an atypical day be - a different day?

S: Where we've had kick off? Erm, that would be me spending quite a lot of time in the corridor, which is frustrating. Because that's their learning time going awry. Erm, so today we had a student that didn't go on his golden time reward because

Making a difference

'Challenging and rewarding' – juxtaposition

Observable change in the child. What happens when you do not 'see it working'?

Draining aspects of the role

'So, so' - emphasise how tiring it really was

A noticeable sudden change in topic from rewarding to draining/tiring

Has she realised the impact this job has had on her? 'On the other side' – A two-sided job - Rewarding versus draining/ good vs bad?

A student with low confidence

'Really, really' – emphasises meaning/severity of difficulty

'That in itself' – A sense that takes a lot from her/energy/emotion – it is very draining?

Perseverance

37. Challenging behaviour

he didn't earn the credits and he had done some silly things today and he was just really rude. And, he did get a bit aggressive, not towards me. It was towards another member of staff. Erm, so I stayed back with him and I done, he had to do his catchup work. I did his work with him. But, erm a typical day is just settling them in, doing some work with them. Like I say, this group I have at the moment, we aren't having any real issues with, it's the odd blip here and there. Its, you know.

I: What does an odd blip look like or mean?

S: Normally, it's throwing a book across the room. Refusing to work. Erm, giving them time out, so we have time out rooms. So, 'you need time out, go and take yourself off, calm yourself down, then we can have a chat about it afterwards'. Erm...maybe occasionally a chair will go over. But, like I say we have no real aggression at the moment. It's more like work refusal, it's having a sulk, they are good sulkers we have at the moment (laughs). Erm, and trying to bring them out of that. The main way to do that is to remind them of the rewards and consequences of what they will do because none of them like missing out on the trips. None of them like missing out on credits. They don't like missing out on the credits. They don't like not seeing them moving up on the reward chart. You know, they want the rewards. It is all about rewards and praise. Erm, and that's how,

A sense she cannot give up – you persevere for the positive moments/ the rewards. Does this take precedence over your own personal welfare?

'What it's all about' – the most important thing

Frustration

'Kick off' – they become aggressive, disruptive?
'Awry' – A sense of frustration that the day is not

going to plan. Is this due to a feeling that the children will lose even more learning time than they already have?

'Odd blip' – unexpected deviations from the norm/aggression and violence

'It's you know' – an assumption I know - Is this influenced by stereotypes she thinks I may know?

Behavioural incidents

A sense this is the nature of the job – normalised/ part of the daily routine

'No real aggression at the moment' - Comparing a time of aggression to now. It's different without the instances of aggression?

Rewards and consequences

38. Challenging behaviour

39. Rewards and praise

40. Comparisons with mainstream environments

they need the praise, they need that confidence boost. So, yeah, it's hard to describe a normal day at the moment because it is, as it would be in a mainstream school. You're there, you're supporting them in class, you're giving them the encouragement, support and coping mechanisms to help them get through their work. Which is exactly what I would have done in a mainstream. Getting the resources ready. Getting the class ready, is exactly what I would have done when I was in mainstream.

I: And when it, when you said about the days with the other group that were difficult, what were the days like then for you?

S: (Sighs) Restraining. Writing up reports. Doing safe-guarding reports (laughs). Putting cold compresses on where I was battered (laughs) and I needed to get a erm, like the bruising. Erm, they were exhausting. They, they were more tiring in a lot of ways because it was a lot more physical, so they were long days.

I: What did you think on those days, what were your typical thoughts?

S: Erm, I can't do this anymore. Why am I doing this?... And then its ok, I am doing this because actually, we are the one constant in these kids' lives. We are the one thing they know no matter

Similarities to a mainstream school

A sense of stressing what can be similar – is this to show the interviewer how the job can encompass the same roles?

Repetition of 'Exactly what I would be doing in a mainstream' – stress the similarity

Procedural elements

Sigh – exasperation/ fatigue – an element she dislikes The more difficult aspects of the role

Difficulty articulating self – a more complex/ emotive topic. Laughter – a defence mechanism/ an attempt to lighten the more difficult aspects she is discussing

Long days – They were never-ending/unforgiving?

42. Questioning the self

Exhaustion

41.

what happens, I am going be here tomorrow. Erm...so they know, no matter what they have done today, tomorrow is a clean slate and I am the A constant figure one constant thing that they have. And a lot of 43. these children don't have that one constant. So yes, you've battered me. Yes, you've hurt me. But you know what, I'm not giving up on you. I am going be here tomorrow. So, in my mind, if I... had as a 44. Refusing to give up parent, because I was actually asked why do you do this job one time. In my mind if I have, I have two children and if I was struggling and if my student, my child, one of my girls was struggling. I would like to think that there is somebody out Understanding a parent's there who actually gives a toss and that would be 45. there. That I can go and talk to and that would be position there to support my child through that difficult time. How could I ask someone else to do that, if I am not prepared to do it myself? So, I'm fortunate, I don't have those issues with my children, I am very lucky. It's just knowing that there is Caring for the child 46. somebody out there that actually cares and that actually can be bothered. And I don't think you can ask that of somebody else if you are not prepared to try yourself. That's just my outlook. So..., it was always a case of when I had the children, I was either gonna be going into a caring profession whether it was an OAP carer, or doing what I am doing now. Erm, but again, I couldn't. Sort of if I Taking responsibility/ a duty to was going into an elderly person's home. Why 47. would you want to do that? Because, at some point help

I am going to be old and at some point, I will need

Asking why

Pause – as if posing the question to herself now – Asking herself again. A sense it can get too much.

Being a constant figure

Sudden change in direction of the conversation - a sense she is justifying why she does the job Repetition of 'constant' - Feeling as though she is

the only one in the CYP's lives that is constant. An attachment figure?

Refusing to give up

Persevering through the difficult experiences refusing to give up?

'I am going to be here tomorrow' - she remains a stable figure/ she will keep coming back/she will not give up on the children

'I was asked why I did this' - a sense the outside world do not understand and a need to defend her decisions. An attempt to explain her reasoning to the researcher as to why she does the job

Making comparisons with her own children

'In my mind' – her beliefs/ mental constructs.

Does this indicate a recognition that others may not feel this way?

A sense she is putting herself in the position of the parents – a position of understanding

Feeling fortunate about her own children 'Lucky' - grateful, blessed.

		some looking after. I can't ask someone else to do	A sense she has been fortunate so now she needs to
		that if I'm not prepared to do something like that	give back to others?
		myself. It's just the way I look at things, that's just	
		my outlook. So	
		my databan bem	Taking up a responsibility to others
		I: No, I understand and I suppose from your	A sense when she had children there were only
		experience, what factors do you think help you	certain jobs available to her – options became limited
			'Why would anyone want to do that' – is this a
		support these children, have you noticed anything	question she asks herself about the job or others ask
		that's really helped you?	her? She is taking up her responsibility and giving
			back to others?
		S: Erm, I don't know really. Erm, I like to think I	'My outlook' – a recognition others may not view it
48.	The maternal figure	am quite approachable. And a couple of times they	in the same way as her.
		go 'oh mum'. So maybe I am just that natural	
		motherly, protective. Maybe I just carry that about	A maternal figure
49.	New sides of the self	me, I don't know. Quite a few of them have slipped	Repetition of 'slipped up and called me mum' –
		up and called me mum.	emphasis of an importance to her. A sense it's a
			mistake, she is put in this position by the children. Is it wanted or unwanted?
		I: And how does that feel for you when they say?	
			Discovering some aspects about the self that were unknown – motherly, protective?
		S: I think it's quite cute (laughs). I did have one	unknown – momerty, protective:
50.	The maternal figure	student in the past. I was his school mum. So, he	
	-	called me 'mum' a few times and said, 'yeah I have	Becoming a school mum
51.	Establishing boundaries	mum at home but you're my school mum'. I	'Cute' - A sense that it feels nice/ validating for her?
		thought ok, that's fine but just remember I'm Ms	'Ms not Mum' - an attempt to put boundaries in
		not mum. Erm, it doesn't bother me if they call me	place. Does this become too emotionally close when
		mum. I just, I must have that natural, without even	you are referred to as mum?
		realising it, nurturing bit about me. Erm never	D'
52.	New sides of the self	considered myself very maternal. Ever. In	Discovering a nurturing side
		comparison to some people I know. Erm, but	'Without even realising it' – A sense that this was something she was unaware of. Through this job
		obviously I just have that, because they do talk to	she's discovered it?
		me. They do. I don't always get the response I am	SHO S discovered it:
L		,, - 8	

looking for. I don't always get them out of that Pause – a moment of thought/consideration – Comparing her attributes to others. Has this been mood. Especially, if I've been the one that's told something commented on by others? Has this job them they have done the wrong thing. But that's brought out this side of her? the nature of the job, so you do have to adult swap and things. But, for the most part, I don't know. I 'The nature of the job' – a sense she is accepting how think it's just about being patient and saying, Letting go 53. it is – there will be difficult moments/ she will need 'that's done and dusted, let's move on'. And being to be the 'bad' guy able to move away and letting that bit go. If you hold on to it then you not going to be able to... so. Letting go 'Done, dusted' – it is finished for her, a new start for I: Is there any more difficult factor about both sides, no grudges held by either. Pause/Does not finish her sentence - a difficulty supporting them? expressing what happens when you hold on to these experiences. Does this suggest you need to let go to S: If they spit at me, that one I do hold on to that, I do the job? can't abide being spat at. I would rather be kicked or punched than being spat at. And so erm, that I find difficult. Erm, it doesn't bother me the name 54. Difficulty letting go calling, and all that sort of stuff, because I'm like A hierarchy of assaults whatever. You know. You can't say it's just a 'Hold on to' - she holds a grudge? She cannot let it name, but you don't know me well enough to be go? able to, so get on with that. Erm, I think the most Listing the different assaults – 'I would rather be' A difficult thing is when they do spit, or if they for sense she is categorising the aggressive acts with me, I find it quite hard if they make a disclosure. I some worse than others? do struggle with that. I'm not going to lie. I do want 'You can't say it's just a name' - She said this did Struggling to maintain the to go and batter whoever it is that's done whatever. 55. not 'bother' her but language suggests change in professional self But you have to be professional, but I do find that thoughts. Is she denying that this verbal abuse can difficult. I just want - 'Come home with me, come hurt her? She cannot always let it go - it does have home with me, I will look after you'. Erm... you meaning for her? know I don't think there is a student I've had that I Desire to look after the child wouldn't have wanted to take home. 'You know I 56. Disclosures

will feed you, I will wash you, I will give you the

bit of love and attention that you desperately ... are Difficulty letting go craving, that's fine. Erm, so sometimes that side of 57. it does gets to me. And I do sometimes find that hard to let go, but you have to. As difficult as it is. You know, I think that's probably why I do lay awake thinking about some of the kids some of the 58. Excessive thought; rumination times, because I know what they are going through at home. I know what their background is And some of it's not very nice (laughs) and that is. That is hard, that I do find hard. I: That would be a more difficult kind of factor. I suppose, have you had any days here that particularly stand out for you - could be for anything. S: Erm...the day that I was strangled. That, erm. 59. Painful experiences Like I say, when I first started here four years ago. We had some students who I would refer to them Loss of hope as the lifers. They had been here for quite some 60. time and they were a very, very, volatile group and on this particular day, every single one of them was

Unfamiliarity with restraints

61.

62.

Fear

having issues. Erm, so the class teacher was sort of

trying to restrain two and the then head of our

department had another two. I had one and I was very new to it all. I had only just recently done my

restraint training as well. Again, that was all very

new and alien to me and erm...I had one jump on

my back and literally was on my back and that really shook me up. That really, really shook me

up (voice breaks).

'I'm not going to lie' – does she not always feel she can be honest about her feelings towards this?

A sense she is grappling between the professional and caring self. Hard to let the parental side go?

Desire to take the child home

A wish to save the child and make it better? Take up the parenting role for them? 'Give them the love' – provide what has been missing.

Difficulty letting go

'Lay awake thinking' – excessive thought about the children, it is difficult to get them to leave her mind? A sense that the job goes home with her?

Laughter – defence mechanism when articulating an emotive topic for her

Repetition of 'hard' – emphasise meaning, difficult to articulate anything.

Being strangled

Pause – appeared to be an emotive experience to discuss, she looked upset/emotional change of voice

'The lifers' – A sense they will never leave, a loss of hope for them. Were they the most difficult or the most extreme?

Articulated as if a battle is happening between the teaching staff and TAs with the children. 'Had one' – does not sound like she is describing a child

'Alien to me' – it was strange and unfamiliar. Was this scary for her?

63. Despair

64. An intensity of emotion

65. Feeling stuck

66. Refusing to give up

67. Rebuilding the self

68. Positive outcomes; relationships and transitions

I: What were you thinking in that moment?

S: Erm, I'm not sure what I was thinking at the time. Erm...afterwards, I am like I cannot do this. I cannot do this. And I went home and I laid on my bed and I bawled my eyes out. Erm, I thought I don't know what I can do to help this little boy, or, or any of them at that point. How do we reach these children? They are so damaged, broken, however you want to put it. I don't know how to connect with these kids. I don't know where we go from here. And then, it was sort of pull yourself together, you stupid woman (laughs). And then it was at that point I thought, I am not having a 10-year-old. I think he was actually 8 at the time, get the better of me. You are a child, you need to know that this is not ok. You cannot behave this way. This is, this is not ok. This is not the answer for you getting what you want. This is never ever ok. He's actually now doing really, really well.

I: and that thought change, what did you do after that?

S: I remember coming in the following morning, and my then boss said to me, 'you aren't going to leave, are you?' And erm, I said 'it has crossed my mind you know, I'm not going to lie'. But no, I'm not prepared I'm not giving in just yet. It wouldn't be fair on them and I think I will always regret it,

Repetition of 'really' – stress importance/intensity of the experience. 'Shook up' – shaken, shocked, upset, distress

Emotional response to traumatic incidents Difficulty to articulate and recall thoughts – a sense it was too difficult for her, had not been thought about for a long time. Pushed to the back of her mind?

Repetition - 'I cannot do this' - an immediate response and desire to run away, give up to prevent going through it again.

'Balled' – sobbed/ weeped – uncontrollable release of emotion

Questioning

Hitting a point of despair – finding it difficult to see a way forward?

'Damaged, broken' – difficulty finding the words to describe the children. 'However, you want to put it' – a sense this may not be the right words to call them.

Pulling yourself together

A sense she is putting herself back together after the traumatic incident. 'You stupid woman' – undermining how difficult the experience was, telling herself to move on?

Laughter – another difficult experience – an attempt to minimise it with humour

The day after

A sense incidents happen and people do not always stay

'I'm not going to lie' – is it difficult to tell the truth in situations like these?

69. A sense of pride

if I give up now. Erm, so I am glad I didn't, because we ended up having a really good rapport with these kids. After we had got over that initial, everything's changing. We actually ended up having really good rapports and really good relationships with these kids. And most of them moved on into mainstream schools and done really well and those that didn't go into mainstream, provisions were found for them. And they have actually done ok, and it's you know, we had a part in that.

I: How did that feel?

70. Successful reintegration into society

71. Fear at the beginning

72. Restraints; fear of the child

73. Restraints; a fear of consequences

S: Yeah, knowing that they've moved on and now they're, they're actually becoming, part of society rather than being...sort of frowned upon. It's a nice, it's a good feeling, it's a good feeling. But that was erm... but yeah, I did struggle with that initial, initial. It was quite frightening. I mean, bearing in mind, I work with the primary students, so to see them going into that rage and not knowing what to do with it. And they become so strong. So, strong. It's like they've got the strength of 20 men. It's erm...yeah it was. It frightened me to start off with. It did frighten me and even now I haven't had to do a restraint for a very long time. Touch wood (touches wood), so that's good. But even now you get that adrenaline rush. Even now I still get the shakes and the jitters afterwards. Because, it is all adrenaline and you know. I'm frightened of, I

Perseverance

'Fair' – A sense she believes it would not be equitable or right to leave the children/job.

'Regret' – she would have always felt disappointed in herself? Is this about herself or the children?

Change and outcomes

Had to get through the initial hurdles/ initial difficulties to see positive change

Repetition of 'really' – elevating how well it went. A sense of pride?

Children as outcasts

Pause – difficulty articulating what the children are. 'Frowned upon' – society looks down on these children/ they are not wanted?

Validating experience – repetition of 'it's a good feeling'

A frightening start

'Initial, initial' - difficulty articulating what was

The transition for her into this setting was difficult/scary for her.

Restraints

The primary students – younger children behaving older? A sense she is imagining what secondary must be like.

Repetition of 'so' – emphasis on the damage these children can do – a sense the children become something else, super-human, almost animalistic.

74. Resignation to restraints

guess I am frightened of doing the restraint wrong and hurting. Even now, four years down the line, in case I make a mistake and they get hurt or, you know, that does still worry me. But it is what it is, it's part of the job. Erm, I don't like doing the restraints. They don't like it. I don't like it. Erm, but sometimes you have to.

I: and what's that like I suppose?

75. Restraints; strong emotional response

Restraints; a reciprocity of

77. Responsibility to the team

distress

76.

S: I personally always get the shakes after. Like I say the adrenaline, getting them to calm down and the de-escalation of it all. Erm, I do get the shakes afterwards. And it's like, I have a stash of chocolate in the cupboard, because I am Ms chocolate (laughs). I don't like doing them, and it's not part of the job that I...like doing. Erm, like I say thankfully I have not had to do one for a very long time. I'm talking it up now (laughs). Now I'm going to have to do one tomorrow (laughs). Now, I'm going to end up doing one. Erm, yeah, it's not, I don't enjoy it. It, it's distressing. It's distressing for them and its distressing for us, especially if it's a big restraint. And I mean, most of them literally a couple minutes, done finished. But when it's a big one, it's horrible, it's horrible. I don't like it. Don't get me wrong I don't step away, I don't run away from it, you can't do that. Because that doesn't help them. It doesn't help them de-escalate and calm down. It's not fair on other members of staff. It's not fair on anybody to walk away and just

'Strength of 20 men' – an unbeatable force. 'Frightened to start off with' – she is not frightened anymore?

Touches wood – a sense of dread about having to do one

Making mistakes

A fear she will hurt them and get it wrong – an underlying fear of getting into trouble and big consequences?

'Four years down the line' – the fear does not leave you

The nature of the job

A sense of rationalisation. 'It is what it is' – acceptance and resignation

Physiological impact

Adrenaline – She feeling strong emotions – fear? 'Get the shakes' – an uncontrollable physical response. A sense there is a lot of emotion behind it?

Laughter – an attempt to make a joke and lighten the topic from a more difficult area

A sense she is grateful she has not done a restraint but by talking about this she will provoke one.

Distress

Repetition of 'horrible'- emphasise how difficult it is for her

A reciprocity of distress for all involved. It's easier to forget the smaller restraints?

Being a team-player

'Don't get me wrong' – she doesn't want me to get the wrong idea from what she is saying.

78.	Aversion	going to ignore that. You can't do that, you are part of the team. You have to work as such. So, but yeah. No, it's certainly not part of the job that I enjoy. I don't know anyone that would. But yeah, I don't like having to do it. And if I can avoid it, I will (laughs). Yeah, it's not something, it's a very, very, very last resort. So I: I suppose, what's the best thing about supporting excluding children?	A sense she wants to emphasise that she won't let her team down. A duty to the team- even in difficult moments you must support each other? Repetition of 'I don't like it' – a sense she is processing her feelings towards it and emphasising this to the interviewer. Repetition of 'very' – emphasis on how much she will avoid a restraint until everything else has failed and she has to. Highlighting her difficulty with this area of the job.
79. 80.	Observing change A sense of pride	S: Seeing them succeed when you do get them back into the school or into a provision. Seeing them, using the coping mechanisms that we've tried to teach them. And actually, it working. And in the nicest possible way not actually hearing bad reports when they are being reintegrated. Actually 'so and so is doing really well, this has worked, this has worked, they've become a monitor', 'they've done this'. That's the best thing.	Seeing the children succeed A sense that it is validating observing the children using the strategies you have given them and not needing to return. 'And actually' – a shock that that it worked?
81.	Accomplishing long-lasting change	I: How does that feel for you when you hear those things? S: Just, we had something to do with that. Look he's doing so well. Look we had a part of that. 20 years' time, he's not going to remember my name. He's not going to know that it was us, but we helped do that. We helped do thatand that's a good thing.	Being forgotten A sense of pride that they have helped the child have a successful future Pause – a tone change (emotional) - they will not remember her – Is this unrequited? She will think of them and they won't remember her? Difficulty helping the child

82. Feeling stuck

I: and the parallel, is there a worst thing for you?

'Reach' – are the children unreachable - Is there no way forward?

Questioning the self – a sense she is stuck, finding it

83. Pressure to be a miracle cure

Questioning the self – a sense she is stuck, finding i difficult to move forward

84. Other settings failing the child

Repetition of 'really' – emphasis on the difficult. Is this something that bothers her?

85. Feeling unheard by mainstream schools

When it doesn't go quite so well, and it's just like...How do we reach out to this child? How do we? It's finding something that works for them and that can be sometimes be really, really difficult. Erm, and another worst part is. Funding is always a massive issue. In any school you go to, but its knowing that the students come from the school...They think we are a miracle cure, which we are not. You know, we do are best, but we are not a miracle cure. But then when they go back to school, the school hasn't actually done anything or put anything in place to help make that child succeed. And it's almost as if they think, 'he's a naughty child and we can't be bothered. And they don't support the child to try and make it work. So, we'll give you a list of strategies. you know and then they don't use them. That is frustrating. It is, you know, you are setting this child up to fail because actually we have said to you this, this and this. And we know these are the triggers, this is what works and then you don't use that. I know it's down to funding and a lot of schools don't have...the right funding or the staff. But then there are ways around that, you know. I think for the type of children that we work with, I think it's really important that they have a keyworker. So that if they are struggling it's one person, that one point of contact that they can go to, say 'you know what, I am struggling today', can I, you know. Or even if

Frustration with mainstream settings

'Miracle cure' – she feels they are viewed as the setting to save/fix the child and make them successful.

'We do are best' – is there a sense of pressure that the job of supporting the children is all left to them?

Other schools letting the child down

'Setting them up to fail' – a sense the schools are letting the child down and undoing the hard work of the alternative provision staff?

Resentment towards the mainstream school? Does this make her feel as though she is not being listened to? A lack of value in their impact?

'Said this, this and this' – she has provided a huge amount of strategies

How children should be helped

Does she believe that the schools are not supporting these children correctly? A sense these schools do

		a member of staff can see that they are bubbling and instead of ignoring that and letting them go bang. You, you address it. Easier said than done and I do appreciate that its easier said than done. But sometimes I just feel that you've decided you don't want this student back. So, you're not actually even going to try.	not address it correctly. Where does this belief come from? 'Easier said than done' – recognition that there are challenges A sense others give up on the children and they don't. Alternative provisions versus mainstream schools?
		I: Yeah.	
		S: That gives me the hump.	
86.	Frustration with other schools	I: What are you thinking then?	Frustration with the system and the school
	and staff	S: I get really frustrated with the schools. I get really frustrated that there isn't the funding in the schools. Money isn't the answer to everything. People have got to want to work with these children and sometimes actually you can clearly	A sense these children are the unwanted ones? What has she seen these settings do that have given her this perception? 'Blips and issues' – others cannot get past the events
87.	Fear	see you can't be bothered. You don't want to try because of the blips and issues they've had in the past. But that's done. That's finished. You need to let that go. You need to see them as they are now	that happened previously/ they are holding on. A sense these settings have rigid/ unchangeable views about the children?
88.	Frustration with mainstream settings	and give them that chance. Children are very perceptive, they know They know if your frightened of them, they know if you don't really want them in the room, they know if you're angry. They are not silly. They will feed off thatSo, its erm, it does frustrate me when you could have just. You know he's got an issue at break time. So why	Perceptive children 'They know' – does she mean they know what you are thinking? Is she fearful of the child? 'Feed off that' – do they live off her fear? Does she need to hide this?
89.	Balancing needs	not have someone there monitoring it. And, you	

90. Feeling let-down by the schools

know literacy is a massive blip so why not put something in place to help them through that. I understand a class of 30 children. It's very difficult to differentiate. And it's, I know that. We've got a class from year 3 till year 6 at the moment. Trying to differentiate for that amount of, you know. So, although we are only doing it for 8, you know actually, we are kind of they are such different levels. We are working from year 1 to year 6 and trying to break it down. So, I do understand, but all you have to do is try. That's frustrating when they don't try. [Makes growling noise] I do grumble.

I: And, if I were to say, what does supporting excluded children look like or mean for you, what would you say?

S: Erm, to me?

I: Yeah

S: Oh, that's really hard. Giving that child a chance. Saying 'ok, you've made a mistake but this is your chance to turn it around'. This is, the choices you now make will define what happens for your future and we're here to help you try and make the right choices. It's all about choice now. So, this is your chance to get on a different path and make different choices. Use it. Use the opportunity. That's what we're here for. I think

Questioning other provisions

She is frustrated - does she feel that the alternative provision manages it, so why can't mainstream settings?

Differentiating for different needs

'That amount, you know' – it is difficult to do this – a juggling act to manage the different needs. A sense she can do it, so mainstream staff can too. Alternative provision versus mainstream school?

'I do understand' – an attempt at empathy through the frustration?

Giving the child a change to succeed

Hard to articulate – this is complex?

A sense that they are setting which matters most, with her role to help them find the correct path.

Repetition of 'use it' – emphasise the importance of this time in the child's life.

91. Alternative provision as a second chance

92.	Managing difference	that's the main thing. Showing them actually, you don't have to take this route, try this one.	
, , ,	Wanaging uniterence	I: How is that for you, how does that work for you – the 'different route'?	Adapting approach to the child
		S: Every child is different, so every approach is different. You've got the basic approach. Sort of right, wrong. You know, erm, this is an area for you that we need to work on. But every child is different so it changes for each child.	'Basic approach' – providing the foundations of right or wrong – like a parent? Constantly adapting approach to each individual – is this difficult/tiring?
93.	Becoming acclimatised	I: What's that like for you to do that?	
		S: I think you just. For me, it's just become the norm now. You just automatically do it. So, I can't really put that into words (laughs), because it's just an automatic thing (laugh). It's really hard actually to put that into words, you just, you just, you just do it. You just automatically, I don't know how to put that into words really. Sorry that's not very helpful	The norm Automatic thing — you do it without thought, attention, control, it is implicit? 'Hard to put into words' - difficult to define this when you do it every day.
		I: No don't worry that's ok.	A sense you relax and accept it rather than attempt to
		S: Sorry that's not very helpful.	have control.
		I: It's all helpful.	
		S: But you just go with the flow and just adapt to what their needs are.	Moving on

		I: Yeah.	
		S: You just do, you just do (laughs).	
94.	Letting go	I: Is there anything that I haven't asked today that you think is particularly important to know about your experiences doing this and supporting these children?	Pause – thinking how to phrase this 'Draw a line' – put a limit on the experience effecting you – for both you and the child. Emphasis on the incident being over – is this how she copes in more difficult situations?
95.	Learning to adapt	S: I think the main thing for me is you need to be able todraw a line. If there has been an issue. You need to be able to draw a line and say look, it's a fresh start now. Look we had an issue this morning, it's done, its' finished, we're moving on. And you need to be able to let that go. Because if you can't and you hold onto it, you are not going to be able to support that child. Then like I say, you just have to adapt with each situation, you need to be able to adapt and just roll with it and that is the main thing you need to be able to do.	'Roll with it' – bear it, tolerate it, adapt to the circumstances or challenges occurring – a sense you do not let it affect you? 'The main thing' – is this the most important thing for her?
96.	Time and space to let go	I: And that letting go process, what is that?	The process of letting go/ taking time for herself Laugh – was she fearing I would judge her?
97.	Letting go	S: For me, it's a case of food, that's really bad (laughs). For me, it is just a couple of minutes to go ok, I'm going for a wee, I'm going to get a	Lightening the topic of conversation. Home = the safe place, the need to get away after a difficult day – needing time and space to reflect and
		drink, done. If it's been a bigger thing, then it's going home and justdoing what I need to do sort of with my family – just give me 5 minutes, and just go clean the kitchen. Just that, that 5 minutes	process. Repetition of 'just' – hard to articulate the letting go process

		on my own. Just to, just that, just that letting go	
		process. Chill out, leave me alone, I just need 5	The importance of a reflective time to talk through
		minutes. And for the most part, that's what I do.	the day – does this help her let it go?
98.	Dependency on the support	And here, we all talk through things. So, at the end	'Bounce off each other' – share together, let off
	system	of the day, we have that briefing at the end of the	steam/emotions?
		day and we talk through things. We have that	What would it be like without the support system –
99.	Value being there for each other	briefing and we look after each other and bounce	is their dependency on each other?
		off each other. If I have the hump, I will bounce off	
		off Tommy, if Tommy has the hump he will	
100.	Relationships in the team	bounce off of me. We have that kind of relationship	Building a relationship
		now, and that's the biggest thing we are there for	A sense you may still need to reflect when you go
		each other. We phone each other and say, 'todays	home?
		been a grotty day, you ok, yeah, I'm ok, you ok,	
		yeah'. And that's kind of what we do.	
		I: Yeah.	A family at work – taking on the motherly role in the
		C. It's a hit of a mosthern can note in which which	team?
		S: It's a bit of a mother-son relationship with the teacher that I work with (laughs).	

I: Thank you for telling me all of that.

S: That's ok.

Appendix P: Example of subordinate and superordinate theme development (Sharon)

Stage 4: Development of subordinate and superordinate themes

	SUPERORDINATE THEME: A JOURNEY OF DEVELOPMENT		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes	
The experience of	Personal disorientation	- "When I first started it was huge. Erm it was a real culture shock for me. Erm, because the students that we had when I very first started here" (<i>Lines</i> 26 – 27)	
beginning the role	Fear at the beginning	- "But that was ermbut yeah, I did struggle with that initial, initial. It was quite frightening. I mean, bearing in mind, I work with the primary students, so to see them going into that rage and not knowing what to do with it" (<i>Lines</i> 264 – 266)	
	Eye-opening beginning (x3)	 "Erm, but yeah it was a real eye-opener" (<i>Lines 37 - 38</i>) "Where, where, where do you pick that up from, you're still a child, where you – it, it was a massive culture shock for me" (<i>Lines 43 - 44</i>) 	
		- "I just couldn't believe what a 6-year-old was coming out with. If I was to hear it from an 18-year-old drunk down the pub, I am like yeah ok, yeah, you're 18. You're drunk you, you know, but a 6-year-old. Wow" (<i>Lines 67 – 69</i>)	
	Beginning with difficult lessons	- "Well, I remember on one of my first weeks, we had a student and he was 6 at the time, and he was going right off into one, and the, the language. I am not going to repeat the language but being the way, I am, I went 'pardon' because you know it's just manners and you think I can't have heard that right and he repeated the whole lot again. That day I learnt never to say pardon again (laughs). You don't say it because they just throw it all back" (<i>Lines</i> 62 – 67)	
	Loss of security	- "I suppose I lived in a little bubble for, because in a mainstream school yes you hear it, but not to the extent I was hearing it here" (<i>Lines 41 – 43</i>)	
	The impact on others	- "Erm, and sort of my children got a bit upset because they are seeing me going home in bruises. My husband wasn't too happy about it" ($Lines\ 28 - 30$)	
The developing	New sides of the self (x3)	- "I kind of, I don't consider myself a stubborn person, but I must be because I am like no" (Lines 30 - 31)	
<u>self</u>		- "So maybe I am just that natural motherly, protective. Maybe I just carry that about me, I don't know. Quite a few of them have slipped up and called me mum" ($Lines\ 30-31$)	

	Rebuilding the self	 "I just, I must have that natural, without even realising it, nurturing bit about me. Ermnever considered myself very maternal. Ever. In comparison to some people I know. Erm, but obviously I just have that, because they do talk to me. They do" (<i>Lines 204 - 207</i>) "And then, it was sort of pull yourself together, you stupid woman [laughs]. And then it was at that point I thought, I am not having a 10-year-old. I think he was actually 8 at the time, get the better of me" (<i>Lines 246 - 248</i>)
	A learning journey	- "And yeah, it's, it's been a massive learning curve it really has for me" (Lines $52 - 53$)
	Refusing to give up (x2)	 "So yes, you've battered me. Yes, you've hurt me. But you know what, I'm not giving up on you. I am going be here tomorrow" (<i>Lines 177 – 179</i>) "But no, I'm not prepared I'm not giving in just yet. It wouldn't be fair on them and I think I will always regret it, if I give up now" (<i>Lines 254 – 255</i>)
	Learning to adapt	- "Then like I say, you just have to adapt with each situation, you need to be able to adapt and just roll with it and that is the main thing you need to be able to do" (<i>Lines</i> 274 – 275)
	Taking responsibility/ a duty to help	- "I can't ask someone else to do that if I'm not prepared to do something like that myself. It's just the way I look at things, that's just my outlook" (<i>Lines 192 – 193</i>)
Separation from role/experience	Letting go (x3)	 "I think it's just about being patient and saying, 'that's done and dusted, let's move on'. And being able to move away and letting that bit go. If you hold on to it then you not going to be able to so" (<i>Lines 210 - 212</i>) "I think the main thing for me is you need to be able todraw a line. If there has been an issue. You need to be able to draw a line and say look, it's a fresh start now. Look we had an issue this morning, it's done, it's finished, we're moving on. And you need to be able to let that go. Because if you can't and you hold onto it, you are not going to be able to support that child" (<i>Lines 370 - 374</i>) "Just to, just that, just that letting go process. Chill out, leave me alone, I just need 5 minutes. And for the most part, that's what I do" (<i>Lines 380 - 382</i>)
	Difficulty letting go (x2)	 "If they spit at me, that one I do hold on to that, I can't abide being spat at. I would rather be kicked or punched than being spat at. And so erm, that I find difficult" (<i>Lines 214 - 215</i>) "Erm, so sometimes that side of it does gets to me. And I do sometimes find that hard, but you have to. As difficult as it is" (<i>Lines 225 - 226</i>)
	Excessive thinking; rumination (x2)	- "And it's, it's heart-breaking sometimes and you go home, and you are constantly thinking. I do, because it's the way I am. Just constantly thinking" ($Lines\ 49-51$)

Time and space to let go	 "You know, I think that's probably why I do lay awake thinking about some of the kids some of the times, because I know what they are going through at home. I know what their background is And some of it's not very nice [laughs] and that is. That is hard, that I do find hard" (<i>Lines 226 - 229</i>) "For me, it is just a couple of minutes to go ok, I'm going for a wee, I'm going to get a drink, done. If it's been a bigger thing, then it's going home and justdoing what I need to do sort of with my family – just give me 5 minutes, and just go clean the kitchen. Just that, that 5 minutes on my own" (<i>Lines 377 - 338</i>)
Struggling to maintain the professional self	- "I do want to go and batter whoever it is that's done whatever. But you have to be professional, but I do find that difficult. I just want – 'Come home with me, come home with me, I will look after you" (Lines 220 – 222)

	SUPERORDINATE THEME: <u>A NURTURING/ PARENTAL ROLE</u>			
Subordinate	Emergent theme	Associated quotes		
theme				
<u>A</u>	The maternal figure (x2)	- "Erm, I like to think I am quite approachable. And a couple of times they go 'oh mum'" (<i>Lines 197 – 198</i>)		
nurturing/parental role		- "I think it's quite cute [laughs]. I did have one student in the past. I was his school mum. So, he called me 'mum' a few times and said, 'yeah I have mum at home but you're my school mum'. I thought ok, that's fine but just remember I'm Ms not mum" (<i>Lines</i> 201 – 203)		
	A constant figure	- "Ermso they know, no matter what they have done today, tomorrow is a clean slate and I am the one constant thing that they have. And a lot of these children don't have that one constant" (<i>Lines 175 – 177</i>)		
	Understanding the parent's position	- "In my mind if I have, I have two children and if I was struggling and if my student, my child, one of my girls was struggling. I would like to think that there is somebody out there who actually gives a toss and that would be there. That I can go and talk to and that would be there to support my child through that difficult time. How could I ask someone else to do that, if I am not prepared to do it myself?" (<i>Lines</i> 180 – 184)		
	Caring for the child	- "It's just knowing that there is somebody out there that actually cares and that actually can be bothered" (<i>Lines</i> 185 – 186)		

Desire to look after the	- "Ermyou know I don't think there is a student I've had that I wouldn't have wanted to take home.
child	You know I will feed you, I will wash you, I will give you the bit of love and attention that you
	desperatelyare craving, that's fine" (Lines 222 – 224)

	SUPERORDINATE THEME: EMOTIONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT ON THE SELF		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes	
An emotional experience	An intensity of emotions (x2)	 "It is so rewarding, so rewarding. It's like yeah, we did that. We did that, that was us. Yeah, yeah, that is, yeah, it's a massive feeling, I can't really put it in to words, it's just yeah, yeah" (<i>Lines 105 - 107</i>) "Ermafterwards, I am like I cannot do this. I cannot do this. And I went home and I laid on my bed and I bawled my eyes out" (<i>Lines 241 - 242</i>) 	
	Feeling drained (x2)	 "Erm, yeah, it's, it's really reward- it can be draining, it can be so, so, tiring" (<i>Lines 128 – 129</i>) "When you know that they really don't want to do the task and you are like you can do, you can do. It can be tiring" (<i>Lines 135 – 136</i>) 	
	A sense of pride (x6)	 "Just, we had something to do with that. Look he's doing so well" (<i>Line 300</i>) "[] and when all of a sudden you see that little light bulb moment with them. That's when it's worthwhile" (<i>Lines 85 - 86</i>) "I have a couple, and one of the ladies from reintegration go 'they've been asking about you and your chocolate'. And it's nice knowing they are still thinking of us and thinking, and you know. I have had an impact on them because they still remember me" (<i>Lines 95 - 97</i>) "Knowing that we've had a part and they are able now to move on with being able to show them some coping strategies and actually when you are struggling, you can do this, you can do that. You know, you need to, erm got them thinking about how they can help themselves and knowing that we've had something to do with that" (<i>Lines 99 - 102</i>) "Erm, but again when you see it working, then it, it, then that again in itself is rewarding. So, it's erm, when you see actually see we are making a difference" (<i>Lines 125 - 127</i>) "And they have actually done ok, and it's you know, we had a part in that" (<i>Line 260</i>) 	
	Painful experiences	- "Ermthe day that I was strangled. That, erm. Like I say, when I first started here four years ago" (Lines 232 – 233)	

	Shock	- "Yeah, it's just, I justI think I stood there with my mouth open for a couple of minutes because I was just like, I can't believe you've just said that" (<i>Lines</i> 71 – 72)
	Fear (x2)	 "Children are very perceptive, they know They know if your frightened of them, they know if you don't really want them in the room, they know if you're angry. They are not silly. They will feed off that" (<i>Lines</i> 332 – 334) "I had one jump on my back and literally was on my back and that really shook me up. That really, really shook me up (voice intonation changes, break in her voice)" (<i>Lines</i> 238 – 239)
	Exhaustion	- "(Sighs) Restraining. Writing up reports. Doing safe-guarding reports [laughs]. Putting cold compresses on where I was battered (laughs) and I needed to get a erm, like the bruising. Erm, they were exhausting. They, they were more tiring in a lot of ways because it was a lot more physical, so they were long days" (<i>Lines 168-171</i>)
	Grief	- "Heartbroken that children aren't allowed to be children anymore and they were having to grow up so quick and they didn't know. They didn't understand what they were feeling, they didn't understand even to some extent now, they were so young, they don't understand the emotions that they are feeling" (<i>Lines</i> 46 – 49)
	Sadness	- "You know it's it shouldn't become normal, but it kind of has. Still challenge it, but it's just the norm. Which is sad. I think it's sad, it shouldn't be the norm" (Lines $59 - 61$)
	Despair	- "And I went home and I laid on my bed and I balled my eyes out. Erm, I thought I don't know what I can do to help this little boy, or, or any of them at that point" (<i>Lines 242 – 244</i>)
	Loss of hope	- "We had some students who I would refer to them as the lifers." (Line 233)
The feelings that come with	Fear of consequences	- "I'm frightened of, I guess I am frightened of doing the restraint wrong and hurting. Even now, four years down the line, in case I make a mistake and they get hurt or, you know, that does still worry me" (Lines 271 – 273)
<u>restraints</u>	Fear of the child	- "I mean, bearing in mind, I work with the primary students, so to see them going into that rage and not knowing what to do with it. And they become so strong. So, strong. It's like they've got the strength of 20 men. It's ermyeah it was. It frightened me to start off with" (<i>Lines 265 – 268</i>)
	Unfamiliarity	- "I had only just recently done my restraint training as well. Again, that was all very new and alien to me" (<i>Lines</i> 237 – 238)
	Strong emotional response	- "I personally always get the shakes after. Like I say the adrenaline, getting them to calm down and the de-escalation of it all. Erm, I do get the shakes afterwards" (<i>Lines</i> 277 – 278)

	Reciprocity of distress Resignation to restraints	 "Erm, yeah, it's not, I don't enjoy it. It, it's distressing. It's distressing for them and its distressing for us, especially if it's a big restraint. And I mean, most of them literally a couple minutes, done finished. But when it's a big one, it's horrible, it's horrible. I don't like it" (<i>Lines</i> 282 – 286) "But it is what it is, it's part of the job. Erm, I don't like doing the restraints. They don't like it. I don't like it. Erm, but sometimes you have to" (<i>Lines</i> 273 – 275)
	Aversion	- "And if I can avoid it, I will (laughs). Yeah, it's not something, it's a very, very, very last resort. So" (Lines 291 – 292)
The psychological experience of	Becoming desensitised	- "And I suppose now nothing really, it's awful to say, but nothing really shocks me. Nothing that they say. It still upsets me sometimes thinking you know, you're 5, you're 6. You shouldn't, nothing really shocks me now" ($Lines 56 - 58$)
providing support	Normalisation of extremes	- "I've been called a prostitute. I've been called a paedophile. I've been strangled. I've been bitten. You know it'sit shouldn't become normal, but it kind of has. Still challenge it, but it's just the norm. Which is sad. I think it's sad, it shouldn't be the norm. Nothing you say is going to shock me. I have heard it all before" (<i>Lines</i> 58 – 62)
	Feeling stuck (x2)	 "Erm, I thought I don't know what I can do to help this little boy, or, or any of them at that point. How do we reach these children? They are so damaged, broken, however you want to put it. I don't know how to connect with these kids. I don't know where we go from here" (<i>Lines 243 - 245</i>) "When it doesn't go quite so well, and it's just likeHow do we reach out to this child? How do we? It's finding something that works for them and that can be sometimes be really, really difficult" (<i>Lines 304 - 206</i>)
	Questioning the self (x2)	 "Well what I can do to help that one, how can I make that one feel a bit more comfortable and at ease?" (Lines 51 - 52) "Erm, I can't do this anymore. Why am I doing this?" (Line 173)
	Becoming acclimatised (x2)	 "I think you just. For me, it's just become the norm now. You just automatically do it" (<i>Line 358</i>) "but now it doesn't shock me so much" (<i>Line 74</i>)
	Loss of time	- "Erm, yeah come September, I would have been here 4 years, [whispers], 4 years, god" (Line 55)

	SUPERORDINATE THEME: EXPERIENCING THE CHILD'S SUCCESS		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes	
Experiencing the	Persevering for positive moments	- "But it's just keeping going, keep persevering and at the end you see that little light bulb and that's what it's all about. Seeing that little light bulb" (<i>Lines 136 – 138</i>)	
<u>child's success</u>	Successful reintegration into society	- "Yeah, knowing that they've moved on and now they're, they're actually becoming, part of society rather than beingsort of frowned upon. It's a nice, it's a good feeling, it's a good feeling" (<i>Lines</i> 262 – 264)	
	Observing change (x2)	 "Seeing them succeed when you do get them back into the school or into a provision. Seeing them, using the coping mechanisms that we've tried to teach them. And actually, it working" (<i>Lines294 - 296</i>) "He's now able to socialise, he's now able to interact without having to feel like he's got to be top dog or she" (<i>Lines 127 - 128</i>) 	
	Experiencing success	- "That's when it's worthwhile. When you actually think we have achieved something here, they're, they're getting there. And that's nice" ($Lines\ 86-87$)	
	Accomplishing long- lasting change	- "Look we had a part of that. 20 years' time, he's not going to remember my name. He's not going to know that it was us, but we helped do that. We helped do thatand that's a good thing" (<i>Lines 300 – 302</i>)	
	Positive outcomes; relationships and transitions	- "Erm, so I am glad I didn't, because we ended up having a really good rapport with these kids. After we had got over that initial, everything's changing. We actually ended up having really good rapports and really good relationships with these kids. And most of them moved on into mainstream schools and done really well and those that didn't go into mainstream, provisions were found for them" (<i>Lines 255</i> – 259)	

1. SUPERORDINATE THEME: FREUSTRATION WITH THE OUTSIDE		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes
	Frustration with placement system	- "Sometimes I get a bit frustrated because I find this isn't long enough. Other times they come into us and where they have struggled in a class of 30, because we are so much smaller, I don't actually

Frustration with the outside		understand why you are here, you know you are settling down and doing everything we are asking. Yes, you are very low ability, but why are you here?" (Lines $110 - 113$)
	Pressure to be a miracle cure	- "They think we are a miracle cure, which we are not. You know, we do are best, but we are not a miracle cure. But then when they go back to school, the school hasn't actually done anything or put anything in place to help make that child succeed" (<i>Lines</i> 307 – 310)
	Feeling unheard by mainstream schools	- "It is, you know, you are setting this child up to fail because actually we have said to you this, this and this. And we know these are the triggers, this is what works and then you don't use that" (<i>Lines 313 – 315</i>)
	Comparisons with mainstream environments	- "So, yeah, it's hard to describe a normal day at the moment because it is, as it would be in a mainstream school. You're there, you're supporting them in class, you're giving them the encouragement, support and coping mechanisms to help them get through their work. Which is exactly what I would have done in a mainstream. Getting the resources ready. Getting the class ready, is exactly what I would have done when I was in mainstream" (<i>Lines 160 – 165</i>)
	Other settings failing the child	- "And they don't support the child to try and make it work. So, we'll give you a list of strategies. you know and then they don't use them. That is frustrating" ($Lines 311 - 313$)
	Frustration with outside schools and staff	- "I get really frustrated with the schools. I get really frustrated that there isn't the funding in the schools. Money isn't the answer to everything. People have got to want to work with these children and sometimes actually you can clearly see you can't be bothered. You don't want to try because of the blips and issues they've had in the past" (<i>Lines</i> 327 – 329)
	Frustration with mainstream settings	- "So, its erm, it does frustrate me when you could have just. You know he's got an issue at break time. So why not have someone there monitoring it. And, you know literacy is a massive blip so why not put something in place to help them through that. I understand a class of 30 children" (<i>Lines 334 – 337</i>)
	Feeling let-down by other schools	- "So, I do understand, but all you have to do is try. That's frustrating when they don't try. [Makes growling noise] I do grumble" ($Lines 341 - 342$)
	Alternative provision as the second chance	- "Giving that child a chance. Saying 'ok, you've made a mistake but this is your chance to turn it around'. This is, the choices you now make will define what happens for your future and we're here to help you try and make the right choices. It's all about choice now. So, this is your chance to get on a different path and make different choices. Use it. Use the opportunity. That's what we're here for" (<i>Lines 347 – 352</i>)

	SUPERORDI	NATE THEME: WAYS TO MANAGE A CLASSROOM OF NEEDS
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes
Managing a	Managing group dynamics	- "If you get, we haven't got it at the moment but sometimes you have that, where they are trying to find their pecking order" (Lines $119 - 120$)
classroom of needs	Managing difference (x2)	- "Every child is different, so every approach is different. You've got the basic approach. Sort of right, wrong. You know, erm, this is an area for you that we need to work on. But every child is different so it changes for each child" (<i>Lines</i> 354 – 356)
		- "Academically they're very low. Erm not seen any real aggression from these ones. You kind of go through stages where you have some really aggressive pupils and then you'll have some that are just really low" (<i>Lines</i> 78 – 80)
	Facilitating equality	- "At the moment, we have a really nice group and they are not doing that, they are just all one. But, when you have got one coming in who is like, 'I am top dog' and it's 'mm, like no we are all equal, we are all the same', and it's getting them to all work as a team aswell" (<i>Lines 120 – 123</i>)
	Balancing needs	- "It's very difficult to differentiate. And it's, I know that. We've got a class from year 3 till year 6 at the moment. Trying to differentiate for that amount of, you know. So, although we are only doing it for 8, you know actually, we are kind of they are such different levels" (<i>Lines 337 – 340</i>)
	Managing transitions	- "Erm we were all new, the students were coming into a completely new setting and completely new set-up, so they had gone home on the summer break thinking one thing and come back and everything's changed and everything's new, so it was hard for everybody" (<i>Lines</i> $34 - 37$)
	Challenging behaviour (x2)	 "Erm, so today we had a student that didn't go on his golden time reward because he didn't earn the credits and he had done some silly things today and he was just really rude. And, he did get a bit aggressive, not towards me. It was towards another member of staff" (<i>Lines 141 – 144</i>) "Normally, its throwing a book across the room. Refusing to work. Erm, giving them time out, so we have time out rooms. So, 'you need time out, go and take yourself off, calm yourself down, then we can have a chat about it afterwards'. Ermmaybe occasionally a chair will go over" (<i>Lines 150 – 153</i>)
	Rewards and praise	- "The main way to do that is to remind them of the rewards and consequences of what they will do because none of them like missing out on the trips. None of them like missing out on credits. They don't like missing out on the credits. They don't like not seeing them moving up on the reward chart. You know, they want the rewards. It is all about rewards and praise. Erm, and that's how, they need the praise, they need that confidence boost" (<i>Lines 155 – 160</i>)

	Managing low self- esteem Managing a constantly	 "Self-esteem is justthrough the floor. They haven't got any, they've got no confidence in what they can and can't do, and it's just trying to build that up and saying, 'you can do this, you know, you can, you just have to believe in yourself'. And again, that can be really upsetting sometimes thinking, when they just have no belief in themselves and it's trying to build that up" (<i>Lines 81 – 85</i>) "Erm, so that it can be hard because they don't all come in at the same time and they don't all leave at
	changing environment	the same time. So, the dynamics of the classes do change. Erm, that can be a bit of a challenge" (Lines $117-119$)
The supportive	Support systems in difficult times	- "I mean I would go home in tears but worked through that and got such a good team down there and it all sort of gelled and saw each other through that really tricky stage" (Lines $32 - 34$)
<u>team</u>	Responsibility to the team	- "Don't get me wrong I don't step away, I don't run away from it, you can't do that. Because that doesn't help them. It doesn't help them de-escalate and calm down. It's not fair on other members of staff. It's not fair on anybody to walk away and just going to ignore that. You can't do that, you are part of the team. You have to work as such" (<i>Lines</i> 285 – 288)
	Dependency on the support system	- "And here, we all talk through things. So, at the end of the day, we have that briefing at the end of the day and we talk through things. We have that briefing and we look after each other and bounce off each other" (<i>Lines</i> $382 - 384$)
	Value being there for each other	- "If I have the hump, I will bounce off of Tommy, if Tommy has the hump he will bounce off of me. We have that kind of relationship now, and that's the biggest thing we are there for each other" (Lines $384-386$)
	Relationships in the team	- "It's a bit of a mother-son relationship with the teacher that I work with (laughs)" (Line 390)

Appendix Q: Data Trails (Lily)

Stage 5: Repetition of stages 1-4 for all participants

	SUPERORDINATE THEME: CLASHES INSIDE AND OUTSIDE		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes	
Battles with the home environment	Impact of home environment (x3)	 "A lot of children they kick, they scream because they want something and they do that here because that's what works at home" (<i>Lines 181 – 182</i>) "Erm we have phases. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday can be quite difficult because they've had that time at home and then we get to Thursday, Friday and it's a better time because they've got used to that routine again" (<i>Lines 193 – 195</i>) "And, then we start again. They go home, have the weekend, come in again on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, start to settle back in and then, yeah. So yeah, every weeks always challenging on Monday morning" (<i>Lines 195 - 197</i>) 	
	Hurt by parents	- "Yeah so that's, that's what hurts, they know. They know what's best for their child but they don't do it" (<i>Lines 190 – 191</i>)	
	Frustration with parents	- "It's frustrating. The parent side of things can be quite frustrating" (Lines 186)	
	Different sides/ battle	- "Unfortunately, parents aren't always on our side or willing to use the strategies that we give them" (Lines 179 – 180)	
	Feeling deceived by parents	- "But, sometimes the parents can surprise you and they'll write on books and get everything right and they say everything right. And sometimes they say everything right but they don't implement it. So, they know they're doing something wrong because they can talk it, they say everything they need to do. They know what they need to do, but when it comes to being at home, they don't do it" (<i>Lines 186 – 189</i>)	
	Breaking the home cycle	- "You know, and it's hard to break that cycle whether you're with someone you know or not. Because that's all they know. So" (<i>Lines 183 – 184</i>)	
	Let down by lack of parental input	- "But like I said if parents aren't putting the effort in, it's not going to work because that's where they are the majority of their life" (<i>Lines 386 – 388</i>)	

<u>Unsuitability of</u>	Unsuitable mainstream	- "Erm, I mean we had him for a year aswell because again it was that transition, he couldn't go back to mainstream school. We had to find somewhere that was more suited for his needs" (<i>Lines</i> 269 – 271)
<u>mainstream</u>	Mainstream conceived as monotonous (x2)	 "I don't think I could work in a mainstream school anymore. I would get really bored to be honest with you. I really would (laughs)" (<i>Lines</i> 76 – 77) "[] what's it called, when you're doing it for school? Yeah, work experience that's the one. And erm, even then I just didn't want to, it's just too boring" (<i>Lines</i> 79 – 82)
	A lesser role; superiority	- "Seeing the kids, just sort of sit there don't you, as a TA. Marking books" (Line 82)
	Refusal from mainstream	- "Even the school said he's made such a difference, but the trouble is, we still can't meet his needs, you are going to have to find a different provision for him" (<i>Lines</i> 281 – 282)
The teacher as a	Anxiety provoked by new teachers	- "Erm well, I'm a really anxious person and I like talk a lot. So, when I first meet them I'm like (making mumbling noise), I can't get my words out" (<i>Lines</i> 300 – 301)
difficult figure	Differences in practice/ conflict with teacher's approach (x2)	 "I feel like that teacher played it safe. Instead of trial and error and seeing the kick off, it was more of a play safe we'll do it like this, this is how it's going to be" (<i>Lines 329 – 330</i>) "Erm, I'm quite an easy-going person. If that's what you think will work then you can do that, that is absolutely fine. Sometimes I think oh this is why, this didn't work and then we put it into place. But I just say next time" (<i>Lines 332 – 334</i>)
	Adapting to different approaches	- "Yeah, she was amazing, she really was. I mean the teacher that I've got at the moment is amazing as well. But they're so different in so many ways for me. You know" (<i>Lines</i> 292 – 293)
	Uncertainty/ exclusion from teacher	- "So, it was very much oh I don't really know what I'm meant to do in this situation because sometimes I wouldn't be a part of that, because the teacher would go out talk to them, bring them back in" (<i>Lines</i> 319 – 321)
	Rejection/undervalued	- "Rather than just shoot you down straight away. No, that ideas not going to work, we will just do this instead, so" (<i>Lines 325 – 326</i>)
	A lack of autonomy	- "Then other times not with the teacher I've got at the moment but it would be like no I'm going to deal with this, I'm going to deal with this. You can do this" (<i>Lines 317 – 319</i>)
	Being left behind by teachers	- "Yeah, I know because a lot of teachers get their teaching degree and then they have children. And that's happened to me so many times" (<i>Lines</i> 297 – 29)

	SUPERORDINATE THEME: MANAGING RELATIONSHIPS		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes	
<u>Difficulties</u>	Attachments/ powerless lack of control	- "You know it's their choice at the end of the day, whether they want to form an attachment with us or not. So. Yeah" (<i>Lines 149 – 150</i>)	
forming attachments and connections	Difficulty liking the child	- (Sighs) "Sometimes, it's lovely. Sometimes you know, some of the children you just can't take a shine to. Per se" (<i>Lines 141 – 142</i>)	
25111123113115	Trauma impacting connection	- "Well, we always try and build a relationship but sometimes the children have just got through so much that they can't get an attachment with an adult. Which is completely understandable" (<i>Lines 147 – 148</i>)	
	Unable to connect	- "We just, we get on with it. I mean, the children that don't like to form attachments with adults, generally form attachments with other children. So, they still got that relationship there. Which we haven't really, they form attachments with children or form attachments to adults. That's what we've had so far" (<i>Lines</i> 152 – 154)	
Relating to the child	Liking the child/desire to protect	- "He, he had like you know, things going on in his background and things at home so it helps you like that child even more because you just want to wrap them up in cotton wool sort of thing. So" (<i>Lines</i> 218 – 220)	
	Knowing the child's emotional needs	- "It's better for the children as well because if I've upset that child, last thing that child wants is for me to be holding them, so we'll swap. I'll go away and the other person can help them calm down at a better rate so, yeah that's probably one of the better experiences" (<i>Lines</i> 167 – 169)	
	Understanding/empathy towards the child	- "He will have a little kick, he'll have a scream and then he will sit down and get on with his work again. So, it's you know, even adults get a bit grumpy sometimes. So, you got to expect some negative things to come from them but" (<i>Lines</i> 55 – 58)	
	Connection aids ability to forgive	- "Erm, well I really liked him. It's difficult when you really like a child to like hold a grudge, so" (<i>Lines</i> 217 – 218)	
	Knowing the child	- "It gives them personality aswell doesn't it? Because you know them so well and you know how you can help them when you've had them for a certain amount of time" (<i>Lines 113 – 115</i>)	
	Having favourites	- "Other times, like the little American speaking guy, he was one of my favourites. Yeah, I do miss him but I still get to hear about him which is nice. Yeah so" (Lines 142 – 143)	

	Understanding anxiety Adapting for child	 "Sometimes they start to revert back to their old behaviour but that's just because they're nervous, they're anxious about going back. Some children we see some of the behaviour when they first came, right at the end. And they know their going back" (<i>Lines 369 – 371</i>) "If it doesn't work we change it again and it's obviously worked because their behaviour now is
Adapting approach and	promotes development	completely different. You know, they sit at the table, they, they get on with their work. Erm very rare, do we see any behaviours from them now" (<i>Lines 13 - 16</i>)
finding ways to support	Small adaptations; large changes	- "Yeah and processing information aswell. Just erm, like if you are giving them instructions, instead of giving them all at once, at one time. Just break it down. This is what you need to do first. Once they've done that, give them the next instruction. That just makes such a big difference" (<i>Lines 40 – 43</i>)
	Continuous change and adaptation	- "Erm, but yeah, it's always changing. It always changes with every child we have. We have to manipulate the strategies every time so. Yeah" (Lines $9 - 10$)
	Adopting a proactive approach	- "When they are arguing? Well, you have to just try and think of a different thing. Right we won't play this anymore then, we'll do something else. Then you give them a puzzle to do alone. Phonics puzzle, like you do this puzzle, you do this puzzle. But" (<i>Lines</i> $353 - 355$)
	Finding ways to manage	- "Like they are all different. Maybe I would do a game with two of them, let them have some choosing time or play a game together and then I would swap them. So, that made it just that little bit easier" (Lines 348 – 350)
	Striving for solutions	- "But there's a wealth of different things and we always, we always find solutions to problems" (<i>Lines</i> $312 - 313$)
	The impact of adapting/ mediating for child	- "You don't understand this, right let's put this in place. And as soon as they go, it's like right they can understand that now. Just that one thing, that one word, will make a big difference. If they don't know these words how are they going to progress with their numbers? Can you take one away? Can you add one up? Well, I don't know what those words mean. You know, just simple things like that" (<i>Lines</i> 238 – 242)
	Trying to figure the child out	- "Like one child we've got at the moment, is really rude and says certain things. And that's the only thing that we've got, that's wrong with her. But there's no trigger. Normally before, there's some sort of a trigger or something that would set her off. But we, we don't' know it yet. So, it's just about like trying to figure out ways, doing things in the classroom that might trigger her" (<i>Lines 91 – 94</i>)

	SUPERORDINATE THEME: THE EXPERIENCE AS A JOURNEY		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes	
Adjusting and developing as part	Competency/ self- assurance through learning	- "Didn't really know how to, what to do I, I learnt along the way and now I'm very confident in what I do, so" (<i>Lines 119 – 120</i>)	
of the role	Constant learning process	- "Oh, so, I, I've only got an Elklan qualification but it's really good but you, you just pick up little things along the way aswell" (Lines $30 - 31$)	
	Experiential learning	- "It's just about using your experiences you've had before to now solve this problem or this situation. So" (<i>Lines</i> 88 – 89)	
	Facing new experiences (x2)	 "So that was like different, I had never dealt with that before so just finding strategies to, to deal with that" (Lines 8 – 9) "Erm, you always get faced with challenges, which are completely different to ones you've ever 	
	Fulfilment through	experienced before" (<i>Lines 87 – 88</i>) - "Yeah, no. It's erm, it's good for me because I like a challenge. I like to, you know to help them and	
	challenge	you know figure out things for them aswell for their sake" (Lines 97 – 98)	
	Coping with constant change	- "Every day is different (laughs). There's never, there is never a day that is the same. You never know what is going to happen" (Lines $86 - 87$)	
	Acclimatisation (x2)	 "Yeah, erm, I, I, I don't mind that because that's what I'm used to. I am just so used to just dealing with the behaviour now and working with children that are challenging" (<i>Lines 112 – 113</i>) "I'm, I'm quite used to it now" (<i>Line 230</i>) 	
	Desire for personal autonomy/opportunities to try	- "Erm, you would think it would be like no I don't care, I don't want to be dealing with that behaviour but I like to have an idea and put it into place and see if it works" (<i>Lines 324 – 325</i>)	
	Learning from others	- "Yeah, yeah it was really good. I mean the teacher that I was working with always did loads of stuff. I mean I learnt so much from her when she was here. Erm and I still put that into practice now" (<i>Lines</i> 287 – 289)	
	Emancipation/ trusted to do role (x2)	- "Again, now it's the same again. I do what I feel is right and my teacher is happy for me to do that" (<i>Lines 321 – 322</i>)	
		- "She very much let me get on with what I wanted to do. Erm, if I just, if I felt like this child needs to have time out that was it. I was allowed to do that, there was no issues" (<i>Lines 315 – 317</i>)	

A positive impact on the self	Becoming liked by the child Input treasured	 "Erm yeah loads. The children are just so funny. They really are. Like we had one here a little while ago, autistic boy. Because he watches TV, he had like an American accent. So, every time he was rude we would say [American accent] 'get out of my face', 'just go away' 'I hate you miss'. Like, it's just funny. These kids, then you get to see a couple of weeks later it wasn't 'I hate you' it was 'I love you Miss, you're so great', like just" (<i>Lines 70 - 74</i>) "And it makes it a bit easier for them to, and we always give them something for them to remember us by. Like a card or some of them make teddies while they are here. We've got one at the moment
		that's still got their teddy now. We've just heard about him. He's about 6 or 7 months ago now" (<i>Lines</i> 375 – 380)
	Valued/wanted (x2)	- "They all get on with their work, they're all really happy to see you in the morning. They all want to do my speech and language activities which was a problem before because they would just refuse" (<i>Lines</i> 128 – 130)
		- "That feels nice for me because I know that they don't want to leave. They would like to stay here" (<i>Lines 373 - 374</i>)
	Pride (x4)	- "I mean sometimes like I said we do get bad news, and it's not always great. But when you hear the good news, it makes you feel really good" (<i>Lines 382 – 384</i>)
		 "Aww it's lovely, it's really rewarding yeah" (<i>Line 21</i>) "Yeah, because all the children we have at the moment they have had challenges beforehand. So just seeing the difference in them and now is just rewarding, yeah, it's lovely" (<i>Lines 134 – 135</i>) "Yeah, it just makes me really proud, makes me really happy. I always log it. Write down what they've done, so. Yeah" (<i>Lines 244 – 246</i>)
	Self-recognition (x3)	 "It's, it's good to see how much of a difference it can make. Just by doing simple memory games and knowing that wow, you, you've done that now" (<i>Lines 36 - 37</i>) "Yeah, it's been really rewarding. It, it's nice for me to see what a difference I've made in their lives aswell. So, that's always a positive for me" (<i>Lines 60 - 61</i>)
		- "You had Tracy before, she takes them back to school so she will come and tell us what sort of difference they've made and how well their doing. It's not always good news, but when it is, it, it does make you feel really good about yourself. So" (<i>Lines</i> 65 – 68)
	A unique contribution/ feeling special	- "Especially with the speech and language stuff because that's something that I do, just me. Nobody else does that" ($Lines\ 236-237$)
	Recognition of school	- "But we're alright normally anyway. It's us, we do really well with them" (<i>Lines 358 – 359</i>)

	Enjoying job; a desire to show positives (x2)	 "I think we've covered everything. I really like my job that's probably good for you to hear. You probably don't hear that, that often" (<i>Lines 392 - 393</i>) "It's hard for me because I love my job so much (laughs). I really do" (<i>Lines 250 - 251</i>)
Strains on the self	Feeling unable to help	- "And then I couldn't really help them or get to know them or understand what the barrier was with their understanding" (<i>Lines 130 – 131</i>)
	Unable to see it through/disappointment	- "And like I said, you don't always get to see that. They go on to school and we only get to hear about how well they progress" (Lines $61 - 62$)
	Lack of time and space (x2)	- "I'm meant to start but I normally come in a bit early to make sure I'm prepared. And then right the way up to about 2.30, erm that's when the children go" (<i>Lines</i> 252 – 253)
		- "Yeah not having that time to stop, have a quick drink, not be around the children. Erm, that would be nice" (<i>Lines</i> 257 – 258)
	Lack of time for change	- "Yeah you can see a difference, but no-where near as much as the children we have for a year" (<i>Line 64</i>)
	Limited capacity of the role (x3)	 "Yeah, well there's only so much we can do working in a school" (<i>Line 179</i>) "[] so, there's only so far, we can stretch that behaviour, you know" (<i>Line 181</i>) "They're not in school, they're only in school 6 hours, there's only so much we can put in to help them with that" (<i>Lines 388 – 389</i>)
	Feelings of helplessness	- "Sometimes I felt helpless, not going to lie. Sometimes you do feel helpless" (Line 117)
	Unsettled/anxiety at the beginning	- "When I wasn't trained and I very first started to come here, it was very unsettling" (<i>Lines 118 – 119</i>)
	Behaviour negatively impacts self	- "The, their behaviours not really good. I mean it doesn't make me feel great" (Line 386)

	SUPERORDINATE TH	EME: TRYING TO SUPPORT BEHAVIOUR AND DIVERSITY OF NEEDS
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes
	Lying to protect others	- "The only thing that is hard is that I live with my partner and whenever he sees a bruise he's like
Working with	from jobs impact	'where did you get that?' (laughs), 'is that one of the kids?' And I sort of say well you know, it's just
<u>aggression</u>		a chair. You know what I'm like I'm really clumsy, because he doesn't like those sort of things. He

		doesn't like seeing me, the bruises. But he's alright. He's like 'yeah, yeah, the chair yeah' (laughs)" (Lines 230 – 234)
	Gratitude/ working with primary hurts less	- "Like yeah, the thing is, I am so lucky I work with primary because they don't really hurt. I've only been really hurt a couple of times" (<i>Lines</i> 223 – 224)
	Assaults could be worse	- "I had a book thrown at me and I like got a fat lip. Erm, kicked like on the leg and had a big bruise. Chairs thrown. But it's never, I've never broken a bone luckily. Or, like I've never had any serious injuries (crosses fingers and laughs)" (<i>Lines</i> 223 – 224)
	Extreme violence/ difficult moments to reflect on	- "And when I had a teacher in, well just after the nurture group and she had her finger broken by the same child. He had gone to kick her. She's put her hand out to stop him kicking her legs or groin area and she broke her finger (laughs). Yeah" (<i>Lines</i> $212 - 215$)
	Impact of severe behaviours	- "Erm, we had one child when I first started here that was really severe behaviours. Like if I had upset him he would run across the table and jump on me. And then other members of staff would have to help. I think that's one of the one's that stood out for me" (Lines $210 - 212$)
	Mechanisms to feel safe	- "But you know I am trained in erm, protecting myself and protecting the children aswell" (<i>Lines 117</i> -118)
	Shock of extremity	- "So, erm they're alright. But when they first came, because I've twins at the moment and when they first came their behaviour was shocking. Erm, like spitting, I mean like erm, weeing on purpose. Erm, getting naked on purpose" (Lines $5-8$)
A clash of needs	More manageable with less	- "Well, we only have 4 children at the moment, we used to have 8, which was a little bit more challenging. But now that we've, the numbers are down a bit. It's a lot easier. 2 to 1. So, you can sort of sit in the middle" (<i>Lines</i> $336 - 338$)
	Difficulty differentiating for diverse needs	- "And, because we've got year 1 and 2 the levels are always so different. So, we've got one that's not even nursery, he doesn't know any numbers, know how to count. Doesn't know any numbers, phonics letters. Then you've got year two that you know is reading fluently, knows how to times things fluently" (<i>Lines</i> 339 – 342)
	Difficulty managing different ages	- "Yeah, yeah. Because when I first started I was in the nurture group here. And all the ages were completely different which doesn't help with the behaviour because you've got erm year ones, copying the, the I don't know the year 4 behaviour. And its behaviour you don't generally see from year 1 because they are only copying it" (<i>Lines 112 – 125</i>)

	Difficulty finding what works (x2)	 "Yeah, the children react to different people in different ways I suppose. Like some teachers are just so like nurturing and calm talking. This is what we're going to do and you don't need to worry about that (voice change – more nurturing). Even though it's very calm and very nurturing. But, then the children can take the mick. Erm, the children don't always reflect well with that" (<i>Lines 305 – 308</i>) "And then you've got other teachers who are like military operation like no, you sit there, this is what's going to happen, you can't get out of your seats (voice change – harsher). Then they react differently to that as well because maybe they will get out of their seats on purpose to just get that reaction from the teacher or they will just leave the classroom" (<i>Lines 309 – 311</i>)
	Always on the go	- "Go there, go there, go here. But when you've got 8, it's like 4:1. So you are trying to run around, making sure they are all doing the same thing" (<i>Lines 338 – 339</i>)
	Child vs TA/ganged up on	- "Most of the children ganging up, getting into groups and sort of 'you do that, you do that, they'll never get us' like. Spitting, kicking, refusing to do anything really" (Lines 106 – 108)
Importance of the	Working/pulling together	- "Well erm yeah (sighs), I've got such a good team, so we all chipping together at the end of the day and sort of talk about what we're going to do and implement that" ($Lines\ 12-13$)
<u>team/staff</u>	Seeking reassurance	- "Also, the other teacher in Key Stage 2, he's team-teach teacher. So, if I have any queries about something or whether I've done something wrong or right, I go to him and he tells me straight away" (<i>Lines 170 – 172</i>)
	Dependency on the team (x2)	 "I think my team. My team I wouldn't be able to do this job without them. Definitely" (<i>Lines 157</i>) "So, I think if I didn't have them, if I didn't have that support, I would probably leave, leave to be honest with you because" (<i>Lines 160 – 162</i>)
	Feeling held/ contained	- "They all support me and they all give me advice, same as I give them advice aswell. And my manager is really good. If I ever have a problem, I go to her straight away and she, she's always giving advice on what to do. Erm, my teacher is really good. She's always there for me" (<i>Lines 157 – 160</i>)
	Held in mind by the team	- "Well, if I'm out in the corridor and I have a child who is, not kicking off but just like being, like showing negative behaviour. They are always out, they come straight away. 'Do you need help miss?' If I'm restraining and they can see that I'm slipping 'miss do you want to swap?' yep we'll do that" (Lines 160 – 164)
	Lucky/grateful to have support	- "I really do and I know other areas of the school and other schools aswell don't have such a good relationship as we do" (<i>Lines 174 – 175</i>)
	Comfort from knowing teacher	- "Yeah, once I get to know a teacher I'm alright" (Lines 301 – 302)

Importance of the team/staff	Working/pulling together Seeking reassurance	 "Well erm yeah (sighs), I've got such a good team, so we all chip together at the end of the day and sort of talk about what we're going to do and implement that" (<i>Lines 12 - 13</i>) "Also, the other teacher in Key Stage 2, he's team-teach teacher. So, if I have any queries about
	from the team	something or whether I've done something wrong or right, I go to him and he tells me straight away" (Lines $170 - 172$)
	Dependency on the team (x2)	 "I think my team. My team I wouldn't be able to do this job without them. Definitely" (<i>Lines 157</i>) "So, I think if I didn't have them, if I didn't have that support, I would probably leave, leave to be honest with you because" (<i>Lines 160 – 162</i>)
	Feeling held/ contained	- "They all support me and they all give me advice, same as I give them advice aswell. And my manager is really good. If I ever have a problem, I go to her straight away and she, she's always giving advice on what to do. Erm, my teacher is really good. She's always there for me" (<i>Lines 157 – 160</i>)
	Held in mind by the team	- "Well, if I'm out in the corridor and I have a child who is, not kicking off but just like being, like showing negative behaviour. They are always out, they come straight away. 'Do you need help miss?' If I'm restraining and they can see that I'm slipping 'miss do you want to swap?' yep we'll do that" (Lines 160 – 164)
	Lucky/grateful to have support	- "I really do and I know other areas of the school and other schools as well don't have such a good relationship as we do" ($Lines\ 174-175$)
	Comfort from knowing teacher	- "Yeah, once I get to know a teacher I'm alright" (<i>Lines 301 – 302</i>)

SUPERORDINATE THEME: LOOKING TOWARD'S THE CHILD'S FUTURE		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes
Seeing the child achieve	Value opportunities to see progress	- "It's nice because we don't often get to see such a huge outcome, because we only have them for 14 weeks. So, we see the first bit of the transition and then we get to hear about how much better they're getting on in school. Whereas with them two, I've get to see the progress that they made" (Lines 21 – 24)
	Transformation of the child	- "Yeah, like even the twins. One of them has just come such a long way. You know, from weeing on the floor and spitting and not doing any work at all. Being in the corridor the whole day to now doing

		all of the work, sitting at the table. You know, not really having any issues apart from sometimes football. He doesn't like losing. But who does" (Lines $52 - 55$)
	Social changes in the child	- "Even the children are happier. You know they are smiling more, they are just playing together instead of like, independently, erm solitary" (<i>Lines 135 – 137</i>)
	Achievements/ change noticed within the child (x2)	 "So, they have definitely noticed the difference even in themselves. They say, 'I've made friends Miss', 'I've made a friend here haven't I miss?' 'oh, I don't have any friends in my other school'. So yeah, it's nice to see that" (<i>Lines 137 – 139</i>) "Just the, the seeing them, how much they've achieved in such a short space of time" (<i>Line 236</i>)
	A different child at the end	- "And yeah, everything just changed for him, he was just a different child" (<i>Lines</i> 271 – 272)
Empowering for the future	Being a role model	- "You have to sort of model it to them and even to a point if, we're doing circle time and I will sit on the carpet aswell and I will start doing this (puts finder to mouth to show being quiet) and they know that's what you need to do, so" (<i>Lines</i> 364 – 366)
	Giving something to work towards	- "Or even just wording things. Like if we say, 'oh you're, you're going to lose credits', 'you are going to go to the Headteacher to see them'. What have they got to work towards? It's just about wording it differently. Like, 'come on you want to gain your credits', 'come on you want to do this, you want to go to the park'. Giving them those rewards instead of the negatives' (<i>Lines</i> 43 – 46)
	Giving the child a purpose	- "Because I think these children have such negative things in their lives. They need that, those positive things to outweigh the negative stuff. I suppose there's nothing really for them to strive for, yeah so" (Lines 47 – 49)
	Listening to the child's voice	- "And even just talking to them and saying, 'is there anything you can think of that we can do to help you?' And they always come up with really good answers. Yeah like candles blowing out and stuff like that. Like one child ages ago, gave to me. Like hold your hand up and blow the candle out (holds fingers up and blows). And I use that even now. So, even the children can come up with some really good ideas aswell. So" (<i>Lines 98 – 103</i>)

Appendix R: Data Trails (Devlin)

	SUPERORDINATE THEME: CONNECTIONS WITH THE CHILD		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes	
Ups and downs of relationships	Connecting with the child	- "There's a pupil, he's gone to another site now. Apparently, he was calm, he wasn't talking before I, before I started. So now he's started talking more. He's communicated for me more than, than, but he plays around too much" (<i>Lines 125 – 127</i>)	
	Moments of recognition	- "But, there's a lot of changes because they do respond and being a TA, getting good responsesby the pupils. You feel like ok, they see you on point today, they see it. They don't forget, they remember that, they just keep going at the same time. So yeah" (<i>Lines 115 – 118</i>)	
	Reciprocity of positive emotions (x2)	 "I feel that (laughs), I can't describe but there's a positive energy that yes, I lift his spirit up" (<i>Lines 132</i>) "You feel good at the same time, they feel good" (<i>Line 52</i>) 	
	TAs understanding the child	- "and this is what, what people who have been a TA, it's understanding it in my point of view" (Lines 21 – 22)	
	The supporting child	- "Erm, a student who, who, who knows their wrongs and knows how to support staff, their communication is good as in like it will keep them going" (<i>Lines 121 – 122</i>)	
	Difficulty getting through	- "Erm, it's justohit is challenging in a way that getting their attention 100%, concentration, that's it. So, it's hard to get their attention, if another pupil's interrupting them, negative, oh or something else, negative either way" (<i>Lines 180 – 190</i>)	
	A difficult position	- "It, me, a TA is a difficult position. Some of them do listen, they will come down but they go up" (Lines 64 – 65)	
	Feeling exploited by the child (x2)	- "They know what they're doingThey good on the trip and when they are coming back they can go berserk. They know, so they know they take that advantage, some gothe anxiety goes higher, it's ridiculous" (<i>Lines</i> $88 - 90$)	
		- "So, if a dominant staff like, like who pupils know that their strong and is not, or she is not around, they will take that advantage and just go berserk, until that staff returns. So, they know when they come out their shell, come on and mess around" (<i>Lines</i> $58 - 60$)	
	Relational boundaries	- "However, he does know thatyou don't cross lines with me" (<i>Lines 127 – 128</i>)	

The big brother; safe	- "So yeah, so yeah, he feels like he's not alone. He feels like he's got a big brother there and he's getting good support here, he's in good hands, that's it" (<i>Lines</i> $133 - 134$)
Consistent/ safe	- "When they come to school and they don't like school, they know they are in the safe zone, and they know that we're important to them. Because they will come back, even though they don't say, but they show it that they care" (Lines $80 - 82$)
Positioned as an older brother	- "He just knows that I'm a safe zone. He sees it as ahh you're a big brother to me, even though I don't have the hat. But they will see you're a big brother to me and I know that I'm safe, ifso yeah" (<i>Lines</i> 128 – 130)
Being a role-model (x2)	- "So, you know what I can do is different, however it's showing them something they've never seen before. Like in sports, you show them something and they are like, oh they want to do that now" (<i>Lines 162 – 164</i>)
Parenting position	 "That yes, there's a role-model that's helping me out" (<i>Lines 52 - 53</i>) "So, but they know, they feel like, they will see it as a parent, they want that parent to be there for
Compensating/ filling a role	 them as well. And I see, I do see it in a way. So yeah" (<i>Lines 61 – 62</i>) "So be the positive. We are the positive role-model for them, because the reality is they don't have actual strong role models. Some do, some don't" (<i>Lines 6 – 8</i>)
	Consistent/ safe Positioned as an older brother Being a role-model (x2) Parenting position

SUPERORDINATE THEME: AN EXPERIENCE THAT IMPACTS		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes
Impact on the self	Unexpected experiences/ shock	- "I wasn't expecting this level, it's getting worse" (Lines 111 – 112)
	Questioning the self (x2)	 "Like I think, I just do, I do ask myself this. Is this the level you want? I don't know" (<i>Lines 112 – 113</i>) "I asked myself why have I put myself into this? Is this what I was expecting? (<i>Lines 111</i>)
	Feeling unprepared/ unqualified	- "It feels likestarting from nothing, stepping in an environment like this" (Line 68)
	Self-recognition	- "Without you, they wouldn't be on point. They wouldn't be focusing on their work. The work wouldn't be in their books, and that's it" (<i>Lines</i> 75 – 76)

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	Sense of accomplishment (x3)	 "Butyou sort of enjoy it when you can get through to them" (<i>Line 50</i>) "So, it feels like as a TA, it feels like, that you did your job, you done it and no-one can't tell you, you didn't do your job, because you did your job" (<i>Lines 73 - 75</i>) "Ermgetting them to write in their books has changed them even more. So, they've seen their work and they know they can improve. They can read if they've got comments, of which a lot of work has been happening. It was great. There have been changes, when they would start writing in books, more writing inside of it. They get to see their work. That's the greatest thing about it" (<i>Lines 148 - 151</i>)
	Reassuring self	- "It was chaos, fights after fights after fights. So, we got, it's just the beginning of that time, so I said to myself it's just the beginning, it will calm down. Right now, they're just started" (<i>Lines</i> 105 – 107)
	The need for time and space	- "You feel like obviously there's an option if you don't feel it, then don't worry, step away, have a breather and come back to it. So yes" (Lines $53 - 54$)
	Desire for acknowledgement	- "That's when you've got to give yourself a pat on the back. So, yeah for the TAs, a lot of staff here, deserve the credit, because without them the kids, the pupils will not self-regulate. They would go, they would malfunction" (<i>Lines</i> $76 - 78$)
Learning in the	Learning the role	- "Learning from last year, it was like, learning the patterns. Controlling their emotions, getting to know the pupils, got me understanding my role more" (<i>Lines 26 – 27</i>)
<u>role</u>	Unity in experience	- "Because everyone, everyone, everyone is learning, even the hierarchies learn in schools, coach, players, everything, students are learning, even teachers are learning themselves" (<i>Lines 27 – 29</i>)
	Expanding knowledge and self-learning	- "Erm, I'm trying to get more experience, more understanding about the young, youth culture as well andstart to see the different environments of it, of different fields of the education system at the same time" (<i>Lines</i> 167 – 169)
	Always learning more	- "Just got me learning more, more and more and more. About pupils, about how it is, about how they are and how do you tackle them, tackle it" (<i>Lines</i> 68 – 70)
	Learning as a positive experience	- "It feels good, it does feel good. You experience it, you feel it, you know" (Lines 203)
	A continuous learning experience	- "It's like snakes and ladders. That's it. But you just keep going up, no snakes there, but keep climbing the ladder, yeah that's it" (<i>Lines</i> 205 – 206)

	SUPERORDINATE THEME: TRYING TO MANAGE THE SEMH NEEDS		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes	
Trying to manage	Managing sudden extremes	- "So, you know who's going, going to go from nought to zero, nought to one hundred. We know who's going to go there, so we have to prepare for it at the same time" (<i>Lines 94 – 95</i>)	
SEMH needs	Difficulty managing a multifaceted role (x2)	 "So, we are here to support their education, their well-being and the behaviour at the same time. So, it's hard to, to keep that under the umbrella, but you start with the behaviour and encourage them" (Lines 4 - 6) "It is like you support the education side at the same time, behaviour if they are upset. You do the therapeutic approach, encourage them to go to lesson and support them at the same time. So yeah, it is, it's hard" (Lines 48 - 50) 	
	Managing anxiety	- "I witness it andit's always a problem and we're going to get that a lot. But we will do our best to keep it down" (<i>Lines</i> 92 – 93)	
	Managing mental health needs	- "Ermthe structure in a way, like maintaining their emotional well-being, their anxiety levels, maintaining, trying to keep it as low as possible" (Lines $34 - 35$)	
	Challenging behaviours	- "A typical day would be shouting, swearing, throwing chairs, but I, that would be like more like pencils first, chairs is just, is a next level" (Lines $42 - 43$)	
	Uncertainty/ constant change	- "So yeah, some trips will be ok, some trips wont. Some pupils will be calm, others won't" (<i>Lines 93 – 94</i>)	
	Powerlessness in times of crisis	- "It's hard to get their attention especially when they are in crisis. That's it" (Lines 190 – 191)	
	Difficult points; transitions	- "The starting point is a problem and then the finishing line of the year is the problem" (Lines 107)	
	Providing routines/consistency/ boundaries	- "Because it's not a pattern, build a pattern and keep them occupied at the same time. So that they know, they know what they can do and can't do. Where to go, where not to go, this time, that time" (Lines 37 – 39)	
	Prepared as a team	- "Erm, it's just alert all the timeThe team knows they know what to do and be calm, and it, all I can is like, we're prepared as a team. We just know what to do and how to do it. How to deal with the issues. That's it, yeah" (<i>Lines</i> 97 – 99)	
	Always being prepared	- "So, everyone knows that we're on alert, on our toes, so just be on our toes. Making sure they keep their focus and yeah, that's it" (<i>Lines 107 – 109</i>)	

SUPERORDINATE THEME: INVESTING IN THE CHILD'S FUTURE		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes
Personal investment	Striving to do your best	- "It's getting to know, erm work with them and be the best, no bring the best, be the best. Bring abilities to them. see what you can do for them" (<i>Lines</i> 22 – 24)
and determination	More than a job/ personal investment	- "Erm, I would say. Yeah, I was learning as a support worker it's about other things, not just one thing. It's not about a job. It's about their well-being aswell" (<i>Lines 197 – 198</i>)
	Perseverance (x3)	 "And there's no, there's no right or wrong answers there's always a strategy to get through. If that's not working, I'll find another strategy" (<i>Lines 70 - 71</i>) "Keep going, that's what I tell myself. Keep going" (<i>Line 193</i>) "No-one can't tell you, you aren't doing your job. You're doing it, it's hard but you've got to keep going" (<i>Lines 193 - 194</i>)
	Giving it all; keep trying	- "And I, I always challenge myself, give it a shot, keep going. That's it, until you can't do it anymore, keep going. So that's it yeah" (<i>Lines 113 – 114</i>)
Empowering and believing in the child	Giving steps for change	- "Because they want to succeed at the same time, they know, because they have the stones, they got the steps, the steps are there to succeed" ($Lines 82 - 84$)
	Reframing learning	- "So, we just teaching them the ways of learning is a good thing. At the same time, you tell them it's ok to make a mistake to evolve, so we are teaching them. It isit is difficult" (<i>Lines 30 – 32</i>)
	Offering opportunities	- "Which there, there's more opportunities to see, there is more, more to it than just staying in the house" (<i>Lines 14 – 15</i>)
	Giving the child drive	- "We know that the pupil, we will say, we will ask them if they are alright, we will say you are better than that, we know you better than that, you can do it" (<i>Lines 122 – 124</i>)
	Improving life chances	- "So, we want to help them expand to the nextarea of their strong point of their, their talents. What will help them accelerate life than just keep them there, so yeah" (<i>Lines</i> 15 – 16)
	TA as changing attitudes and perspectives	- "So, it's like there's another outlook that they want to try, they want to do and that's a good thing" (Lines 164 – 165)
	Giving the child with a sense of worth (x2)	- "That's how, that's how it affects them as well because they see their important, their importance at the same time" ($Lines\ 78-80$)

		- "You are someone already because you are important to somebody. You are pushing yourself, you're not staying in, you're not using excuses, (laughs) you're going through it in a way (laughs) yeah" (<i>Lines</i> 156 – 158)
	Believing in the child (x2)	 "Basically, we put a belief in them, we give them so much praise and they will take it on board" (<i>Lines 124 - 125</i>) "It feels, the changes that have made it happen, I really feel like they can do it. I, I, I really feel that they can do it" (<i>Lines 154 - 155</i>)
	Using child's interests as motivation	- "[] they got ambition. One wants to work in Sainsbury's, Subway. I say ok, we got to use that strategy" (<i>Lines 145 – 146</i>)
	Belief they can always accomplish	- "And ermand they will get to a point where when they grow up, they will know what's right and what's wrong and we tell them it's never too late" (<i>Lines 181 – 182</i>)
	Compensating	- "So yeah, so we will help them to firm their education and teach them life skills at the same time. Because they, they've missed it. They are mis-educated if that's the word, I forgot, but yeah" (Lines $8-10$)

	SUPERORDINATE THEME: MANAGING THE COMPLEXITIES OF THE OUTSIDE WORLD			
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes		
Managing the complexities of the outside world	Contending with the home environment (x2) Challenges of the outside world	 "It's erm, it's atough, tough job. In a way, you, we have to be on the ball because what they can't do here, they can do at home" (<i>Lines 12 - 14</i>) "Putting boundaries in place and keeping it structuredis erma challenge because they don't have boundaries at home. There is nothing structured, there is no structure at home itself" (<i>Lines 35 - 37</i>) "Erm, boundaries in life. What they see outside, they can bring it in. So, it's going to be a challenge. We do a social story with them about why you can't do this, why you shouldn't do this. So, we do get that challenge a lot" (<i>Lines 179 - 181</i>) 		
	Lack of control over home	- "It's a challenge because what they do at home, is out of our hands. So, but we will try our best, in school we do teach them the lifestyle at the same time" (Lines $182 - 184$)		
	Pressures of society	- "I know it can stress them when they do a-levels that andI ask myself if these ones will do it. I said no it will actually, their anxiety will go high, and they will just go to chaos. It's no good for them, it's so much pressure" (<i>Lines 173 – 175</i>)		

Disagreement with the	- "[] and even though they get kicked out, I feel like kicking out the kids is actually wrong at the
system	same time because you aren't giving them opportunities" (Lines $20 - 21$)

Appendix S: Data Trails (Ali)

SUPERORDINATE THEME: RELATIONSHIPS: CONNECTIONS AND DISCONNECTIONS		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes
Forming a connection	Seeing the good in the child/connect and understand	- "He would justI feel like there was a lot, I had a lot about him, he was given to me as the really bad child, but I don't know I really connected with him. Some children you just feel you can just really get along with and you feel like they are misunderstood" (<i>Lines 166 – 169</i>)
	Finding positives/something to like	- "They are going to have negatives, but there must be something likeable about them" (<i>Lines 215 – 216</i>)
	Liking and understanding the child	- "Erm, there is one of the pupils who does, I really do like. Like I do get" (<i>Lines 189 – 190</i>)
	Moments with meaning (x2)	 "When you can actually connect with them it feels" (<i>Lines 169</i>) "And he did come back. I did funny enough see the card the other day. He did, he came back randomly to the school because he had a CAMHS meeting. He came back to just, he said he thought he would just pop-by but it was nice to see him, it was just, because I never worked with one pupil that much" (<i>Lines 161 – 164</i>)
	Really knowing/understanding the child	- "Oh, erm definitely knowing the kids and their ability. Like there are certain words that work with the children, certain words that work with them" (<i>Lines</i> 256 – 257)
	Learning how to support/find a way in	- "I knew about all his life. I knew about what he liked, what he didn't like, how to get him to do work, how to not, when he's not going to do any work. When, all without like erm, physically restraining him or anything like that" (<i>Lines 164 – 166</i>)
	Always with the child/ a sense of continuousness	- "Yeah last year there was one. Just because I was with him literally 24-7. And he was someone who wasn't accessing education and then he did" (<i>Lines 157 – 158</i>)
Struggling to connect and relate	Lack of connection creating difficulty	- "They don't have anything, they don't know what they like, they don't have any interests. Their life is literally they don't have an existence, they don't have hobbies, they don't know what it means" (<i>Lines</i> 217 – 219)
	Feeling rejected/ pushed away	- "Because everything you want to give them they throw it out. Not even if it's work, even if it's something they want to do, they just keep throwing it away" (<i>Lines 241 – 243</i>)

	Resistance to support	- "Some of them don't, I've had that, kids you just can't like them, but you just have to grudge along with it" (<i>Lines 216 – 217</i>)
	Barriers to forming relationships/pushed away	- "Erm, yeah so that's a factor that does stop me getting to know them because they push you away so much where it's violent and you can't really do much with that" (<i>Lines</i> 269 – 271)
	Struggling to relate/connect with difficult child	- "They don't have anything, they don't know what they like, they don't have any interests. Their life is literally they don't have an existence, they don't have hobbies, they don't know what it means" (<i>Lines</i> 217 – 219)
	Unable to relate to child's trauma	- "Maybe I don't know but I can't relate, a lot of them have gone through a lot" (Lines 295 – 296)
	Difficulty understanding child	- "Because - some of them don't even go to class and you think what are you doing here? I mean I appreciate you being here, but what's the point if you aren't even going to class?" (<i>Lines</i> 227 – 229)
	Needs impacting connection	- "Because, you, you make a connection with them but whether erm, it's scientific inside of their head, whether the chemicals aren't right or they have a chemical imbalance or something" (<i>Lines</i> 222 – 224)
Understanding and accepting the child	Letting go and understanding	- "I don't think you can hold a grudge with them or have an ego with a child, anyway because they're children. With the adults I'm not sure, because it does hurt when an adult does something to you. But a child is a child" (<i>Lines</i> 66 – 69)
	Making allowances/letting go	- "You can't, even if it looks like you're being a push-over sometimes, giving into every single thing they need. It's worth it, because they do their work and they really feel confident and they do achieve and they feel. And then eventually they build tolerance to not have everything they need" (<i>Lines 257 – 260</i>)
	Understanding/ empathy towards child	- "We know as adults, we do lose our temper, things get too much for us. Especially if you come from a trauma-informed background" ($Lines 54 - 55$)
	Accepting without judgement	- "I do believe in unconditional positive regard in terms ofwe shouldn't take their actions as defining them, that's something I do agree with. They are just an action" (<i>Lines</i> 52 – 54)
	Acceptance and caring about the individual	- "That we are just accepting them. If they haven't made progress, they haven't made progress. It's not always about statistics, that's why they're here. So, yeah, caring about the individual, that's what it's been like this year" (<i>Lines</i> 210 – 212)
	Acceptance as a setting	- "But the one thing that I have appreciated working here istheir behaviour isn't focused on as muchas in like that's just part of the package of them" (Lines 7 – 9)

	SUPI	ERORDINATE THEME: FOCUSING ON THE FUTURE
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes
Focusing on the	Small wins	- "And kids that aren't even doing any work at all, to do 45 minutes a day consistently is massive for them" (<i>Lines</i> 24 – 25)
<u>child's progress</u>	Observing triumph through difficulty	- "As in like, emotions don't go away just like that. Depression, things like that. They don't just go away. They are something that you have to just sit with. They are uncomfortable as well but you have to just sit with them. So, watching someone else, when you know there, there's actually a positive coming from it" (<i>Lines</i> 138 – 141)
	Hope and self- development of the child through difficulty	- "Everyone feels horrible at some stage, things aren't going to get better. Like if there's a death, there's a lot of grieving or even a lot of anger and it does go away. But you don't see that process, because you are going through it. But when you see the pupils going through it, you can tell them, you can see them getting better" (<i>Lines 144 – 147</i>)
	Being part of the child's development/change	- "Because he used to just like have a problem with everyone and he used to have an argument with everyone, everything used to irritate him. He couldn't be in school, he didn't like authority, he didn't like the school and by the end he, he was kind of sad to leave. He wanted, actually came back to get the pictures he took of us in the school, so he did, whether he admits it or not" (<i>Lines 173 – 177</i>)
	Satisfaction through witnessing progress (x2)	 "It is rewarding to see that, it is nice to see that. And it does put, you see it for yourself, you got a visual of seeing it for yourself" (<i>Lines</i> "Erm, so it did feel, rewarding's the word, because then you actually feel like you are doing the job" (<i>Lines</i> 142 – 144)
	Making allowances to facilitate achievement	- "You can't, even if it looks like you're being a push-over sometimes, giving into every single thing they need. It's worth it, because they do their work and they really feel confident and they do achieve and they feel. And then eventually they build tolerance to not have everything they need" (<i>Lines 257 – 260</i>)
	Steps forwards and backwards	- "It's rewarding when they make a little bit of progress. Really rewarding but they forget within 30 minutes" (<i>Lines</i>
	A long-lasting journey/ no quick fix	- "But it's slow, isn't it? Change is slow, it happens over months, years. As long we are making some sort of change for them, in a positive way" (<i>Lines 115 – 116</i>)
	Giving everything	- "But there has to be a time where you bend over backwards for some of the children because that's just what they need and likeyeah" (<i>Lines</i> 260 – 261)

	Willing the child to try	- "Erm, even go to class and rip up work. I would rather them do that because you've tried to come into the class and it's been too hard and so you've left. But when they've just come into school and your just sit in the hallway all day and then yeah" (<i>Lines</i> 229 – 231)
Thinking about the child's future	Sympathy for the child's future (x4)	 "And it's sad. It's really sad. I feel really sorry for them, because what can they actually offer to doing any sort of job?" (<i>Lines 245 - 247</i>) "I mean there's a few kids that just, I don't know if they're going to get any better, but they are out there standing. And its's sad because they are always going to need support for the rest of their life" (<i>Lines 111 - 113</i>) "He will get the grips of that but he'll need, like constant support. And he's going to need support, I feel when he's older, if his parents aren't there to do basic things. And that's sad. That is sad, yeah" (<i>Lines 120 - 122</i>) "And it's sad. It's really sad. I feel really sorry for them, because what can they actually offer to doing any sort of job?" (<i>Lines 245 - 247</i>)
	Fear for the child's future (x3)	 "How can they keep a job consistently? They can't. The work they do, they can't even do that. They can't even just be in lesson, even when they have the work" (<i>Lines</i> 247 – 248) "It is, it is scary, because obviously some of them can't read and they are 15. We were talking about it today and they're just, when are they going to get to the stage where they can read?" (<i>Lines</i> 12 – 13) "But, she needs to be exposed to a bit more, because it's just in a mainstream school. If she's going to a mainstream school or a school that has more pupils and a class of 30, they're going to struggle" (<i>Lines</i> 85 – 87)
	A sense of overprotecting the child (x2)	 "Just because, we're setting them up for failure if we keep, erm, wrapping them up in cotton wool" (Lines 78 - 79) "Because she's in a room with erm, other pupils that are too similar to her. She's not being exposed to things she's uncomfortable with. So, children she doesn't get along with, children that might potentially scare her" (Lines 82 - 84)
	Teaching fundamental skills for the future	- "Like, reading. If they can't read, they can't be doing much in the world. It's so fundamental. It's, I think it's more important than Maths because you can teach them Maths if they know how to read. But, if they can't read, you can't teach yourself anything" (<i>Lines</i> 101 – 104)
	Preparation for the future	- "And when you get older there is an element of, if you want to move on you have to be around things you are uncomfortable with. Even if it's not major like going to the post office or going to the bank. Things like that" (<i>Lines 101 – 104</i>)
	Holding onto hope for the future	- "They will eventually go, they will eventually forget about an argument, it will get better. They won't be constantly hitting you forever. So, it will go down" (<i>Lines 141 – 1421</i>)

	SUPERORDINATE THEME: THE ROLE IMPACTS THE SELF		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes	
Challenges for the self	Feel like giving up	- "They are the kids that I do struggle with because we have to come to a stage where, what's the point of them being in school? Because we are not meeting their needs, they can have, I understand they have some stuff going on, but they're just being, their existence in the school is pointless. As harsh as it is, there isn't erm, there isn't a bigger reason for them being here" (<i>Lines 231 – 235</i>)	
	Useless/ unhelpful	- "We were actually talking about one of the pupils now and she is moving into a mainstream school, and I don't think we're helping her" (Lines $79 - 80$)	
	A sense of redundancy	- "Just to suit, they're not getting anything from us as individuals" (Lines $182 - 183$)	
	Can't do it all/resignation	- "Because we're not therapists, in terms of, we can't be that. Our role isn't that. We are trying to focus on the academic side of stuff" ($Lines 57 - 58$)	
	Can't do it all/ role boundaries	- "Because we can, we are only here with them until they are a certain age and then after that, they aren't our problem. Of course, we are going to share concern but there's only so much we can do" $(Lines 91 - 93)$	
	A limited capacity/role	- "That's why it's a bit scary because there is only so much we can do and it's mainstream as well, I suppose" ($Lines\ 14-15$)	
	A sense of stuckness (x2)	 "As in like, they have just fought since 9 o'clock till 12, and they won't let it go and it dominates or dictates the whole lesson. Because, even if you take them to this side [of the school], they're still going to carry it on. So, you split them up and it's not the answer" (<i>Lines 131 - 133</i>) "If they can't do it here, they won't access it in mainstream. So, what is the solution?" (<i>Lines 13 - 14</i>) 	
	Not enough time for change/ blame self	- "But I have got along with him, but he is leaving next year. But I don't feel like I've made much progress with him because I haven't worked with him enough" (<i>Lines 197 – 199</i>)	
A positive impact on the self	Job providing fulfilment (x2)	 "I don't think I could do any sort of other job. Like, even if it was in, I have always. I have done this for about three years now, this is my third year. This is the only job I feel some sort of acceptance with. Like, I've done loads of different jobs, but this is the longest sort of job that I've done. And, yeah, I just feel like progressing more with it, like to teacher level or to even higher, whatever that entails" (Lines 298 – 302) "So erm this job, does provide you with a sense of accomplishment. Satisfaction, so yeah" (Lines 305) 	
		-306)	
	Pride in self	- "So, I erm, I do feel proud about what I do sometimes" (<i>Lines 98 – 99</i>)	

	Validation of self through child	- "Because they've got a lot of trauma, a lot of them. So, watching them deal with their situations is, it sort of validates your sort of stuff. Like, like you can see it first-hand. That's why" (<i>Lines 147 – 149</i>)
	Feeling recognised/valued	- "And I think he's, a lot of the children here don't give thankyou cards, but he made the effort to give a thankyou card and it was really in-depth. He put a lot of effort in to it and he understood the work I did with him and appreciated it" (<i>Lines 158 – 161</i>)
	Enjoyment from benefiting child	- "Because when I am actually doing reading with them, rather than just talking about their behaviour. Don't get me wrong, I like that side of it but I also like the side of them taking on something that is going to benefit them" (<i>Lines 99 -101</i>)
A need for space to	Time and space evoking emotions	- "So, but, the, so the sadness for them doesn't happen in an instant. Sometimes it will, but most likely not. It only happens when you are away from them for a while" (<i>Lines</i> 252 – 254)
<u>think</u>	A need for time/space to reflect/ see clearly (x2)	 "A bit of mixed stuff. In my head, I'm like, I can't wait to finish as in I just want to, and then it does hit me a couple of days later. When I sort of reflect on it, when I'm not, because when you're not in that instance you're tired, its natural you are" (<i>Lines 239 - 241</i>) "Andit's hard to do that. But then when you give it a couple of days, or sometimes when I'm on my way to work I just think what they actually going to do when they're older" (<i>Lines 244 - 245</i>)
	Importance of the capacity to reflect	- "Erm, I feel as if I started this job at a good age because I always felt that I was more reflective" (<i>Line 137</i>)
	A sense of clarity through time and space	- "By the end of it, I was sick of him (laughs), like ok then, I didn't see it until a couple of months later that I was like, it was nice to like to see him develop throughout the year" (<i>Lines 172 – 173</i>)

SUPERORDINATE THEME: COMPLEXITIES OF MANAGING BEHAVIOUR AND NEED		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes
Attempts to manage behaviour and need	An intense array of needs (x2)	- "He hits me all the time, but he does it in a sense of like that (shows a slapping movement), he has no awareness of his body. He says words that are really inappropriate. Erm, he's so like confused, as in the sense of he doesn't have an awareness ofjust life in itself in general. He doesn't, like to go to extreme cases he soils himself at night because he likes that sensation. I didn't know he does that" (Lines 190 – 193)

		- "He, he, he's just so autistic is the word. They say that he's got erm, Tourette's. That's why he swears so much. I don't know where the hitting comes from, because he does hit a lot. Even when nothing's happened" (<i>Lines 195 – 197</i>)
	Extreme behaviours/ loss of child	- "Because you can see it in the mornings, where they are fine but by 11 they've like, they've gone. It's not even the same pupil, they're just not existent, it's just a body, they're just all limp, they don't know what they're doing. They are just hitting people and spitting, doing random things" (<i>Lines 224</i> – 226)
	Unexpected behaviour/ out of the ordinary	- "It's understandable I suppose, it's not normal behaviour to act like that in school" (<i>Lines 9 – 10</i>)
	Supporting the deteriorating child	- "Like we have one child who forgets everything. I don't know if you've heard, but apparently his memory went backwards. So, he forgot basic things. He was a top pupil and he had friends. Now his communication levels, it is getting better but it's poor" (Lines $116 - 118$)
	Difficulty managing multiple needs	- "And, yeah those are the ones that are the hardest. When you've got multiple pupils having issues. They've all got a problem with someone else or two pupils have just dominated the whole class with their argument" (<i>Lines</i> 128 – 131)
	Behaviour impeding learning	- "Usually it's one pupil or two are having problems. That's it. That means no learning is being done" (<i>Lines</i> 127 – 128)
	Managing crisis	- "This year has been a bit weird for me, because I've been with multiple kids. I haven't been with this amount of kids, I am with whatever kids in crisis. So, I will be called into wherever's needed" (<i>Lines</i> 187 – 189)
	Being accused	- "Like one of the children, I'm not going to say his name, but one of the children he just played that card so much, to the extent he knows the right words to use and you have to adhere to it because he's using those words. Saying 'I don't feel safe'but he's the same child that says erm, he's being abused, which is completely false. Because he's saying it about staff members and repeating it but it's been checked over on cameras and it isn't happening" (<i>Lines</i> 46 – 50)
	Exploited/taken advantage of	- "Whereas like it's being used as an excuse. They need to be doing work. That's what I feel. Sometimes the therapeutic approach they use, they, they play that card" (<i>Lines</i> 44 – 46)
	The need for strict boundaries	- "It's because, I understand, erm it's because sometimes you have to put the boundaries up there" (Lines 33 – 34)
	Setting structure, routine and boundaries	- "Like they need for example, erm for example when a child is tired, tired and cranky, but they need to stay awake sort of thing, because it's part of their structure. So, they need some structure. In terms of, they have to do their English work from 9.30 till 10, 10 till 10.40. They have to do their English work, even if they don't feel like it. Even if their work, work as isn't good or their saying it's rubbish.

		But they have to have that routine. And erm, there can't be off days, you can't be saying I'm not doing it today" ($Lines 70 - 75$)
	Blurred relationships	- "Because some of the kids are making progress but then their physical violence gets too much because they are teenagers and I think they confuse us as being one of them" (<i>Lines</i> 278 – 280)
Struggling with physical	Restraints impacting on relationships	- "But sometimes you do need to physically intervene, there's no, they are unsafe to themselves, unsafe to the school, unsafe to other kids. It's just, it's just that's the difficult thing I struggle with getting to know children better" (<i>Lines</i> 281 – 284)
<u>intervention</u>	Worry/fear	- "Yeah, I hate it. Like I don't like holding kids because you don't know if they are going to get hurt from it" (<i>Lines</i> 286 – 287)
	Lack of control/resignation to	- "So, it's obviously, I don't think no-one, there is anyone in the school who likes to hold the children but unfortunately, we have to" (<i>Lines</i> 289 – 291)
	physical intervention (x2)	- "I suppose the violence. Because sometimes you have to physically restrain them. It's just a matter of fact you have to do it and there's no two ways about it. Of course, you don't want to do that" (<i>Lines</i> $263 - 265$)
	Fear of unknown consequences	- "You can remember everything from Team-Teach to the Tee, but accidents can happen because if the child, if you are not holding the child right, you let go or they could bump themselves or there are unforeseen circumstances. Something could have happened" (<i>Lines</i> 287 – 289)
	Uncertainty about intervention	- "And I feel like, or maybe it's that our therapeutic approach hasn't been saidclearly, hasn't been stated clearly what you can and can't do. What's therapeutic and what's isn't?" (<i>Lines 34 – 35</i>)
	Restraint evoking emotion	- "Because you don't want to hold them, no-one likes holding a kid. It's just not a nice feeling" (<i>Lines</i> 268 – 269)

SUPERORDINATE THEME: <u>DIFFICULTIES AND SUPERIORITY</u>		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes
Difficulty within the school system	Frustration/ disagreement with approach	- "Because erm, I don't know if that's here but on that side (the other side of the provision), the only lesson we have is on a Thursday afternoon and the rest of the afternoons are enrichment or P.E. And those, I'm not saying they don't need P.E or they don't need enrichment, but those are the sort of times that they need to be taken away" (<i>Lines 40 – 44</i>)
	Desire for clear rules	- "From my opinion, I haven't heard much erm discipline. I am not saying discipline has to be martial law like, or some sort of like being a commandeer and chief, like you have to follow this way, you

		have sit this exactly like that or stand. But, you shouldn't be taken away from a lesson if, or if you've got work to do" ($Lines\ 35-38$)
	Uncertainty about approach	- "And I feel like, or maybe it's that our therapeutic approach hasn't been saidclearly, hasn't been stated clearly what you can and can't do. What's therapeutic and what's isn't?" (<i>Lines 34 – 35</i>)
	Lack of control in the system	- "So, I don't know what sort of kids, I just take whatever I'm given. In terms of last year, I had certain key children that were given to me because that's what they do with the kids" (<i>Lines 213 – 215</i>)
	School in systemic change	- "It's been ok because I feel like the school is moving in a different direction. There is positives and negatives to it but I think that's with all changes" (<i>Lines</i> 203 – 204)
	Separation/ disorientation	- "It felt a bit disorientated, because we were split up in so many different sections" (Line 107)
Better than the outside	Better adapted than mainstream	- "So yeah, in that aspect the time-table is better tailored for the children, which I don't feel in mainstream. I feel like we just have to do it because that's the way the system is. But, it's not really beneficial" (<i>Lines</i> 25 – 27)
	A better understanding	- "So yeah, I mean, I definitely feel here there is more of a realistic approach of what kids can actually do, especially with their needs" ($Lines\ 27 - 28$)
	Inflexible mainstream	- "Whereas in the mainstream, it was, you can't do anything. It's very rigid" (Line 9)
	More supportive	- "Erm, I do like, that we, it's like 3 to 1, so we give them more individual support. It's not 30 to 1 person like in a mainstream school" (Lines $16-17$)
	A lasting label	- "Well, I can only like compare it to mainstream. I mean erm, they are not as alienated and they are not seen as the. Actually no, they are seen as the naughty children still, because even within that group there is always one that is really extreme" (Lines $5-7$)
	Authenticity in the work	- "They are actually genuinely doing work and we actually genuinely feel like we are meeting their needs" (<i>Lines 110 -111</i>)
	Removing facades and being genuine	- "So, there is more, like erm, we are writing in books now, we don't have sheets. We are writing in books so, at the end of the day we are not just trying to show Ofsted, we are doing this, this and this" (Lines $108 - 110$)
	Having a greater understanding	- "Like we know what we are doing, we do have a better understanding of what the children need to achieve and how we are going to help them achieve that" (Lines $97 - 98$)

Appendix T: Data trail (Tracy)

SUPERORDINATE THEME: SUPPORT AND STRENGTH FROM THE TEAM		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes
Support and strength from the team	Sense of security/able to rely	- "I think we talk daily to each other about our kids, how well they're doing, the bumps, whatever. But we also have weekly briefings to discuss everyone's cases, so if somebody suddenly if someone had to take one over, they know the student, what's going on with them, as much as we do-you know" (<i>Lines</i> 472 – 475)
	Holding each other in mind	- "Very important. You know, it's not like if one person's off for any reason, what we- try and support each other's students, so they don't get the gaps, and we quite happily do it. Everyone has stuff, we know where to get the stuff that we need []" (Lines 470 – 472)
	Defended/ unconditional support	- "Or to know that I've made a decision, I can come back because it was the correct decision, you know we know all the do's and don'ts but she's got your back. And she has it 110%, you know, we're very, very lucky with her. Which is really, really good" (<i>Lines 470 – 472</i>)
	Value in openness	- "And that goes with our boss as well, you can go to her with anything. And that makes a huge difference" (<i>Lines</i> 461 – 462)
	Dependence	- "When things aren't going so great, the support couldn't do the job without them" (Lines 461)
	Safe to share and seek help	- "We support each other brilliantly, you can come back, you could've had a bad session with a kid, you can go and speak to someo- erm, right, this hasn't worked, what do you think I should do? We bounce off each other so well" (<i>Lines</i> 457 – 459)
	Challenges lessened with support	- "I think we're great for each other, and our job is very challenging very demanding" (Line 454)

	SUPERORDINATE THEME: SUPPORTING A SUCCESSFUL FUTURE		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes	
Believing and empowering the child	Empowering (x2)	 "You know, it's the reassurance, its giving them that confidence, that boost that they need" (<i>Lines 310</i>) "So, it's letting them it's getting them to manage how they are" (<i>Lines 372 – 373</i>) 	
<u>cinu</u>	Hope and belief in the child	- "It's just really, I suppose having I don't know what the right word for it is Just knowing that they can all be successful, you know, whatever barriers they might find, anything like that. They have the potential to be the best of the best of themselves" (<i>Lines</i> 512 – 514)	
	Holding a position of understanding and belief	- "Sometimes it takes a while with them. Our kids are very engaging. You know, if people often are very like, 'oh they're secondary, they're here you know, they're not nice kids', yeah there are days they're not great but, you get a lot out of them" (<i>Lines 364 – 366</i>)	
	Needing the child's voice	- "Erm, and its- for a student as well to identify what some of the factors are that are difficult. If they can tell us what's difficult, then we can arrange with the school and work with them to put things in place, if they don't tell us then that makes things difficult" (<i>Lines 350 – 352</i>)	
	Knowing success is possible	- "I just think with our kids it's like recognising that they can do it" (Lines 510)	
	Certainty/ confidence of success	- "I don't ever think oh they're not good at work, it's not gonna be succes- they are gonna be success-you know erm" (<i>Lines 511 – 512</i>)	
	Holding onto positives	- "And it's being positive all the time. We don't give any bad students anything negative, even if it's been really bad, that's not- we try not to do that. So, you know, however bad something has been, it could be- ok that happened but do you remember that- you try and pick that little thing, but that, you done good. You know, and get them to really think about themselves, how they are" (<i>Lines 310 – 313</i>)	
	Saviour; directed away from a difficult path	- "You know, the student that maybe had got permanently excluded from her school for, being physical whatever reason it's been. To actually move on and be successful somewhere else and it- you know, it's so important in their childhood years. Whether they're primary or secondary, of it's how it steers them for the rest of their life" (<i>Lines</i> 409 – 412)	

	Retaining endless positivity	- "And it's being positive all the time. We don't give any bad students anything negative, even if it's been really bad, that's not- we try not to do that. So, you know, however bad something has been, it could be- ok that happened but do you remember that- you try and pick that little thing, but that, you done good. You know, and get them to really think about themselves, how they are" (<i>Lines 310 – 313</i>)
Providing skills for a positive future	Facilitating self- reflection	- "So, we go in class, we support in the lesson, then, we just chat to them at the end of the lesson and say "how d'you think the lesson went?", you know, if it wasn't great, what do you think you'd do next time? Um, so once again it's self-reflection" (<i>Lines 90 – 92</i>)
	A positive reframe/ help to recognise achievements (x2)	 "And then I come back and I go and see my boss, and she says, 'has broken down, she's permanently excluded. But look at what you have done for that girl'. So that's when we think, oh we've I dunno it just brings you on a real down and then somebody reminds you, but look at what she did achieve, she will remember that, despite the outcome" (<i>Lines 439 – 442</i>) "It's what was put in before that, that you need to recognise that you actually did. You got the student that's never been in school, to be in school for six weeks. She went into lessons, look at what she learnt, she done this, she done that you done that. And it's just somebody saying, you've done a good job, despite the outcome that makes you feel better" (<i>Lines 442 – 445</i>)
	Reframing perspectives/ understanding others	- "and the students are beginning to really identify their own behaviours, their needs, their emotions, many things they couldn't do before. And it's them being able to voice it. And realise that when a teacher, in a certain way asks them to do something, it's a constructive- somebodies trying to help them. They're not necessarily just having a go at them. And it's how they respond, yeah you will get a teacher in secondary that shouts at you. But you've got to remember they're teaching probably 150-200 kids a day, and you've got little mouthy so and so going along doing this or what they- you know, every teacher's expectations are different" (<i>Lines 381 – 388</i>)
	Helping to learn from the past/ move on	- " and showing them that its ok to make mistakes, and that's how you learn, it's learning from your mistakes" (<i>Lines</i> 308 – 309)
	Preparing the child	- "[] We go erm, have sessions out where they, where we talk about the strategies they've learnt here, what the triggers are, what could go wrong when you go back to school. So, if this went wrong how would you deal with it, who would you talk to, what do you think, how could we avoid it" (<i>Lines</i> 93 – 96)

Facilitating Emotional Literacy	- "Which is hard for a secondary student I think to fully comprehend going from lesson to lesson. And it's like, we try and teach them how- what their responses are like. If this happens, that's the route you're going to go down. But yeah, you can be annoyed, but it's how you're going to react to that anger, because we can't change that, we can't your emotions. What we try to get them to recognise, is there's an alternative to how you manage that" (<i>Lines</i> 388 – 392)
A mountain to climb (x2)	 "[] we work out of class we try and find what the barriers were before when they was in school, what they were struggling with what they've learnt here what can be put in place and try and build up that relationship with them before they go back" (<i>Lines 12 - 15</i>) "Erm, so it's difficult, because they're here- once they're here, they do want to go back to school. But it's having the skillset to be able to do it, being the new kid again, building the relationships, peer pressure from secondary kids, second to none for them" (<i>Lines 270 - 273</i>)

SUPERORDINATE THEME: A BETTER SCHOOL THAN THE OUTSIDE		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes
The superiority of	Better than others/ superiority	- "And that's where the support of our team is like, second to none here" (Line 454)
the alternative provision	Superior support	- "It's - some schools haven't got the facilities to put in - or mainstream just not for that child. Then, sometimes they've ended up coming back here" (<i>Line</i> 212 – 213)
	Alternative provision/ the understanding ones	- "Erm, there's some excellent teachers don't get me wrong, there's absolutely excellent schools in the borough, excellent teachers, but obviously sometimes students always have that teacher they don't get on with, lessons they don't particularly like there. Whereas, we recognise behaviours they take for rudeness" (<i>Line 72 – 74</i>)
	Able to be there	- "Erm, you know, you can pop down there and they're used to 'hi miss how's your day, who are you going to see?' And they openly talk to you, because we have the time to sit and talk to them" (Line $367 - 369$)
	Better than others	- "Secondary schools don't have that with the students. You can't just pull them out and have a little chat and say, "how's your day doing?" ($Line\ 369-370$)

	The secure/safe place	- "Erm because this is their comfort place, and they want to come back long term or erm, which isn't always feasible because of the way it's done and obviously schools have to pay for them to come back long term, so, they don't realise the effect of behaviours" (<i>Line 344 – 346</i>)
Difficulty located outside of the	Outcast from mainstream	- "Erm I had one girl I worked with that really hard life, erm don't think- I think she'd been permanently excluded from school out of borough, year 7, within the first month. And it wasn't even for a phys- you know, face didn't fit" (<i>Line 425 – 427</i>)
alternative provision	Unwillingness of outside schools	- "You know, and with that student, I think she'll make it, because the head of year who's working for her has gone above and beyond. Whereas, other schools wouldn't have done" (<i>Line 269 – 270</i>)
	A battle with mainstream settings	- "But we have - the more barriers we have are with the schools, not the students. With schools putting things in place for us. Whichnot so much with primary, more so with secondary. I think because secondary schools are so different. You know, every lessons different, there's the wandering around the school, peer pressure, different factors in both primary and secondary" (<i>Line 346 – 349</i>)
	Outcast/ unable to help/save	- "Erm, 'til she went to one school erm and previous to the school she had six weeks in, she went to one school that made it quite clear they didn't want her, and within a week they had her out. They treate- they were so nasty to her, it was horrible to see. Erm and I think very unfairly treated" (<i>Line</i> $432-434$)
	Work sabotaged by mainstream	- "Erm, they pick up on teachers and school vibes about them. If they've gone back to their home school and the school necessarily don't want them, they pick up on that very quickly. They can walk through a classroom door and it be like "oh you're back", and that's it. If everything they've gone through and achieved really well here, that's a real knock on their confidence" (<i>Line 63 – 67</i>)
	Frustration with lack of support	- "Erm, sometimes it's frustrating for us when, we work with students who we know the EHCP is gonna go through, and, with us you've got that initial 14 weeks to do it, and we take 'em back and nothing's happened. That is frustrating" (Line $215 - 218$)
	Difficulty with the system as a whole	- "[] because it's very hard for the students to keep coming from one to another, but that's the whole education system" (<i>Line 214 – 215</i>)
	Disappointment in the system	- "[] you work obviously with the young people and know that they're gonna, erm, and that's an even longer process 'til get to the right place that they're be. But that is the way the system works unfortunately" (<i>Line</i>
	Saving from the outside	- "Cos, I think these days stude- the young people compared to my children, when I was younger it's such a different life now isn't it. So, I think your school years and getting support here, really does help" (<i>Line 219 – 221</i>)

	Secondary - a barrier	- "So, it's very hard for us to try and put things in place for them, in secondary schools compared to the nurturing side of a primary school" (Line $69 - 70$)
Believing and empowering the	Empowering (x2)	 "You know, it's the reassurance, its giving them that confidence, that boost that they need" (<i>Lines 310</i>) "So, it's letting them it's getting them to manage how they are" (<i>Lines 372 – 373</i>)
<u>child</u>	Hope and belief in the child	- "It's just really, I suppose having I don't know what the right word for it is Just knowing that they can all be successful, you know, whatever barriers they might find, anything like that. They have the potential to be the best of the best of themselves" (<i>Lines</i> 512 – 514)
	Holding a position of understanding and belief	- "Sometimes it takes a while with them. Our kids are very engaging. You know, if people often are very like, "oh they're secondary, they're here you know, they're not nice kids," yeah there are days they're not great but, you get a lot out of them" (<i>Lines 364 – 366</i>)
	Needing the child's voice	- "Erm, and its- for a student as well to identify what some of the factors are that are difficult. If they can tell us what's difficult, then we can arrange with the school and work with them to put things in place, if they don't tell us then that makes things difficult" (<i>Lines</i> $350 - 352$)
	Knowing success is possible	- "I just think with our kids it's like recognising that they can do it" (Lines 510)
	Certainty/ confidence of success	- "I don't ever think oh they're not good at work, it's not gonna be succes- they are gonna be success- you know erm" (<i>Lines 511 – 512</i>)
	Holding onto positives	- "And it's being positive all the time. We don't give any bad students anything negative, even if it's been really bad, that's not- we try not to do that. So, you know, however bad something has been, it could be- ok that happened but do you remember that- you try and pick that little thing, but that, you done good. You know, and get them to really think about themselves, how they are" (<i>Lines 310 – 313</i>)
	Saviour	- "You know, the student that maybe had got permanently excluded from her school for, being physical whatever reason it's been. To actually move on and be successful somewhere else and it- you know, it's so important in their childhood years. Whether they're primary or secondary, of it's how it steers them for the rest of their life" (<i>Lines</i> 409 – 412)
	Retaining endless positivity	- "And it's being positive all the time. We don't give any bad students anything negative, even if it's been really bad, that's not- we try not to do that. So, you know, however bad something has been, it could be- ok that happened but do you remember that- you try and pick that little thing, but that, you done good. You know, and get them to really think about themselves, how they are" (<i>Lines 310 – 313</i>)

	SUPEROR	DINATE THEME: UPS AND DOWNS OF THE EXPERIENCE
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes
Difficult experiences	A sense of sadness	- "And it was our relation broke down at the end, you know, I'd put everything I had into this girl" (<i>Lines</i> 431 – 432)
and feelings	Need for time and space away	- "And even if you have to walk away, and they're shouting, it's like, you can go and explain to somebody else. Rather than shout at them, and go, "it's best to walk away, if you can give me half an hour, I'll talk to you about it. But at the moment, I'm not ready to do that" (<i>Lines 393 – 395</i>)
	A sense of uncertainty	- "Ermbecause you never know from day to day when you go in with a student, what we're gonna get from them. At primary, obviously you can gauge it very well, but secondary, very difficult" (<i>Lines</i> 446 – 448)
	It's too much - emotionally and physically tired	- "So, whether it's in class, out of class, with like targeted interventions we have for erm students, you haven't got the whole day with them where they're absolutely draining you, its ermover an hour is too much for a student" (<i>Lines</i> 317 – 319)
	Disheartened	- "But you still feel like you've let them down. It's erm, it's disheartening" (Lines 421)
	Powerless (x3)	- "Or, just because their life, and their family's life, are spiralling out of control, there's nothing you know you can do, nothing anyone can do []" (<i>Lines</i> 419 – 420)
		- "Or schools, or the whole school system just let them down, and there's nothing nothing you can do for the kid" (<i>Lines</i> 421 – 423)
		- "Most of our students really want to do well. You do get some that go back, want to self-destruct, and want to come back here, and there's nothing we can do to stop that" (<i>Lines</i> 339 – 340)
	Demoralised	- "Erm its very disheartening sometimes. There's only been a few, not that I've had personally, but it is when you do all that work beforehand and everything, and know every child has the potential to do well, whatever's happened in the past they still have that. And they just go and sabotage the place, erm it's it's very disheartening" (<i>Lines</i> 340 – 343)
	Torn trying to do it all	- "Because, as much as what we do and have to fit in, seeing the students, we also have the paperwork, everything is evidenced as you know. Erm, which takes forever and obviously things happen in between, so whatever your diary says, doesn't always happen" (<i>Lines 455 – 457</i>)

Support positively impacting the self	Pride in own achievements (x2)	 "She was very hard work then. You know, I had a very good relationship with her there, when she come here, extremely challenging student that in the end has really turned herself around. And it's seeing, it's like I had a part in that" (<i>Lines 485 – 487</i>) "And it's like, knowing that you've had an impact on somebody's life that's been so difficult, fromwell I think she was about 7 when I first knew her" (<i>Lines 491 – 492</i>)
	Pride in witnessing successes (x3)	 "And to see how she's progressed and starting an apprenticeship, it's amazing" (<i>Lines 496</i>) "The best thing is, probably, seeing them remain in mainstream school" (<i>Line 399</i>) "and to see, I'm in school, I'm achieving this, I'm doing this, I don't get support anymore, that's huge" (<i>Lines 402 – 403</i>)
	Overwhelming/ emotive moments	- "Erm, I think last week I mean lots of days, you get very proud moments, sometimes that you could cry. It's like (gasps) they've done that!" (<i>Lines</i> 481 – 482)
	Feeling valued	- "And the support when- you know, we praise each other, and it's like, pat on the back when things have gone really great" (<i>Lines</i> 459 – 460)
	Valuing recognition	 "Erm, and they say, "oh we couldn't have done it without you", it's like, but you really did do it without us. We were there just to guide you, you done it because you wanted to do that" (<i>Lines 402 – 405</i>) "And the support when-you know, we praise each other, and it's like, pat on the back when things have gone really great" (<i>Lines 459 – 460</i>)

	SUPERORDINATE THEME: RELATIONSHIPS: STABILITY AND INSTABILITY		
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes	
Difficulties and	A distance/ attempting to emphasise	- "I can relate through maybe ermother things that I've seen, heard, what we work with and maybe this could work with you []" (<i>Lines</i> 307 – 308)	
<u>breakdowns in the</u> <u>relationship</u>	Pain/ hard work squandered	- "Our relationship broke down from there. And that, I found, really hard. Becauseeverything you've put in, and then you get that, and you walk away and you can practically be in tears" (<i>Lines 437 – 438</i>)	
	Barriers to relationship building	- "I thinkyou might get the odd time, very odd, that you just can't build the relationship with the student. There's too many things that have come in the way, especially with the secondary student, and if they're not attending, because you don't see them constantly. Erm, that's quite hard" (<i>Lines</i> 415 – 417)	

	Barriers created by age/ less relatable Relational boundary/	understa	t older, it's fine. Erm, and its trying to, maybe- it's acknowledging sometimes, I don't nd how you feel" (<i>Line 306 - 308</i>) we're there to support them but we're not there to be their friend. And we have to make
	unable to get close	sure we h	ave that proper barrier with them" (Lines 306)
	Fears of knowing too much	telling me to advise effect as in (Lines 29)	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·
	Knowing own limits		d there's sometimes you have to go and say, look it's not working, maybe somebody else ake over, it's a fresh face" ($Lines\ 417-419$)
	Adolescents more difficult to access	relationsl	condary students, obviously it's a lot different because they have different teachers, different hips with everyone, ermtheir problems cannot always a lot more complex, butthey're t cohort of person aren't they, so sometimes it's a lot more challenging" (Lines $61 - 63$)
	Moments of disbelief/can be hard to understand	and some that's rea it's a real	w, we've got som- a little boy- well not little boy, a secondary boy down there at the moment other boy was banging on the door and he went, "that is so disrespectful", he said "miss lly disrespectful", and you think You're here. Why do youbecause they don't see and good indication, you don't see your own behaviours, but you will easily recognise somebody $nes 356 - 360$)
Understanding and getting through	Trying to understand and get through	then? Ho	In you know that you can bring him to a discussion, 'well, why are you with us, what happened we do you think that somebody else could see your behaviours?' Because they don't see that. 't see that at all' ($Lines 360 - 362$)
	A true understanding of needs	it's like, floored m	and even when she's kicked off here, and she was quite a big girl, ermyou know, and you know when to step in, I know when to not step in, because she could have absolutely $\frac{1}{100}$ (Lines $\frac{1}{100}$)
	Reaching the child		t other times, you have that relationship with her, knowing her so well, that you I could rmal conversation with her" (Lines $494 - 495$)
	Children comfortable to share		tell us what's gone on at school, what they found difficult, why they behaved why they did, ct quite well here" ($Lines\ 355 - 356$)
	Understanding and adapting to needs		st flow through with it, others just need a lot more. So, it's, it's just using a lot of common ly and using the strategies that they learn here" (Lines $38 - 40$)

<u>The</u>	Desire to keep them safe	- "And just knowing we are here, there- sometimes it's kinda hard to let them go because there's good in all the kids we work with" (<i>Lines</i> 268 – 269)
<u>consistent/caring</u> <u>figure</u>	The dependable, responsible figure	- "But it was just being- the consistency there and there and there again" (Line 502)
	The proud parent	- "Oh, it's lovely. It does, it's like my own kid, you feel so proud" (Line 498)
	Desire to be	- "But you don't want them to think you've kinda given up on them" (Line 419)
	consistent/trustworthy	
	A secure figure/ putting the time in	- "I thinkit's the time we spend here beforehand, has a huge factor, it's getting to know them, them comfortable with us, listening to them. Sometimes they just want somebody to talk to" (<i>Lines</i> 297 – 298)
	A deep sense of care and desire to hold on	- "Because she says, 'miss knew me at primary school and this is how she helped me' and everything, you know, and it's like when you talk to her afterwards and it was likeI've known you for so many years and I'm not going to see you anymore. And it's like, but you know the doors always open. Come back and let us know what's been successful, things like that" (<i>Lines 487 – 490</i>)

Appendix U: Data trail (Julie)

	SUPERORDINATE	THEME: SUPERIORITY INSIDE AND CLASHES OUTSIDE
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes
Repairing the damage of mainstream settings	Combatting past experiences of mainstreams schools	 "But I think really, I think the challenges here are The secondary students very much so feel they've been let down throughout their education, people haven't been there for them, and they may have been excluded 2 or 3 times, gone to another school, been excluded again, so they're very negative towards education, towards adults, towards the whole thing really" (<i>Lines 34 – 37</i>) "But you'll also find that sadly, a lot of the mainstream schoolsdon't want the kids back" (<i>Lines 42 – 43</i>)
	Disappointment in attitude of other schools (x2)	- "And if they're directed, if they've been permanently excluded and the LA have directed them, you've gotta have this kid, I don't want you, so I'm going to put barriers in the way. You know, andthe students see it. We sit up here with the schools and they're like, so negative. And you've got the kid sitting there, and they're like well they don't want me anyway, what's the point, you know?" (<i>Lines 43 – 47</i>)
	Little confidence in outside	- "It's great. It's great. But my, my fear iswhen they then go back to mainstream. They're thrown straight back into that environment" (<i>Lines 114 – 115</i>)
	Fear of their return to mainstream	- "Yeah, because you just don't want them to get excluded again" (Lines 123)
	Lack of faith	- "I was so fearful of him going back to school, but he was going through the EHC process, he was waiting for a diagnosis, so there was no other route for him but to go back to mainstream school" (<i>Lines 175 – 177</i>)
	Frustration with mainstream's standpoint	- "But, you know, I've sat in many meeting after 3 weeks after they've gone back, and the school are, 'oh she's done this' and the list is endless" (<i>Lines</i> 355 – 356)
Alternative provisions as a superior setting	Alternative provision experienced as superior at meeting needs (x7)	 "But there's no like, oh actuallylike sometimes in mainstream they do because they've got 30 kids, sometimes it's easier to keep it calm, whereas here, no. You don't get it, you didn't deserve it, you wasn't respectful, you said this to so and so, you will lose your credit" (<i>Lines 108 – 111</i>) "And I think that's the main thing about working as a PRU, all the students have got major history of someroute or another. But we're all aware of it. And it's not like you make

	allowances, but you can understand why it's happening and you can work with them in a different way" (<i>Lines</i> 225 – 228) "Well its emotion - even if it's a case of, you know, I dunno the trigger might bewhatever (sighs) I dunno. It could even be a smell, or a sound, or whatever. We can remove things, we can change things, whereas you can't do that in a bigger setting" (<i>Lines</i> 230 – 232) "We can make things individual, we might have 8 kids. Every single kid is working at a different level, but, you can do that. You can give them all totally different work, which you can't do in a bigger setting" (<i>Lines</i> 232 – 234) "You've got that time to be moretalk about their emotions, talk about their feelings and why you act this way, look at everybody else, how are they feeling. Start giving them, making them understand and reflect on their behaviour" (<i>Lines</i> 297 – 299) "So, I think that's the main thing about this setting is that you've got time, patience, you know all their backgrounds, all the staff know their backgrounds" (<i>Lines</i> 305 – 306) "Whereas, because we have such few students I think where every single one is so individual, and so the staff are so involved in- and we get a really good background history which I think is fantastic, 'cos I come from mainstream setting initially and I used to get so frustrated. 'There's a child protection issue, but you don't need to know what it is'. Well, actually, I kind of think I do because I'm working with the child. Whereas here, when I started here, it was like right, these
Pride in the setting (x3)	 are the kids, there's their folders, read" (<i>Lines 208 - 214</i>) "It's very different to mainstream, because you've got a small setting here, you've only got at the maximum, 8 in a class with 2 adults. So, they've got more attention focused on them. Erm, it the boundaries are very, very set here. Very, very set, it's got to- it's this way or no way" (<i>Lines 104 - 107</i>) "And I thinkthey only have 14 weeks here, but within 2 or 3 weeks, you can see such a huge difference in the kids" (<i>Lines 111 - 112</i>) "He's a lovely little boy who can actually hold a conversation with you. And the amount of work that went into him hereand he's just come on leaps and bounds, you know?" (<i>Lines 188 - 189</i>)
Juxtapositions - better than outside but difficulties within	- "Soyeah, I really enjoy it here and I love the way it's so structured, and everything is very, very rigid, and of course you've got 8 kids in that class, you've got the 8-worst key stage 2 students in the borough, all with different needs, so it's hard it's a hard setup you know." (Lines 126 – 128)

	Better approach to understanding	- "And we do mix ages, so we've got a key stage 1 class and a key stage 2. So, you'll have kids from year one and two together, and then kids, year three, four, five and six together. So that's quite a range of ages. But every bit of work is made specially for them. So, they can gain the best out of it" (<i>Lines 234 - 237</i>)
	A positive influence	- "So, I think, I mean I think it's a brilliant setting, I know all parents go, 'Ohh I don't want them to go to a PRU it's horrendous', you know. But I think especially for those kids that come from the 14-week program that haven't been permanently excluded, they can really, really benefit" (Lines 238 - 241)
	Breaking cycles of behaviour	- "Because it just cuts that, it just cuts that- I think they get into a habit. "This is how I go into school, this is how I behave, so what? I want attention, I don't care if it's negative or positive attention", whereas here they won't get the negative attention" (<i>Lines 241 – 243</i>)
	Superior teamwork	- "Erm, and I think in all the other schools I've worked in, this communication is just not fantastic, you see it sometimes, you know?" (Lines $308 - 310$)
	Feeling pigeon-holed	- "So, it's not really the scary place everybody thinks it is" (Lines $311 - 312$)
Difficulties with the	Undersupported/undervalued by the family	- "Erm, I think, family, that's sadly really but, you know, some families are just not supportive. They don't back you up, they don't listen to what you are saying" (<i>Lines 317 – 319</i>)
<u>family system</u>	Despair	- "We don't we meet the families at meetings, you know, the parentsthat's it, at the beginning of the day, the end of the day. But there's no input as such from the parents, who either are absolutely distraught their child has come to a PRU because it doesn't look good does it, to you know, your friends. Or they don't care. Or they don't know how to parent, you know? They've never been shown" (<i>Lines</i> 320 – 324)
	Irritated by lack of parental support	- "So that's been a big bugbear, the last few years of mine, that we're really missing out on the parents" (Lines $324 - 325$)
	The PRU perceived as an easy option	- "Because some of them see it as a relief, because they were getting phone calls from exclusions, come and get your kid, blah, blah, they come here, we don't do that. You know, you don't exclude from a PRU" (<i>Lines 331 – 333</i>)
	Family as a barrier	- "So, I would say family is probably the biggest issue that we face" (Line 337)
	A cycle	- "[] and we do get quite a lot of siblings, unfortunately. So erm, you know, "oh my brother this and my brother that", so that you do keep in touch, you know, there's quite a lot of families you get the same surname and you're like mmm okay, know where we're going here" (Lines 416 – 419)

	Despair at lack of input/skills	- "Especially cos - I mean I've worked with kids in receptionthere's no boundaries at home, they've come into school, they're expected to sit on that carpet, they're expected to listen to that teacher, they don't even know how to share, you know? There's nothing there so you've got to really go for the basics!" (<i>Lines</i> 52 – 55)
<u>Difficulties</u> <u>associated with the</u> <u>system</u>	Adverse impact of the systemic context	- "And to be honest, special educational needs at the moment isnearly all of them are SEN. Erm, and they need so much support. Schools haven't got the finances, they haven't got the staffeven if they're diagnosed, 'sorry we can't help, we can't give them a one to one, we've got one TA in the classroom in the mornings and that's even in year one and two!', You know?" (Lines 115 – 119)
	An exclusive system	- "So, he's gone back and really, he's the same child. Nothing's changed with him. So, I think he's going to belike you get some that just come back and come back you know. And eventually you gotta think, where should they be?" (<i>Lines</i> $197 - 200$)
	Lost/stuck in the system	- "It's so sad that there's some kids that don't fitin any particularthey're not SEN, they haven't got a diagnosis, they can't go to a specialist provision, but they're not mainstream. That's the difficult ones, it's what we call 'the other kids'. Because, what do you do with them?" (<i>Lines</i> 200 - 203)
	Frustration/ anger with system	- "Oh, it's horrible, it's really, really frustrating. It's almost like I want anotherI want a middle ground school, you know? But there's nothing you can do about it. Nothing you can do about it" (Lines 206 – 208)
	Lack of belief in the LA	- "They're just sadly I think for the authority they're just another figure" (Line 208)
	Restricted - unable to provide the desired support	- "Erm, resources are not great finances, you know. It's a shame we don't have, you know, all the wonderful things" (<i>Line</i> 289 – 291)

	SUPERORDINATE THEME: MANAGING RELATIONSHIPS			
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes		
	Struggling to get through	- "[] I think is the case, but then on the other hand, a lot of them don't understand what they've done wrong or why they're displaying these behaviours. Soto get them to understand it and to changeis really, really difficult" (<i>Lines 49 – 52</i>)		

Difficult aspects of connections with the	Resistant to restraint (x2)	-	"And I think the worst thing, even for the little ones, I don't want that relationship with them" (<i>Lines</i> 273 – 274)
<u>child</u>		-	"I'm in and out of there all the time, and I don't want them to think some of them get that feeling that you're going to be doing that again, and I want a really positive relationship. I mean, I have had to do it and I'll do it if I have to, but I think that does change that dynamics in what I do" (Lines 277 – 280)
	Emotionally draining relationships	ı	"And you can build up such a - and they do open up so much, it's really nice. Sometimes you come out exhausted" ($Lines\ 358-360$)
	Shocked at rejected relationship	-	"But we go and catch up and sometimes they don't even want to see you when you go back, it's really weird the reactions you get. You either get it's great to see you it's going really well. Or, you remind me of before and I don't wanna know. And it's like whoawe had, this was all good and they're like, no, I'm not interested, I don't wanna know, I've moved on" (<i>Lines 386 – 390</i>)
	Difficulty breaking through (x2)		"It's probably the frustration of trying to get to know them in the first place. Getting them to break those barriers down -cos that takes time" ($Lines\ 450-451$) "It's, it's, it's, the initial getting through the barriers" ($Lines\ 452-453$)
	Poor attitudes and feeling provoked	-	"Erm, so they come in here, they don't turn up you know they have to go round and get them from home, erm, and the whole attitude to - for them I think is everyone has let me down nobody is interested in me, so I'm going to push your buttons so you don't want me either" (<i>Lines 37 – 40</i>)
Understanding and	Understanding perceived as crucial	-	"So, you have to cotton on very quickly, find out what pushes their buttons" (Lines 139 – 140)
connecting with the child	The need to adapt and tailor approach (x2)	-	"So, I've got one boy who can write me all about how he feels, what upsets him, you try to speak to him about it and you get nothing. So, I know, that him, you slide him a piece of paper, he'll do the work, he'll do it quietly and that's fine. Whereas, I can have a discussion with the four here, that are really happy to listen to each other and, you know" (<i>Lines</i> $141 - 145$) "It's the different personalities. Different personalities, so I've got some students who will really happily talk about their emotions, how they feel, will reflect on things they've done. I've got others who you try to bring that up and they will kick off. As far as they're concerned that was the past, they don't want to talk about it, or they not gonna look a fool in front of their peers, and they're not going to talk about emotions" (<i>Lines</i> $135 - 139$)
	A real understanding of the child (x2)	-	"But, it's good to know, because you can see the child as a whole, and everybody knows everything about that child. So, as they say, behaviours, communication, you know, why they're communicating like that" ($Lines\ 220-223$)

	- "And when you get frustrated, and you get those ones that really do press your buttons and you just want to go 'just stop' you know? Knowing, what's gone on before they've come to school the reason why they're acting like this makes a huge difference" (<i>Lines</i> 223 – 225)
Empathy/ being there	- "I always say it like, I'm there to support you, I don't work for the school. I'm not interested. I'm there to make sure, you get the support. And you get the help you need" ($Lines\ 352 - 353$)
Trying to truly understand	- "So, it's a slow process, unpicking, unpicking, trying to find out- with the older ones you can say it's like onions, with lots of layers you know? We're trying to unpick where the actual problems are []" (<i>Lines 345 – 348</i>)
Showing you care/ developing trust	- "And they're like, 'yeahmmm' like this, you know? And the students are like, oh actually she - you know, she's there for me" (<i>Lines 357 – 358</i>)
Pleasure in the bond formed	- "But they do - you build up that bond and that friendship and that - it's really nice, to actually be there" (<i>Lines 360 – 361</i>)
Relational boundaries	- "Because then they see you as - I'm meant to be that person that'snot a friend by any means but the person that's supported them within school" ($Lines\ 280-281$)

	SUPERORDINATE THEME: HELPING THE CHILD BE SUCCESSFUL			
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes		
Helping the child be successful	Empowering the child (x2) Guiding to a different path	 "It's giving them a new start, a fresh start. Erm, not letting them think that's it, life is over. You know, it's never too late. No matter what you've done. You've still got choices" (<i>Lines 456 – 457</i>) "You need to be positive. But if you can get them young, and you can change their way of thinking, and they wanna do it, then you think well actually, you've got so much potential. So much potential to achieve, you know?" (<i>Lines 123 – 126</i>) "Right now, you can make the choice of going down the pathway that is going to lead to crime and prison, god knows what else. Or, you can think no, this is where I can change my life and I can make a difference" (<i>Lines 458 – 460</i>) 		

Being the child's advocate (x2)	 "And you can build up a really good relationship with them, and be their kind of advocate' (Lines 351 - 352) "And if you've got any worries or concerns, I'll be your voice" (Lines 353 - 354)
Being the positive figure	- "[] because they don't have any positives in their lives, a lot of these kids. Everything is negative, and then they just feed off this negative attention and they get themselves into a cycle and it's like come on (laughs)" (<i>Lines 361 – 363</i>)
Determination/ striving to get through	- "I will get that attention, and he's getting on everybody's nerves, because he's just in your face the whole time and the only way to deal with him is to ignore him. Just stop, I'll come and speak to you when I've got time. And you keep at it and you keep at it, and then he sorta goes 'hmph' first off, he'll get the hump and I go "you know what I'm gonna say", you know, and it's like "oh I'll sit down". So, I know now, I've got that []" (<i>Lines 370 – 374</i>)
Battling mind-sets	- "And that's where it becomes really challenging here. It's trying to change their mind-set onto actually, a fresh start" (Lines $40 - 42$)
Persistence/determination to elicit change	- "So, they put him back in the provision, and he went ballistic. He was kicking and screaming and swearing, all the stuff that we'd stopped here. And the re-stopping it here was literally a thinking chair. We had to treat him back right to a toddler you know? Every time you swore you'd sit on the thinking chair, we don't swear. He'd get up, you go back, he'd get up, you'd go back. This went on for weeks. In the end, he totally stopped swearing" (<i>Lines 178 – 183</i>)
Adopting a realistic attitude to change	- "You know, I think you are not going to do it with all the kids, by any means. Some of them just don't want to. But for the ones that do, erm when you see that, I think that's all we are here for really so, yeah" (<i>Lines</i> 460 – 462)

SUPERORDINATE THEME: MANAGING AGGRESSION, NEEDS AND CLASS DYNAMICS			
Emergent theme	Associated quotes		
Managing challenging/aggressive behaviour	- "It's managing behaviour in general, but if they're at risk, or they're putting others at risk, or they're throwing furniture or wrecking the place then they will have to be held. Erm, we've got a timeout room where we can take them out to. Erm, but some of them do it quietly, but others you know, you have to remove them for their own safety as well as everybody else" (Lines 151 – 154)		
	Emergent theme Managing challenging/aggressive		

	A loss of control/ shocking to witness Intense fear	- "If you get a radio come down and it'swell I don't knowI'd say it's like a riot off, it's like a- it's what you'd see off tele. Kids are on the roof, windows are smashed, things are flying out of windows, staff are on the floor I mean, yeahwhen they go, they go big time" (Lines 249 – 252)
	intense fear	- "And some of them have got no respect whether you're a woman, whether you're a bloke don't care. You know, and it's like, I ain't gonna move you, you'll eat me alive I'll be on the floor before I can" (<i>Lines</i> 264 – 266)
	Distress associated with aggression (x2)	 "And they are strong. When they get angry, they get really angry you know, so yeah. I mean that's horrible, I hate it" (<i>Lines</i> 271 – 272("I mean it's not like a daily occurrence, but when it does happen then it happens in style. I
		don't like it. I hate it" (<i>Lines</i> 272 – 273)
G	Supported/secure	- "Everybody's behind you. If you've had a bad day, everyone's there" (<i>Lines 306 – 307</i>)
Support and security of the staff team	Closeness/security	- "But we do have that here because it's so small and its close knit, you know" (<i>Line 311</i>)
	Security/safety	- "So, we've got a couple of men that work in our team, which is quite handy to have! We can always call on them (laughs)" ($Lines\ 266-268$)
	Looked out for/ supported	- "That helps me are the support of staff. Erm, I think that's such a good team, because they have to be. They've all got each other's backs, and I think that is really, really helpful" (<i>Lines 288</i> – 289)
	Accepted and trusted within the setting	- "That's the difference. You're not judged if you feel like, actually, this ain't working this lesson, let's stop it. Let's look at what the problems are" (<i>Lines</i> 295 – 297)
Managing needs and dynamics	A diversity of backgrounds and needs	- "Others is the fact that family background and family history has a lot to do with it. And they think they're little teenagers and they all want to rule the roost, so you've got a lot of personalities in a room" (<i>Lines</i> $130 - 133$)
	Uncertain dynamics/ unable to settle	- "So, the dynamics - and of course it's like a revolving door, they don't all come together, so we'll have them coming and going. So. You just get it all settled and then someone else comes into the mix, and then of course it all upsets the dynamics again" (<i>Lines 145 – 148</i>)
	Severity of needs	- "[] obviously autistic but didn't have a diagnosis when he came to us. He had very, very limited language and what he did use were swear words. He was like a selective mute with Tourette's basically (laughs). Erm, he had hardly any understanding, he'd just learnt these words he didn't know what they were you know. He'd just turn around, call you the C word and then go 'love you'. I mean, it was just random words. There was no way he was a mainstream child, he'd actually come from a provision within a mainstream school" (<i>Lines 163 – 169</i>)

SUPERORDINATE THEME: THINKING ABOUT HOW THE EXPERIENCE IMPACTS THE SELF			
Subordinate theme	Emergent theme	Associated quotes	
Difficult feelings and	A mixture of emotions/ a rollercoaster	- "All the fun, all the joy, all the sadness (laughs)" (<i>Lines 464 – 465</i>)	
<u>experiences</u>	Dedication/ resilience is key	- "You've got to really love kids to doyou know to do this day in day out" (<i>Lines 193 – 194</i>)	
impacting the self	Questioning self/ hard to see the positives	- "You can have really bad days and you think what is the point? (<i>Lines</i> 422 – 423)	
	Fear/ powerless	- "It's some of these lads, these year eleven lads, they're like 6 foot 2, what am I gonna do?" (Lines 263 – 264)	
	Fear of uncertainty	- "I hate it. Your heart goes. Cos, you really don't know what you're going to face, you really don't know what you're going to face" (<i>Lines</i> 270 – 271)	
	A mixed response/ resignation and worry	- "But, eventually, after time, you realise there's only so much you can do. You do what you can do while they're here, you know, but that sometimes isquite scary" (<i>Lines</i> 219 – 220)	
	Unbearable days	- 'But they still, again, every day is a fresh start, and some days are horrendous" (<i>Lines</i> 254 – 256)	
	Pressure	- "Start giving them, making them understand and reflect on their behaviour. Whereas, sometimes I think in some situations you'd feel quite difficult doing that. You've got to there, you've got to get to this and you've got to get to that, and although our kids are assessed when they come in, and then when they leave, and we are hoping they've made progress, actually, its 14 weeks out of atime" (<i>Lines</i> 298 – 302)	
	Impossible job	- "[] you know you've got they've seen domestic violence, they've seen this, they've seen that. How can youdeal with that in fourteen weeks? You can't" (<i>Lines 343 - 344</i>)	
	Shock/fear	- "It frightened the life out of meto read what these kids have been through and what they're going through" (<i>Lines 214 – 215</i>)	
	Touched input is valued	- "Months later, I've emailed to say how's he goingHe's still got the teddy. I was like, oh my god! You know?!" (<i>Lines 400 – 401</i>)	
Positive impact on	Rewards make it worthwhile	- "I think the best part ismmm the rewards of it really. Job satisfaction is great" (Line 422)	
the self	Making a difference/ pride	- "But when you break through to a kid, and you get something out of them, and you, you boost that because self-esteem is dire you know" (<i>Lines</i> 423 – 424)	

	Satisfaction from making a difference	- "But if you can get something out of them, and boost their self-esteem that is, that's worth it. That's totally worth it" (Lines $425 - 426$)
	Satisfaction/ pride from the small rewards	- "Anyway, I didn't think no more of it, at the end of the day I saw his teacher and he went to me, "what did you say to him? I said well, he went, oh he come in, big smile on his face, he was so happy, he said he starts telling me about your kids and going to university. He said he was like buzzing, and I just thought, little things like that to actually go, you can do this, you know. So, I think that's the most rewarding" (<i>Lines 437 – 441</i>)
	Seeing the positive	- "You go home, my husband goes "how do you do your job?" Cos I'm like, ohh he got excluded he's done this he's done that, and then it's like, yeah butso and so did this and you know" (Lines 443 – 445)
	Small rewards aid resiliency	- "So, he thanked me, I went and said to one of the kids, I'm gonna be your officer when you go back. He went "Yes! I told my mum I want someone like you because you're always smiley and happy". Aw that's it, I have only known him for a week (laughs). You gotta really go for the little things, you know" (<i>Lines</i> 445 – 448)
	Pleasure/satisfaction from the transformation	- "But it's when they come here and they just look awful and they don't want to come here but then you look at them two weeks down the line and they are like different kids. So, it's all good really. I love it, I love my job (laughs)" (<i>Lines</i> 453 – 456)
	Holding onto positives/ positive reframes	- "But it makes for really interesting lessons! (laughs)" (<i>Lines 132 – 133</i>)
Struggling to let go	Desire to keep them safe/ trauma of letting go	- "So, it's almost likeI know it's not the right place for them to stay here long term, but it's so nice to see the change in thembut it's very hard when they go back, very, very, hard" (<i>Lines</i> 119 – 121)
	Disbelief and fear/ desire to protect	- "I didn't want them to go home, I was in a right state initially, because I couldn't get it out of my head! You're letting them go back to that?! You know? No wonder they're coming in so chaotic every morning when they've got that going on at home" (<i>Lines</i> 215 – 218)
	Distress of letting go	- "It's really nice; it can be hard at the end when you've got to walk away, you know? It can" (Line 379)
	A grief/sadness associated with letting go	- "And some of them, you just like, well they break your heart, they're just like, really?" (Line 380)
	Desire to hold on/ hard to let go (x2)	 "It's like when your kids are growing up isn't it? You know, you grow up to be independent and then you're like, don't go (laughs)" (<i>Lines 411 - 412</i>) "So yeah, we don't just sort of let them go. But you still hear years later, you know, you hear about them" (<i>Lines 415 - 416</i>)

Letting go and moving on	- "Don't speak to me, there's no point. Come back, now we'll have the positive. And every day is a fresh start" (<i>Lines</i> 244 – 245)
Trying to hold onto the positives of moving on (x2)	 "Do you know what, it depends on the student, but it's nice in some respects cos you think, well they've moved on. You know. Actually, it's good" (<i>Line 407 – 408</i>) "[] but you got feedback from the school to say it's going well, and you can see that they've totally moved on, they're not interested, and it's a positive thing" (<i>Lines 410 – 411</i>)

Appendix V: Table of superordinate themes for main participant group

OVERARCHING THEME 1: RELATIONSHIPS: A COMPLEX LANDSCAPE						
Sharon	Lily	Devlin	Ali			
A nurturing/parental role	Managing relationships	Connections with the child	Relationships: connections and disconnections			
OVERARCHING THE	OVERARCHING THEME 2: A JUGGLING ACT: BEHAVIOUR, NEED AND STRENGTH FROM THE TEAM					
Sharon	Lily	Devlin	Ali			
Ways to manage the classroom of needs	Trying to support behaviour and diversity of needs	Trying to manage SEMH needs	Complexities of managing behaviour and need			
OVERARCHING TH	HEME 3: <u>A ROCKY ROAD: HIG</u>	HS, LOWS AND A JOURNEY (OF DEVELOPMENT			
Sharon	Lily	Devlin	Ali			
Emotional and psychological impact on the self	The experience as a journey	An experience that impacts	The role impacts the self			
A journey of development						
OVE	RARCHING THEME 4: <u>BATTL</u>	LES, CLASHES AND SUPERIOR	RITY			
Sharon	Lily	Devlin	Ali			
Frustration with the outside	Clashes inside and outside	Managing the complexities of	Difficulties and superiority			
		the outside world				
OV	ERARCHING THEME 5: THE	the outside world JOURNEY TOWARDS A FUTU	RE			
OV Sharon	TERARCHING THEME 5: <u>THE</u> .		RE Ali			

Appendix W: Comparison of superordinate themes with participants who did not meet inclusion criteria

Main participants: Relationships: a complex landscape			
Тгасу	Julie		
Relationships: stability and instability	Managing relationships		
Main participants: A juggling act: be	ehaviour, need and strength from the team		
Tracy	Julie		
Support and strength from the team	Managing aggression, needs and class dynamics		
Main participants: <u>A rocky road:</u> h	ighs, lows and a journey of development		
Tracy	Julie		
Ups and downs of the experience	Thinking about how the experience impacts the self		
Main participants: <u>Bat</u>	ttles, clashes and superiority		
Tracy	Julie		
A better school than the outside	Superiority inside and clashes outside		
Main participants: <u>Th</u>	ne journey towards a future		
Tracy	Julie		
Supporting a successful future	Helping the child be successful		

Appendix X: TREC form and ethical approval letter



Tavistock and Portman Trust Research Ethics Committee (TREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL REVIEW OF RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

This application should be submitted alongside copies of any supporting documentation which will be handed to participants, including a participant information sheet, consent form, self-completion survey or questionnaire.

Where a form is submitted and sections are incomplete, the form will not be considered by TREC and will be returned to the applicant for completion.

For further guidance please contact Paru Jeram (academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk)

PROJECT DETAILS

Current project title	Exploring the experiences alternative provisions with settings: an Interpretative Ph	children excluded from	n mainstream
Proposed project start date	March 2019	Anticipated project end date	May 2020

APPLICANT DETAILS

Name of	Hollie Danby
Researcher	
Email	
address	
Contact	
telephone	
number	

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Will any of the researchers or their institutions receive any other benefits or incentives for taking part in this research over and above their normal salary package or the costs of
undertaking the research?
YES NO 🛛
If YES, please detail below:
Is there any further possibility for conflict of interest? YES \square NO \boxtimes
If YES , please detail below:

FOR ALL APPLICANTS

Is your research being conducted externally* to the Trust? (for example; within a Local Authority, Schools, Care Homes, other NHS Trusts or other organisations).				
*Please note that 'external' is defined as an organisation which is external to the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust (Trust)				
If YES, please supply details below:				
(i.e. submission via Integ	Has external* ethics approval been sought for this research? (i.e. submission via Integrated Research Application System (IRAS) to the Health Research Authority (HRA) or other external research ethics committee)			
	*Please note that 'external' is defined as an organisation/body which is external to the Tavistock and Portman Trust Research Ethics Committee (TREC)			
	ls of the ethical approval bodies below AND val from the ethical approval bodies:			
If your research is being un sponsor of your research?	dertaken externally to the Trust, please provide de	etails of the		
Do you have local approval	(this includes R&D approval)?	YES ⊠ NO		
• Does the proposed reserves ⋈ NO □	UTOR earch as detailed herein have your support to proc	ceed?		
Signed	Brian Davis			
Date				
APPLICANT DECLARATION I confirm that: • The information contained in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and				
I confirm that: • The information cor		/ledge, correct and		
I confirm that: The information corup to date. I have attempted to	ntained in this application is, to the best of my know identify all risks related to the research.			
I confirm that: The information corup to date. I have attempted to a cknowledge my Practice for ethical	ntained in this application is, to the best of my know identify all risks related to the research. obligations and commitment to upholding our Ur research and observing the rights of the participar	niversity's Code of		
I confirm that: The information corup to date. I have attempted to acknowledge my Practice for ethical I am aware that ca result in formal d	ntained in this application is, to the best of my know identify all risks related to the research. obligations and commitment to upholding our Ur	niversity's Code of nts.		
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I confirm that: The information corup to date. I have attempted to lacknowledge my Practice for ethical I am aware that ca result in formal dresearch.	ntained in this application is, to the best of my known identify all risks related to the research. obligations and commitment to upholding our Ur research and observing the rights of the participar ses of proven misconduct, in line with our Universisciplinary proceedings and/or the cancellation	niversity's Code of nts.		

FOR RESEARCH DEGREE STUDENT APPLICANTS ONLY

Name and School of Supervisor/Director of Studies		
Qualification for which research is being undertaken		
Supervisor/Director of Studies − Does the student have the necessary skills to carry out the research? YES ☑ NO ☐ Is the participant information sheet, consent form and any other documentation appropriate? YES ☑ NO ☐ Are the procedures for recruitment of participants and obtaining informed consent suitable and sufficient? YES ☑ NO ☐ Where required, does the researcher have current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance? YES ☑ NO ☐		
Signed	Judith Mortell	
Date		
DETAILS OF THE PROPOS	SED RESEARCH	
1. Provide a brief description of the proposed research, including the requirements of participants. This must be in lay terms and free from technical or discipline specific terminology or jargon. If such terms are required, please ensure they are adequately explained (Do not exceed 500 words)		
There is currently little research that explores the experiences of Teaching Assistants (TAs) working in alternative provisions with Children and Young People (CYP) who have been excluded from mainstream settings. Acknowledging the importance of these staff members for CYP in these settings, this research aims to interview 6 TAs about their experience working in alternative provisions. The participants will be asked to answer open-ended questions from a semi-structured interview schedule about their experiences supporting CYP who have been excluded from mainstream settings. The interviews will be completed in either the school that the TA works within or at the Local Authority building. Each interview will be audio-taped and transcribed by the researcher, followed by analysis using an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach. This allows exploration of the meaning participants impress upon their lived experiences, through analysis of their reflections and descriptions.		
2. Provide a statement on the aims and significance of the proposed research, including potential impact to knowledge and understanding in the field (where appropriate, indicate the associated hypothesis which will be tested). This should be a clear justification of the proposed research, why it should proceed and a statement on any anticipated benefits to the community. (Do not exceed 700 words)		
Vital to alternative provisions, TAs and the relationships they form with CYP are emphasised as highly important in enabling positive outcomes (Hart, 2013; Leather, 2009; Michael & Frederickson, 2013). Despite their significance, there is a paucity of research investigating TAs experience working in alternative provisions, with the majority of existing studies focusing on		

CYP/ parental experience of exclusion, protective factors and the reintegration to mainstream settings (Farouk, 2014; Hart, 2013; Lawrence, 2011; Michael & Frederickson, 2013). Whilst some papers attempt to incorporate the views of TAs, these are usually included with the experiences of other professionals (teachers, SENDCos or higher management) investigating their function in relation to the CYP, with little emphasis on the TAs experiences as individuals.

Recognising that the needs of TAs must be identified and met for them to give their best to CYP (Soloman & Thomas, 2013), acquiring their views and experiences in alternative provisions is vital. This is particularly important in the current context of systemic pressure on alternative provisions; a result of increasing exclusions (Department for Education, 2016; Power & Taylor, 2018), government reviews highlighting the need for improvement ('Alternative provision: Effective Practice and Post 16 Transition' [Tate & Greatbatch, 2017], 'Creating opportunity for all: Our vision for alternative provision' [DfE, 2018], 'Forgotten Children: Alternative provision and the scandal of ever increasing exclusions' [HC, 2018]) and difficulties with the recruitment and retention of staff (National Union of Teachers [NUT], 2012). Working in this challenging and emotionally demanding environment that is often under-staffed and over-subscribed, it is important that the needs of TAs are recognised to support their well-being and improve recruitment and retention of staff.

As a result, this research aims to explore the personal experiences of TAs working in alternative provisions with CYP who have been excluded from mainstream settings. It will have an explorative focus, taking an inductive approach (with no specific hypothesis), to explore TAs lived experience supporting children in alternative settings.

The findings from this research will be disseminated to the participants who wish to be contacted following completion, as well as the Educational Psychology Service (EPS) and Local Authority (LA). The written thesis will be available through the Tavistock and Portman library. I also intend to publish papers for EP based journals. It is hoped that by developing a rich understanding of the lived experiences of TAs in alternative provisions, EPs will be better able to support TAs and, in turn, the CYP in these settings. It is hoped that a better understanding of the phenomenon will highlight areas in which support could be provided at the individual, group and organisational level.

3. Provide an outline of the methodology for the proposed research, including proposed method of data collection, *tasks* assigned to participants of the research and the proposed method and duration of data analysis. If the proposed research makes use of pre-established and generally accepted techniques, please make this clear. (Do not exceed 500 words)

A qualitative design is proposed, whereby TAs will be interviewed using semi-structured interview schedules developed in accordance with IPA guidance (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). Each participant will be asked to talk about their experience of working in alternative provisions with CYP who have been excluded from mainstream settings. I will aim to interview 6 teaching assistants, with each interview lasting approximately one hour. In keeping with IPA guidance, a purposive sampling approach will be employed to obtain a homogenous sample, the homogeneity focusing on the shared experience of working in an alternative provision with excluded CYP. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed to aid in depth analysis of each transcript. The transcripts will then be analysed using IPA (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009), an established approach used to explore participants experiences and the meanings impressed upon them. It is anticipated that the analysis will take up to 6 weeks.

PARTICIPANT DETAILS

4. Provide an explanation detailing how you will identify, approach and recruit the participants for the proposed research, including clarification on sample size and location. Please provide justification for the exclusion/inclusion criteria for this study (i.e. who will be allowed to / not allowed to participate) and explain briefly, in lay terms, why this criteria is in place. (Do not exceed 500 words)

Participants will be TAs working in alternative provisions with CYP excluded from mainstream settings. Initially, headteachers of alternative provisions within the researcher's LA will be approached and asked if they agree to the research being undertaken within their schools. Should this recruitment method not elicit enough participants, alternative provisions outside of the LA will be approached. Provisions will be contacted one at a time, to prevent over recruitment and potential disappointment of TAs.

Following IPA guidance, the researcher aims to recruit a sample of 6 participants to provide a range of individual experiences and a feasible amount of data for analysis. TAs will be included in the study if:

- -They are currently working in an alternative provision with CYP excluded from a mainstream setting. Staff who do not currently work within these settings will not be included as this may mean they have worked in a different context or have to rely on recollection of the experience of working within this setting.
- Their primary role is a TA within the school. Staff who have other responsibilities such as teaching will not be included as this may influence their experience of working within the setting.

When headteachers have consented to me undertaking research in their schools, I will arrange a meeting with these staff to explain the research project and their potential role within this. The TAs will be given an overview of the research, their contribution and how the data will be analysed. They will also be told about the process of anonymity, confidentiality and their right to withdraw their participation at any time. All TAs will also be provided with an information sheet to take away and read. An opportunity to ask questions will also be provided. If the TAs agree to take part in this research, they will be provided with a consent form to sign.

5.	Will the participants be from any of the following groups?(Tick as appropriate)
	Students or staff of the Trust or the University. Adults (over the age of 18 years with mental capacity to give consent to participate in the
	earch). Children or legal minors (anyone under the age of 16 years) ¹ Adults who are unconscious, severely ill or have a terminal illness. Adults who may lose mental capacity to consent during the course of the research. Adults in emergency situations. Adults ² with mental illness - particularly those detained under the Mental Health Act (1983 & 2007).
	Participants who may lack capacity to consent to participate in the research under the research requirements of the Mental Capacity Act (2005). Prisoners, where ethical approval may be required from the National Offender nagement Service (NOMS).
	Young Offenders, where ethical approval may be required from the National Offender nagement Service (NOMS). Healthy volunteers (in high risk intervention studies). Participants who may be considered to have a pre-existing and potentially dependent relationship with the investigator (e.g. those in care homes, students, colleagues, service-users, patients).
	Other vulnerable groups (see Question 6). Adults who are in custody, custodial care, or for whom a court has assumed responsibility. Participants who are members of the Armed Forces.
vuli Dis ² 'A phy	the proposed research involves children or adults who meet the Police Act (1997) definition of nerability ³ , any researchers who will have contact with participants must have current closure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance. Adults with a learning or physical disability, a physical or mental illness, or a reduction in visical or mental capacity, and living in a care home or home for people with learning difficulties receiving care in their own home, or receiving hospital or social care services.' (Police Act, 97)

³ Proposed research involving participants with whom the investigator or researcher(s) shares a dependent or unequal relationships (e.g. teacher/student, clinical therapist/service-user) may compromise the ability to give informed consent which is free from any form of pressure (real or implied) arising from this relationship. TREC recommends that, wherever practicable, investigators choose participants with whom they have no dependent relationship. Following due scrutiny, if the investigator is confident that the research involving participants in dependent relationships is vital and defensible, TREC will require additional information setting out the case and detailing how risks inherent in the dependent relationship will be managed. TREC will also need to be reassured that refusal to participate will not result in any discrimination or penalty.

6. Will the study involve participants who are vulnerable? YES \square NO \boxtimes

For the purposes of research, 'vulnerable' participants may be adults whose ability to protect their own interests are impaired or reduced in comparison to that of the broader population. Vulnerability may arise from the participant's personal characteristics (e.g. mental or physical impairment) or from their social environment, context and/or disadvantage (e.g. socio-economic mobility, educational attainment, resources, substance dependence, displacement or homelessness). Where prospective participants are at high risk of consenting under duress, or as a result of manipulation or coercion, they must also be considered as vulnerable.

Adults lacking mental capacity to consent to participate in research and children are automatically presumed to be vulnerable. Studies involving adults (over the age of 16) who lack mental capacity to consent in research must be submitted to a REC approved for that purpose.

6.1. If YES, what special arrangements are in place to protect vulnerable participants' interests?

If **YES**, the research activity proposed will require a DBS check. (NOTE: information concerning activities which require DBS checks can be found via https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-check-eligible-positions-guidance)

7. Do you propose to make any form of payment or incentive available to participants of the research? YES \square NO \boxtimes

If **YES**, please provide details taking into account that any payment or incentive should be representative of reasonable remuneration for participation and may not be of a value that could be coercive or exerting undue influence on potential participants' decision to take part in the research. Wherever possible, remuneration in a monetary form should be avoided and substituted with vouchers, coupons or equivalent. Any payment made to research participants may have benefit or HMRC implications and participants should be alerted to this in the participant information sheet as they may wish to choose to decline payment.

8. What special arrangements are in place for eliciting informed consent from participants who may not adequately understand verbal explanations or written information provided in English; where participants have special communication needs; where participants have limited literacy; or where children are involved in the research? (Do not exceed 200 words)

Participants in this study will be TAs working in alternative provisions within the United Kingdom and using English to communicate with the CYP. In order to successfully undertake the role, participants will have the required level of understanding of written and spoken English in order to access the information sheets, consent forms and verbal information provided.

RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

9. Does the proposed research involve any of the following? (Tick as appropriate)
use of a questionnaire, self-completion survey or data-collection instrument (attach copy) use of emails or the internet as a means of data collection use of written or computerised tests interviews (attach interview questions) diaries (attach diary record form) participant observation participant observation (in a non-public place) without their knowledge / covert research audio-recording interviewees or events video-recording interviewees or events access to personal and/or sensitive data (i.e. student, patient, client or service-user data) without the participant's informed consent for use of these data for research purposes administration of any questions, tasks, investigations, procedures or stimuli which may be experienced by participants as physically or mentally painful, stressful or unpleasant during or after the research process performance of any acts which might diminish the self-esteem of participants or cause them to experience discomfiture, regret or any other adverse emotional or psychological reaction procedures that involve the deception of participants administration of any substance or agent use of non-treatment of placebo control conditions participation in a clinical trial research undertaken at an off-campus location (risk assessment attached) research overseas (copy of VCG overseas travel approval attached) 10. Does the proposed research involve any specific or anticipated risks (e.g. physical, psychological, social, legal or economic) to participants that are greater than those encountered in everyday life? YES NO No
If YES , please describe below including details of precautionary measures.
11. Where the procedures involve potential hazards and/or discomfort or distress for participants, please state what previous experience the investigator or researcher(s) have had in conducting this type of research.
The researcher has experience conducting research in the community with adults experiencing significant mental health problems. This role involved working with participants diagnosed with anorexia and bulimia. The researcher has also worked with children, families and adults for 9 years, within the community, schools (schools with a special educational need focus and alternative provisions) and mental health settings. Through these roles, the author has helped individuals in distress, signposted to alternative agencies and followed appropriate safeguarding procedures. Working within alternative provisions, the author has also accessed training on therapeutic listening techniques.
12. Provide an explanation of any potential benefits to participants. Please ensure this is framed within the overall contribution of the proposed research to knowledge or practice. (Do not exceed 400 words) NOTE: Where the proposed research involves students of our University, they should be assured that accepting the offer to participate or choosing to decline will have no impact on their assessments or learning experience. Similarly, it should be made clear to participants who are patients, service-users and/or receiving any form of treatment or medication that they are not invited to participate in the belief that participation in the research will result in some relief or improvement in their condition.

The participants of this study may benefit from:

- An opportunity to speak about their experiences working within these settings, allowing opportunity for

reflection on their daily practice

- The experience of being listened to without judgement
- An awareness that they are contributing to the development of knowledge that aims to support good

outcomes for TAs and CYP. When the results of the study are shared and applications for support in these

provisions are provided, TAs may benefit from the dissemination of these findings to their provisions with

hope this may influence future practice.

13. Provide an outline of any measures you have in place in the event of adverse or unexpected outcomes and the potential impact this may have on participants involved in the proposed research. (Do not exceed 300 words)

Although it is not expected that the interviews will result in adverse or unexpected outcomes, it is possible that participants may become distressed talking about their experiences supporting young people in alternative provisions. As a result, the researcher will ensure that all participants, 1) understand their right to withdraw from the study and 2) know that they can discuss any issues that may arise following the interview process. Additionally, participants will be signposted to any help or support they may require if the interviews raise personal or professional issues.

14. Provide an outline of your debriefing, support and feedback protocol for participants involved in the proposed research. This should include, for example, where participants may feel the need to discuss thoughts or feelings brought about following their participation in the research. This may involve referral to an external support or counseling service, where participation in the research has caused specific issues for participants. Where medical aftercare may be necessary, this should include details of the treatment available to participants. Debriefing may involve the disclosure of further information on the aims of the research, the participant's performance and/or the results of the research. (Do not exceed 500 words)

In the event that the interviewee (TA) wishes to think/discuss any issues that may have arisen through the interview process, the researcher will set aside time for a meeting to take place. If further discussions are required, an additional time will be allocated for this to occur. Additionally, once the research process is completed (with all data analysed and written-up), a meeting will be held to inform participants of the findings of the study. This will be a voluntary meeting and will give participants the opportunity to reflect on their participation and the research outcomes.

PARTICIPANT CONSENT AND WITHDRAWAL

15. Have you attached a copy of your participant information sheet (this should be in plain English)? Where the research involves non-English speaking participants, please include translated materials. YES ⊠ NO □
If NO , please indicate what alternative arrangements are in place below:
16. Have you attached a copy of your participant consent form (this should be in <i>plain English</i>)? Where the research involves non-English speaking participants, please include translated materials. YES ⊠ NO □

If **NO**, please indicate what alternative arrangements are in place below: 17. The following is a participant information sheet checklist covering the various points that should be included in this document. Clear identification of the sponsor for the research, the project title, the Researcher or Principal Investigator and other researchers along with relevant contact details. Details of what involvement in the proposed research will require (e.g., participation in interviews, completion of questionnaire, audio/video-recording of events), estimated time commitment and any risks involved. A statement confirming that the research has received formal approval from TREC. ☑ If the sample size is small, advice to participants that this may have implications for confidentiality / anonymity. A clear statement that where participants are in a dependent relationship with any of the researchers that participation in the research will have no impact on assessment / treatment / service-use or support. Assurance that involvement in the project is voluntary and that participants are free to withdraw consent at any time, and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied. Advice as to arrangements to be made to protect confidentiality of data, including that confidentiality of information provided is subject to legal limitations. A statement that the data generated in the course of the research will be retained in accordance with the University's Data Protection Policy. Advice that if participants have any concerns about the conduct of the investigator, researcher(s) or any other aspect of this research project, they should contact Simon Carrington, Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance (academicquality@taviport.nhs.uk) Confirmation on any limitations in confidentiality where disclosure of imminent harm to self and/or others may occur. 18. The following is a consent form checklist covering the various points that should be included in this document. University or Trust letterhead or logo. Title of the project (with research degree projects this need not necessarily be the title of the thesis) and names of investigators. ☐ Confirmation that the project is research. Confirmation that involvement in the project is voluntary and that participants are free to withdraw at any time, or to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied. Confirmation of particular requirements of participants, including for example whether interviews are to be audio-/video-recorded, whether anonymised quotes will be used in publications advice of legal limitations to data confidentiality. ☑ If the sample size is small, confirmation that this may have implications for anonymity any other relevant information. The proposed method of publication or dissemination of the research findings. Details of any external contractors or partner institutions involved in the research. ☐ Details of any funding bodies or research councils supporting the research. Confirmation on any limitations in confidentiality where disclosure of imminent harm to self and/or others may occur. CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY 19. Below is a checklist covering key points relating to the confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Please indicate where relevant to the proposed research. Participants will be completely anonymised and their identity will not be known by the

investigator or researcher(s) (i.e. the participants are part of an anonymous randomised sample

and return responses with no form of personal identification)?

and replaced by a code, with <u>no</u> record retained of how the code relates to the identifiers). \[\textstyle		
20. Participants must be made aware that the confidentiality of the information they provide is subject to legal limitations in data confidentiality (i.e. the data may be subject to a subpoena, a freedom of information request or mandated reporting by some professions). This only applies to named or de-identified data. If your participants are named or de-identified, please confirm that you will specifically state these limitations.		
YES ⊠ NO □		
If NO , please indicate why this is the case below:		
NOTE: WHERE THE PROPOSED RESEARCH INVOLVES A SMALL SAMPLE OR FOCUS GROUP, PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BE ADVISED THAT THERE WILL BE DISTINCT LIMITATIONS IN THE LEVEL OF ANONYMITY THEY CAN BE AFFORDED.		
DATA ACCESS, SECURITY AND MANAGEMENT 21. Will the Researcher/Principal Investigator be responsible for the security of all data collected in connection with the proposed research? YES NO		
DATA ACCESS, SECURITY AND MANAGEMENT 21. Will the Researcher/Principal Investigator be responsible for the security of all data collected in connection with the proposed research? YES ☑ NO ☐ If NO, please indicate what alternative arrangements are in place below: 22. In line with the 5 th principle of the Data Protection Act (1998), which states that personal data shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes for which it was collected; please state how long data will be		
 DATA ACCESS, SECURITY AND MANAGEMENT 21. Will the Researcher/Principal Investigator be responsible for the security of all data collected in connection with the proposed research? YES NO □ If NO, please indicate what alternative arrangements are in place below: 22. In line with the 5th principle of the Data Protection Act (1998), which states that personal data shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes for which it was collected; please state how long data will be retained for. 		

23. Below is a checklist which relates to the management, storage and secure destruction of data for the purposes of the proposed research. Please indicate where relevant to your proposed arrangements.
Research data, codes and all identifying information to be kept in separate locked filing
cabinets. Access to computer files to be available to research team by password only. Access to computer files to be available to individuals outside the research team by password only (See 23.1).
Research data will be encrypted and transferred electronically within the European Economic Area (EEA).
Research data will be encrypted and transferred electronically outside of the European Economic Area (EEA). (See 23.2).
NOTE: Transfer of research data via third party commercial file sharing services, such as Google Docs and YouSendIt are not necessarily secure or permanent. These systems may also be located overseas and not covered by UK law. If the system is located outside the European Economic Area (EEA) or territories deemed to have sufficient standards of data protection, transfer may also breach the Data Protection Act (1998). Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, e-mails or telephone numbers.
☐ Use of personal data in the form of audio or video recordings. ☐ Primary data gathered on encrypted mobile devices (i.e. laptops). NOTE: This should be transferred to secure UEL servers at the first opportunity.
MOTE: For hard drives and magnetic storage devices (HDD or SSD), deleting files does not permanently erase the data on most systems, but only deletes the reference to the file. Files can be restored when deleted in this way. Research files must be <u>overwritten</u> to ensure they are completely irretrievable. Software is available for the secure erasing of files from hard drives which meet recognised standards to securely scramble sensitive data. Examples of this software are BC Wipe, Wipe File, DeleteOnClick and Eraser for Windows platforms. Mac users can use the standard 'secure empty trash' option; an alternative is Permanent eraser software. ☑ All hardcopy data will undergo <u>secure disposal</u> . NOTE: For shredding research data stored in hardcopy (i.e. paper), adopting DIN 3 ensures files are cut into 2mm strips or confetti like cross-cut particles of 4x40mm. The UK government requires a minimum standard of DIN 4 for its material, which ensures cross cut particles of at least 2x15mm.
23.1. Please provide details of individuals outside the research team who will be given password protected access to encrypted data for the proposed research.
23.2. Please provide details on the regions and territories where research data will be electronically transferred that are external to the European Economic Area (EEA).

OVERSEAS TRAVEL FOR RESEARCH

24. Does the proposed research involve travel outside of the UK? YES \(\subseteq \) NO \(\subseteq \)
24.1. Have you consulted the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website for guidance/travel advice? http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/ YES NO
24.2. If you are a non-UK national, have you sought travel advice/guidance from the Foreign Office (or equivalent body) of your country? YES ☐ NO ☐ NOT APPLICABLE ☐
24.3. Have you completed the overseas travel approval process and enclosed a copy of the document with this application? (For UEL students and staff only) NO Details on this process are available here http://www.uel.ac.uk/qa/research/fieldwork.htm
24.4. Is the research covered by your University's insurance and indemnity
provision? YES NO
<u>NOTE:</u> Where research is undertaken by UEL students and staff at an off-campus location within the UK or overseas, the Risk Assessment policy must be consulted: http://dl-cfs-01.uel.ac.uk/hrservices/documents/hshandbook/risk assess policy.pdf . For UEL students and staff conducting research where UEL is the sponsor, the Dean of School or Director of Service has overall responsibility for risk assessment regarding their health and safety.
24.5. Please evidence how compliance with all local research ethics and research governance requirements have been assessed for the country(ies) in which the research is taking place.
N/A
24.6. Will this research be financially supported by the United States Department of Health and Human Services or any of its divisions, agencies or programs? YES NO
N/A
PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS
25. How will the results of the research be reported and disseminated? (Select all that apply)
 ☑ Peer reviewed journal ☑ Conference presentation ☑ Internal report ☑ Dissertation/Thesis ☑ Other publication ☑ Written feedback to research participants ☑ Presentation to participants or relevant community groups ☑ Other (Please specify below)

OTHER ETHICAL ISSUES

26. Are there any other ethical issues that have not been addressed which you would wish to bring to the attention of Tavistock Research Ethics Committee (TREC)?
CHECKLIST FOR ATTACHED DOCUMENTS
27. Please check that the following documents are attached to your application.
Letters of approval from ethical approval bodies (where relevant)
Recruitment advertisement Participant information sheets (including easy-read where relevant)
Assent form for children (where relevant)
☐ Evidence of any external approvals needed☐ Questionnaire
Interview Schedule or topic guide
Risk Assessment (where applicable)
Overseas travel approval (where applicable)
27.1. Where it is not possible to attach the above materials, please provide an
explanation below.



NHS Foundation Trust

Quality Assurance & Enhancement Directorate of Education & Training Tavistock Centre 120 Belsize Lane London NW3 5BA

> Tel: 020 8938 2699 Fax: 020 7447 3837

Hollie Danby

By Email

04 March 2019

Dear Ms Danby,

Re: Research Ethics Application

Title: Exploring the experiences of teaching assistants working in alternative provisions with children excluded from mainstream settings: an Interpretative Phenomenological Approach.

I am pleased to inform you that subject to formal ratification by the Trust Research Ethics Committee your application has been approved. This means you can proceed with your research.

If you have any further questions or require any clarification do not hesitate to contact me.

I am copying this communication to your supervisor.

May I take this opportunity of wishing you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Best regards,

Paru Jeram

Secretary to the Trust Research Degrees Subcommittee

T: 020 938 2699

E: academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk

cc. Course Lead, Supervisor, Course Administrator