"The teachers, they try to understand, they say they understand, but they really don't": An exploration into the educational experiences of secondary school pupils from military families

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Abstract

The present study explores how service children and young people (CYP) experience education. Service CYP may experience multiple school transitions throughout their education as a result of frequent family relocations which can affect their academic attainment, emotional wellbeing and friendships. Some service CYP may also experience parental deployment with prolonged periods of separation from their deployed parent. Whilst there is a growing body of literature on the perceived experiences and support needs of service CYP in schools, qualitative research directly exploring the educational experiences of this population is scarce.

To acknowledge the voice of service CYP themselves, the present study directly explores the educational experiences of seven service CYP attending secondary schools across England and Wales. Interview data was collected remotely and was analysed using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis which led to the emergence of superordinate themes for each participant. Five overarching themes were then identified across the data set: 'searching to belong', 'the impact of loss and separation', 'establishing a sense of self', 'adapting to changes' and 'the need for empathy and understanding'. Findings were discussed in the context of existing research and relevant psychological theory. Implications for educational professionals working with this group are explored and suggestions for future research are provided.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CYP   Children and Young People

YP   Young Person

MC   Military-connected

MoD   Ministry of Defence

DfE   Department for Education

EP   Educational Psychologist

EPS   Educational Psychology Service

SL   School Liaison

US   United States of America

UK   United Kingdom

CAMHS   Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

CHKS   California Healthy Kids Survey

GCSE   General Certificate of Secondary Education

SEN   Special Educational Needs

LA   Local Authority

AFF   Army Families' Federation

NFF   Naval Families' Federation

SCiP   Service Children's Progression

Ofsted   Office for Standards in Education, Children's services and skills

MOD   Ministry of Defence

ESF   Education Support Fund

SPP   Service Pupil Premium

AFC   Armed Forces Covenant

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1. Introduction

1.1 Chapter Overview

This research focuses on the educational experiences of secondary school pupils from military families. This introductory chapter outlines the terminology that will be used through the research project and introduces the population of interest. It provides an overview of the national context within which the research was conducted and highlights the unique characteristics of the military lifestyle. The educational impact of these features is discussed. This chapter provides the aims and purpose of the research and consideration is given to the relevance of the research for educational psychologists (EPs).

1.2 Terminology

Within the UK "children whose parent/s, or carer/s, serves in the regular armed forces, or as a reservist, or has done at any point during the first 25 years of that person's life" have been defined as 'service children' (Service Children's Progression Alliance, 2021, para 1). As this definition describes the population of interest for the current study the researcher has used the term 'service children and young people' (service CYP) throughout this thesis.

Within their interviews, participants in the current study referred to themselves as *"military kids"* (03:10; 07:112-113) *"military children"* (02:86), *"forces children"* (06:232-233) and *"children of people in the military"* (05:14). The term 'military-connected' (MC) is widely used in US literature and 'military-connected students' have been defined as those who "have at least one parent as active duty in the

military or the reserves, or a parent who was honourably discharged with veteran status" (Kranke, 2019, p.1). With these considerations in mind the researcher uses the terms 'military-connected (MC)' and 'service' CYP interchangeably throughout the current research study to encompass terminology used by participants, and to acknowledge the fact that the population of interest has familial connections to military services.

To acknowledge the fact that the current study focuses on the educational experiences of secondary school pupils from military families the researcher interchangeably uses the terms 'pupils' and 'students' to consider the educational component of the current study. The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines 'adolescents' as individuals aged 10-19 years and 'young people' as individuals between the ages of 10-24 years (WHO, 2021). Consequently the researcher uses the terms 'children and young people (CYP)', 'young people' (YP) and 'adolescents' throughout the current study to recognise the 11-16 age range of the population of interest.

In addition, the term 'civilian' has been defined as "a person who is not professionally employed in the armed forces; a non-military person" (Oxford University Press, 2021). This term is used in the current study where reference is made to adults who do not serve in the armed forces. In light of the above definition, the researcher also uses the term 'non-military connected' (non MC). Within the context of the current study this term is used when referring to CYP who do not have MC parents or carers.

1.3 Research Population of Interest

There is some evidence to suggest that service CYP may face barriers to their education in the form of interrupted schooling and social and emotional difficulties, as a result of parental deployment (Chandra et al., 2009; Bradshaw et al., 2010; Aronson & Perkins, 2013; De Pedro et al., 2014a; Pexton et al., 2018). Despite literature suggesting that some service CYP experience barriers to their learning, many MC parents perceive there to be a lack of understanding and support for their children at school (Brady et al., 2013). Little is known about how service CYP in the UK experience education as research directly exploring their individual experiences is scarce (see Literature Review- chapter 2).

Many service CYP live unique lifestyles in comparison to their non MC peers. Those who experience parental deployment can be separated from their deployed parent for prolonged periods. Some of these CYP may also live with the reality that their parent has been deployed to a combat zone. Furthermore, service CYP are likely to experience multiple school transitions throughout their education which have been found to affect their academic development (Harrison & Vannest, 2008) (see section 1.7) and relationships with peers (Bradshaw et al., 2010).

Research has highlighted that older youths report significantly more school, family and peer-related difficulties with parental deployment (Chandra et al., 2010). Service YP are likely to experience these lifestyle related stressors in addition to the developmental changes typically experienced during adolescence. The literature review (chapter 2) provides a broader contextual justification of why MC secondary school pupils were chosen as the population of interest and the methodology (3.4.4) provides further rationale for conducting research with these individuals.

1.4 National Context

1.4.1 Legislative Context

Until 2011 the UK Armed Forces Covenant (AFC) existed purely as a statement of a moral obligation, or promise, between the nation, the Government and the Armed Forces community (Ministry of Defence [MOD], 2011). This promise stated that "those who serve in the Armed Forces…and their families, should face no disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services" (MOD, 2011, p.1) including healthcare, housing and education services. It was published in May 2011 and the core principles of the AFC were first enshrined in law in the Armed Forces Act 2011. This Act made it a statutory requirement for the Secretary of State for Defence to provide annual reports to parliament outlining the progress made by the government to honour the AFC (MOD, 2011). However, in the 2020 AFC Report (MOD, 2020) the Confederation of Service Charities (Cobesco) made reference to recent financial austerity since the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and raised concerns about the longer-term sustainability of the Service Charity Sector.

Cobesco highlighted that the Service Charity Sector makes a significant contribution to the delivery of the AFC but emphasised that fundraising during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic had been reduced by up to 60%, impacting the services they will be able to offer to military personnel and their families over the next year (MOD, 2020). Cobesco outlined that in order "to deliver the Covenant effectively, the government must either pick up the full requirement itself, or help the Service Charity Sector to sustain its current levels of provision" (MOD, 2020, p.23). Cobesco maintain that Service Charity Sector work is critical to the delivery of the AFC.

Although the Service Charity Sector is a significant contributor to the delivery of the AFC, the Armed Forces Bill 2021 highlighted that it will legislate and further enshrine the principles of the AFC in law by the end of 2021. The Armed Forces Bill 2021 outlined that it "will strengthen the legislative basis of the AFC to help ensure that those who serve or have served and their families are treated with fairness and respect in the communities they serve" (MOD, 2021, p.1). The Bill stipulates that by the end of 2021 it will be the legal duty of specified persons or bodies to ensure that military personnel and their families do not suffer any disadvantage with regards to housing, education or healthcare services. A renewal of the Armed Forces Act is needed by the end of 2021 (MOD, 2021). Without a renewal by the end of 2021 the Armed Forces Act will expire ending the legal rules and provisions set out to uphold the rights of British Armed Forces personnel and their families.

1.4.2 Population and Distribution of Service CYP

Despite the 'Children in Service Families' OFSTED report recommendation that "the MOD should consider the benefits of developing and maintaining an accurate register of service children and young people…in the UK and overseas to track where they are" (OFSTED, 2011, p.7), there is still currently no single, accurate record of the number of service children living in the UK or overseas. It is not mandatory for British military parents to declare that they have children on their personal military records or to their child's school (OFSTED, 2011). However, some military parents declare their military status to schools in England enabling their child to receive Service Pupil Premium (SPP) funding (Department for Education [DfE], 2020).

The 2020-2021 Pupil Premium Allocations (Education and Skills Funding Agency [ESFA], 2020) identified that 79,340 service CYP received SPP funding within state-

maintained schools in England. Although SPP data does not provide an exact measure of how many service CYP currently reside in England, it provides an approximation of how many service CYP aged 5-16 were registered as service CYP within English state-funded schools at this time. In 2016 the MOD reported that the majority of service families with school-age children had a least one child at a state-funded school in the UK (76%) (MOD, 2016). Roberts et al. (2021) highlight that there has been a consistent increase in the number of pupils receiving SPP since 2011 and outlines an overall increase of 2,190 additional pupils receiving SPP in England since 2019. This indicates that over the past decade there has been a steady rise in the number of service CYP being educated in state-funded schools across England.

Since the 2010 publication of the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) (HM Government, 2010), the overall population and spatial distribution of military families in the UK has been affected (Rodrigues et al., 2020). The 2010 SDSR outlined that there would be a withdrawal of all British military personnel and their families from UK bases in Germany by 2020. As a consequence of this withdrawal, 20,000 serving personnel and their families were affected and there was a significant increase in the number and spatial distribution of military families with dependent children in England between the years 2011-2019 (Rodrigues et al., 2020).

As Rodrigues et al. (2020) used SPP data in their research the above findings can only provide an estimate for the number of service CYP in England. It is still unknown how many service CYP reside in other countries in the UK. In response to a freedom of information request from the public the MOD (2019) estimated that there were approximately 103,620 service CYP living in the UK in January 2019,

however Rodrigues et al.'s (2020) findings highlight that the overall number of service CYP living in the UK is likely to have increased since then.

1.4.3 Financial Support for Service CYP in Schools

In 2011 SPP was introduced by the Department for Education (DfE) to recognise the specific challenges service pupils face. SPP funding was intended to assist schools to offer "pastoral support during challenging times and to help mitigate the negative impact of family mobility or parental deployment on service children" (MOD, 2021, p.1). The funding was introduced to support service pupils in English state-funded schools as part of a commitment to deliver the British AFC (MOD, 2021). However, The Children's Commissioner for England highlighted that "there is no specific SPP toolkit for schools to understand how this group's specific needs can be met" (Children's Commissioner, 2018, p.17). A survey seeking service parents' perceptions of their children's experiences found that 52% of the 384 parents interviewed felt their children's schools were not using the SPP to provide any effective support (AFF, 2019).

In addition to the introduction of SPP, the MOD Education Support Fund (ESF) was first made available in 2011 to help assist state-funded schools, academies and free schools to mitigate the effects of exceptional mobility or parental deployment on service pupils (MOD, 2020). The availability of the ESF was due to expire in 2018 however, the Directorate of Children and Young People (DCYP) secured an extension of the fund until the end of the financial year in 2021. This extension was granted in response to the withdrawal of British military personnel and their families from Germany back to the UK. It was granted for a limited period to provide time for local authorities across the UK to bring in longer-term provision for service CYP in schools (MOD, 2020).

The MOD acknowledge that schools are a critical part of supporting service families (MOD, 2020). The ESF "is available to support schools in embedding practices that can benefit the service children and their school" (MOD, 2020, p.1). However, despite the MOD stating that the ESF can be used "for a range of projects, schemes and initiatives" (MOD, 2020, p.4), the MOD do not provide clear, accessible examples of how schools can best meet the needs of the service CYP they teach.

1.5 EP Role in Supporting Service CYP

As a consequence of frequent relocations and separation during parental deployments, service CYP have been found to face unique experiences in comparison to their non MC peers including; challenges with managing multiple transitions between schools, experiencing gaps in their learning, developing social relationships and also social and emotional difficulties in response to parental deployment (Cramm & Tam-Seto, 2018; Chandra et al., 2010).

In light of the distinctive challenges service CYP face Hogg et al. (2014) suggest that EPs are best placed to support them and their families. They maintain that EPs can draw on their facilitation and consultation skills as well as their evidence-based psychological knowledge to develop appropriate interventions designed to help these CYP and their families (Hogg et al., 2014). Given the profession's interest in wellbeing, inclusion and using psychology to promote positive change for pupils, EPs are in a good position to advocate for service CYP in schools.

Harrison and Vannest (2008) highlight that educator awareness of the needs of service pupils in schools can help to ensure these pupil's educational success. This, along with the suggestion that service pupils should be considered a vulnerable population (Cramm & Tam-Seto, 2018), could suggest that EPs are well placed to

work with the systems around service CYP to support them and promote their success in schools.

1.6 Unique Aspects of Service Life

1.6.1 Mobility

Mobility within the current context has been defined as "movement in and out of schools by pupils other than at the usual times of joining and leaving" (OFSTED, 2002, p. 3). Mobility of service pupils occurs when service families relocate to different geographical locations. Service CYP make up the population within different types of schools across the UK and overseas. Despite there being slightly different mobility patterns across each of the armed forces (Children's Commissioner, 2018), service CYP are generally more mobile than their non MC peers and can attend upwards of five different schools up to the age of eighteen (AFF, 2021). The average military relocation occurs every three years and some MC families, move more frequently than this (Hall, 2008).

OFSTED described the families of service personnel as a "highly mobile" population (OFSTED, 2011, p.4) and added that regular moves can cause anxiety and stress. School-age service children have been found to be particularly vulnerable to the stress related to frequent transitions, as they are also coping with normal developmental stressors such as increased academic demands (Engel et al., 2010) and establishing peer relationships (Kelley et al., 2003). In addition to these findings the National Audit Office (NAO, 2013) stated that 42% of service parents found moving schools to have a negative effect on their children's academic performance, the most common problem reported was differences in school curriculums. The Army

Families' Federation (AFF) (2019) highlighted that 69% of service parents[1] felt that their children experienced difficulties making new friends as a result of moving schools.

1.6.2 Deployments

Deployment is "the term used when serving forces personnel are required to be away from home either on active service or for training purposes" (Service Children in State Schools [SCiSS], 2019, p.1). Deployments can be unpredictable and are subject to change at short notice which can be unsettling for service families (SCiSS, 2019). Many service families will experience more than one deployment and a significant number of them will have experienced more than one period when their parent deployed to a conflict zone (Pexton et al., 2018). When this occurs threat of death or serious injury of a deployed parent has been found to have a significantly negative impact on a child's emotional wellbeing (Pexton et al., 2018; Chandra et al., 2010).

Deployment is often described as an ongoing cyclical process consisting of stages including pre-deployment, deployment, post-deployment and re-deployment as opposed to the occurrence of a single event (White et al., 2011). During each stage of the cycle service CYP have been found to experience different feelings and display different behaviours (Naval Families Federation [NFF], 2016). Parental deployment has been found to cause children to experience stress resulting in academic, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties at school (Chandra et al., 2010). Challenges at school for service CYP during this time have been found to include attention difficulties, separation difficulties, difficulties with peers and extreme

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[1] 591 respondents surveyed

worry about their deployed parent's safety (Chandra et al., 2010). However, Noret et al. (2014) found that 45.79% of service parents[2] do not feel that school staff understand the impact that parental deployment can have on service CYP at school.

1.7 Educational Attainment of Service CYP

'The educational performance of children of service personnel' report published by the DfE in 2010 shows that mobile service children do not perform as well academically as non-mobile service children indicating that mobility and frequent school moves can disrupt service pupils' academic attainment[3] (DfE, 2010). Despite differences in the attainment of mobile and non-mobile service pupils, service CYP's progress was found to be broadly in line with their non MC peers. However, the report shows that on average, service pupils are less likely to be economically deprived than non MC pupils and less likely to be identified as having a Special Educational Need. Considering that both of these factors are associated with lower attainment the DfE stated that they would expect service pupils to perform better academically than they currently do (DfE, 2010).

Examination of the factors affecting the disparity between the attainment of mobile and non-mobile service pupils highlights a number of potential influences. OFSTED (2011) report that schools find it difficult to set targets for highly mobile pupils and Noret et al. (2014) found that missing or repeating areas of the curriculum could affect pupil attainment as could different subjects being taught at different schools. A study into the higher progression of service pupils highlighted that service YP are less likely to go to university than the general population (McCullouch & Hall, 2016).

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[2] 140 respondents
[3] With regards to Early Years Foundation Stage Profile teacher assessments, KS1 teacher assessments, KS2 National Curriculum tests & KS4 GCSE results- mobile service children did not perform as well as their non-mobile peers. After controlling for prior attainment and demographic factors, and not pupil mobility, service children were found to perform similarly to their peers.

With regards to improving educational progression, the House of Commons (HoC) state that service pupils could do better but this requires "greater recognition of their needs and focused additional support" (HoC, 2013, p.3).

It is now eleven years since the last large-scale report specifically analysing the educational outcomes of service pupils was published by the DfE (2010). This report was produced in response to the Labour Government's commitment to the AFC which emphasises that service CYP should be provided with the same standard of education as non MC CYP. Considering that the HoC stated that "the Government should ensure that these children are given every opportunity to maximise their potential" (HoC, 2013, p.3), updated Government analysis of the educational outcomes for this specific population would be beneficial to allow for a better understanding of their needs.

1.8 Research Aims and Purpose

The current national context and existing research highlights the need for further national focus on supporting service CYP in education across the UK. The current research study aims to provide an insight into the educational experiences of service CYP to explore how they make sense of their lived experiences. The current study further aims to assist educational professionals in understanding the experiences of this under-researched population to give them an insight into how they could best support service CYP in schools.

The current study explores the lived educational experiences of this population to add to a growing understanding of their needs at school. The current study intends to give a voice to service CYP as their direct views and experiences are scarce in existing research. In addition to the national context outlined in sections above, the

Literature Review (Chapter 2) helps to further develop the rationale for the current study.

1.9 Researcher's Position

It is important to acknowledge the professional background of the researcher to ensure transparency and trustworthiness. The researcher previously worked as a primary school teacher in an outer London school, however they had no previous experience of working directly with service CYP or their families. The researcher also had previous experience working as an assistant EP (AEP) within an area where there was a 'medium' density of service CYP (SCiP Alliance, 2020). Although the researcher did not work directly with this population it was this experience that made them curious about the educational experiences of service pupils. The researcher's experience working as a trainee EP (TEP) and previous job roles meant that the researcher had developed skills to work sensitively and effectively with CYP of different ages and from different backgrounds. The researcher communicated with organisations who support this population to build connections and rapport within the military community before conducting the current research project. For further discussion on researcher reflexivity see chapter 3.8.

Summary

This chapter has provided the context and rationale for the current study. In the following chapter, existing literature on the educational experiences of service pupils is critically reviewed. Chapter three outlines the methodology of current study in detail and the research findings are presented in chapter four. These findings are then discussed in relation to existing research and psychological theory in chapter five.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter outlines the systematic approach taken to search and critically appraise the current body of research available in relation to exploring the educational experiences of service CYP. This chapter provides details of the search strategy used to identify research papers for analysis through application of the inclusion and exclusion criteria. This chapter also outlines the method of appraisal and provides a critical analysis of the current literature available within the research area.

2.2 Literature Review Question

The aim of this literature review was to find out what the current research tells us about service CYP's experiences of education. It therefore sought to answer the following literature review question:

'What research has been conducted into exploring service children and young people's experiences of school?'

2.3 Review Method and Search Strategy

2.3.1 Rationale for Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Although the researcher was interested in the experiences of service CYP who have parent(s) in the British Armed Forces, the literature search for the current study, was not restricted to the experiences of a British population. Due to the limited amount of UK based research on this population in general, the researcher was curious to explore what research had been conducted in relation to exploring the educational experiences of service CYP globally.

The inclusion and exclusion criteria applied when searching for relevant research can be seen below in table 1.

Table 1. *Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria*

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Written in English	Written in any language other than English
Peer-reviewed research	Non peer-reviewed research
Published since 2010	Unpublished research Research published before 2010
Empirical research that focuses on the experiences of military-connected CYP (aged 4-16) *and* is either relevant to their education, conducted within an school setting or with school staff	Non- empirical research Articles and review papers
	Research related to MC students above 16 or focused on further education for MC students
	Research related to children and young people from non MC families
	Research papers where the full text was not accessible

Only research published since 2010 was included as this was when the government pledged to enshrine the key principles of the military covenant in law (which later became the AFC [2011]). Before this time, the military covenant existed as an unwritten social and moral contract between the armed forces and the state (MOD, 2015). In addition, the most recent large-scale report by the DfE which specifically focused on the education of service CYP was published in 2010 (DfE, 2010), the researcher therefore considered it important to search the literature from this date onwards.

To ensure that the research papers were readable and had been reviewed to the same standard, only research studies written in English that had been peer-reviewed were included. 'Peer review' is intended to help ensure that the research published is of high quality by assessing the validity, significance and originality of the study (PUBLISSO, 2017).

For research papers where it was not possible to obtain the full-text, despite searching elsewhere, were excluded as the researcher was not able to critically appraise the research study as a whole. Only empirical research studies were included as they use real-world evidence to investigate assertions and their conclusions are said to be "exclusively derived from concrete, verifiable evidence" (Bouchrikea, 2020, para. 4). Empirical research studies were therefore included in the literature as they were considered to have greater relevance to the current study.

2.3.2 Keywords and Search Terms

An online systematic literature search was conducted on 3rd August 2020 through the PsycINFO, PsycArticles, Psychology and Behavioural Sciences Collection, SocINDEX, Education Source and ERIC databases via the EBSCOhost platform. These databases were used as they provided access to psychology and education related literature. Within this search a range of Boolean phrases and keywords were entered into the databases to search for relevant literature. The search terms used can be seen below in table 2, however more thorough details of the systematic literature search process can be found in Appendix A.

Table 2. *Search Terms*

Topic	Search Terms
Service children	Service child*; forces child*; military; military-connected; forces-connected
Pupil	Pupil*;student*; young pe*; adolescen*; youth
School	School*; education
Experience	Experience*; perception

The term 'perception' was included so that any research related to other people's perceptions of these CYP's experiences could also be searched for.

As a result of the systematic literature search detailed in Appendix A; ten research papers that were most relevant to the current study, helped to answer the literature search question and met the inclusion criteria were identified for critical appraisal.

2.3.3 Selection of Research Papers

In order to select these ten research papers the following procedure was used. Firstly, the title and abstracts of the research papers generated from the search were read so that relevant research could be identified. Next, the research papers where the abstracts were considered relevant to the literature search question were read in full. After these papers had been read in full decisions were made to either include or exclude each of the research papers into those considered appropriate for critical appraisal (rationale for excluded research papers can be found in Appendix A).

Table 3 below provides an overview of the main aims and findings of the ten research papers included in this literature review.

Table 3. *Overview of Included Research Papers*

Research Study	Type of Study	Aims	Participants	Outcome Measures	Main Findings
De Pedro et al., 2014a	Qualitative	To explore the perspectives of key stakeholders who work with MC students to provide a foundation for future research, school-based interventions and policy initiatives to support MC pupils in school	31 stakeholders from school, community, neighborhood and military contexts who work with MC students	Semi-structured interviews	Major themes consisted of: 'MC students have unique challenges & strengths, school-level home-grown practices that support the unique needs of MC students', 'poor responsiveness of public schools to the challenges of MC pupils' and 'schools need to be stable, welcoming, and supportive places for MC students'
Arnold et al., 2014	Mixed Methods	To identify teacher knowledge, skills and dispositions perceived as vital for supporting the academic and social development of MC students at school	74 educators in eight US public schools	Focus groups, questionnaires, individual interviews	Three themes arose: Teacher's cultural awareness of military students, Teacher's constructions of targeted academic supports for military students and teacher's perceptions of social and emotional supports for military students in the classroom context.
Chandra et al., 2010	Qualitative	To explore school staff perceptions on the social and emotional functioning of MC children at school during parental deployment	Teachers, counsellors & school administrators	Focus groups & semi-structured interviews	Themes that emerged: school personnel see parental deployment as affecting the ability of children to function at school, students loose resiliency as deployments continue & schools are a safe place for students.
Aronson & Perkins, 2013	Quantitative	To understand school liaisons' perspectives on the types of challenges the MC families they work with experience	20 marine corps school liaisons	Telephone surveys using Likert rating scale	School transitions were found to be both the most frequent and most severe child and youth problem encountered. Anxiety and worries about parental deployments in MC CYP was one of the most frequent issues. Difficulties supporting children or young people with SEN was perceived to be most problematic.
De Pedro et al., 2014b	Mixed methods	To explore how MC school administrators perceive MC students and how the schools	137 school administrators	Online survey tool	Schools lack appropriate systems, capacity and coordination to create a supportive school climate for MC pupils. School administrators perceive there to be barriers including lack of time, resources and

		they work in address the needs of this student population			training which they feel are needed to improve the school climate for MC students.
Cederbaum et al., 2013	Quantitative	To examine the influence of military connectedness and parental deployment on adolescent mental health	District wide sample of US students aged 12-17	Paper surveys- California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS)	Increased likelihood of adolescents feeling sad or hopeless when experiencing deployment of a family member. 14-17 year olds who reported two or more deployments of family members were associated with a 34% increase in the likelihood of suicidal ideation compared to adolescents with no experience of family member deployment. Findings suggested a need for teachers to be sensitive and proactive to the needs of MC adolescents who are experiencing familial deployment.
Pexton et al., 2018	Quantitative	To explore and compare the mental health needs of children whose parents were deployed to a combat zone with those whose parents were deployed for training	52 children aged 8-11, class teachers & non deployed parents	The SCARED, DSRS, CRIES-8, BYI-II, SDQ, PSI & GHQ-12	Anxiety levels of children in the combat group were not significantly higher than that of the training group. Clinically high stress levels were reported at mid deployment by both groups. Girls rated higher levels of anxiety at pre and mid deployment compared to boys and younger children rated higher levels of separation anxiety throughout their father's deployment.

Bradshaw et al., 2010	Qualitative	To describe the transition related stressors experienced by mobile MC students, describe efforts employed to help these students cope & identify strategies schools can use to ease the transition process	MC students, MC parents & school staff	Focus groups	Perceived transition related stressors included; stress on the family system, stress on the student's social support system, adapting to a new environment, academic challenges, student-teacher relationships and missed opportunities for extracurricular activities. The efforts used by students to help them cope with transitions included; adapting quickly and accelerated maturation, connecting students with teachers and school staff, participation in extracurricular activities, connecting with other military students and confiding in peers. Suggested strategies for schools included; increase school-family communications, foster connections among students, provide training for teachers, school psychologists and other professionals on strategies for connecting with MC students.
Le Hanna, 2020	Qualitative	To explore the experiences of identity development with nine MC adolescents aged 14-18 years in secondary schools	9 MC secondary school students	Semi-structured interviews	All participants mentioned experiencing feelings of vulnerability and spoke about personal attributes including pride, determination, self-assurance, optimism and fearlessness as a result of their connectedness to military culture. They felt being connected to the military meant that they hold higher levels of respect, self-discipline and self-reliance than their non MC peers. Viewed themselves as resilient, adaptable and good at coping with unpredictability.
De Pedro et al., 2016	Quantitative	To explore victimization rates and the role of school climate, deployment, and school transitions in the victimization of military-connected students and their civilian peers	14,493 students aged 11-17	Paper surveys- California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS)	Deployment and school transitions were significant predictors of physical violence and nonphysical victimization. Multiple school climate factors were significantly associated with physical violence and non-physical victimization.

2.4 Critical Appraisal of Research

The ten selected research papers were critiqued using the Critical Appraisal Skills

Programme (CASP) review checklists (CASP, 2021), for qualitative and case control

studies. Quantitative and mixed methods research was critiqued using a framework

for review developed by Holland and Rees (2010). These tools were selected as

they allowed the researcher to systematically follow a guide when appraising

research. They were used as frameworks to assist in the appraisal of the literature

and develop an understanding of how relevant each research paper was in relation

to the literature review question.

The selected research papers were each read thoroughly then organised under

three separate categories:

- Perspectives of others on the experiences of military-connected pupils

- Wellbeing and support needs of military-connected pupils in school

- Direct experiences of military-connected pupils

Other categories were considered such as grouping literature by methodology, for

example, quantitative survey data or by participant sample. However, the above

themes were chosen as they relate to the purpose of the research and the literature

review question.

These themes have been included as headings below where papers considered

relevant to each of the themes have been appraised.

2.4.1 Perspectives of Others on the Experiences of Military-Connected Pupils

District, School and Community Stakeholder Perspectives on the Experiences of Military-Connected Students (De Pedro et al., 2014a)

The educational experiences of military-connected (MC) pupils has been explored indirectly through examining the perspectives of those who work with them. De Pedro et al (2014a) explored the school experiences of MC students through gaining the perspectives of stakeholders who worked closely with MC students or within MC public schools in the US. A clear rationale for undertaking this research was provided and a qualitative methodology in the form of semi-structured interviews was appropriately used to address the research question and illuminate the perspectives of stakeholders who work with MC students. The clearly proposed aim of the research was to explore the perspectives of key stakeholders who work with MC students in order to provide a foundation for future research, school-based interventions and policy initiatives to support MC pupils in school. De Pedro et al (2014a) used a purposeful sampling strategy where 31 stakeholders were selected across 8 different school districts. This sampling strategy was used to ensure breadth of perspectives from participants who have different roles and work with MC students in different contexts.

Although De Pedro et al (2014a) specifically chose to explore the perspectives of those who widely support MC pupils in schools, 87% of the 31 participants who agreed to take part in the study reported having direct family affiliations with the military. This may have resulted in potential bias as participants may have entwined their own experiences with that of the experiences of the MC pupils they were interviewed about. This high percentage of participants with personal military

connections may have acted as a limiting factor as De Pedro et al (2014a) reported that they tried to ensure a breadth of perspectives.

The research team clearly examined their own roles and the interviewer selected grew up in a military family and attended MC schools as a child. Despite this being recognised as a contributing factor to build a strong rapport between researcher and participants, it must be considered that this may have resulted in researcher bias. The fact that a high percentage of participants were from MC backgrounds and the interviewer had personal military connections may mean that previous, personal experiences influenced responses to interview questions or the way in which the interview question was presented to participants.

De Pedro et al (2014a) presented an in-depth description of the data analysis process and the four major themes derived from the data were clearly presented. The findings of this study were explicit and more than one analyst was used to ensure credibility of findings. The four major themes consisted of: "Military-connected students have unique challenges and strengths", "school-level home-grown practices that support the unique needs of military-connected students", "poor responsiveness of public schools to challenges of military children" and "schools need to be stable, welcoming, and supportive places for military-connected students" (De Pedro et al., 2014a, pp.12-23).

De Pedro et al (2014a)'s research discusses the contribution the study makes to understanding the strengths and challenges of MC pupils. However, this research was conducted in the US so cannot be directly transferable to a British population. Although findings from the study in question cannot be generalised, this study identified new areas where research was necessary which include more qualitative

research to examine the perspectives of teachers and students in MC schools. It was also suggested that exploratory studies focussed on students in MC schools "would offer a rich description of schooling experiences" (De Pedro et al., 2014a, p.29).

Understanding Teaching and Learning with Military Students in Public School Contexts: Insights from the Perspectives of Teachers (Arnold et al., 2014)

In another study examining the perceptions of professionals who work with MC students, Arnold et al (2014) used a grounded theory approach to analyse data from interviews and focus groups with 74 teachers. The aim was to identify teacher knowledge, skills and dispositions perceived as vital for supporting the academic and social development of MC students at school. Focus group methodology was appropriately used to identify supports for MC pupils in a school context and help to explore the teaching and learning experiences of this population.

This research was conducted across eight US public schools across four school districts. These schools were purposefully selected as they were in close proximity to military bases and had high proportions of MC students on roll. This study used a "snowball sampling procedure" (Arnold et al., 2014, p.11) where schools and teachers who supported MC children aged 5-10 years were identified. Focus groups were conducted with teachers who were also asked to complete a questionnaire asking them about their current practices and their perceptions of the education of MC children.

Data was also gathered from individual interviews with principals and school counsellors creating a total overall sample of 74 educators. The research design and data collection methods were appropriate considering the aim of the research and a detailed explanation of a rigorous data analysis process was provided. More than

one researcher was involved in the analysis of data to ensure credibility of findings and any coding disagreements were resolved through discussion within the research team.

Findings were made explicit and presented as three themes; teacher's cultural awareness of MC students, teacher's constructions of targeted academic supports for MC students and teacher's perceptions of social and emotional supports for MC students in the classroom context. It was found that school personnel frequently made comments about the importance of having empathy and being sensitive to challenges associated with transitions and parental deployments which supports findings from other research (Cederbaum et al., 2013; Pexton et al., 2018 & Aronson & Perkins, 2013). Educators suggested that school staff should be open to learning more about military culture from students, should get to know pupils individually and should be friendly and adaptable.

This study found that educators placed emphasis on the need to effectively facilitate the transition from different ways of teaching and learning at other schools to their current school. It was suggested that differentiation, individualised support as well as small and flexible groupings could help to ease the transition into a new learning context. Lastly, teachers highlighted a number of strategies for supporting the social and emotional needs of MC students. Strategies for support included building personal connections with these pupils in school by eating lunch with them, personally introducing them to new staff and attending extracurricular activities with them.

Educators also suggested that that peer relationships could be fostered through asking other students to make MC pupils feel comfortable and familiar with

classroom routines. Coping activities that connected with aspects of the curriculum such as using art to express feelings and writing letters or diary entries were considered to help MC students experiencing deployment-related stress. Although these findings valuably highlight the perceptions of educators and give suggestions of helpful strategies to support MC pupils in schools, it was conducted in the US. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalised to a UK population as the school climate, education system and culture possess nuanced differences.

The Impact of Parental Deployment on Child Social and Emotional Functioning: Perspectives of School Staff (Chandra et al., 2010)

In another US study, Chandra et al (2010) explored school staff perceptions on the social and emotional functioning of MC children during parental deployment. In this study, focus groups and semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers, counsellors and school administrators across 12 (elementary, junior high and high) schools. Participants were identified through snowball sampling whereby participants recommended other people who they thought may like to take part. This sampling method could result in bias as participants may have only recommended like-minded acquaintances to take part.

In this qualitative research study participants were asked to comment on their perception of; behavioural or emotional issues of MC children with deployed parents, the unique social issues among children with deployed parents and academic issues exclusively faced by MC children with deployed parents. However, the use of the word 'issue' in the above phrases may have implied that the researcher was expecting participants to talk about problems and difficulties instead of openly exploring these areas with them.

A grounded theory approach was used to identify overarching themes in the data and a detailed explanation of the analysis process was provided. This process involved three members of the research team who each analysed the data to promote consistency with coding. The themes that emerged from the data were; "school personnel see parental deployment as affecting the ability of children to function at school", "students are losing resiliency as deployments continue" and "schools are becoming a safe place for students" (Chandra et al., 2010, pp.220-222). Within these themes it was noted that school staff perceived parental deployment to be an isolating time for students, particularly for those who do not have MC peers in their school. School staff also perceived children to become less engaged in school work and more interested in avoidant behaviours at school when they have experienced multiple or extended parental deployment.

It should be acknowledged that the findings from this study were based on the perceptions of school staff who work with MC children and not the children themselves. There was no distinction between the perceptions of school staff within their different job roles, and the study could not account for other life stressors that may have impacted the behaviour of the MC children that the school staff spoke about.

Despite these limitations, this study provides an insight into the perceived experiences of MC children during times of deployment and highlights how staff perceive this to affect the school functioning of these pupils.

Challenges Faced by Military Families: Perceptions of United States Marine Corps School Liaisons (Aronson & Perkins, 2013)

In another study examining the perceptions of those who work with MC CYP Aronson and Perkins (2013) sought to explore the perceptions of school liaisons (SLs). They examined frequency and severity of the difficulties faced by MC children, families and youth through asking SLs to rate the frequency and severity of child and youth problems that they have been involved with. Aronson and Perkins (2013) used a quantitative approach to 'examine' the experiences of SLs (Aronson & Perkins, 2013, p.519). It could be argued that a qualitative methodology would have been a more appropriate way to gain a richer insight into the perceptions and experiences of others.

This study used a telephone survey design and asked participants to indicate how frequently they assisted MC families across a range of challenges (per week). They were also asked to rate the severity of each difficulty. Although it was mentioned that participants were provided with opportunities to add comments throughout the survey, these comments were not referred to in the results or the discussion sections. The survey questions were constructed based on prior discussions with the US Marine Corps and a review of relevant materials related to the role of a Marine Corps SL. The survey questions had therefore not been used before in previous studies. With no mention of reliability or validity for this tool of data collection, it cannot be assumed that the survey questions accurately measured what they intended to measure.

The results from the survey data were presented in tables, however, only the percentages of frequency and severity were made clear. The methods for processing and analysing the data were not referred to making it difficult to determine how rigorous the data analysis process was. It must also be acknowledged that Aronson and Perkins' (2013) data was collected from a sample of 20 US Marine Corps SLs

who work specifically with Marine families. This infers that the data collected cannot be generalised to families with connections to other military services or that of a British population. In addition, Marine families who seek support from SLs are a group who are likely to be experiencing difficulties. Therefore, the difficulties experienced by these families may not reflect the experiences of Marine families who do not seek support from SLs.

The results of the study related to the aim of the research and were presented under two headings to separate school-related and family-related issues; "school liaison's perceptions of the frequency and severity of child and youth problems" and "frequency and severity of family problems" (Aronson & Perkins, 2013, p.520). School transitions were found to be both the most frequent and most severe child and youth problem encountered. Worries about parental deployments in MC CYP was one of the most frequent issues (80%), however, it was rated by SLs as one of the least 'severe' problems (30%). Over half (55%) of SLs indicated that they 'fairly' or 'very often' encountered 'discipline problems' with MC pupils at school, and this was perceived as a 'severe' issue.

The results supported the broad hypothesis that SLs would encounter MC families dealing with a range of difficulties beyond academic issues. The most frequent and severe problem SLs encountered was families feeling overwhelmed. They also reported high frequency rates for working with families experiencing difficulties related to deployment and conflicts with schools and school policies. The results of this study were somewhat valuable as the frequency and severity of problems encountered by SLs who work closely with military families was explored. However, the perceptions of SLs could have been explored in more detail if a qualitative approach was used. Recommendations for future research included a suggestion for

research to explore ways in which effective partnerships can be developed between military families, schools and communities.

Responding to the Needs of Military Students and Military-connected Schools: Perceptions and Actions of School Administrators (De Pedro et al., 2014b)

This second study by De Pedro and a different team of researchers (De Pedro et al., 2014b) aimed to explore how MC school administrators perceive MC pupils and how the schools they work in address the needs of this student population. This mixed methods study was considered relevant to examine the transformative role of school administrators in providing support for MC pupils in schools. An online survey tool was used to collect data at two separate times within one academic year. The survey responses produced quantitative data, which was analysed using statistical analysis in SPSS, and qualitative data in the form of open-ended responses which was analysed using thematic analysis.

Given the aim of the study, the survey tool was used appropriately to gather responses from 137 participants who worked in 130 schools and had high response rate. However, the study had some methodological limitations. All participants were recruited from one school district and their schools all belonged to the same consortium. This must be acknowledged as it may have affected participant's responses and resulted in sampling bias. It was also reported that in some schools the survey was completed by more than one member of school staff. Researchers should be aware of these limitations when generalising findings from this study to other school contexts.

The survey questions were focused on four areas including; "awareness and responsiveness to MC students", "programmatic efforts", "parental involvement",

"intern placements" and "interest in future resources" (De Pedro et al., 2014b, p.21). Although the research paper provided a detailed explanation of the types of questions included in the online survey, there was no mention of a pilot study nor the questions being used in previous research. Therefore it is unclear whether the online survey accurately measured what it intended to. Despite the limitations, findings from the study related to the aim. Findings highlighted how school administrators perceive MC students and gave some insight into how schools address the needs of this population.

Just under 45% of participants in the study indicated that they felt following statement was true: "military students have special needs and circumstances" (De Pedro et al., 2014b, p.21). Despite this, 39% of participants indicated that they did not have specific activities or programs for MC pupils at school. In spite of the perceived lack of targeted support for MC pupils, almost 84% of participants indicated that they would like to be provided with ideas and examples of appropriate school programs and activities for MC pupils.

The results indicated that 63.2% of school administrators valued parental involvement within their school communities. However, it was also widely acknowledged that schools do not have specific policies and practices in place to support the involvement of MC parents. In addition, 45.5% of school administrators felt it was 'true' or 'very true' that military parents face barriers to involvement with their children's schools. Overall, the results of this study indicated that schools lack appropriate systems, capacity and coordination to create a supportive school climate for MC pupils. This research also highlighted that school administrators perceive there to be barriers including lack of time, resources and training which they feel are needed to improve the school climate for MC pupils.

The results of this study are valuable as they provide an insight into the barriers faced by MC pupils within the school climate for MC pupils. However, limitations with regards to potential sampling bias were acknowledged. Suggestions were provided as to how the results could be used in practice to make school climates (within the consortium) more military friendly including documenting MC pupils during the enrolment process, increasing school staff awareness of the needs of MC pupils and including MC pupils in policies and educational reform models. De Pedro et al (2014b) identified that future research should focus on how to build capacity within schools so that they are able to meet the needs of MC pupils and their families.

The research studies appraised above (Chandra et al., 2010; De Pedro et al., 2014a; Aronson & Perkins, 2013; De Pedro et al., 2014b; Arnold et al., 2014) were considered relevant to the literature review question as they indirectly explored the school experiences of MC CYP. These studies sought the views of professionals who work closely with this population in schools and produced findings which have added to a scarce, yet growing, body of research exploring the educational experiences of MC CYP.

2.4.2 Wellbeing and Support Needs of Military-Connected Pupils in School

Wellbeing and Suicidal Ideation of Secondary School Students from Military Families (Cederbaum et al., 2013)

This case control study addressed a focused issue as it sought to examine the influence of military connectedness and parental deployment on adolescent mental health. Data was collected through participants completing a topic-specific survey in addition to the core California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) in elementary and secondary schools across the US. A case control study can be considered

appropriate for this research design as data from non MC pupils could be used comparatively with data from MC pupils. This research study collected data on participants' relationships to the military to find out whether each of the respondents had a parent, a sibling or no family members in the military. It also gathered data on the deployment history for those with familial military connections.

In this study, there was a high response rate and student participation was voluntary. However, 12-17 year olds were given paper surveys to complete in class which may have meant that students felt obligated to complete the survey due to environmental pressure despite the fact that it was voluntary. After data collection, Cederbaum et al (2013) classified respondents into three groups; those without family in the military, those with siblings in the military and those with parents in the military. The dependent variables measured in the topic-specific survey consisted of; feeling sad or hopeless, suicidal ideation and wellbeing and depressive symptoms. A detailed method of the analysis process was provided, and as the survey yielded quantitative responses a statistical software programme was used to appropriately analyse data.

The single item measures used to test two of the dependant variables (sad or hopelessness and suicidal ideation) mirrored measures used in the Youth Risk Behaviour Surveillance System (YRBS). This provided reassurance that the measures had been validated and measured what they intended to measure. However, to measure wellbeing and depressive symptoms participants were asked to respond to 12 items as opposed to one single item which made it less specific. The survey sub-scales used to measure the wellbeing and depressive symptoms variable were created by adapting other validated tools, as opposed to the YRBS. This provides validation for the items used to measure wellbeing and depressive

symptoms but the twelve item responses yielded a greater variety of responses that were less specific.

The research is based on a US sample so cannot be generalised to a UK population. Despite limitations, the study provides a valuable insight into the experiences of MC, adolescent pupils. Overall, the results indicated that there was an increased likelihood of adolescents feeling sad or hopeless if they were experiencing deployment of a family member. It was found that 14-17 year olds who reported two or more deployments of family members were associated with a 34% increase in the likelihood of suicidal ideation compared to adolescents with no experience of family member deployment.

Findings suggest that there is an imminent need for teachers to be sensitive and proactive to the needs of MC adolescents who are experiencing familial deployment. Findings also highlighted a need for schools to be able to identify risks and support the mental health needs of MC pupils. It was acknowledged that this could be achieved through increasing the capacity of professionals and support personnel who work closely with MC pupils and their families. It was suggested that future research could focus on examining the influence of the length, type and location of parental deployments on the wellbeing of MC CYP.

The Impact of Father's Military Deployment on Child Adjustment. The Support Needs of Primary School Children and their Families Separated during Active Military Service: A pilot study (Pexton et al., 2018)

The impact of familial deployment on the wellbeing of adolescents was explored in the above US study by Cederbaum et al (2013), however, Pexton et al.'s (2018)

study was conducted in schools linked to military bases in the UK and Germany. They used a small sample (n=52) of primary school children aged 8-11.

Cederbaum et al. (2013) suggested that future research should focus on examining factors around deployment. This study *(*Pexton et al., 2018) appropriately used a case control design to explore and compare the mental health needs of children whose parents were deployed to a combat zone with those whose parents were deployed for training. It was hypothesised that children whose fathers' were deployed to combat zones would experience significantly higher stress levels and adjustment difficulties than those deployed on training posts.

Participants for this pilot study attended schools with a high percentage (50%-100%) of service children on roll. All participants were living in military accommodation and attended six primary schools that were linked to military bases in the UK and Germany. The findings may therefore only be representative of these geographical locations. It must also be considered that the military accommodation and high proportion of service children on roll within the schools may have acted as protective factors for children during times of deployment. Schools with a high proportion of service children on roll may be more aware of the needs of these pupils during parental deployment.

Pexton et al (2018) compared two groups; children whose fathers were being deployed to combat zones (n=26) and children whose fathers were being deployed for training purposes (n=26). These defined groups were representative of the population of interest as the impact of the type of deployment on children was explored in more detail. However, the small sample and narrow geographical location must be considered when attempting to generalise findings to other areas

within the UK. Of the families contacted, there was a higher response rate from the training group (54%) as opposed to the combat zone group (39%).

This study used validated self-report questionnaires with both groups of children to measure; child anxiety, depressive feelings and the impact of stressful events and self-esteem. The parent outcome measures used were also validated self-report questionnaires which measured emotional wellbeing and parents' perceived stress related to parenting and child behaviour. The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) (Goodman, 1997) was used as a validated outcome measure for teachers in this study.

The authors accounted for participant characteristics and demographics in the study and found no significant differences between the two groups of children at the baseline. A detailed method of the analysis process was provided, this included a series of mixed-design analyses of variance (ANOVAs) to examine any changes in child mental health at each stage of deployment for each group of children. The two groups were exposed to repeated measures across three separate points (pre, mid and post deployment) to highlight any interaction effects between each group and the stage of deployment. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to analyse positive and negative relationships within the data.

The results of this study did not support the hypothesis as the anxiety levels of children in the combat group were not significantly higher than that of the training group. There were also no differences found between the two groups in relation to stages of deployment, however, there was a significant decrease in anxiety scores from pre to post deployment. Despite the post deployment decrease in child anxiety ratings, the means in both of the two groups were noted to be above the clinical

threshold for anxiety disorder post deployment. This infers that all of the children who participated were found to be generally more anxious than their peers in the wider population. Clinically high stress levels were reported at mid deployment by both groups, but contrary to the hypothesis, there were no significant differences in relation to stress levels between the two groups.

The results of this study also highlight that ratings of child depression in the two groups were low at each stage of deployment and 60% of children in each of the groups rated levels of self-esteem in the high average/average range at each stage of deployment. The results of the parent and teacher SDQs indicated that there were low-normal rates of behavioural difficulties in each of the groups and rates of behavioural difficulties were not reported to be significantly higher in the combat zone group. Other than gender and age of participants, no other significant socio-demographic covariates were found. Girls rated higher levels of anxiety at pre and mid deployment compared to boys and younger children (8-9 years) who rated higher levels of separation anxiety throughout their father's deployment.

The lack of effects between groups could have been due to the small sample of participants from one geographical location within the UK. Pexton et al (2018) noted that whilst the research design had attempted to control for two groups; parental training deployment and combat zone deployment, children were aware that their father's training deployment was in preparation for a longer, more dangerous deployment to a combat zone. This could have had an impact on the results as children may have felt anxious about upcoming deployments.

This study is one of the first psychological research studies to focus on the support needs of service children in UK schools. The results are valuable as they add to a

scarce, yet growing, field of research allowing researchers and educational professionals to understand the needs of this population. In light of their findings, Pexton et al (2018) suggested that a collaborative approach could be beneficial when working with military parents, schools, military welfare and community support groups. They also reported that increased joint working between CAMHS and schools could help to increase capacity of school staff supporting service children. With this in mind, it should be acknowledged that EPs could also have an important role to play in working jointly with schools and CAMHS. EPs could assist in increasing the capacity of school staff to meet the needs of service pupils during parental deployments.

School Transitions Among Military Adolescents: A Qualitative Study of Stress and Coping (Bradshaw et al., 2010)

Some of the literature appraised so far has focused on how deployment affects MC CYP and what schools can do to support MC pupils during this time (Cederbaum et al., 2013; Pexton et al., 2018; Chandra et al., 2010). However, none of the research appraised so far has specifically focused on how school transitions affect MC CYP. This study used qualitative methods to explore the perceived transition stressors for adolescents, the efforts employed to help adolescent students cope, and strategies that can be used in schools to help ease the transition process for pupils.

A qualitative, focus group methodology was appropriately used to gather different perspectives of frequent military-related school transitions on student adjustment. Separate focus groups with military students, parents and school staff were conducted with 8-10 participants in each. Participants were recruited across five states in the US and demographics of the participants were recorded. However, a

staff member at each of the military bases who had strong connections with MC families and schools was responsible for the recruitment of participants for the focus groups. Although this recruitment strategy allowed for access to this population, it should be considered that this staff member may have approached particular students, parents and staff members whom they believed would have strong views on the topic of transitions. This recruitment strategy could have therefore resulted in participant bias.

The question topics included in the focus groups were based on theoretical models and formatted in line with focus group methodology guidelines. Participants were provided with focus group guides and questions focused on exploring transition related stressors for students, the efforts used at school to help students cope with transitions, and also the strategies that they believe schools could employ to ease the transition process for MC students. A detailed explanation of the data analysis process was provided and followed a phenomenological approach. Qualitative data was coded and step by step process was followed. More than one member of the research team was involved in this process to promote credibility of findings.

Bradshaw et al (2013)'s overall findings indicated that the perceived transition related stressors for MC students included; stress on the family system, stress on the student's social support system, adapting to a new environment, academic challenges, student-teacher relationships and missed opportunities for extracurricular activities. The efforts used by students to help them cope with transitions included: adapting quickly and accelerated maturation, connecting students with teachers and school staff, participation in extracurricular activities, connecting with other military students and confiding in peers. Suggested strategies that schools could employ to ease the transition process for students included:

increase school-family communications, foster connections among students, provide training for teachers, school psychologists and other professionals on strategies for connecting with MC students and alter school policies and procedures to support MC students.

These results are valuable as they not only gather the perceptions of different individuals but also provide an insight into how military students can be best supported in schools. Bradshaw et al (2013)'s research is the only study within this literature review to include school psychologists as research participants and recognise how they can adapt their practice in light of the findings. Suggestions for school psychologists were provided and included: increase the visibility of this group of children, use strengths-based approaches to manage stress and form in-school support groups for military youth. However, like much other research into MC CYP, this research was based on a US sample so findings cannot be directly generalised to a UK population. It must be acknowledged that there is very little research in this area and so additional research is needed to ensure the transferability of findings.

Despite limitations this research provides support for the findings of other research included within this literature review. Le Hanna (2020) also suggested that MC adolescents viewed themselves as mature and adaptable and other researchers also highlighted difficulties with school-family communications as well as school polices (Aronson & Perkins, 2012; De Pedro et al., 2014a; De Pedro et al., 2014b). This study not only provided a platform for parents, school staff and MC students to share their views, it allowed these individuals to offer suggestions and recommendations to support MC students with school transitions.

2.4.3 Direct Experiences of Military-Connected Pupils

Removing the Camouflage: A Deeper Look at Military-Connected Adolescent

Perception of Identity in Secondary Schools (Le Hanna, 2020)

Much of the above research focused on the perceptions of those who work with MC

students in schools (Carpenter-Aeby, 2012; Chandra et al., 2010; De Pedro et al.,

2014a; De Pedro et al., 2014b; Aronson & Perkins, 2013 & Arnold et al., 2014).

Some of the appraised literature uses quantitative research methods to obtain pupil

views (Cederbaum et al., 2014 & Pexton et al., 2018), however, this literature review

has highlighted that research exploring the educational experiences of MC CYP

using qualitative research methods is scarce.

Le Hanna (2020) used narrative inquiry to explore the experiences of identity

development with nine MC adolescents aged 14-18 years in secondary schools. A

qualitative methodology was appropriately used in this study to gather an in-depth

understanding of MC adolescents' perceptions of themselves and their experiences.

Narrative inquiry allowed for participants to have a voice and share life stories and

experiences within the context of military culture. Le Hanna (2020) used a criterion-

based approach to select participants and conducted three semi-structured

interviews with each of these participants across several months.

Data was rigorously analysed in accordance with the recommended systematic

steps of the narrative inquiry process. To ensure credibility of findings, transcripts

were read and re-read so that the researcher was familiar with the data and

participants were given the opportunity to read back through their interview

transcripts to check for authenticity. Four themes emerged from the data to highlight

how adolescents view and describe themselves whilst belonging to a military culture: confidence, empathy, maturity and adaptability.

Overall, findings revealed that whilst all of the MC adolescents mentioned experiencing feelings of vulnerability, they also spoke about personal attributes including pride, determination, self-assurance, optimism and fearlessness as a result of their connectedness to military culture. They also spoke about how being considerate, worldly, self-sacrificing and humble were key features of their identities. The participants interviewed felt that being connected to the military meant that they hold higher levels of respect, self-discipline and self-reliance than their non MC peers. They also held a general acceptance that nothing will stay the same and that change is inevitable, but viewed themselves as resilient, adaptable and good at coping with unpredictability.

The results of this most recent study are valuable as they provide and in-depth insight into the perceptions and experiences of MC YP. However, like much of the appraised research, this study was based on a US sample so findings cannot be generalised to British MC YP. Although only 9 adolescents participated, the small sample was appropriate for the research design used and allowed the research to thoroughly analyse each data set. The relationship the researcher had with the participants was acknowledged however it could be seen as a limitation. The researcher was a teacher at the participants' school which may mean that the participants wanted to please the researcher with what they shared in interview. This relationship must be considered as it could have impacted findings.

Despite limitations, this study was one of the only studies found within the literature search that used a qualitative approach to explore the perceptions and experiences

of MC adolescents. Although the findings from the study do not provide direct recommendations for how schools can best support this population, they reveal how these young people feel about themselves. This valuable insight into the lives of MC adolescents can help professionals understand how to better support them in schools.

Examining the Relationship between School Climate and Peer Victimization among Students in Military-Connected Public Schools (De Pedro et al., 2016)

This research directly explored how MC students experienced specific aspects of school life using self-report measures to yield quantitative data. The study used a subsample of data from the California Healthy Kids state-wide survey (CHKS) which gathered the views of elementary, middle and high school students in the US. The 38 schools who took part in this study administered an additional module: the military-connected module. The study aimed to explore rates of victimisation among MC and non MC students (n=14,943) attending the same schools. It also looked at how parental deployments and school transitions contribute to victimisation at school. This study also examined the contributing role of the school climate on these variables and made comparisons between them. The school climate scales used in the survey consisted of: caring relationships, high expectations, school connectedness and meaningful participation.

The recruitment and data collection processes in this study were similar to that within Cederbaum et al.'s (2013) research, however, this sample consisted only of schools who belonged to the same consortium. This may have influenced the data as the schools within the same consortium may have held similar values to one another and students who attended non MC schools were not included in the sample. A detailed

description of the data analysis process using statistical software was provided and results showed both relationships and comparisons between variables.

Overall, the results showed that deployment and school transitions were significant predictors of physical violence and non-physical victimisation. This provides support for the findings of other research studies included in this literature review that have highlighted negative effects of deployment and school transitions on the wellbeing of MC CYP and their families (Chandra et al., 2010; Aronson & Perkins, 2013; Pexton et al., 2018; Bradshaw et al., 2010 & Cederbaum et al., 2013).

Multiple school climate variables were significantly associated with physical violence. However, caring relationships were negatively associated with both domains of peer victimisation. This infers that supportive relationships between adults and MC students at school are associated with lower levels of peer victimisation. Despite these findings providing a valuable contribution to research in this area, the cross-sectional nature of this study meant it was not possible to assess for cause and effect relationships between variables. It must also be acknowledged that this study used student self-report measures which may have resulted in participant bias.

Like the majority of research included within this literature review, the research was based on a US sample. Although this infers that the results of this study are not representative of a UK participant sample, the US based research could be seen to provide a strong foundation for UK based researchers. US research related to the educational experiences of MC pupils paves the way for future British research with service CYP.

2.5 Conclusion

This literature review suggests that the experiences of MC adolescents have been explored in the US, however there is a lack of qualitative, UK based research on the school experiences of this population. Research exploring the perceptions of school staff on the experiences of MC CYP has highlighted a need for cultural awareness of the military lifestyle in schools (Arnold et al., 2014) and a need for school staff and other professionals to be sensitive towards the difficulties service pupils' experience in relation to deployments and school transitions (De Pedro et al., 2014a; De Pedro et al., 2014b; Bradshaw et al., 2010; Chandra et al., 2010; De Pedro et al., 2016; Pexton et al., 2018 & Cederbaum et al., 2013).

Despite the perspectives of school staff providing a valuable insight into what it is like for MC CYP in schools, research directly exploring the experiences of MC adolescents is scarce. Le Hanna (2020)'s researched used narrative inquiry to give a voice to this group and uncover the rich experiences of MC YP. This research allowed for an in-depth exploration of the experiences of this group, however, it focused specifically on their perception of identity in schools and was based on a US sample. The voice of British service CYP is under-explored by researchers and a greater exploration into the educational experiences of this population is needed. An Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) methodology exploring the educational experiences of British, service CYP would allow for an idiographic focus to make sense of the experiences of this under-researched group. The current study therefore seeks to answer the following research question: *'how do service CYP experience education?'*

3. Methodology

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter provides an account of considerations related to the research process. It outlines the researcher's ontological and epistemological position and gives details of the methodology selected. The theoretical perspectives underpinning the selected methodology and the rationale for choosing it are discussed, along with a discussion of the other methodologies that were considered. This chapter also outlines the researcher's position and provides details on participant sampling and recruitment. Issues of validity and reflexivity are discussed and ethical considerations are addressed.

3.2 Selection of Methodology

3.2.1 Methodological Approach

Qualitative researchers attempt to "make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p.3). The current study explored the educational experiences of service CYP using a qualitative methodology. This qualitative methodological approach was guided by the researcher's own theoretical orientation where the researcher was interested in understanding the subjective meanings service CYP make of their own individual, lived experiences.

The researcher holds a relativist ontological position where there is a focus on understanding multiple realities and takes a constructivist epistemological stance. Constructivist epistemology accepts that these realities are socially constructed by individuals and can change throughout the process of the research study (Merten, 2015). Although philosophical ideas largely remain hidden in research they still influence research practice and must be identified (Creswell, 2003). Therefore the

researcher's ontological and epistemological position were identified and influenced the choice of a qualitative research design. A qualitative research design was considered appropriate as the current study specifically explored service CYP's individual experiences of education, and focused on the meanings they assigned to those experiences. Figure 1 below provides a summary of the research framework for the current study. Each of these aspects will be discussed in more depth throughout this chapter.

Figure 1

Ontology	Epistemology	Theoretical Perspective	Methodology	Method
Relativism	Constructivism	Phenomenology	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis	Semi-structured Interviews
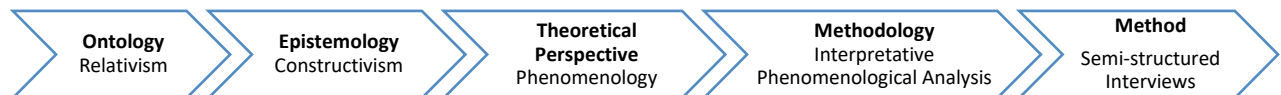
Summary of research framework

3.2.2 Ontology and Epistemology

Ontology is concerned with developing an understanding of the form and nature of reality as well as questioning what can be known about it (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Researchers therefore have different beliefs about reality which are based on different beliefs about what they think is true or real. Two opposing types of ontology are realism and relativism. Researchers position themselves on a realist to relativist continuum and their placement on this continuum is referred to as their ontological stance (Robson, 2011). How researchers come to know what they know is referred to as epistemology.

With this in mind, realists perceive an objective world "…which exists independent of human belief, perception, culture and language" (Hart, 1998, p. 85). Realist ontology is therefore underpinned by the notion that reality exists without any influence from individuals. In contrast to this, a relativist ontological position holds the view that

reality can be understood in the form of "multiple, intangible, mental constructions" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p.110). Relativism therefore takes a constructivist epistemological stance whereby reality is socially or individually constructed by individuals or external groups.

Constructivist epistemology assumes that individuals interpret the world based on their experiences so meanings can be interpreted in different ways, even in connection to the same phenomenon (Gray, 2013). In the current study, the researcher's ontological stance was relativist as relativism appreciates the notion that all service CYP will have different realities. A constructivist epistemological stance was taken in the current study as it assumes that service CYP have constructed their own meanings around how they have individually experienced education.

3.2.3 Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis

The current study used Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to explore the educational experiences of service CYP. IPA was selected as an appropriate methodological approach for the current study as it aims to explore, in detail, how participants make sense of their own experiences of the world. The core theoretical foundations for IPA also provide further justification for this choice of methodology and are discussed in more detail later in this chapter (phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography).

IPA is rooted in phenomenology and involves detailed examination of the participant's world; "it attempts to explore personal experience and is concerned with an individual's personal perception or account of an object or event, as opposed to an attempt to produce an objective statement of the object or event itself" (Smith &

Osborn, 2009, p.53). An IPA researcher must therefore make attempts to move closer into the participant's personally constructed world. The nature of IPA is an interactive, dynamic mode of data collection which suggests that the researcher and participants influence one another throughout the process creating a double hermeneutic (Smith & Osborn, 2009) (see chapter 3.2.4). IPA researchers therefore aim to enter into the participants' psychologically and socially constructed world where they attempt to make sense of their lived experiences.

Consistent with phenomenology, IPA is concerned with trying to understand what it is like from the world view of participants. It takes an interpretive stance and a detailed IPA analysis can involve engaging in empathetic hermeneutics as well as questioning hermeneutics. In-depth IPA analysis can involve the researcher asking the qualitative data critical questions such as: "What is the person trying to achieve here? Is something leaking out here that wasn't intended? Do I have a sense of something going on here that maybe the participants themselves are less aware of?" (Smith & Osborn, 2009, p.53). This therefore requires the IPA researcher to identify perspectives and empathise with the participant.

IPA has a "theoretical commitment to the person as a cognitive, linguistic, affective and physical being and assumes a chain of connection between people's talk and their thinking and emotional state" (Smith & Osborn, 2009, p.54). However, IPA researchers recognise that these connections are complex as human beings may find it difficult to fully express their thoughts and feelings and may hold back from some self-disclosures. IPA researchers therefore interpret participants' mental and emotional states from what they disclose.

IPA has been criticised for using small sample sizes as this raises questions related to its ability to represent a population and the transferability of findings (Charlick et al., 2016). However, it is important to remember that in IPA research, "fewer participants examined at a greater depth is always preferable to a broader, shallow and simply descriptive analysis of many individuals" (Hefferon & Gil-Rodriguez, 2011, p. 756). IPA research does not aim to make generalised claims, nor does it try to uncover what occurs in all contexts. Instead, it attempts to unveil the perceptions and understanding of a particular group within their own unique context. IPA research, including the current study, should therefore be considered in terms of theoretical as opposed to empirical generalisability as readers can make links between the findings of an IPA study, the existing literature and their own personal or professional experiences (Smith & Osborn, 2003).

3.2.4 Theoretical Perspectives

Phenomenology

A theoretical perspective that contributes to the foundation for the current IPA study is phenomenology. Phenomenology is a philosophical approach to the study of human experience (Smith et al., 2009). Phenomenologists are interested in thinking about what human experiences of the world are like in all their forms including a consideration about how individuals understand their own experiences of the world they live in. Husserl, developed early ideas around the development of phenomenological inquiry and believed that experience should be studied in the way in which it occurs, and in its own terms (Smith et al., 2009).

Husserl (1927) believed that our desire for order as humans can mean that researchers can sometimes rapidly look to assimilate phenomena into pre-existing

categorization systems. He therefore stressed that researchers should go back to what is experienced in the consciousness of the participant, and give time and space to focus on each and every different particular phenomena in its own right (Smith et al., 2009). He also highlighted the need for individuals to stop and self-consciously reflect, through disengaging with an activity and re-engaging with the experience itself in order to be phenomenological. This suggests that reflexivity is key to fully achieve a phenomenological approach to research.

To achieve this phenomenological approach, Husserl (1927) suggested that researchers also need to 'bracket' or put to one side the world they take for granted in order to concentrate on their perception of that world. This would suggest that researchers can attempt to shut out the world as it simply exists and replace it with a conscious world. However, it should be recognised that bracketing does not make the taken for granted world disappear (Smith et al., 2009). The researcher held this in mind during the current study and attempted to bracket any previous beliefs or assumptions during the data collection process to avoid influencing the data (see section 3.8).

Hermeneutics

Another theoretical foundation of IPA stems from hermeneutics. Heidegger (1962), a hermeneutic theorist, set out a path for acknowledging the importance of hermeneutic and existential influences in phenomenological philosophy. Heidegger (1962) emphasised that there is an existential requirement for others and that humans are thrown into a pre-existing world of people, objects, language and culture that they cannot be meaningfully detached from (Smith et al., 2009). Hermeneutics is

therefore a theory of interpretation and focuses on how a sense of understanding is achieved rather than what is understood (Robson, 2016).

Another well-known hermeneutic theorist offered a holistic view to the interpretative processes. Schleiermacher (1998) maintained that the process of interpretation is not a matter of following strict rules but instead a combination of a range of skills including intuition (Smith et al.,2009). Schleiermacher (1998) believed that if a researcher has engaged in a comprehensive, detailed analysis of participant data then that researcher can end up understanding that participant better than they understand themselves (Smith et al., 2009).

Gadamer (1990) however highlighted that he believed a distinction must be made between understanding the meaning of the text and understanding the person. He argued that understanding the meaning of the text should be prioritised and highlighted that interpretation is essentially a dialogue between past and present (Smith et al.,2009). Gadamer (1990) also emphasised that being open to allow acknowledgement of inevitable preconceptions is key to understanding the dialogue of what a researcher brings to the text and what the text brings to the researcher (Smith et al.,2009). However, IPA methodology recognises that it is unrealistic to say researchers can fully access the exact personal world of another so the aim is to gain an insight which gets as close to the participant's view as possible (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006).

One of the notions in hermeneutic theory is the hermeneutic circle. This suggests a dynamic relationship between the part and the whole at various levels. It describes the process of interpretation as a non-linear, dynamic way of thinking and therefore provides a useful way for IPA researchers to think about the 'method' (Smith et al.,

2009). As the process of IPA is iterative the researcher may move back and forth through different ways of thinking about data. This would assume that their relationship with the data is likely to shift according to the non-linear hermeneutic circle.

Idiography

The third theoretical perspective that has a major influence on IPA is idiography. Idiography is concerned with the particular and therefore refers to "an in-depth analysis of single cases and examining individual perspectives of study participants in their unique contexts" (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014, p.8). In order to achieve this, IPA research intentionally uses small, purposively-selected and thoughtfully-situated samples and can make effective use of single case analyses. Idiography refers to examining single cases in their own right and entails exploring each single case, or moving through a process of exploring individual cases, before making more generalised claims.

Idiographic principles contrast with a nomothetic inquiry which predominates in psychology and is concerned with studying groups or populations to establish the likelihood that particular phenomena will occur under specific conditions (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). Nomothetic inquiry is where "data is collected, transformed and analysed in a manner which prevents the retrieval or analysis of the individuals who provided data in the first place" (Smith et al., 2009, p.30). In contrast to idiography which focuses on particular cases, nomothetic inquiry is focused on collecting measurable data and dealing with group averages.

IPA research relies on idiography as the researcher focuses on individual perspectives within unique contexts rather than universal ideas. IPA research allows

for the researcher to immerse themselves in detailed analysis and be equally attentive to the exploration of each case study individually. Themes can then be generated from the analysis of these cases and individual narratives highlighted before they are compared and contrasted.

IPA was used in the current study as the researcher believed that an idiographic and interpretive approach was an appropriate way to appreciate, explore and understand the unique, educational experiences of service CYP. The researcher found IPA to be a particularly appropriate methodology for the current study given its phenomenological theoretical foundation as it focuses on how individuals make sense of the world they live in. The ontological and epistemological foundations for the current study therefore influenced the choice of IPA as an appropriate methodology.

3.2.5 Researcher's Position

The researcher had an interest in learning more about how service CYP experience education prior to the current study but had never specifically worked with this group. However, the researcher acknowledged that their experience as a primary school teacher may have potentially influenced interpretations of how participants' experienced education. The researcher also had previous experience working as an assistant EP (AEP) in an LA where there was a 'medium' density of CYP receiving SPP (according to SCiP Alliance, 2019). Although the researcher did not work directly with this population in their role they became openly curious about the support available for this population as a whole.

Whilst there is a need for researchers to bracket their previous knowledge it has been suggested that there is a need to use it as a source of insight (Finlay, 2008).

The researcher acknowledged that they would need to make attempts to put aside their own understandings attached to the phenomenon so that they did not influence the data collection or analysis process (see section 3.8). It has been suggested that researchers should interact with an awareness of biases and their potential so that these biases do not become obstructive or intrusive to research (De Marrais & Lapan, 2003).

3.3 Other Methodological Approaches Considered

Before IPA was decided upon, the researcher considered other qualitative approaches to conducting research. Only qualitative approaches were considered as these approaches would align with the researcher's ontological positioning. The researcher did not consider a quantitative or mixed methods approach for the current study as the researcher wanted to take an open, flexible and exploratory approach to explore the phenomena around how service CYP experience education.

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis is a flexible approach that can be used to identify, analyse, and reporting patterns or themes within data (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Unlike IPA, thematic analysis is not wed to a particular theoretical framework. Thematic analysis has been described as an approach for extraction of meanings and concepts from data which "includes pinpointing, examining and recording patterns or themes" (Javadi & Zarea, 2016, p.39). The theoretical underpinnings of IPA however mean that IPA research has an idiographic focus. The current study used an IPA approach as it was felt that research exploring how service CYP experience education would benefit from more of an idiographic and phenomenological focus where the researcher could seek to make sense of each individual participants' experience.

In addition, thematic analysis does not consider a double hermeneutic structure. The researcher felt that this was essential to be able to explore experience and the meaning of these experiences on the individual. The double hermeneutic process involves the researcher attempting to make sense of the participant as they try to make sense of their own experiences (Smith et al., 2009). IPA researchers therefore have a dual role and engage in this immersive process to help them understand phenomena.

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry was another approach considered for the current study. IPA holds some form of connection to different narrative approaches as they are all focused on meaning-making within certain cultures or contexts (Smith et al., 2009). Narrative inquiry generally consists of different groups of people engaging in 'story telling' and through this producing narrative accounts of their lives (Earthy & Cronin, 2008). A narrative inquiry approach is rooted in phenomenological theory and is method used to elicit participant's stories. However, the approach is aligned within a social constructionist epistemology as it holds the notion that a participant's understanding of the world is jointly constructed and that there are shared assumptions about reality. Therefore the approach did not compliment the current study as the epistemological position held by the researcher is constructivist.

3.4 Method

3.4.1 Research Question

'How do service children and young people experience education?'

This research question was chosen as it reflected the ontological and epistemological stance held by the researcher in the current study. The way in which

this research question has been posed reflects the notion that all service CYP will have different realities. It emphasises that the researcher is interested in gaining an insight into the sense these CYP have made of their unique experiences so far and ultimately, *how* they have experienced education. The primary focus of the current study was therefore to explore *how* service CYP experience education. The word 'how' was intentionally used within this primary research question to encourage a broad and open insight into exploring individual perspectives and the lived experiences of service CYP.

3.4.2 Purpose of Research

The purpose of the current research study was exploratory. It explores how service CYP experience education. The current study did not attempt to prove or disprove a hypothesis but instead aimed to provide a rich insight into the lived experiences of service CYP, an under-researched population.

3.4.3 Research Context

This research was conducted during the 2020 COVID-19 health pandemic in the UK. School closures as a result of a national 'lockdown' meant that many children and young people across the UK engaged in remote learning from March to July 2020. The researcher acknowledged that the current research study was conducted during an unprecedented time and held this in mind when considering the most appropriate methods for recruitment and data collection.

Recruitment for the current study was conducted remotely and therefore not limited to a specific location within the UK. The research was conducted remotely with service CYP who (at the time of interview), attended schools and lived in England and Wales. Two participants attended different schools in different counties within

the South-West of England (areas 1 & 2), two participants attended different schools

in different counties within the South-East of England (areas 3 & 4), one participant

attended a school in the East Midlands of England (area 5) and the final two

participants attended schools in the same region of North Wales (area 6).

Table 4 below provides information about the density of pupils receiving SPP in each

of the areas where research for the current study was conducted in England (areas

1-5) [4].

Table 4. *Area research was conducted and density of pupils receiving SPP in*

corresponding area

Area research was conducted	Density of SPP pupils[5]
Area 1	Medium
Area 2	Medium
Area 3	Medium
Area 4	High
Area 5	High

Note: Based on average number of service children per school.

As area 6 was in Wales, SPP data was not available for this area. There is no

specific, recorded number of how many MC pupils were being educated in North

Wales (area 6) when the current study was conducted. However, the Supporting

Service Children in Education (SSCE) network asked schools and LAs in Wales to

identify service CYP. They reported that there are less than 50 service CYP

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[4] Information on the average number of service children per school in each of these areas was extracted from the SCiP Alliance's online targeting tool (SCiP Alliance, 2020). This data derived from the number of pupils receiving SPP in state funded schools in England between 2020-2021 (ESFA, 2020).

[5] The 'density' corresponds to the 'national decile by number of service children' (SCiP Alliance, 2020) which categorises the SPP data into 10 equal groups. Deciles 1-5 corresponded to a 'low' density of SPP recipients in that area, deciles 6-9 corresponded to a 'medium' density and the 10th decile corresponded to a 'high' density of SPP recipients in that area.

attending school in 'area 6' within North Wales (SSCE, 2021). The exact figure reported for 'area 6' is not provided in the current study to preserve anonymity.

3.4.4 Sampling and Participants

A purposive sample was used for the current IPA study in order to be consistent with the qualitative paradigm as suggested by Smith et al (2009). Purposive sampling allowed the researcher to select a participant sample that would be able to offer insight into particular experiences. In order to gain access to participants who have perspectives on a specific phenomenon (i.e. experiences of education) the researcher obtained a fairy homogenous sample.

A sample size of 7 was used for the current study as this fell within the suggested, appropriate number of participants for an IPA study (Smith et al., 2009). This number of participants was considered an appropriate number to enable the researcher to obtain a sufficient number of cases for the development of meaningful points of similarity and difference between them. This sample size would allow the researcher to not become too overwhelmed with the amount of data generated and enable the data to be analysed in-depth. IPA studies are said to value quality of data over quantity and "benefit from a concentrated focus on a small number of cases" (Smith et al., 2009, p.51).

A purposive sample of 7 service CYP aged between 11-16 years was used in the current study. These participants were all secondary school pupils and all had at least one parent who is a member of the British Armed Forces whom had been deployed at least once since they started school. All of the participants also had experience of moving school at least once throughout their educational career. Therefore, this group of participants were considered a fairly homogenous sample

who would be able to provide particular perspectives on how they have experienced education. Table 5 below provides some further information on the participant sample for the current study.

Secondary school pupils were chosen as they were considered more likely to have had a longer experience of being in education compared to primary school pupils. They were also considered by the researcher to be more likely to be able to fully engage in a lengthy, one to one interview compared to younger pupils and be better able to articulate their experiences. In addition to this, existing literature exploring the experiences of British, MC, secondary school pupils is scarce (see chapter 2) and 77% of secondary schools in England have been found to have at least one service pupil on roll (SCiP Alliance, 2019). Therefore the researcher chose to focus the current study on their educational experiences.

Table 5. *Participant information*

Participant pseudonym	Age	Gender participant identified by	Ethnicity	Participant's first language	Parental connection to which branch of the British Armed Forces?
Jack	15	Male	White British	English	Royal Navy
Tom	14	Male	White British	English	Royal Air Force (RAF)
George	15	Male	White British	English	Royal Air Force (RAF)
James	16	Male	White British	English	Royal Air Force (RAF)
Lucy	12	Female	White British	English	Royal Air Force (RAF)
Alice	13	Female	White British	English	Royal Navy
Ava	11	Female	White British	English	British Army

In order to achieve a fairly homogenous sample the following inclusion and exclusion criteria for participant selection was employed:

- Participants had to have at least one parent or carer, who serves in the regular British armed forces, or as a reservist
- Participants had to have had a parent(s) who had been deployed by the British Armed Forces at least once since they started school

- ➢ Participants had to be aged between 11-16
- ➢ Participants had to attend mainstream, non-boarding schools in the UK
- ➢ Participants with recognised speech and language needs were excluded
- ➢ Participants who had received support from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services were excluded
- ➢ Participants with SEN were included _if_ they were considered able to fully understand the nature of the study and were able to fully engage in the interview process
- ➢ Participants had to be able to understand and speak English fluently

A comprehensive list of the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the current study with rationale can be found in Appendix B.

During the data collection phase it came to light that Ava had moved to a boarding school that term. As this participant had spent less than a term at boarding school and had experienced most of her education in schools where she did not board, the researcher chose to include her in the overall sample. Ava's experience of moving school before the end of the year reflects the reality for many service CYP as they are a highly mobile population. The researcher made the decision to fully include Ava's experiences as it was believed homogeneity of the sample would not be affected given the short amount of time Ava had spent 'on roll' at a boarding school prior to her interview. The researcher uses the term 'on roll' as Ava (and all of the other participants in this study) did not physically attend school throughout all of the Summer term of 2020 as UK schools were closed in response to a COVID-19 health pandemic.

3.4.5 Participant Recruitment

The researcher contacted UK based charities and organisations who support service CYP and their families. The researcher asked these charities and organisations to

share a recruitment advert (Appendix C) with the military families and service CYP they have connections with to inform them about the research. Some of these charities and organisations shared the recruitment advert on their professional social media platforms. The recruitment advert provided the researcher's contact details for CYP's parents to get in touch if they would be interested in finding out more about taking part in the research study.

Parents who informed the researcher that their child would like to take part after reading through the information sheet (Appendix P) were sent consent forms to read, sign and return to the researcher. The researcher asked for both parental consent forms and participant consent forms to be signed to ensure that the participants and their parents had both given informed consent to take part (Appendix Q). Once the researcher had received the signed consent forms they arranged convenient dates and times for remote interviews via the video conferencing software 'Zoom'.

Five participants were excluded from the study as they did not meet the inclusion criteria. One parent told the researcher that her child had complex learning needs, after talking to the parent the researcher decided that it would not be appropriate for that particular child to participate. Another parent told the researcher that she and her family were not living in the UK. The researcher did not include this participant as they were only conducting this study within the UK. A third parent told the researcher that her two children attended boarding school so did not meet the inclusion criteria for the study. Lastly, a young adult aged 18 contacted the researcher directly and offered to speak in retrospect about their educational experiences. As this participant did not meet the inclusion criteria with regards to age range, they were not included in the research study but were thanked for offering up their time to take part.

3.5 Data Collection

3.5.1 Semi-structured Interviews

Interviews have been suggested as one of the best ways to invite participants to provide a detailed, first person account of their experiences (Smith et al., 2009). Therefore the researcher chose to collect data through the means of semi-structured, one-to-one interviews. The researcher held the view that this mode of data collection would effectively facilitate the elicitation of personal stories, thoughts, feelings and perceptions of how the participants experience education.

A constructivist stance acknowledges that participants have all had different, individual experiences. This epistemological stance assumes that there are multiple meanings of individual experiences. Therefore constructivist researchers may seek to establish the meaning of a phenomenon from the view of participants (Creswell, 2003). With this in mind, the researcher chose to collect data through flexible, semi-structured interviews with open ended questions. A semi-structured interview schedule was developed with this in mind and was used flexibly as a guide throughout the interview process (Appendix D). The interview schedule was developed as a framework to guide the facilitation of a comfortable interaction between researcher and participant but was not strictly followed. The questions and prompts used were open and expansive to encourage participants to give detailed responses. This form of questioning allowed the interview to proceed as naturally as possible. The researcher developed this interview schedule in line with guidance on how to construct a semi-structured interview schedule for an in-depth, IPA interview (Smith et al., 2009).

3.5.2 Remote Data Collection

The current research study was conducted during the COVID-19 health pandemic in the UK, the researcher therefore took this into consideration when choosing the most appropriate method of data collection. To avoid any potential risk of spreading the COVID-19 virus and to abide by national Government guidelines, one-to-one, semi-structured interviews were conducted remotely through 'Zoom'. The use of this video conferencing software was considered secure and approved for use with CYP by Tavistock and Portman NHS trust. In order to ensure that the virtual meeting could only be accessed by the intended participant the researcher emailed individual 'Zoom' invitations to each participant separately with passwords. Participants were interviewed from their own homes.

The researcher initially considered how interviewing via remote means may have some effect on the researcher-participant relationship. However, it has been argued that although remote interviews through video conferencing software "cannot completely replace face to face interaction, they work well as a viable alternative or complimentary data collection tool for qualitative researchers" (Lo Iacono et al., 2016, p.1). Lo Iacono et al. (2016) also suggested that remote forms of interviewing offer new opportunities for researchers and should be embraced with confidence.

Prior to the interview the researcher introduced themselves and spoke to participants to build rapport. It has been suggested that establishing rapport with the participant and making them feel at ease is essential to IPA research as it is likely to yield rich data (Smith et al., 2009). The researcher spoke to the participants about how the remote interview would work, checked that the technology was working effectively and gave them an opportunity to ask questions before starting the interview (see Appendix D for script). The interviews were audio recorded with the informed

consent of the participants (and their parents) and lasted between 25 to 55 minutes. Audio recording was used so that the researcher could produce verbatim transcripts for thorough analysis.

3.6 Data Analysis

There is no prescribed, single method for analysing IPA data but the essence of IPA lies in its analytic focus (Smith et al., 2009). To become familiar with the qualitative data and learn something about the participant's psychological world the researcher must engage "…in an interpretative relationship with the transcript" (Smith & Osborn, 2009, p.66). The researcher's engagement with the transcript is required to support the process of interpretation of the data. During this process the IPA researcher directs their attention towards the participant's attempts to make sense of their personal experiences.

Although there is no single method for analysis, IPA involves a set of common processes and principles such as moving from the descriptive to the interpretive, attempting to understand the view of the participant and commitment to a psychological focus on personal meaning-making in particular contexts (Smith et al., 2009). Making sense of participants' experiences is said to be achieved by interpreting data through applying psychological concepts and theories to what has been shared (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014).

IPA provides a set of flexible guidelines which can be adapted by individual researchers according to their research objectives (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014). However, these guidelines are simply a suggestion of one possible way of analysing qualitative IPA data. Therefore they do not need to be strictly followed during data

analysis and IPA researchers are advised to be flexible and creative in their thinking (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014).

The researcher considered IPA an appropriate approach to data analysis for the current study as it allowed for an in-depth exploration into individual participant experiences of a particular phenomenon. IPA allowed the researcher to fully immerse themselves in the data and move from the descriptive to the interpretive when trying to understand how service CYP make sense of their experiences of education.

3.6.1 Stages of Data Analysis

Whilst bearing in mind that there is no 'one fits all' approach to data analysis in IPA research, the researcher chose to follow the suggested stages of analysis outlined by Smith et al. (2009). The researcher chose to use Smith et al.'s (2009) process as a guide due to the clear and detailed explanation provided at each suggested stage of analysis. The data analysis process used in the current study is outlined in figure 2 and discussed in more detail below.

Figure 2

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Read & re-read transcript	Initial Noting	Developing emergent themes	Searching for connections between emergent themes to develop subordinate themes	Developing superordinate themes from subordinate themes	Process repeated for each case	Looking for patterns across the cases to identify overarching themes
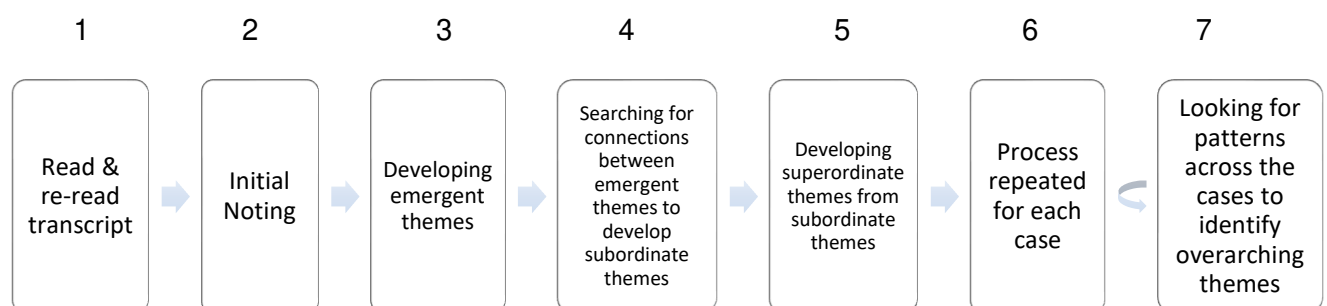
Data analysis process used in current study

Stage 1: Reading and re-reading transcript

This stage involved the researcher reading through the transcript multiple times to become immersed in the data. The researcher listened to the audio recording whilst reading through the transcript to ensure that the participant became the focus of the analysis. This also helped the researcher to ensure that the transcript was accurate and allowed the researcher to identify any variation in intonation, or hesitations that had not been reflected within the transcript. It has been suggested that an IPA researcher should make notes of their initial thoughts or emotional reactions when reading through the transcript so that they can remain solely focused on the data itself (Smith et al.,2009). The researcher therefore noted their initial reactions below each of the analysed transcripts (Appendix E).

Stage 2: Initial Noting

This stage of analysis in IPA has been described as the most detailed and most time consuming (Smith et al., 2009). It involves a process whereby the researcher maintains an open mind and grows increasingly familiar with the transcript. The researcher developed initial notes within this stage which consisted of three different types of exploratory commenting, each with different focuses:

- *Descriptive* comments were made which focused on describing the content of that the participant had said (purple text in Appendix E)
- *Linguistic* comments were made which focused on the participant's specific use of language (green italic text in Appendix E)
- *Conceptual* comments were made which focused on engaging with the data at a more interrogative level (red text and underlined in Appendix E)

These exploratory comments were used as useful analytic tools to engage in a detailed analytic dialogue with the transcript. Smith et al (2009) suggest that establishing links and connections between these comments is key to attempting to immerse oneself in the participant's world.

Stage 3: Development of Emergent Themes

Within this stage the researcher attempted to reduce the volume of detail. The researcher attempted to maintain the complexity of the data whilst using this stage as a process of mapping the interrelationships, patterns and connections between the exploratory notes from stage 2. This stage involved a shift from working with the transcript itself to working primarily with the initial notes. During this stage, the researcher ensured that they used what they had learnt throughout the process of initial noting to help make sense of the participant's experiences and identify 'emergent themes'. The researcher essentially had to shift themselves away from the transcript, break up the narrative and re-organise the data in order to identify emergent themes. The 'emergent themes' were given titles that were reflective of the participant's experiences. The researcher added the emergent themes into the left hand column (see Appendix E for an example of this).

Stage 4: Searching for connections between emergent themes to develop subordinate themes

This stage involved searching for connections between the set of emergent themes from stage 3. To achieve this, the emergent themes from stage 3 were copied and pasted into a new document. The researcher read and re-read through the emergent themes to familiarise themselves with them. The researcher then highlighted where there were connections between emergent themes (see Appendix F for an example).

In order to establish connections between the emergent themes to develop subordinate themes the researcher used the below strategies suggested by Smith et al (2009):

> *Abstraction* involved grouping similar emergent themes together to develop subordinate themes.

> *Subsumption* was used when an emergent theme had capacity to bring together other closely related themes.

> *Polarisation* involved searching for oppositional relationships between emergent themes and focused on the difference between them to develop subordinate themes.

> *Contextualisation* was used to identify the narrative elements within the analysis and highlight clusters of emergent themes which relate to specific narrative moments or important life events.

Within this stage, a set of subordinate themes with corresponding emergent themes was produced for each participant. The researcher used a colour coded key to match the identified emergent themes with the corresponding subordinate themes (see Appendix F). The emergent themes used to develop subordinate themes were selected as they were considered reflective of the initial set of emergent themes.

Stage 5: Developing superordinate themes from subordinate themes

The researcher grouped together subordinate themes to create superordinate themes for each participant using abstraction, subsumption, contextualisation and polarisation (see individual tables 6-12 in chapter 4).

Stage 6: Process repeated for each case

The researcher repeated the above analysis stages 1 to 4 for each individual case before moving onto stage 7 to maintain an idiographic approach.

Stage 7: Looking for patterns across cases to identify overarching themes

The concluding stage involved searching for patterns across participants' superordinate themes to identify the final overarching themes. Links were made between the participants' superordinate themes and a process of numeration was used to look at the frequency of the superordinate themes across cases (see Appendix G). Although numeration was used to help the researcher identify the frequency of similar superordinate themes across cases, there was no blanket number rule for what counted as a recurrent theme. Numeration was simply used to indicate to the researcher which superordinate themes were identified across more than one case. This process was helpful as the researcher was able to look for patterns across cases to help identify the final overarching themes (see Appendix G).

3.7 Validity and Reliability

The nature of qualitative research does not lend itself to statistical or empirical calculations of validity, so qualitative research should be evaluated in relation to criteria that is recognised as more appropriate to it (Smith et al., 2009). There is an ongoing debate as to whether validity and reliability are the most appropriate terms to use when looking into qualitative research. Many qualitative researchers use terms such as credibility, trustworthiness, truth, value, applicability, consistency and conformability when evaluating the accuracy and consistency in qualitative research (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Lincoln & Guba 1985).

Yardley (2008) maintains that criteria to assess validity of qualitative studies such as objectivity, reliability and generalisability are irrelevant to qualitative research, which generally seeks to explore individual experiences rather than to explain phenomena through recruiting a large number of participants. Reliability traditionally looks at "consistency across repeated investigations, in different circumstances and with different investigators" (McMullen & Braithwaite, 2013, p.95). However, in an IPA study it cannot be expected that answers given on one occasion will reflect those given on another as it seeks to explore different, individual interpretations of phenomena.

3.7.1 Validity

In a broad sense, validity refers to the integrity and application of the methods undertaken and the precision in which the findings accurately reflect the data, whilst reliability describes consistency within the employed analytical procedures (Long & Johnson, 2000). However, it can be argued that "if qualitative methods are inherently different from quantitative methods in terms of philosophical positions and purpose, then alterative frameworks for establishing rigour are appropriate" (Noble & Smith, 2015, p.1). The unique idiographic and interpretive elements of IPA research hold the individual participants at the centre of the research and make criteria for objectivity or generalisability particularly irrelevant.

Yardley's (2008) approach for assessing the validity and quality of qualitative research sets out appropriate guidelines which can be applied to evaluate IPA studies. The researcher found that Yardley's (2008) criteria to be presented in an accessible way and relevant to IPA focused research. Therefore this criteria was used to evaluate the quality of the current study. Yardley's (2008) criteria outlines four broad principles for evaluating the quality of qualitative research: sensitivity to

context, commitment and rigour, transparency and coherence, and impact and importance. Each of these principles are further discussed below and details are provided on how the researcher considered them in the current study.

Sensitivity to Context

This principle relates to the researcher's sensitivity to the social context, the existing literature and the data obtained from participants. In the current study the researcher demonstrated sensitivity to context through building rapport with participants prior to beginning the interview. The researcher did this through talking to participants and introducing themselves prior to beginning the interview to make the participants feel as comfortable as possible. This is deemed essential to data collection as Smith et al (2009) place emphasis on the interactional nature of data collection. With this in mind the researcher also ensured that they were empathetic towards the participants and communicated this throughout the interview process.

Yardley (2008) suggested that sensitivity to context also involves negotiating the complex power relationship between research expert and experiential expert. The researcher in the current study was honest with participants when they told them that they were genuinely interested in their experiences as they felt this would place the participants in the expert position, as experts in their own lives. The researcher also thanked them for agreeing to take part.

In IPA research Smith et al (2009) suggest that sensitivity to context is particularly important as the methodology is centered on participants who share a particular lived experience. They suggest that these samples of participants can be more difficult to access than other samples so establishing access or rapport with key gate keepers is fundamental to the viability of an IPA project. Before conducting the current study

the researcher established connections and liaised with key services and charities who offer support to service CYP and their families across the UK. The researcher found that establishing connections with key gatekeepers allowed them to build relationships and open up access as well as gain an insight into the military community.

The researcher maintained sensitivity to context throughout the experience of conducting the current study. The researcher was sensitive towards the fact that participants had openly shared their experiences with someone they had not met before. After the interviews the researcher thanked the participants for taking part and sent a follow up email to their parents to also thank them for their consent. The researcher immersed themselves in the data analysis process and took care to demonstrate sensitivity to the raw material as they worked with it. The researcher ensured that they included the raw data set (see Appendices H-N), verbatim extracts during stage 4 of the analysis process (see Appendix F) and signposted to quotations in transcripts throughout chapters 4 and 5 so that these could be checked against any interpretations that had been cautiously presented.

Commitment and Rigour

Yardley (2008) suggests that this principle can be demonstrated in a number of ways including commitment being shown through the degree of attentiveness to participants during data collection and the care taken to analyse each case. She adds that rigour refers to how thorough the research is in terms of how appropriate the sample is in light of the posed research question, the quality of the interviews and the comprehensiveness of the analysis. The researcher in the current study took great care to be attentive towards participants during interviews and carefully

analysed data across a period of three months. The researcher ensured that analysis was rigorous to capture the essence of the participants' experiences.

The current research study used a fairly homogenous, purposive sample to ensure that the data gathered would match the research question. Throughout the interview process the researcher was consistent in sensitively using prompts and probes to pick up on important cues from the participant, as suggested by Smith et al (2009). The researcher in the current study used individual and group supervision to reflect upon keeping the balance between staying close to the participant whilst separating themselves from becoming fully immersed in the phenomena. Smith et al (2009) also suggest that there must be sufficient idiographic engagement in IPA highlighting the notion that analysis must move beyond simple description of what is there towards an interpretation of what it means. In the current study the researcher used judiciously selected appropriate quotes from participants to illustrate and support themes (see chapter 4).

Transparency and Coherence

This principle refers to how clearly the different stages of the research process are communicated to the reader in the write up of the study (Smith et al.,2009). In the current study the researcher included a detailed explanation of the research process including how participants were selected, how the interview schedule was developed, how the interviews were conducted and the stages involved in the analysis process (see above sub-headings in this chapter). In section 3.6.1 above the researcher also included a process diagram and provided clear, in-depth descriptions of what each stage of the analysis process involved.

In the current study the researcher attempted to make sense of the participant's experiences according to the principles of IPA. Coherence can be seen in the way that themes logically hang together. Yardley (2008) maintains that coherence can also refer to the degree of fit between the research project and the underlying theoretical assumptions of the approach that has been implemented. The current research project therefore ensures that the hermeneutic and phenomenological sensibility is apparent in line with the theoretical perspectives underlying IPA.

Impact and Importance

Yardley (2008) infers that the test of a research study's real validity is whether or not it tells the reader something interesting, important or useful. Smith et al (2009) maintain that they feel this sentiment is true of IPA and suggest that an IPA researcher should make efforts to do this. The researcher of the current study feels that this research provides interesting findings that are important to the military community and professionals working with service CYP. The researcher maintains that these findings are useful to educational professionals as they provide a unique insight into how some service CYP experience education. They also add to a scarce, yet growing, body of research in this field.

3.7.2 Audit Trail

It has been suggested that an audit trail providing a chain of evidence can be followed to ensure validity in IPA research. This trail can be used by IPA researchers to clearly show how the research progressed from the initial research question to the final write up (Smith et al., 2009). The audit trail showing the progression of the current study can be seen below.

> ➤ Initial notes were made and supervision sessions were used to discuss the researcher's preliminary ideas for the research study and a how the study could be conducted

> ➤ The literature review question and final search terms highlighted the existing literature relevant to the research topic (see chapter 2)

> ➤ The research question was developed through reviewing the existing literature on the research topic

> ➤ During the data collection phase interviews were audio recorded (destroyed after transcription to protect anonymity) and the recordings were transcribed verbatim (Appendices H-N)

> ➤ The researcher chose to combine exploratory, linguistic and conceptual comments within the same column on each of the transcripts (see Appendix E for an example). Smith et al (2009) suggested that establishing links and connections between these comments is critical to in-depth data analysis

> ➤ During data analysis emergent, subordinate and superordinate themes were identified for each participant (Appendix F for example) before these were developed into overarching themes across the data set (Appendix G)

> ➤ Throughout the thesis, transcript numbers and line numbers are provided to signpost the reader to direct quotations within the raw data (Appendices H-N)

> ➤ The final research report was produced (current thesis)

3.8 Reflexivity

Quantitative researchers ensure that steps are taken to minimise researcher influence or bias whereas qualitative researchers ensure that researcher reflexivity plays a key role as they acknowledge their influence on the research (Yardley, 2008). Reflexivity is particularly important within IPA research as it involves a double

hermeneutic process whereby the researcher is making sense of the participant who is making sense of their experience. This highlights the dual role of the researcher and the need for them to reflect upon their influence within the research process. Smith et al (2009) further emphasise the need for pro-active self-reflection as they maintain that it is not possible for researchers to be aware of all preconceptions in advance of collecting and analysing data.

Hermeneutic reflection aims to emphasise reflexivity to facilitate awareness both of the dynamic relationship between researchers and participant data, and also of the way in which research encounters change researcher's fore-understandings to bring a fresh understanding of the phenomenon they are investigating (Shaw, 2010). Alongside this ongoing reflective practice, 'bracketing' (Husserl, 1999) is used by qualitative researchers to set aside prior knowledge and experiences that may influence the research. It is therefore important for IPA researchers to maintain a dynamic relationship with the data but also hold an awareness of what is it they are bringing to the process themselves.

Shaw (2010) maintains that reflexivity is a vital component of each stage of the research journey. The researcher in the current study therefore embedded reflexivity at the following different levels:

➢ Through initially acknowledging their previous experience and how this may have influenced the research (see section 3.2.5 above)

➢ Through recording written, personal reflections after each interview

➢ Through one to one supervision sessions where details of the research process were discussed and reflected upon

➢ Through group supervision sessions with other doctoral researchers where specific IPA related discussions were held and any issues jointly reflected upon

➢ Through noting thoughts, observations or reflections after reading through each of the transcripts for the first time (see Appendix E for example)

➢ Through repeatedly reading transcripts and immersing themselves in the data before analysis then going back over the annotated transcripts to check that they had picked up on exactly what the participant was telling them

➢ Through sharing the superordinate and overarching themes with another doctoral researcher

The above practices allowed the researcher to; engage in ongoing reflective practice throughout the development of the current research project, become involved in ongoing discussions about aspects of the research process, and gain feedback on aspects of the data analysis phase. These practices helped the researcher to check the themes that had emerged could be referenced back to quotes or phrases from participants' raw data. The researcher acknowledged that their prior experiences and pre-existing beliefs may have impacted the research (see section 3.2.5) and embedded reflexive practice into the current study.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

The researcher was granted approval to conduct the current research by the Tavistock and Portman Research Ethics Committee (TREC) (see Appendix O) before beginning the recruitment process. Ethical considerations within the current research were guided by the Code of Human Research Ethics (British Psychological Society [BPS], 2014) and the BPS Code of Ethics and Conduct (2018) as the

researcher is training to become an Educational Psychologist. The researcher complied with the guidance outlined in these codes and also complied with the Data Protection Act 2018 to ensure all data was used, protected, managed and stored appropriately.

Willig (2013) suggests that researchers should protect their participants from any potential harm and aim to preserve their psychological wellbeing and dignity at all times. Willig also suggests that five basic, ethical considerations should apply to how participants are treated in research, these include; informed consent, no deception, right to withdraw, debriefing and confidentiality. These are outlined below with details of how the current study took steps to protect participants within each of the five areas of ethical consideration.

Informed Consent

The researcher ensured that all participants and their parents who had contacted them to express an interest in taking part in the study were fully aware of what participation would involve before they agreed to take part. The researcher provided CYP and their parents with information sheets outlining details of the study including information on what their participation would entail, confidentiality, anonymity and data protection (Appendix P). The researcher offered the young person's parents a chance to speak to the researcher with no obligation to agree to participate. Parents were informed them that they were welcome to contact the researcher to ask any additional questions that they, or their child, may have about the study.

After reading the information sheet, young people and their parents were then sent consent forms to sign (Appendix Q) if they wanted to take part and met the inclusion criteria. These consent forms reiterated details about the study that were included on

the information sheet to ensure that CYP and their parents were fully informed. Before beginning the interview, the researcher checked that the young person still wanted to take part in the study. They reiterated important details and sought verbal consent from the young person to check that they still wanted to take part in the study. The researcher also checked that CYP gave their consent for the interview to be audio recorded and reminded them that they were not obligated to take part in the study.

No deception

The researcher made attempts to ensure that no deception was involved. The researcher provided CYP and their parents with comprehensive information sheets outlining details of the study and remained transparent about what the research study would involve. The researcher openly and honestly answered any additional questions that CYP or their parents had about the study. Before starting the interview participants were asked to only share as much as they would like to, this was to remind them that they had some control over what they would like to share within the interview. After the interviews the researcher checked that individuals were happy with what they had shared.

Right to Withdraw

Participants were informed that they had the right to withdraw their participation in the study at any time. They were also informed that they had the right to withdraw any interview data up until the point where it was analysed. This information was relayed to participants and their parents within the information sheet and on the consent forms. The researcher also reminded participants of their right to withdraw prior to beginning the interview and checked that they would still like to take part.

Debriefing

After the interview had finished the researcher provided participants with a space to talk and reflect upon the interview. This debriefing session was not recorded as it was separate to the data gathering process. The BPS Code of Human Research Ethics (BPS, 2014) highlights that it is important for researchers to provide appropriate debriefing following data gathering and suggests that if negative mood was induced then it would be ethical for researchers to ensure that participants leave feeling comfortable.

Within the debriefing session the participants were encouraged to reflect upon the interview and were given the opportunity to ask the researcher any questions they may have. The researcher spoke to participants to ensure that they were feeling comfortable following the interview. Participants were thanked for sharing their experiences within the interview and informed that they may contact the researcher to talk some more about their experiences if they felt they needed additional follow-up support. Participants were spoken to sensitively and reminded that talking about personal experiences could bring up unexpected feelings. The researcher reiterated this to participants' parents and provided a de-brief slip (Appendix R) which included the researcher's contact details and details of charities and organisations who offer additional wellbeing support to CYP should they require it.

The researcher felt that de-briefing following the interview was required as participants had spoken in detail about various aspects of their lives. Having an informal space to talk and reflect upon what had been shared was supportive for these participants. The researcher believes that a short, informal de-briefing session directly after interview is essential when working with all CYP. Despite being told that

they could contact the researcher should they require further support following their interviews, none of the participants contacted the researcher to seek additional support.

Confidentiality

Participants were informed that information they had provided would remain confidential but there would be limitations to the researcher maintaining confidentiality if there were disclosures of imminent risk of harm. The researcher ensured that the names of participants were removed and replaced with pseudonyms in all written records. The researcher also removed names of any identifying features including schools, teachers, friends, siblings, military bases and specific locations to ensure participant anonymity. These were either replaced with pseudonyms or deleted.

Participants were informed that due to the small sample of participants they may be able to identify some of their own responses in the final write up. The researcher destroyed audio tapes after transcription and stored transcripts securely on an encrypted drive. All data in the current study was used, stored and managed in accordance to the Data Protection Act (2018).

4. Findings

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter outlines the findings that were generated through the Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis of the seven participants' interview data. The analysis sought to answer the following research question:

'How do service CYP experience education?'

Contextual information is provided for each participant along with a summary of their individual subordinate and superordinate themes. The findings across the data set are presented under headings which directly correspond to the five overarching themes below in figure 3.

Figure 3

Overarching Themes:

'Searching to Belong'

'The Impact of Loss and Separation'

'Establishing a Sense of Self'

'Adapting to Changes'

'The Need for Empathy and Understanding'
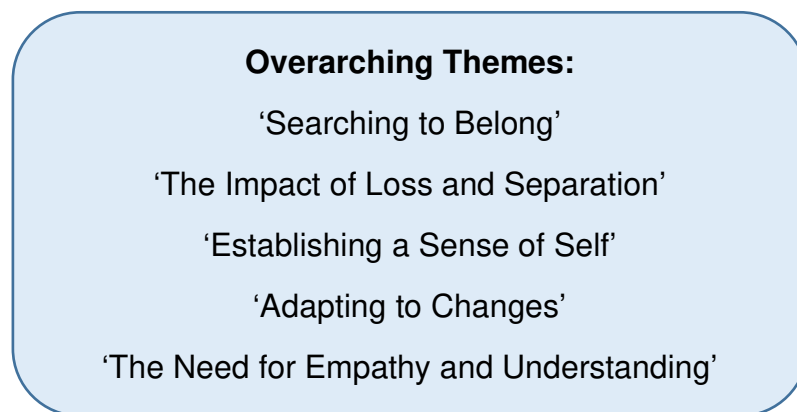
Summary of overarching themes

4.2 Summary of Individual Participants' Findings

Tables showing how the subordinate themes were grouped together to develop superordinate themes are provided below for each participant. Contextual information for each participant has been included to highlight their different, individual experiences prior to interview. This contextual information emerged throughout the interview process. Some details about each participant's response to

being interviewed are also comprised. Individual participants are listed below in the same order in which they were interviewed. Direct quotations are referenced in the following format: (transcript number: line number).

4.2.1 Jack

Table 6. *Subordinate to superordinate themes: Jack*

Subordinate Themes	Superordinate Themes
Loss of Familiarity and Friendships	Experiences of Loss
Adapting to New Teaching Styles & Expectations Seeking Familiarity	Adjusting to a New Home and a New School
Seeking a Sense of Belonging Difficulties Forming Friendships	Searching to Belong
Establishing an Identity as a Learner	Re-establishing an Identity
Maintaining Motivation to Learn Support Systems Additional Resources and New Opportunities	Emotional and Academic Support Following a Transition

One of Jack's parents is in the Royal Navy and does a lot of 'weekending' meaning that this parent often lives away in the week and comes home at weekends. Jack's serving parent has had one deployment since Jack has been in education, for a period of six weeks. Jack and his family have moved to four different locations across the UK since Jack has been born and the family are preparing to relocate again next year.

Jack appeared keen to talk about his experiences of education in interview. He gave articulate, detailed responses and spoke at length about his varied experiences. Jack expressed his love of learning throughout the interview. He spoke a lot about the challenges and excitement of familiarising himself with a new school environment and new teaching styles.

At the beginning of his interview, Jack spoke about some difficulties that he and his family had experienced with regards to school transitions including SEN support for his sibling. Jack expressed that he would like to become a doctor and mentioned that he has future plans to go to university.

4.2.2 Tom

Table 7. *Subordinate to superordinate themes: Tom*

Subordinate Themes	Superordinate Themes
Emotional Experience of Parental Deployment Experiences of Loss Remote Connections	Emotional Impact of Loss and Separation
Becoming the New Pupil Benefits of Military Life	Re-establishing an Identity
Adapting to a New Way of Life	Adapting to Changes
Forming and Maintaining Friendships	Building Friendships
Understanding Military Culture	Lack of Understanding of Military Culture

Tom's father is a full-time reservist in the RAF and was deployed multiple times when Tom was in primary school. Tom's family have relocated a number of times across the UK and Italy. Due to family relocations, Tom has been to one nursery school, four different primary schools and one secondary school.

Tom appeared happy and enthusiastic throughout his interview. He was articulate and reflective with his responses and was keen to speak about his varied experiences of education. Tom shared his frustrations with non MC peers not understanding military culture and the repercussions of this for him in school. He inferred that MC peers were more relatable and also spoke about the benefits of military life. His attitude and responses could suggest that he has a strong psychological connection to military culture and is very proud to be a service child.

Tom made suggestions about how schools could support service pupils and mentioned how he would like to share his experiences of the RAF with others who do not have military connections: *"I can just tell them the experiences I've gone through and help them out"* (02: 275). He appeared keen to be involved in helping others to understand aspects of military life.

4.2.3 George

Table 8. *Subordinate to superordinate themes: George*

Subordinate Themes	Superordinate Themes
Attachment, Separation and Loss	Experiences of Loss
Emotional and Academic Impact of Transitions Future Hopes and Plans	Emotional and Academic Impact of Previous and Upcoming Transitions
Difficulties Fitting in with Non-Military Peers	Building Friendships
Emotionally Supportive School Emotional Containment during Deployment Understanding the Military Lifestyle	A Desire for Teachers and Peers to Empathise and Understand the Military Lifestyle
Being a Military Child	Sense of Self as a Military Child

Georges' father is in the RAF and was deployed multiple times when George was at primary school, one of these deployments was a six-month deployment. George's family have relocated multiple times since he was born and George has been to seven different schools across the UK and Cyprus. At the time of interview, George and his family were preparing to permanently emigrate to Australia.

George appeared happy to be sharing his experiences of education and came across as confident. He was deeply reflective during the interview and communicated his personal thoughts and feelings in detail. George spoke about his current school using the past tense perhaps inferring that he was already psychologically preparing himself for his upcoming transition. George expressed that

he has plans to go to college in Australia and that he would also like to go to university in the future.

4.2.4 Ava

Table 9. *Subordinate to superordinate themes: Ava*

Subordinate Themes	Superordinate Themes
New Identity	Re-establishing an Identity
Adapting to New Teaching Styles and Expectations Remote Learning Adapting to New School Systems	New Teaching Styles and Expectations
Physically and Emotionally Adjusting to New Environments	Adjusting to a New Home and a New School
Friendships as an Important Part of School Life Belonging within the Military Community	A Need to Belong

One of Ava's parents serves in the British Army and has been deployed multiple times since Ava started education, two of these deployments were long-term deployments. Ava has been to two different schools in the UK and her family have very recently relocated to a new area. Ava had spent less than a term at her current school at the time of interview.

Ava appeared quiet at the beginning of her interview. She seemed reluctant to expand on her responses at times, perhaps suggesting that she may have felt nervous. Ava spoke a lot about friendships and inferred that they are an important part of school life for her. She mentioned the practical challenges of adapting to a new school and spoke about challenges adjusting to the expectations of new teachers.

4.2.5 James

Table 10. *Subordinate to superordinate themes: James*

Subordinate Themes	Superordinate Themes
Forming Friendships Exploring Social Dynamics and Alienation	Exploring New Social Dynamics
Loss of Futile Friendships	Loss of Friendships
Emotional Impact of Transitions A Supportive School Different Experiences and New Opportunities	Physical and Emotional Impact of Transitions
Cultural Changes	Adapting to Changes

One of James' parents serves in the RAF and has been on multiple deployments since he was born. James' family have relocated multiple times across the UK and to Cyprus. James has been to four different primary schools and three secondary schools. At the time of interview James' family were preparing to relocate again to a different area of the UK.

James appeared subdued during interview and spoke about his current school in the past tense. This could suggest that he was psychologically preparing for his upcoming transition to his new school. James appeared frustrated with the thought of his upcoming move and needing to leave his friends: *"we've all had enough of moving all the time, not just me but my whole family have got tired of having to make friends with people and leave them behind"* (05:130-131). James also spoke about the excitement that he has felt with past transitions and reflected upon how different schools have provided him with new opportunities including clubs, school trips and expeditions.

4.2.6 Lucy

Table 11. *Subordinate to superordinate themes: Lucy*

Subordinate Themes	Superordinate Themes
Empathetic Teachers Military-Connected Peers as Relatable	A Desire for Teachers and Peers to Empathise and Understand
Settling into a New School Cultural Changes Adapting to a New Way of Life Additional Opportunities	Adjusting to a New Home and a New School
Difficulties Forming Friendships Loneliness	Fear of Loneliness

Lucy has a parent who serves in the RAF and has been deployed a number of times since she started school including a four-month deployment when she was in primary school. Lucy's family have relocated several times across the UK and spent some time in Cyprus. Lucy has been to three different primary schools and two secondary schools. At the time of interview Lucy's family were preparing for an imminent relocation to a different part of the UK.

In her interview, Lucy came across as calm and reflective. She spoke about looking forward to her upcoming re-location: *"I'm quite looking forward to moving because I've been to this place before so I won't be completely unfamiliar with the area and I do have relatives there and the school looks very good"* (06:197-198). Lucy also reflected upon her experiences in Cyprus and spoke about how teachers have helped her settle into new schools. She revealed how it feels important to avoid feelings of loneliness at school and mentioned how she had experienced difficulties forming friendships.

4.2.7 Alice

Table 12. *Subordinate to superordinate themes: Alice*

Subordinate Themes	Superordinate Themes
Experiencing Loss Emotional Impact of Parental Deployment on Learning Coping Remotely During Parental Deployment Fear of Uncertainty	The Impact of Loss on Learning Experiences of Loss
Empathetic Teachers Comparisons between Self and Non-Military-Connected Peers	A Desire for Teachers and Peers to Empathise and Understand
Desire to Fit In	A Need to Belong

Alice's father serves in the Royal Navy and has been sent on multiple long-term deployments including a six-month, front-line deployment when Alice was in primary school. Alice and her family have relocated multiple times since she started school, most of these moves were whilst Alice was in primary school. Due to family relocations, Alice has attended eight different schools.

Alice was articulate, confident and reflective in her interview. She spoke about her previous experiences of parental deployment and the emotional impact she felt this had on her learning and friendships. Alice reflected upon the emotional support she had received from teachers in her current school during parental deployments and compared this to her previous schools. Alice expressed a strong desire to feel a sense of belonging at school and spoke about the sense of reassurance she feels when she is introduced to other service children: *'It makes me feel more assured that I'm not the only one"* (07:259).

4.3 Summary of Overarching Themes

Five overarching themes were generated from participants' superordinate themes. Table 13 below shows how superordinate themes were grouped together to form

overarching themes. Appendix G highlights the occurrence of each of these themes for individual participants and shows how numeration was used to assist in the development of overarching themes. All superordinate themes formed from the analysis of participant data closely relate to the five overarching themes generated (see Appendix G).

Table 13. *Superordinate themes mapped onto overarching themes*

Overarching Themes	Superordinate Themes
Searching to Belong	▪ Seeking a Sense of Belonging ▪ A Need to Belong ▪ Fear of Loneliness ▪ Building Friendships ▪ Exploring New Social Dynamics
The Impact of Loss and Separation	▪ Experiences of Loss ▪ Emotional Impact of Loss and Separation ▪ Loss of Friendships ▪ The Impact of Loss on Learning
Establishing a Sense of Self	▪ Re-establishing an Identity ▪ Sense of Self as a Military Child
Adapting to Changes	▪ New Teaching Styles and Expectations ▪ Adapting to Changes ▪ Adjusting to a New Home and a New School
The Need for Empathy and Understanding	▪ Lack of Understanding of Military Culture ▪ A Desire for Teachers and Peers to Empathise and Understand the Military Lifestyle ▪ Emotional and Academic Impact of Previous and Upcoming Transitions

Throughout this chapter direct quotations from individual interviews are presented in the following ways:

- Speech marks are used to denote the beginning and end of a quotation

- Participant's words are italicised

- Quotations are referenced as (transcript number: line number)

- […] has been used where quotations have been cut

- "…" is used where long pauses or hesitations occur

4.4 Searching to Belong

The overarching theme of 'Searching to Belong' was evident in each of the

participant interviews (see Appendix G). This overarching theme provides a

foundation for discussion into the different ways participants' sought to both

physically and psychologically 'belong'.

Jack expressed a desire to have a physical place that he could call home. He

appeared to have formed an emotional attachment to the area that he had lived in

previously and mentioned that he has future plans to return to the place he refers to

as his 'home' for university:

"I'd always be the odd one out that I'd always be from somewhere else. […] I came

from [name of city] and I refer to that to this day as my home […] it's where I spent

half my life so far. And it's where I'm planning on moving back to for University I still

refer to that as my home […] it's also weird to know that where you are at that

moment isn't your home […]" (01: 47-53).

Jack acknowledged that it feels 'weird' knowing that the place he lives is not his

'home' which could suggest that he feels ungrounded in areas other than that

particular city. The strong emotional tie to the area Jack lived in as a child appears

to be drawing him back as he mentions that is where he is planning to return to for

university. Jack also made reference to always being the 'odd one out' as he would

'always be from somewhere else' suggesting that he does not feel emotionally

connected to any other areas other than the one he refers to as his 'home'. The

psychological sense of security Jack expressed with regards to searching for a

physical place to call 'home' could suggest that he is seeking both an emotional and

a physical sense of stability.

Jack also shared experiences of searching to belong within a new school. He felt it was important to make sure that teachers at his new schools understood his academic ability so that they were best able to support him:

"when you first move you always have to make sure […] that you're put in the right groups making sure that I said why I thought I belonged in say a higher group or something if I was in a lower group" (01:77-81).

Jack mentioned ability groupings and used the word 'belonged' to highlight where he thought he would fit as a learner. This phrase suggests that Jack feels it is his responsibility to ensure that he is put into the correct sets within a new school and implies that he is always prepared to challenge his placement within these sets.

Other participants shared experiences of being a new pupil within a school. Some participants spoke about how their accent or the language that they speak made them visibly different to others when starting school in a new area:

""Grass" and "bath"[…] and I'd definitely start switching, and it could get confusing, because lots of people can make fun of you" (02:208).

Tom specifically mentioned how he tried to mask his accent when he started a new school and linked this behaviour to a fear of his peers making fun of him. Perhaps Tom felt as though it would be easier to fit in if he appeared similar to his peers. However, James did not have that option when he started school in a different country:

"Some people there spoke Welsh, and I was a bit anxious because I didn't know what they were talking about. And I was like, "Are they talking about me?" And sometimes I asked, "What are you talking about?" I guess sometimes I felt a bit nervous, but other times it was like, it's their language" (05:219-222).

James highlighted the anxiety he felt when his peers would talk to one another in a language he did not understand. He expressed the difficulties he experienced with not being able to fully communicate suggesting that he felt different to his peers. James told himself 'it's their language' which could suggest that he felt they belonged together as a group of Welsh children and culturally shared something between them that he did not.

Some participants made reference to how sharing commonalities with other service CYP helped them to feel a sense of belonging at school. For example, George said: *"in Cyprus, we lived on a military base. So the whole school was actually military kids, which was amazing and really helpful"* (03:359-360). Perhaps inferring that being taught amongst other service CYP had both social and emotional benefits for him in comparison to where he currently goes to school*: "I am literally the only military kid in the area. So it is strange, but doable."* (03:14-15). James also suggested that being taught in a school on a military base enabled him to form friendships with peers whom he could relate to: *"…the friends that I had there, they understood me"* (05:27).

Other participants expressed a strong desire to fit in and placed value on being able to form friendships when they have transitioned to a new school. The ability to build and maintain friendships was highlighted as key part of school life for all participants. Ava even considered her new school to be a better school because of the friends she had made: *"it's a lot better school, because I have such nicer friends"* (04:65). Lucy also placed a lot of value on friendships enhancing school life*: "I like school when I've got friends, it's not fun unless you have friends at school"* (07:204-205). Despite the shared notion that friendships are a vital component of school life, many of the participants expressed difficulties with forming friendships in a new school:

Lucy: *"sometimes I just had to hang out with people I didn't necessarily like too much or I didn't have much in common with, because… yeah, it wasn't worth being lonely"* *(06:73-75)*.

The use of the word 'had' could suggest that Lucy felt a strong need to be surrounded by peers to combat an intense fear of loneliness. The word 'worth' could possibly infer that even insignificant friendships are worth more to her than being alone.

Alice also reflected upon her desire to fit in and wanting to *"be like everyone else"* (07:190) in school: *"I wanted to be like my friends. […] even though pink wasn't my favourite colour, I forced myself to make it my favourite colour. Looking back I really just wanted to fit in"* (07:194-195). This suggests that Alice felt a strong desire to be accepted by others so that she would feel a sense of belonging with her peers.

Whilst considering that friendships with peers is generally important to all adolescents, it is important to highlight that multiple school transitions may make it more challenging to establish a strong sense of acceptance and belonging at school. George acknowledged the difficulties he has experienced fitting in and linked these to his multiple school transitions: *"I kind of found it tricky moving from place to place, and not having the availability to basically make friends, and stuff like that; I found it tricky trying to fit in"* (03:14-15).

Tom also linked the notion of friendships with transitions: *"we've now stopped moving. So, it's a lot nicer, because I can actually keep my friendship groups"* (02: 260-261). This suggests that Tom places value on settlement and staying in one area as he has the potential to form long lasting relationships.

Alice shared her experiences of starting a new school and made reference to her fear of not wanting to stand out. She also reflected upon an experience when she was highlighted by the teacher as the new pupil:

"The teacher was introducing me to the whole class. I just felt really weird. I didn't like being the centre of attention, I've never liked being the centre of attention"
(07:85-87).

This introduction of Alice as the new pupil may have felt alienating for Alice, perhaps highlighting that she was new exacerbated feelings associated with being different to others.

"I'll keep to myself until somebody talks to me because I don't want to stand out. I just want to be normal, because I've never been normal. I've always come in halfway through a year or randomly appeared in Year 3 and then gone away Year 5. So, I don't like sticking out, it just makes me feel very uncomfortable" (07:62-65).

Alice described the complex feelings associated with transition and linked her behaviour as a new pupil to not wanting to draw attention to herself. This could suggest that Alice feels this social camouflage is a good coping strategy to defend against difficult feelings associated with being a new pupil. Wanting to be 'normal' suggests that Alice sees herself as different to others; she gave examples of how she would join and leave schools at different times of the year. This could imply that she has not yet been able to establish and maintain a sense of belonging at school.

4.5 The Impact of Loss and Separation

This overarching theme was developed from superordinate themes present in five of the seven participant interviews (see Appendix G). Although Ava and Lucy briefly drew upon the concept of loss in their interviews with regards to friendships and leaving things behind when relocating, this was not a prominent theme within their interviews. All other participants shared experiences of loss in relation to their

learning and or friendships. Reference was also made to lost experiences during times of parental deployment and the emotional impact that separation from a deployed parent had on learning.

Considering it was previously highlighted that participants valued friendships to help them feel a sense of belonging at school, participants found loss of friendships particularly challenging when transitioning to a new area:

Jack: *"leaving your old place behind everything that's familiar behind and all your friends so all of the relationships you've built over the last year or two have just been left behind and you now have to build new ones"* (01:171-173).

Tom: *"It's a bit odd, because I made some really good friends, and then I'd suddenly leave them again"* (02:10).

James: *"leaving friends behind and to make new friends. That is always a difficulty and I'll have to do it again when I move from here"* (05:117-118).

Jack, Tom and James spoke about the challenges of leaving friends when they transitioned to a new area. James implied that his coping mechanism was to repress the difficult feelings associated with this loss: *"I guess I know what to do now and not to get upset and not to think about it too much and just get over it and say, "I have to leave it behind and make new friends""* (05:120-121). He implies that he mentally prepares himself for having to replace these friends once he has moved. Tom spoke about how he made attempts to stay in touch but *"slowly but surely…lost contact with them"* (02:195), and Jack shared a similar experience: "*I would maintain contact with them for quite a while but eventually it would just become a big hassle or we would find new friends"* (01: 105-106). This could suggest that these

friendships which were once considered a necessary part of school life for Jack,

Tom and James eventually begin to feel futile after a transition as they have to

prioritise finding new friends.

George reflected upon the emotional impact preparing to leave his friends has on

him and his relationships:

"*I had in my head that these aren't going to be my lifelong friends. These aren't going to be my lifelong friends, so don't get too attached, don't get too close. So that was a massive wall for me*" (03:124-126).

"*When we found out we were actually moving, instead of being closer to my friends; just being like this is going to end soon, we need to spend as much time as we can together, I distanced myself, to like prepare myself for not having them there*" (03:128-130).

"*I've got three friends that I can really call my best friends. And I've made a bond with them that I told myself I wasn't going to make*" (03:138-139).

George spoke of his fears of becoming 'too attached' and developing a 'bond' with

friends through what feels like an intense fear of loss. He consciously reflected upon

mentally preparing himself for loss of these friendships by distancing himself to

avoid painful feelings. This suggests that George has developed coping strategies

such as avoidance to help him psychologically manage difficult feelings associated

with loss and separation.

George also expressed how transitioning to a new school caused some loss of

learning for him and mentions how he missed out on learning some aspects of the

curriculum: *"they were already studying some GCSE topics, because I think you*

start halfway through Year 9. So I did miss out on that" (03:209-210). However

James spoke about how he usually transitions to a new area at the end of an academic year which mitigates the need to catch up on lost learning: *"I quite often moved at the end of the school year […] and when I get back to school it's the beginning of the year so you're not doing exams right then and there and you're given time to learn the stuff"* (01:156-159).

The above experiences highlighted the impact of loss as a consequence of transitions. However, Tom, George and Alice also spoke about feelings of loss and separation in relation to parental deployment.

Tom and Alice both reflected upon the fear of death that they associated with parental deployment and the emotional impact this had on them:

Tom: *"having my dad go away into somewhere that he could possibly get killed in lots of different ways can be quite concerning as well […] It makes me feel nervous, and when he does come home, I get a sigh of relief and… I just don't want him to leave"* (02:234-236).

Alice: *"I thought a lot about 'what if he doesn't come back?' Because I always think worst-case scenario […] when I was seven, eight, I didn't understand really what a deployment was […] it was just the overwhelming not understanding what was going to happen that made me really upset and made me really stress about it and made me really self-conscious about it thinking all this stuff"* (07:149-154).

Tom and Alice feared death of their deployed parents whilst they were separated from them. They acknowledged feelings of fear, worry and 'stress' associated with the uncertainty of whether or not a deployed parent would return and Tom expressed a sense of relief upon their safe arrival home.

Alice further emphasised the difficult feelings she experienced when her parent was deployed and directly related her feelings to feelings of grief when a pet or family member has died:

"I've never been good with dealing with loss, whether it was my dad going away or a family member or pet passing away. I've never dealt with it very well […] it gets really into my head, and I have about a week of just…I can't do anything but be sad, basically. […] it just really affected me. That was the first time I actually felt like proper loss. So, it just really made me feel really upset" (07:31-37).

Alice expressed how she felt debilitated by overwhelming feelings of sadness and suggested that dealing with loss is something that she is not 'good' at. Perhaps Alice feels as though dealing with loss should get easier the more a parent is deployed however she still experiences these same emotions every time. Alice also spoke about the impact of parental deployment on her learning: "*it can be overwhelming being at school when your parents are away*" (07:237) and frequently used the word 'overwhelmed' to describe her emotional state.

She spoke of her experience of a six month parental deployment and added:

"I struggled to do homework on time […] I would have breakdowns in class, and I would start to cry randomly because I'd be happy one second, and then I'd be crying the next and I wouldn't understand it. It was just very overwhelming for me." (07:40-46).

Alice also used the words sensitive and upset to describe how she felt during this time of separation. She acknowledged these turbulent emotions and made reference to them being a barrier to learning whilst she was at school: *"I get quite burned out. I'll feel overwhelmed in one lesson, and then the next lesson I'll just feel kind of emotionless"* (07:241-242). Alice also expressed how she found it difficult to cope with work at school when her parent was about to be deployed: *"I would be able to*

do the work, if you gave me that work two weeks before I would have got it done and been on the next work within 20 minutes. But I just got so overwhelmed by facing the fact that my dad was going to be on deployment" (07:138-140). This suggests that Alice is aware of how difficult she finds it to regulate her emotions at school prior to, and during, parental deployment.

George spoke of lost experiences and linked parental deployment to parental separation:

"He was away quite a lot – loads of birthdays, Christmas. […] my dad was always deployed over Christmas, and that meant my birthday, and his birthday. So he missed quite a lot. He was there for first days of school and stuff like that, but then straight after he was off. So it was like…you know, when parents are separated, going from one household to another, that's what it kind of felt like – my dad just coming out and in, out and in". (03:328-334).

This could suggest that George may have had mixed emotions towards his father during this time and perhaps resented the fact that he needed to repeatedly leave the family home to be deployed and miss special occasions. It could suggest that George found the unpredictability of parental deployment unsettling as a child.

4.6 Establishing a Sense of Self

This overarching theme was developed from superordinate themes present in four of the seven participant interviews (see Appendix G). Jack, Tom, George and Ava shared experiences related to establishing a sense of self either as a learner in a new school or as a service child. Other participants made some reference to their identity, however this was not a prominent theme for them.

Jack, Tom, George and Ava all reflected upon their experiences of starting a new school and spoke about the need to show others who they are whilst re-establishing their own sense of identity. Tom mentioned how he found the first few weeks at a new school 'awkward':

"Definitely the first few weeks are a bit awkward, when I move from school to school, because no-one knows me, and they're like, "Who are you? How did you get in here so quick?"" (02:184-185).

Tom highlighted the curiosity of his peers and also implied that he would feel the need to answer questions about who he was and why he had started school in that area. This suggests that Tom would need to reflect upon who he was and why he had moved every time he was questioned. Jack inferred that he was more focused on ensuring that teachers knew who he was and had a good understanding of his academic ability:

"When you first moved you always have to make sure that you that you put yourself out there to make sure that […] you make good relationships with your teachers and stuff and basically tell them who you are. I was lucky coz I was quite extroverted I didn't have too much problem making friends with my teachers" (01:77-80).

Establishing an identity with his teachers appeared to be a priority for Jack when starting a new school. He expressed that he felt he needed to 'tell them' who he was and also spoke about wanting to ensure that they understood his academic ability inferring that academic attainment is important to him. Jack refers to himself as 'extroverted' throughout his interview which suggests that this is how he likes to express himself when referring to his identity. He used the phrase 'making friends with my teachers' which could infer that he values the opinions of teachers over his

peers- this could be linked to the fact that Jack was bullied by his peers *"for quite a while"* (01:3-4) when he started secondary school.

George reflected upon how he struggled to decide how he wanted to be portrayed by others when he started a new school:

"I'm kind of like a class clown […] especially in my old school I was kind of naughty, in detention every day. But […] the move calmed me down. But then trying to find my feet, I didn't know whether to act like the brainy kid I know I can be; because I knew all the answers, but I never said the answers, if that makes sense, in case people would judge me for being too smart. So then I'd just be funny. And then people liked me because I was funny" (03:116-221).

George gave labels to various identities he considered taking on in his new school: 'class clown', 'naughty', 'brainy kid' or 'funny'. This suggests that George perhaps felt as though starting a new school was an opportunity to try out a new persona or take on a new role. George appeared to consider taking on two different identities- one where he would risk being judged for being 'too smart' or one where he was likely to be accepted by his peers. George therefore linked his identity in school to a desire to fit in with his peers. George made the decision to become 'funny' as this appeared to have social benefits for him.

Ava shared experiences of how she had to re-establish where she best fit in comparison to her peers in her new class:

"…in Year 4, I was literally the fastest person in the whole school, going up to Year 6. But when I went to [name of current school], it was so different, because everyone was so much better, and it just, like [silence]" (04:147-150).

Ava made reference to how she views herself in relation to her athletic ability and gave an example whereby people in her new school may have categorised her

ability differently to people in her old school. Ava portrayed how her sense of self shifted within her new school. Her example suggests that she compares herself to others in an internal hierarchy and the moment of silence could be a reflection of how difficult it is to talk about this renewed sense of self.

Ava also made comparisons between herself and the peers in her previous school: *"I would probably have found that hard if I was at my old school. But now, because I've had better education, really, I found it a lot easier, just looking at the question"* (04:87-89). Ava's examples highlight how she repeatedly compared herself to the peer group around her to help her establish a sense of self. Similarly, Tom made comparisons between himself and his peer group: *"Year 4 was super fun […] we would have leader boards, but I was always at the bottom because we had some really clever people"* (02:66-67), this highlighted how he ranked himself within his class.

In addition to establishing a sense of self when starting a new school Tom and George reflected upon how they view themselves as service children. They spoke positively about how they feel service life has shaped their identities:

George: *"it's difficult but then it has also made me more adaptable, and easier to integrate into groups, and kind of weasel my way in"* (03:162-163).

Tom: *"you get to meet lots of new people, which is also quite nice, because you end up just growing branches of friends"* (02:211-212).

These expressions highlight how George and Tom feel military life has moulded them into being sociable people and how it allows them to grow 'branches' of social connections. The use of the words 'grow' and branches' suggest that these

connections are ongoing and continue to flourish throughout their lives. However, George used the word 'weasel' which could suggest that he feels he has become apt at discreetly merging himself into new social groups. Perhaps George is seeking to portray a sense of how being sociable is a positive trait, however feels conflicted by the process of continually having to integrate into new groups.

Both Tom and George also suggested that they feel culturally aware as people because of the life they live: *"It's quite nice, because when you're military, you move around a lot, so you get to experience lots of different cultures"* (02:201-202) and *"you get to experience the world and new places"* (03:464). George referred to himself as *"self-sustainable"* (03:350) when speaking about how he will cope when he moves to Australia. He also spoke about some of the skills he believes make up who he is and linked these to being a service child:

"you learn new skills – adaptable, more responsibility, being able to do things like some people wouldn't even know how to hammer a nail into the wall […], but I have those because I had to be that person at such a young age. I was cooking, chopping stuff with real knives and stuff like that, making cups of tea […] you definitely learn skills from being a military kid" (03:464-471).

Tom and George highlighted how their experiences have shaped their identities and explored what their experiences to date have taught them. The word 'adaptable' was used by both of these participants which perhaps suggests that they feel as though they are more capable of adapting to changes than their non MC peers.

4.7 Adapting to Changes

With reference to the theme discussed above: 'Establishing a Sense of Self', it was

highlighted that Tom and George view themselves to be 'adaptable' people. The

theme 'Adapting to Changes' was a prominent theme for five out of the seven

participants (see Appendix G).

Jack, Tom, Ava, James and Lucy expressed how they have had to adjust and adapt

to changes in relation to their school and home environments following a transition.

Lucy highlighted a number of changes that she has had to adapt to in her current

school:

"even small things like I had Welsh for a subject and lots of the places around me I
didn't recognise, I wasn't familiar with how they worked, and also the school, they
had different methods for teaching and stuff. So I would have to kind of work out,
"This is how they do stuff here. They write it like this," or, "They word it like this and
they sit like…"" (06:43-47).

Lucy inferred that she had to adapt to lots of different changes when she transitioned

to a new school. She mentioned that she needed to work out how her new school

functioned with regards to teaching styles and behavioural expectations. Similarly,

others also highlighted how they have to try and work out these unspoken nuances

within a new school:

Tom: *"I'm used to one way of being taught, and then suddenly I just, like, come back*
and then it's a completely different way and I'm like, "What's happening?" (02:186-
188).

Jack: *"and the challenges of understanding how do new teachers teach and what*
they expect and stuff" (01:208-209).

Despite referring to the above as a 'challenge', Jack revealed that he enjoys the

process of adjusting to new teaching styles: *"it's quite nice to figure out […] what the*

best way is for you to capitalise on their way of teaching" (01:237-238). Perhaps this suggests that Jack enjoys the challenge of seeking to uncover new opportunities. He mentioned that *"each school has a different timetable…different times that they do things, different start times, different end times"* (01:234-235) and expressed how he needs to adapt to these. Jack also reflected upon how he now understands behavioural expectations within some classes: *"I know to behave properly and make sure that I do the work to the level she expects"* (01:116-117).

Ava similarly spoke about how she had experienced differing behavioural expectations in her new school: *"teachers get really angry when you're late for a lesson"* (04:103), and linked this to the need to work out the physical layout of that school to ensure that she would not be late to her lessons. Ava made further reference to the physical layout of her new school and compared it to her old school: *"It was very, very different. Like, the playgrounds were so much smaller. You had a restricted space. The astro where we'd play around on was… when I saw the new one that we had, it was tiny compared to that"* (04:72-74). She suggests that the physical layout of her new school feels less restrictive and inferred that this is positively 'different'.

Tom expressed a similar view to Ava's. Despite feeling shocked by the physical differences between his old and new school Tom took solace in the fact that there were more people around him:

"The junior school was actually really, really big. I think it got the same amount of students that I have in my secondary school, which is a bit alarming. But at the same time, it was quite nice, because since there were so many people, I gradually got

used to it. But we also had quite a big playing field and playground at the same time, so it wasn't really overcrowded at all" (02:135-139).

Tom used the phrase 'gradually got used to it' which suggests that adjusting to the changes around him took some time. Like Ava, Tom acknowledged the larger physical space around him in his new school and viewed this as a positive aspect of school life. Perhaps a larger, non-crowded space reflected a sense of freedom and having more people around made school feel less daunting as a new pupil.

Participants shared experiences of adapting to cultural changes when moving to or from other countries. Lucy mentioned that *"it can be difficult adapting to the new surroundings"* (06:260-261) and spoke of *"always adjusting and adapting to new and different lifestyles"* (06:188). She made reference to specific aspects of life that she has needed to adapt to when moving countries:

"In Cyprus, you would wake up at different times and go to school at different times and obviously you have things like the heat and the environment around you and you live on a base that's fully surrounded by a fence […] it was quite different to just living normally in a town or a village. And here, […] it's quite small where I live and […] the community isn't as good as it was in Cyprus, because there aren't many people living here" (06:213-219).

Lucy made comparisons between her life in Cyprus and where she currently lives in the UK. She inferred that moving countries meant she had to adapt to time differences, difference in school times, differences in the weather, the environment and the sense of community. Lucy appeared to reminisce upon her time in Cyprus and viewed it as a positive experience. She spoke about how she found it difficult to adjust back to life in the UK.

Both Tom and James shared similar experiences of adapting to cultural changes:

Tom: *"we moved back to England. That was quite odd, because we were used to it being hot, sunny days. Maybe sometimes I'd be wearing a jumper, and it was a bit odd. But other than that, it was fine. We just had to get used to the time difference"* (02:131-133).

James: *"the moving process was, I guess I was really excited, and I didn't really want to stay in [previous county] anymore, I wanted to get away. When I moved to Cyprus I obviously enjoyed it because of the weather and stuff like beaches and hotels and the food there"* (05:27-29).

Tom expressed that the differences initially felt 'odd' as there was a lack of familiarity in terms of weather and time zone. In addition to adapting to differences in schooling these cultural changes may have initially felt unsettling for Tom when moving to a new country. James however reflected upon how he felt 'excited' to move to Cyprus and 'enjoyed' aspects of the cultural change.

Although Ava had not moved countries she expressed how she felt when she moved to a new area of the UK:

"Moving house was a bit of a shock, as well […] it just felt different to be in a different house when I was getting driven back from school […] it just didn't feel like home […]. I knew the route from school to [previous city]; I just knew all the routes and stuff off by heart. But now, going to [name of current area], I'm like, "Whoa, this is all new." It just doesn't feel right" (04:113-118).

Ava used the word 'shock' to represent how she felt moving to a new house in a new area. This suggests that the unfamiliarity of the new area may have felt unnerving for her as it did for Tom. Ava mentioned how she was familiar with her old route home

and that it 'didn't feel right' when it changed. This infers that the lack of predictability made Ava feel unsettled when she moved to her new area and suggests that physically and psychologically adapting to these changes in lifestyle will take time.

Lucy spoke about how her new school helped her to feel settled when she first arrived. She mentioned: *"it's always hard settling… going into a secondary school and it can be quite scary because there are lots of new things and I had never experienced them before"* (06:39-41). Lucy used the word 'scary' to infer that starting secondary school with people that she did not know, in an unfamiliar area was frightening. She reflected upon what her teachers did to help her adjust to the new school and make her feel settled:

"*If you haven't done this subject before […], they would introduce you to it, but not make you feel intimidated by a new subject. And they introduced you to students quite nicely and calmly and… they would pair you up with a buddy I think, who would introduce you to stuff and that was always good*" (06:27-30).

"*there were a few RAF students at the school, they introduced me to them and told me that I could sit next to this person who was also RAF, and so that was quite nice because of course you can sit next to someone who may live in the same place as you and might have gone through similar experiences*" (06:89-92).

Lucy reflected upon how the above helped her to adjust to her new school environment. She also drew upon how teachers used a friendly, calm approach to introduce her to students and suggested that they did not make her feel 'intimidated by a new subject'. This language emphasises how frightening it can be for students beginning new schools and how an empathetic approach from school staff can help new pupils adapt to changes.

4.8 The Need for Empathy and Understanding

This theme was a prominent theme for six out of the seven participants (see Appendix G). It was not a prominent theme for Ava. This could possibly be due to the fact that Ava currently attends a school with a high population of service children. In interview Ava mentioned that her parents chose to send her to her current school as they had lots of connections with other military parents whose children attended that school.

All participants (including Ava) shared that they felt they could relate to other MC CYP as these CYP understood their experiences compared to non MC peers. For example:

Alice: *"It just makes me feel so reassured that someone's felt what I have and I'm not alone or alienated in my current situation, it just makes me feel really comfortable"* (07:259-263).

Lucy: *"they could relate to you more easily […] we would talk to each other about kind of our experiences and it was nice having people who understood you"* (06:8-14).

They expressed how relating to MC peers made them feel and highlighted that being able to connect with other service pupils was a positive aspect of school life. Lucy explained why she felt these peers were easier to relate to:

"forces children, they… we know how to adapt to different situations and we've been through stuff that people who aren't in the forces may not have. We understand each other in ways that non-forces children may not understand each other and obviously it's quite hard to talk about something you've been through when they may not understand or know what you're talking about" (06:242-246).

These participants valued the understanding of MC peers as they have shared similar life experiences. Alice spoke about how she currently attends a school with

no other service pupils but mentioned that one of her friends is from Poland. She related her experiences to that of her friend's and added: "*The foreign kids, they understand, because they've had big moves, moving from countries or understanding the language or talking a separate language*" (07:78-80). Alice linked a sense of understanding with the need to adapt after transitioning to a new country.

Tom, George and Alice all shared their frustrations with the lack of understanding of some of their non MC peers and some of the curious, yet ignorant, questions and comments they have received from them. They mentioned how these made them feel irritated, for example, Tom shared:

> *"It can be quite challenging because some of the questions asked, […] like, "What's it like to live in a war zone?" […] and I'm like, "I don't live in a war zone. It's my dad who ends up flying away to a war zone. I never lived in one." […] I tell them I moved to Italy and then some people now think I'm Italian, and then start speaking Italian to me because they've gone overnight and found some Google Translate answers"*
> (02:175-180).

Participants also spoke about the need for some teachers to have an understanding of the military lifestyle and show empathy towards them in schools. George has been to seven schools and spoke about how some schools he has been to have had a better understanding than others. He compared his previous school that had a high population of service children to his current school where he is the only service child:

> *"it's annoying because at least in 'St George's', people understood; like if Dad was going away, they understood what was going on. And the teachers, they try to understand, they say they understand, but they really don't. So it is saddening, but I can deal with it – I've done it before"* (03:50-52).

George inferred that the teachers in is current school lack understanding which is 'annoying' and 'saddening'. The phrase 'I can deal with it - I've done it before'

perhaps suggests that George is used to having to cope with the feeling of not being 'understood' by teachers.

Similarly, Alice has been to eight schools and, like George, currently attends a school where she is the only service child. Whilst reflecting upon her experiences of being at school when her parent was deployed Alice expressed: *"the teachers blame it on you for being unfocused, when you've got all this stuff going on."* (07:246-247). This could suggest that Alice felt that there was a lack of empathy from her teachers for the difficult emotional experience she went through.

George and Tom both mentioned that they feel they can relate to teachers who have had similar experiences to them including teachers who have moved countries or those who grew up with parents in the armed forces: *"It makes me feel nice, knowing that it's not just me and, […] there's a lot more who have gone through what I maybe have gone through, and who understand why sometimes I'm sad, why sometimes I'm happy"* (02:228-230). However, participants also expressed that some teachers in some of the schools they have been to have made comments which reflected a lack of understanding including:

George: *""Couldn't you just settle down?""* (03:182).

And during times of parental deployment:

""Some people don't live with their dads…"" (03: 441).

Alice: *""Oh, but, well, maybe somebody's had it worse…""*

"…Yeah, I know people have had it worse, but I feel really upset and you telling me that people have it worse isn't going to make me feel better about my situation." (07:120-122).

James added: *"the teachers […] told me to grow up and don't get worked up about things"* (05:259-260).

Although these comments were not reflective of all teachers, these particular comments were remembered by participants as they made them feel frustrated. The comments suggest that a lack of empathy was communicated from these teachers and infers that that pupils emotions were dismissed rather than acknowledged and contained.

Although participants highlighted the lack of empathy and understanding of some teachers in some of the schools they have been to, they also shared examples times they have felt understood and well supported in school. Jack mentioned that he was given extra textbooks and was invited to "*special meetings*" (01:12) specifically for service pupils. George spoke of the following positive experience in one of his primary schools on a military base:

"we […] had a military pack […] whenever our dads or mums were away for a substantial amount of time, we'd […] have a teddy bear that we'd be able to cuddle at night. […] And there were a few surprises; like kids' dads and mums were coming home, surprising them in assembly and stuff […]. We had little badges, and there was a buddy bench. So if we were feeling down there were certain places we'd just go, special teachers that understood. […] it was really handy and helpful" (03:421-434).

George referred to the high level of support he received as 'handy and helpful'. He also mentioned having 'special teachers that understood' which suggests that this was a key, supportive aspect for him in school. Both Alice and Lucy also spoke of how they valued having teachers who spent time talking and listening to them:

Lucy: *"one of the teachers talked to me about her own experiences and that her dad was away a lot, and they were just very nice and I would say they were kind of supportive"* (06:112-113).

Alice: *"She just listened, and she didn't tell me what I did was like you're acting irrational, she didn't do that. She just listened and she gave me advice. She let me sit*

in a lounge for a bit and just let me out of lessons when I've had too much and was
really stressing about something. It's just sometimes you need someone to listen"
(07:117-120).

Participants were reflective with regards to what they feel has supported them at schools they have been to and what further support they feel is needed in schools for service children. All of their suggestions were centred around increasing emotional support in schools. Alice stated that emotional support in schools *"needs more focus"* (07:232) and George expressed his views:

"in schools where there's a high population of military kids, there's a system in place; but then even if there's just one kid at the school, who is a military kid, he or she still needs to be checked up on and still needs to be understood. […] They don't need a whole member of staff that is dedicated to being a military specialist, just the headmaster or a teacher in general, just […] pulling me out of a lesson just to ask what I'm like. Or […] just at lunchtime, coming over and just wanting to have a little conversation with me about what's going on; it just would have been really helpful"
(03:481-489).

Similarly, Lucy and Alice suggested that it would be helpful for school staff to talk to them, ask questions and show an interest in their lives:

Lucy: *"I would say that it's good to talk to people and ask how they're feeling […] maybe they could ask […] "Are you excited about your new place? Are you looking forward to it? Are you nervous about it?" Questions about how they feel about it"*
(06:177-195).

Alice: *"Just talking to them, listening to them, understanding them is the best way to make them feel better about themselves. Just tell them that what they're feeling is completely normal and that they have the right to feel sad in that situation"* (07:250-253).

Both George and Alice also spoke about how they have found it supportive to have a group or club specifically for service children to meet up together in school. Tom

added that he is helping staff at his school to set up a room where service children can video call their deployed parents. He mentioned how differing time zones in other countries mean that some service children need to talk to a deployed parent during the school day, to avoid missing the opportunity.

4.9 Summary of Findings

The findings show that although each individual participant shared diverse experiences they expressed some similar thoughts and feelings in relation to the five overarching themes. In summary, participants shared experiences of trying to search for where they belong in relation to their new area, new school and fitting in with peers after a transition. They also spoke about aspects of loss in relation to familiarity, friendships and learning following transitions as well as the emotional impact of parental deployment.

Some participants shared experiences of re-establishing their own identities within schools and spoke about how they view themselves as service children. Participants spoke about the different aspects of home and school life they have had to adjust or adapt to following transitions. Lastly, participants shared experiences which highlight the significance of pupils and school staff understanding aspects of the military lifestyle. They reflected upon helpful, school based strategies that have previously been employed to offer emotional support to them in some of the schools they have been to. In the following chapter, these findings will be discussed in relation to theory and existing research.

5. Discussion

5.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter provides a discussion of the five overarching themes: 'Searching to Belong', 'The Impact of Loss and Separation', 'Establishing a Sense of Self', 'Adapting to Changes', and 'The Need for Empathy and Understanding' in relation to existing literature and relevant psychological theory. These themes are used as sub-headings below to allow each of them to be individually discussed. Within this chapter, links to psychological theory and existing literature are proposed. Implications for school staff and EPs are provided and the researcher's personal reflections on the research process are highlighted. Limitations of the current research and suggestions for future research are discussed.

Findings are discussed in relation to the research question:

'How do service CYP experience education?'

5.2 Searching to Belong

Participants in the current study expressed a desire to seek a sense of belonging; in school, as learners, within peer groups and within a new home environment. For participants in the current study, the need to 'search' to establish a sense of belonging stemmed from their transitions to new schools in different geographical locations.

Existing literature identifies some of the school transition stressors for MC adolescents as; strains on peer relationships, adapting to a new school or environment, academic challenges and difficulties with student-teacher relationships (Bradshaw et al., 2010). Other literature has focused on the social and emotional wellbeing needs of MC CYP during deployment (Chandra et al., 2010; Pexton et al.,

2018). There have been some links made between deployment related stressors experienced by MC youth and attachment theory within Esposito-Smyther et al.'s (2011) review paper. However, the review focused on relationships between MC adolescents and their caregivers during parental deployment. It was therefore felt that attachment theory could also be useful to assist in discussion of the overarching theme 'searching to belong' for MC adolescents in relation to the current study's findings.

The concept of "school belonging" has been connected to interpersonal relationships and defined as "the extent to which students feel personally accepted, respected, included, and valued by others within the school social environment" (Goodenow, 1993, p. 80). In light of this, school belonging could share close links with attachment theory as the process of attachment has been found to have a significant influence on educational contexts (Castro & Pereira, 2019).

Attachment theory derives from the nature of a child's emotional tie to their primary caregiver and can be used to help understand how to promote psychological and social wellbeing (Bowlby, 1988). Early attachment theory suggests that individuals who develop secure attachments to at least one early caregiver will be able to use this as prototype for establishing future social relationships (Bowlby, 1988). In addition to this, research has suggested that children with secure attachments to caregivers score higher than their insecure peers on communication, cognitive engagement, emotional, social, and behavioural school adjustment, and motivation (Moss et al., 2005; Granot & Mayseless, 2001). Participants in the current study shared experiences of exploring social dynamics and establishing social relationships with peers within new schools following transitions.

Hazen and Shaver (1994) developed a model for how attachment relationships can be extended to include peers. Peer relationships have been found to be important for all adolescents irrespective of their perceived early attachment relationship to a parent (Nickerson & Nagle, 2005). Unlike in infancy, adolescent attachment security is acknowledged as a characteristic of an internal state of mind, as opposed to a feature of a particular attachment relationship (Fearon et al., 2014; Main et al.,1998). The way adolescents represent and think about attachment has an influence on their relationships (Fearon et al., 2014). This suggests that peer relationships can help to fulfil an internal, psychological sense of belonging for adolescents.

Peers have been found to be the primary source of proximity seeking for early adolescents (Nickerson & Nagle, 2005), this infers that adolescents will seek support from peers, as opposed to parents, when they feel upset or threatened. Research has suggested that during this time, there is increased conflict within the parent-child relationship and adolescents perceive their parents as less supportive (Ammaniti et al., 2000; Arnett, 1999; Paikoff & Brooks-Gunn, 1991). Throughout this period peers are therefore said to become a greater source of support for young people (Allen & Land, 1999).

Participants in the current study expressed how they valued peer relationships in different ways and suggested that they were an important part of school life- *"it's a lot better school, because I have such nicer friends"* (04:65) and *"I like school when I've got friends, it's not fun unless you have friends at school"* (07:204-205). This suggests that the formation of positive peer relationships and connections helped these service pupils to develop a psychological sense of belonging in school. It also infers that feeling accepted and valued by peers improves school experiences for some service pupils.

The above notion infers that having a peer group feels supportive for service pupils in school. However, Arnold et al (2011) found that MC pupils find it difficult to initiate and sustain deep, meaningful relationships with their peers. This concurs with the fear of loneliness Lucy experienced when she transitioned to a new school:

"sometimes I just had to hang out with people I didn't necessarily like too much or I didn't have much in common with, because… yeah, it wasn't worth being lonely." (06:73-75). Although these feelings are common during early adolescence as the secure base phenomenon is demonstrated in peer relationships (Hazen and Shaver, 1994), many service CYP frequently transition between schools and are forced to restart the process of forging new friendships to help them develop a sense of belonging (Le Hanna, 2020).

Astor et al (2013) suggested that opportunities to forge new peer relationships in schools are crucial for service pupils who have just transitioned. Findings from the current study support this notion as participants inferred that they felt a need to establish new relationships with peers quickly after starting a new school despite the fact that some of them felt superficial. Alice also shared how she conformed as a plea to be accepted by her peers and expressed that she felt a strong desire to *"be like everyone else"* (07:190).

In addition to expressing a desire to form friendships with peers to fit in and alleviate feelings of loneliness, findings of the current study highlight that building relationships with other service CYP can feel *"really helpful"* (03:360) as within these peer groups they feel well *"understood"* (05:27). Having opportunities to develop relationships with MC peers who they share common life experiences and cultural values with therefore promoted feelings of acceptance and belonging within school for service pupils. Although Bradshaw et al (2010) outlined that further research into

supportive school practices for service pupils is needed, they suggested that service pupil support groups may be helpful during times of parental deployment. Participants in the current study concurred with this suggestion but also inferred that developing attachments with other MC peers in the form of friendships, not just in structured groups during times of parental deployment, felt reassuring.

Developing positive attachments to peers was found to be conducive to developing a sense of belonging at school for all participants in the current study. However, some participants also suggested they had developed emotional connections to physical places. These participants spoke fondly of geographical locations they had once lived in and Jack specifically expressed that he maintained a strong emotional tie to the city he used to live in: "*I refer to that to this day as my home […] it's where I spent half my life so far. And it's where I'm planning on moving back to for University I still refer to that as my home*" (01:48-50). Hay's (1998) theory of a sense of place provides a meaningful explanation for the ascribed relationship some service CYP may have with areas they have lived in. It suggests that an individual can experience a long-term affective bond to a particular geographical location and ascribe meanings to this bond which develops a sense of belonging. Hay (1998) also suggests that a geographical area can become an anchor of an individual's identity.

Findings of the current study highlight that service pupils seek a sense of belonging within peer groups and with regards to a physical place to call home following transition. Seeking a sense of belonging as a learner within a new school was also referred to in the current study: *"when you first move you always have to make sure […] that you're put in the right groups making sure that I said why I thought I belonged in say a higher group or something"* (01:77-81). Although this experience shares some common features with regards to establishing an identity within school,

the use of the word 'belonged' reflected a desire to be acknowledged and feel

accepted. It also infers that the participant sought to have their academic needs met

by their teacher and took independent steps towards achieving a sense of school

belonging. The notion that service pupils independently seek to establish a sense of

belonging within attainment groups following transition has not been highlighted in

existing literature. However, research on pupil reintegration found that learners who

were placed in incorrect attainment groups were left feeling as though they had not

been thought about by their teachers (Pillay et al.,2013).

5.3 The Impact of Loss and Separation

Research focussing on the stressors of school transitions for MC adolescents found

that students expressed that the inevitable ending of close relationships led them to

avoid making close connections with peers at new schools (Bradshaw et al., 2010).

Participants in the current study overtly expressed that leaving friendships behind felt

difficult. In concurrence with Bradshaw et al.'s (2010) findings, some participants in

the current study also inferred that they made attempts to avoid forming close bonds

with peers to avoid the inevitable grief that came with losing them: "*I had in my head*

that these aren't going to be my lifelong friends. These aren't going to be my lifelong

friends, so don't get too attached, don't get too close" (03:123-124).

George shared an example of how he mentally tried to prepare himself for loss

"*instead of being closer to my friends […] I distanced myself, to like prepare myself*

for not having them there." (03:128-130). James expressed that his way of coping

with loss of friendships was to avoid thinking about it: "*I guess I know what to do now*

and not to get upset and not to think about it too much and just get over it and say, "I

have to leave it behind and make new friends."" (05:120-121). Consistent with previous research (Bradshaw et al.,2010) findings from the current study highlight that it may feel easier for MC adolescents to form superficial friendships, or in James' case, perhaps psychologically dissociate themselves to disconnect from difficult feelings of loss.

Although the most prevalent type of loss is loss through death, loss can be uniquely experienced in different forms (Yousuf-Abramson, 2020). Despite concepts of loss and separation being frequently mentioned in literature exploring the experiences of service CYP, there have been no explicit links made to theories of loss. Pexton et al (2018) found that clinically elevated levels of anxiety and stress symptoms were reported by children at each stage of parental deployment. MC adolescents in the current study repeatedly expressed difficulties associated with coping emotionally during times of parental deployment. George shared that his father repeatedly leaving and returning felt like his parents were separated: *"You know, when parents are separated, going from one household to another, that's what it kind of felt like – my dad just coming out and in, out and in"* (03:333-334), suggesting that the repeated experience of separation was difficult to cope with. Alice directly related her experiences of parental deployment to previous experiences of bereavement: *"I've never been good with dealing with loss, whether it was my dad going away or a family member or pet passing away. I've never dealt with it very well"* (07:31-32).

In light of participant's comments in relation to loss, Georges' link to parental separation and Alice's direct link to bereavement, it was felt that links to theories of loss could be further explored in relation to parental deployment. Worden (2018)

maintained that the process in which a person comes to terms with their loss is referred to as bereavement. He defined 'grief' as "a person's reaction to bereavement comprised of thoughts, feelings, and behaviours experienced after the loss that changes over time" (Worden, 2018, p. 39). In his writings on grief, Worden (2018) linked theories of attachment and loss to the experiences of grief. He stated that "the goal of attachment behaviour is to maintain an affectional bond, situations that endanger this bond give rise to certain very specific reactions" (Worden, 2018, p.16), this suggests that the threat of separation from a parent whom a child has a close relationship which can result in certain emotional and behavioural responses.

Research on parental separation identified that children are "likely to grieve over one of their parents departing from the home" and added that "their schoolwork is likely to suffer as they become preoccupied with their familial situation" (Weiss, 1998, para.7). This, together with findings from the current study, suggest that tentative links could be made between separation from a parent during deployment and theories of loss. Worden (2018) acknowledges that individuals (both adults and children) can experience a broad range or feelings and behaviours when they grieve or anticipate loss. Participants in the current study, specifically Tom, George and Alice, revealed experiencing different feelings during parental deployment. According to Worden these feelings could be associated with 'normal or uncomplicated grief' which "encompasses a broad range of feelings, cognitions, physical sensations, and behavioural changes that are common after a loss" (Worden, 2018, p.27).

Tom and George spoke about feeling *"sad"* (02:102; 03:349) during parental deployments and similarly Alice expressed feeling *"really upset"* (07:37) during this

time. Worden (2018) identified that sadness is the most common feeling experienced after loss. He also states that many individuals experience a fatigue or sense of numbness and report lack of feelings. The feelings Alice revealed she has experienced during parental deployment could share some resemblance with these feelings as she expressed how she felt *"burned out", "emotionless" and "overwhelmed"* (07:241-242). Worden (2018) suggested that individuals sometimes experience a lack of emotion after a loss as they psychologically block feelings out because acknowledging them or "allowing them all into consciousness would be overwhelming" (Worden, 2018, 32). This infers that support from an attuned, attentive adult at school during these times could be beneficial for service pupils. Bion (1963) introduced the concept of 'containment' which assumes that individuals (in this case, school staff) can 'contain' somatic, emotional and psychic distress of others (pupils) so thoughts can be made sense of and meaning can be developed within a dyadic relationship.

Although participants in the current study expressed experiencing difficult emotions during parental deployments, service CYP have been found to successfully adapt to moderate to severe tolerable stressors such as longer or combat deployments, parental injury or death when adequate support is in place (Lemmon & Chartrand, 2009). However, Lemmon and Chartrand (2009) also highlighted that these stressors can become severe and cause emotional and behavioural difficulties for CYP when they are not adequately supported. The complex emotions experienced within the deployment cycle and the proposed links to theories of loss suggest that service pupils require additional support at school during this time.

There are different interpretations of the various 'emotional phases' service CYP and their families experience during parental deployment (NFF, 2016; National Military

Family Association, 2021). However, according to the American Psychological Association (2007) there are at least four distinct phases including pre-deployment, deployment, reunion of parent and post-deployment. The NFF (2016) suggest that service CYP experience different emotions during each phase of the cycle. This infers that they will need emotional 'containment' (Bion, 1963) and support from teachers before, during and following parental deployment to help them process their thoughts and feelings.

Findings of the current study were also consistent with previous research which has indicated that fear of the potential death of a parent is an additional stressor during parental, war deployment for service CYP (Huebner & Mancini, 2005; Mmari, 2009; Lester & Flake, 2013). For example, Tom shared:

"…having my dad go away into somewhere that he could possibly get killed in lots of different ways can be quite concerning […] It makes me feel nervous" (02:234-235).

And Alice expressed- *"I thought a lot about 'what if he doesn't come back?' Because I always think worst-case scenario […] it was just the overwhelming not understanding what was going to happen that made me really upset and made me really stress about it"* (07:149-153).

The findings of the current study infer that school staff should be aware of the multifaceted experience of parental deployment (NFF, 2016) so that they can offer appropriate emotional support to service pupils during this time.

Within the current study it was emphasised that the stressors associated with parental deployment can have an impact on learning. For example, Alice shared how she found it difficult to keep up with learning tasks in school leading up to parental deployment:

"I would be able to do the work, if you gave me that work two weeks before I would have got it done and been on the next work within 20 minutes. But I just got so

overwhelmed by facing the fact that my dad was going to be on deployment"
(07:138-140).

She also spoke of the emotional impact of parental deployment on her ability to cope in school and meet homework deadlines. Worden (2018) emphasised that individuals experience feelings of helplessness during the early stage of loss. Alice may have begun to experience this with the anticipated loss associated with upcoming parental deployment.

Although Mmari et al (2009) found that educators perceived deployments to be affecting MC students' emotional functioning in school, the current study was able to offer additional value to these perceptions as it provides an insight into the direct experience of a service pupil. This finding suggests that school staff should be mindful of the effect that the stress of separation from a parent can have on learning for some service pupils throughout different stages of the deployment cycle.

Another experience of loss highlighted by participants in the current study was the loss of experiences with their parent as a consequence of parental deployment. Concurrent with Mmari et al.'s (2010) findings where MC youth reported difficulty coping with the absence of the deployed parent at special occasions George shared *"he was away quite a lot – loads of birthdays, Christmas. […] my dad was always deployed over Christmas, and that meant my birthday, and his birthday. So he missed quite a lot"* (03: 328-330).

Some participants in the current study also reflected upon lost learning opportunities as a consequence of transitioning to a new school part way through the academic year. These participants inferred that missing out on curriculum topics or repeating learning felt difficult. This finding adds to existing research suggesting that each time a service pupil transitions, there is a period of approximately four to six months for

the student to feel academically re-established (Weisman, 2012). This also links to the above theme of 'searching to belong' as service pupils who have lost opportunities to learn topics with their peers could be required to learn them separately. For some service CYP this could exacerbate feelings of difference between themselves and other class members.

5.4 Establishing a Sense of Self

Findings from the current study suggest that service pupils made attempts to establish a sense of self with each transition to a new school. They made reference to re-establishing who they were within a new school and their identity as learners. These participants also spoke of how they view themselves and expressed how they have attributed aspects of who they are to military culture. In addition to the normative developmental processes that take place within adolescence, frequent transitions mean that many service CYP are forced to repeatedly re-establish who they are with new people in new schools and their sense of self.

According to Erikson's (1968) identity formation theory, the most significant developmental tasks for adolescents include; solving an identity versus role confusion crisis, constructing their own unique sense of identity, and finding the social environment where they can develop a sense of belonging and create meaningful relationships with others. This early, yet influential, research suggests that an individual's sense of identity and the quality of relationships with peers are closely related, and of great importance, within adolescence. Consistent with Erickson's (1968) earlier work, Becht et al (2017) has stated that openness to identity change in adolescence is an important long-term predictor of identity achievement in emerging adulthood.

Many MC adolescents have multiple opportunities to change their identity in school when they experience transitions. Kranke et al (2013) highlighted that being a new pupil can create an opportunity for service pupils to re-establish an identity and start from a blank slate. Some findings of the current study were consistent with Kranke et al.'s (2013) suggestion as George expressed how he *"didn't know whether to act like the brainy kid"* (03:118) or the *"class clown"* (03: 116) when he started a new school. Recounts from other participants in the current study also highlighted the curiosity of peers to work out who they were as a new pupil when they transitioned to a different school.

Being the new pupil within a new school posed other challenges for participants in the current study with regards to establishing a sense of self. Some participants shared how they compared their academic and sporting abilities to peers in their new school. They inferred that they went through a process of re-establishing where they felt they should conceptually position or rank themselves in comparison to their new peers. For example, Ava shared- *"in Year 4, I was literally the fastest person in the whole school, going up to Year 6. But when I went to 'Oak Hill', it was so different, because everyone was so much better"* (04:148-149). As well adjusting to the loss of a former identity, these participants had to re-establish their sense of self as learners and within a new peer group, perhaps to help establish an overall sense of belonging. Concurrent with this finding Le Hanna (2020) acknowledged that stressors including parental deployment and transitions can have an impact on the development of a sense of self for MC students.

Despite the difficulties associated with high mobility, Blum (2005) highlighted how learning to interact with new people and the development of extrovert behaviours can help MC adolescents develop buoyancy in social and work environments. The

notion that developing extroverted behaviours can be beneficial to MC pupils was supported by Le Hanna (2020) in research exploring MC adolescent's perception of identity in secondary schools. Findings of the current study provide further support for this notion:

"When you first moved you always have to make sure that you that you put yourself out there to make sure that […] you make good relationships with your teachers and stuff and basically tell them who you are. I was lucky coz I was quite extroverted I didn't have too much problem making friends with my teachers" (01:77-80).

Jack frequently used the term 'extroverted' to refer to his sense of self and other participants also implied that they employed extrovert behaviours at school.

Although Jack revealed that he views himself as extroverted he also expressed that he was bullied *"for quite a while"* (01:3-4) when he started secondary school. Previous research has suggested that service pupils could be targeted by non MC students as they possess attributes that make them seem different to others (Goffman, 1963). Astor et al (2013) later suggested that MC pupils could become bullied for being the new pupil in school because of frequent family relocations associated with the military lifestyle. The experience of being bullied that Jack shared within the current study has therefore been acknowledged as a fairly common experience for MC youth. Sullivan et al (2015) highlighted that MC adolescents are 1.7 times more likely to be bullied in US public school settings than non MC adolescents.

Although findings from the current study highlighted the difficulties faced in relation to developing an identity within a new school and as a learner, participants also expressed the positives they associate with being part of a military family. These

participants spoke of how they see themselves as service CYP and how the military lifestyle has shaped their sense of self including allowing them to become sociable, adaptable and responsible people.

Many of the participants expressed how being a MC young person has allowed them to live in different places and *"experience lots of different cultures"* (02: 202). These participants expressed that this makes them feel knowledgeable about the world they live in. Some participants suggested that living in different countries has made them more culturally aware as people and compared their varied cultural experiences with that of non MC CYP who have always lived in the same area. Some participants in the current study also spoke of how they had learnt things about the world through listening to their fathers' stories from deployments in other countries. This finding adds to Le Hanna's (2020) findings which emphasise that MC adolescents view themselves as confident, empathetic, mature, and adaptable.

MC adolescents are not only seeking to establish a sense of identity as part of their normative developmental process, they are also seeking to establish a sense of self as a MC young person embedded within the wider "military culture" (Kranke & Dobalian, 2018, p.595). Whilst Le Hanna (2020) recognised that MC adolescent's perceptions of themselves is likely to change as they get older, it was also acknowledged that military culture helps them to develop maturity through respect for others, self-reliance, and discipline. Consistent with the perceived sense of self-reliance, George expressed that he views himself as *"self-sustainable"* (03:350) during parental deployment, which could suggest that he feels mature and confident supporting himself through challenging times.

While some research has suggested that MC YP experience prolonged or delayed adolescent maturity (Mc Donald 2010; Moore & Barker 2012), Le Hanna's (2020) findings contradicted this notion. Le Hanna (2020)'s narrative inquiry revealed that the MC adolescents in her study overwhelmingly viewed themselves as more mature than their peers, particularly non MC peers. The current study also elicited the voice of MC CYP and concurrent with Le Hanna's (2020) findings, participants in the current study referred to themselves as responsible and inferred that they viewed themselves as more adaptable than their non MC peers.

Existing research has also highlighted that MC adolescents also may experience increased stress with role ambiguity during parental deployment. During this time, it has been suggested that the family home suddenly becomes a single-parent household so MC adolescents may take on additional responsibilities to support the remaining parent (Chawla & Solinas-Saunders, 2011; Harrison & Vannest, 2008). Findings from the current research highlight that some MC adolescents see it as their duty to help and support the remaining parent during parental deployment as opposed to an additional stressor:

"You learn new skills –adaptable, more responsibility, […] some people wouldn't even know how to hammer a nail into the wall […]. I was cooking, chopping stuff with real knives […], making cups of tea at such a young age […] you definitely learn skills from being a military kid." (03:464-471).

George shared how he views this as a positive experience and talks of the skills it has taught him which add to his sense of self.

5.5 Adapting to Changes

Early attachment research found that infants in unfamiliar situations or without a secure base were less likely to move about and explore than those in familiar

situations or with a secure base (Ainsworth & Bell, 1970; Bowlby, 1988; Schwarz, 1972). Other research has highlighted that under stress, individuals become more sensitive to proximity-related words (Mikulincer et al., 2000) or attachment figures (Mikulincer et al., 2002). This suggests that individuals seek a sense of familiarity in times of distress. These existing findings are offered as an insight into a way of thinking about how MC adolescents may feel and act in unfamiliar environments and situations following relocation. Participants in the current study spoke of adapting to; new and unfamiliar home environments, cultures, schools, teaching methods and expectations of school staff following a relocation. Since frequent relocations have been found to be significant stressors for MC YP (Bradshaw et al., 2010), this, in addition to the above, suggests that MC adolescents are likely to seek a sense of familiarity following geographical relocations and during transitions to new schools.

Participants in the current study spoke of the difficulties they experienced with regards to adjusting and adapting to, and within, new environments following a relocation: *"it can be difficult adapting to the new surroundings"* (06:260-261), *"always adjusting and adapting to new and different lifestyles"* (06:188). Bradshaw et al (2010) highlighted that MC adolescents found it stressful adjusting to the physical school building, adapting to the culture and context of a new school and learning new school policies and procedures. Findings from the current study support the notion that service pupils find it difficult to adapt to these changes but participants particularly emphasised the challenges associated with adjusting to the physical layout of a new school. This shares commonalities with Bradshaw et al.'s (2010) suggestion that service pupils feel safe when they are familiar with the physical layout of the school. The unpredictability of the layout of the new school appeared to cause Ava to worry about whether she would make it to lessons on time and others

spoke of needing to learn the new layout quickly. Some participants also mentioned how transitioning to a bigger school with more people or to a secondary school initially felt *"alarming"* (02:136) and *"scary"* (06:40).

Although participants in the current study expressed that they found it difficult to adjust to the physical layouts of new, bigger schools they also emphasised the benefits of having more space and being surrounded by more people. This could share some commonalities with the overarching theme of 'searching to belong' as there is a suggestion that being surrounded by more people feels supportive in a new environment- "*it was quite nice, because since there were so many people, I gradually got used to it*" (02:136-137). Tom emphasised that he *"gradually got used to"* (02:136-137) his new school environment which could suggest that although some MC students in existing research (Bradshaw et al., 2010; Le Hanna, 2020), and within the current study, view themselves as adaptable, it still takes them time to adjust to changes. Tom made a link between having more people around him and gradually adapting to changes in his new school environment.

Arnold et al (2013) suggested that teachers of MC students need to be adept at providing structured and predictable classroom environments to support those who have transitioned to a new school. Arnold et al.'s (2013) suggestion could be viewed through an attachment lens whereby it may be considered that service pupils who have transitioned to a new school seek a sense of predictability or familiarity during stressful times. This infers that for a new school to become a secure base for service pupils it must provide them with both a physical and a psychological sense of security. Lucy highlighted the lack of familiarity she experienced when she relocated and started a new school: *"even small things like I had Welsh for a subject and lots of the places around me I didn't recognise, I wasn't familiar with how they worked,*

and also the school, they had different methods for teaching and stuff. So I would

have to kind of work out, "This is how they do stuff here""" (06:43-46). Structured

timetables, lists of all subjects taught, maps of the layout of the school and lists of

school rules and expectations could be shared with service pupils prior to them

starting at a new school to help offer a sense of predictability and ease feelings of

uncertainty.

Within the current study participants highlighted that they found it challenging

adjusting to new teaching styles and working out the expectations of new teachers

following transitions. Previous research exploring teacher's perceptions emphasised

the perceived need to support service pupils adjust to different teaching methods,

curriculums and pacing within new schools (Arnold et al., 2013). However, findings

from the current study add to these perceptions as they offer the viewpoints of

service pupils themselves. Although teachers perceive there is a need to help MC

students adjust (Arnold et al., 2013) the findings of the current study highlight that

some MC students are still finding it difficult to adjust to new teaching styles and

expectations of new teachers- *the challenges of understanding how do new teachers*

teach and what they expect and stuff" (01:208-209). This suggests that teachers

should be mindful of these difficulties for newly transitioned service pupils and take

an empathetic approach towards supporting them. Teachers should consider

providing clear explanations of what is expected of students academically and

behaviourally following a transition to a new school and provide small group or one-

to-one opportunities for new students to ask specific questions. They should also

seek to explore service pupils' experiences and show an interest in their lives to help

develop attuned relationships.

Participants in the current study also highlighted difficulties they experienced adapting to cultural changes. Those who had moved countries expressed how they had to adapt to changes in time zones, school start times, the weather and the environment. Participants who had moved to the UK after having lived on a military base also spoke of a change in the sense of community. They inferred that the sense of community on military bases in Cyprus felt more active and thus supportive. This finding supports Bradshaw et al.'s (2010) finding that students who attended schools on a military bases or in communities where there were more military families tended to experience less stress than students attending schools where there were fewer military pupils on roll. Both of these findings could suggest that being surrounded by other service pupils or families helps service pupils adapt to changes within their environment. Lucy shared how connecting with other service pupils felt supportive when she first started a new school in the UK:

"*there were a few RAF students at the school, and they introduced me to them and […] told me that I could sit next to this person who was also RAF, and so that was quite nice because […] you can sit next to someone who may live in the same place as you and might have gone through similar experiences.*" (06:89-92).

Participants in the current study also shared examples of how being introduced to new subjects by teachers felt supportive when they started a new school: "*if you haven't done this subject before […], they would introduce you to it, but not make you feel intimidated by a new subject*" (06:27-28). The use of the word 'intimidated' could suggest that without a calm, empathetic approach from teachers, differences and changes can feel frightening to service pupils starting new schools. Participants in the current study also suggested that being paired up with a *"buddy"* (06:28) at their new school helped them adapt to changes. This finding is consistent with

Bradshaw et al.'s (2010) finding that fostering connections in schools helps MC students adapt to changes and feel safe. However, fostering connections between service pupils and promoting an empathetic approach relies on teachers and school staff having an understanding of military culture and how they can best support service pupils in school.

5.6 The Need for Empathy and Understanding

Findings of the current study highlight an overwhelming need for empathy and understanding of the military lifestyle in some schools. This overarching theme could share close links with the theme of 'searching to belong' as Astor et al. (2013) found that caring relationships and a strong sense of belonging both played a significant role in promoting wellbeing among students in MC schools.

In 2011 De Pedro et al suggested that future research needed to specifically focus on the role of school-level factors including teacher and peer awareness and support as well as school climate on the social and emotional consequences of MC students. Although the current study did not specifically focus on these areas, findings highlighted that improved teacher and peer awareness of the military lifestyle would have been beneficial for the MC adolescents interviewed.

The current study found that participants felt *"reassured"* and *"comfortable"* (07:259-263) knowing that they could *"talk to"*, *"relate to"* and feel *"understood"* (06:8-14) by other service pupils. Participants expressed that it feels easier to talk to MC peers as they "*understand each other in ways that non-forces children may not*" (06:243-244) and inferred that this makes them feel as though they are "*not alone or alienated*" (07:262). Participants in the current study reflected on the benefits of being able to connect with other MC peers at school and some inferred how being the only MC

student in a school can feel difficult. In addition, some participants also shared their frustrations with the lack of understanding of some of their non MC peers. Findings of the current study are consistent with research which has suggested that MC adolescents felt alienated, had difficulty making friends and could not form caring relationships in schools with high numbers of non MC pupils due to a perception that non MC peers and teachers did not understand military life and culture (Mmari et al.,2009).

The current study highlighted that participants perceived a need for improved empathy and understanding of the military lifestyle within some of the civilian run schools they had attended in the UK. Participants in the current study emphasised how supportive and *"nice"* (02:228) it was to be in schools where they felt understood by teachers who also had military connections. However, participants also expressed their frustrations with receiving emotionally dismissive comments from some other teachers following transitions, and during times of parental deployment, which reflected a lack of empathy and understanding. This is concurrent with research which has suggested that many civilian teachers may be unprepared to sensitively support MC students who are facing fears of parental injury or death during parental deployment (De Pedro et al.,2011; Mmari et al.,2009).

Findings from the current study accentuate the need for schools to promote a culture of understanding in relation to military culture and lifestyle amongst staff and students. Astor et al (2013) maintain that positive school climates are crucial to the social, emotional, and academic success of service pupils. According to Cohen et al (2009), a positive school climate fosters caring relationships between students, their peers and staff, promotes a strong sense of belonging and supports feelings of safety, whilst minimising exposure to risky peer behaviours. In light of findings from

the current study, fostering caring relationships between service pupils, their peers, and staff, appears to be easier when there is a shared sense of understanding about the military lifestyle and service pupils' experiences. The findings also suggest that peers and teachers who *"understand"* (02:228) can empathise with service pupils' experiences. This suggests that a whole school approach to improving school climates could have social, emotional and academic benefits for service pupils, particularly in schools where there is a low population of service pupils.

Previous research has highlighted that teachers without military connections found it challenging to be able to relate to the experiences of MC CYP, particularly parental deployments (Arnold et al.,2013; Bradshaw et al.,2010). However, Arnold et al (2013) also highlighted that despite not being able to relate to these experiences civilian teachers perceived it to be important to get to know MC students, be friendly and ask questions. In the current study, participants revealed that they found it supportive to have teachers who spent time with them, listened to them and asked them questions- particularly around the time of transitions and during parental deployments. However, findings of the current study revealed that this does not always happen in schools where there are a low population of service pupils. George expressed that *"in schools where there's a high population of military kids, there's a system in place"* (03:481-482) but emphasised that service pupils in schools with low populations still need to be *"checked up on and still need to be understood"* (03:482-483)*. These findings are consistent with research suggesting that school responsiveness to MC students who attend civilian run schools needs improvement (De Pedro et al.,2014a). This highlights the need for an enhanced level of understanding of military culture within school systems to improve social and emotional support for service pupils.

MC adolescents in the current study voiced how they feel they could be best supported to cope with stressors including parental deployment and recent or upcoming transitions at school. They also reflected on previous school practices that they found helpful which included whole school social and emotional support (e.g. *"military packs"*, *"buddy benches"*, *"assemblies"* [06:421-434], spaces to call a deployed parent [02:245-247]), group level support (e.g. military peer support groups, *"special meetings"* [01:12]) and support at an individual level (e.g. "*questions about how they feel"* [06:195], *"talking to them, listening to them, understanding them"* [07:250]).

Participants in the current study inferred that simply connecting with teachers and peers can feel reassuring. George expressed that schools *"don't need a whole member of staff that is dedicated to being a military specialist, just the headmaster or a teacher in general just […] pulling me out of a lesson just to ask what I'm like. Or […] just at lunchtime, coming over and just wanting to have a little conversation with me about what's going on; it just would have been really helpful"* (03:485-489). The desire for individual emotional support was further emphasised by other service pupils in the current study who also felt that teachers simply need to take time to listen, ask questions and try their best to understand.

Previous research has highlighted the "significant role of social connectedness in the lives of military families" living on military bases (Mmari et al.,2010 p.363). However, findings of the current study drive this finding further as they relate to the educational experiences of service CYP. MC adolescents in the current study inferred that feeling connected to peers and teachers who make attempts to empathise, reassure or understand is conducive to school life. Establishing these key relationships could

consequently induce a sense of belonging for service pupils in schools. Findings of the current study suggest that in addition to individual and group level support, creating positive whole school climates whereby all teachers and pupils have a level of understanding of the military lifestyle would be supportive for service pupils.

5.7 Implications for School Staff

The five overarching themes represent the shared experiences of service pupils included in the current study. Discussion of these themes in the context of existing literature and theory has highlighted a number of implications for professional practice.

To support service pupils to establish a sense of belonging in schools following transitions, school staff could provide increased opportunities for these pupils to form friendships. This could be through encouraging them to join groups or clubs at school, offering them regular opportunities to connect with other service pupils in peer support groups or pairing them up with a 'buddy' who can help them navigate the new school systems. These practices could help service pupils connect and form bonds with other students to help establish feelings of acceptance and belonging within the school community. In schools where ability groupings are used, teachers could reassure new service pupils that they will use assessments to ensure that students are placed into the most suitable groups.

It came to light throughout discussion of the overarching theme 'separation and loss' (chapter 5.3) that school staff also have an important role to play in supporting service pupils leading up to and during parental deployment. School staff working with service pupils should consider the emotional impact of parental deployment and be attentive to service pupils' needs.

The impact of parental deployment on learning was also considered. It was emphasised that school staff should bear in mind that service pupils may find it particularly difficult to concentrate, regulate their emotions, meet homework deadlines or complete school work leading up to or during parental deployments. During this time service pupils would benefit from teachers being flexible with work expectations and homework deadlines.

Participants suggested that being allowed some time out of the classroom was supportive when they felt overwhelmed. They also voiced that simply feeling listened to and having access to an empathetic adult to talk to in school would be beneficial during this time. School staff should also ensure that service pupils have structured times and opportunities to catch up on any lost learning as a result of transitions.

Implications for school staff could also be considered in response to discussion of the overarching theme 'establishing a sense of self' (chapter 5.4). Staff should be considerate of the fact that newly transitioned service pupils will not only be coping with the stress of starting a new school, but also seeking to re-establish their sense of self as learners, and within new peer groups. School staff should also be mindful of the notion that transition related difficulties may be masked by extroversion for *some* service pupils as appearing outgoing may have social benefits for them.

Furthermore, it was discussed that MC adolescents may be more likely to be bullied in school than non MC adolescents. In addition to keeping their anti-bullying policy up to date and ensuring staff are aware of the increased risk for MC pupils, schools could put systems in place to help reduce this risk including naming a member of staff who MC students can seek support from in school. It has been suggested that quality time with an adult in school where the adult is present, attentive, attuned and

responsive is important so they can be mindfully aware of any challenges the pupil is experiencing (Bomber et al.,2010). Schools could therefore provide regular opportunities for service pupils to meet and build a trusting relationship with a named member of staff.

Some participants in the current study spoke about difficulties adapting to their new school environment and discovering new subjects that they had not previously encountered at other schools. School staff could help newly transitioned service pupils adapt to changes (chapter 5.5) through enhancing consistency and predictability where possible. For example, school staff could routinely provide new students with structured timetables, visual maps of the layout of the school and lists of the names of teachers and subjects taught at the school. Teachers should be mindful that it may take some service pupils time to adjust to new routines and practices (including the expectations and teaching styles of teachers) within the new school and make allowances for this.

Through discussion of the theme 'a need for empathy and understanding' (chapter 5.6) it was further emphasised that service pupils would benefit from being given opportunities to connect with other service pupils or staff in school. It was highlighted that some non MC staff and students lack understanding of the military lifestyle making it difficult for them to empathise with the experiences of service pupils.

Schools could support service pupils through creating a whole school approach to improving understanding of the military lifestyle. This was emphasised to be particularly important for schools with low populations of service pupils on roll who do not currently have support systems in place. Service pupils in the current study stressed the importance of feeling listened to and understood by school staff.

Participants particularly emphasised the importance of having their feelings acknowledged and validated leading up to, and during, difficult times such as parental deployment and transitions.

5.7.1 Implications for EPs

In addition to helping schools to implement the above practices in schools (5.3), EPs are in a unique position to be able to advise schools and LAs on how to best support different groups of CYP. EPs can use their knowledge of individual, group and organisational psychology to facilitate positive change for service pupils in schools. This could involve assisting schools to set up whole school approaches and systems to improve the wider understanding of the military lifestyle between staff and pupils. EPs could offer training to schools to help build staff capacity to understand more about the experiences of service pupils and how these can have an impact on how they behave and what they require to thrive school. EPs could draw upon their knowledge of adolescent development and theories of attachment to emphasise the importance of relationship formation between other students and staff in secondary schools.

EPs are in a unique position to be able to facilitate discussion groups and use consultation to respond to the needs of school staff, service pupils or their parents. They could form working parties with EPs across different EP services to share good practice and keep up to date on recent research developments. EPs could offer supervision sessions to school staff who regularly support service pupils at school. EPs could also recommend appropriate school-based interventions for service pupils who may be finding it particularly difficult to cope with transitions or around times of parental deployment. These interventions would be tailored to the individual needs of pupils, school staff or parents.

Considering the findings outlined that participants found it supportive to be around other service pupils, another possible intervention could include group wellbeing sessions with service pupils. A group format would open up opportunities for service pupils to observe, learn from, reflect upon and share their experiences with other service pupils. EPs could also help build the confidence and capacity of school staff to enable them to provide appropriate social and emotional support to service pupils. This could be done through training Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs) to work effectively to support the emotional wellbeing needs of service pupils in schools.

5.8 Dissemination of Findings

As participants in the current study particularly highlighted the importance of feeling listened to and understood in schools, the researcher aims to ensure that their voices are heard by educational professionals. The research findings will be disseminated in several ways to help widen the scope of circulation.

Firstly, a short summary of findings will be written and sent to participants and their parents. A leaflet for school staff comprising recommendations for practice (Appendix S) will be sent to charities and organisations who support service CYP and professionals who work with them, including the SCiP Alliance, the three Service Families Federations and the RECT. These organisations will be asked to share the leaflet with any schools they work with.

Findings and recommendations for EP practice (see Appendix T) will be presented to EPs and TEPs in June 2021 at a Research Day in the LA the researcher works in. A summary of the research project will also be presented to other TEPs and professional tutors at the researcher's training institution in July 2021. EPs and TEPs

who attend the research events will be sent leaflets for both EPs and school staff outlining the main findings of the current study and recommendations for practice (Appendices S & T). It is hoped that by giving EPs and TEPs a greater understanding of the educational experiences of service CYP they will be better equipped to help schools improve current practices to support service pupils.

5.9 Limitations of Current Study

The current study used IPA to explore the experiences of seven MC secondary school pupils. Although the small sample size is typical for IPA research, it means that findings may not be generalisable to a broader population of service pupils. However, this sample size allowed for a detailed, in-depth analysis of participants' lived experiences. IPA relies on idiography, meaning that researchers focus on the particular rather the universal (Smith, 1995).

Consistent with IPA requirements, the researcher made efforts to ensure that the participant sample was fairly homogenous. The participants in the current study were all aged between 11-16 years and attended secondary schools across the UK. They all had at least one parent who is a member of 'service personnel' in the British Armed Forces who had been deployed at least once since they started school. All of the participants also had experience of moving school at least once since they started school. However, the sample could be considered as an additional limiting factor with regards to how far findings can be generalised.

Despite the researcher's efforts to make the sample as homogenous as possible there were differences in the amount of times each participant had re-located and transitioned to a new school. Also, participants all had different experiences of being educated in various parts of the UK and some had also previously been educated in

other countries. Four participants had parental connections to the RAF, two had parents who served in the Royal Navy and only one participant had a parent who served in the British Army. All of the participants in the current study were White British, therefore findings do not provide an insight into the educational experiences of service pupils of other ethnicities.

In addition to the above, the researcher did not collect information on participants' socio-economic status or make note of their serving parents' rank within the Armed Forces. This lack of demographic knowledge could have had an impact on the current study's findings and/or the researcher's interpretation of the findings.

It should also be considered that interviews for the current study took place during an unprecedented time amidst the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK. Schools were suddenly closed in response to the pandemic in March 2020 and did not reopen until September 2020. This meant that there was an unanticipated ending for service pupils who were due to leave school or re-locate at the end of the academic year. Participant interviews took place during a time of national uncertainty in the UK which may have influenced some responses. Despite the fact that participants in the current study largely reflected upon and shared examples of past school experiences, it should be considered that school closures are likely to have had some impact on service pupils' experiences of education in 2020.

5.9.1 Suggestions for Future Research

The current study focuses on exploring the educational experiences of secondary school pupils from military families from the perspective of MC pupils themselves. Considering findings of the current study highlight a lack of understanding of the military lifestyle from some civilian teachers and peers it may be interesting to

explore the experiences of civilian teachers who have taught service pupils. This could provide an insight into how they have experienced supporting the service pupils they have worked with.

Future research could look further into what common practices and support systems are in place within UK schools with high populations of service pupils. This could highlight good practice in how to best support service pupils and could be shared across schools who currently do not have systems of support in place for service CYP. To embrace the voice of service CYP, further research into how supportive MC pupils have found school-based practices and support systems in these schools could also be useful.

Further exploration into what supports service pupils to establish a sense of belonging at school following a recent transition would be relevant in response to the current study's findings. Given the current findings, future research could also seek to specifically focus on the emotional impact of prolonged separation on learning and attainment during times of parental deployment for service pupils in secondary schools, and perhaps service students in further education.

The current study excluded participants who attended residential boarding schools and only included those who had spent most of their education in non-residential schools. The researcher made this decision as some of the existing research included in the literature review mentioned how multiple school transitions can be stressful for MC CYP (Aronson & Perkins, 2013; Bradshaw et al., 2010; De Pedro et al., 2016). Future research could look into comparing the educational experiences of service pupils residing in boarding schools, with those of service pupils in non-boarding schools.

5.9.2 Reflections on the Research Process

Personal reflections are provided as engagement in the research process was an ongoing, reflexive process. The researcher has chosen to write in the first person for the purpose of this sub-chapter as this tense felt more appropriate for providing personal reflections on the research process.

Overall, I have found the research process exciting and rewarding. Having heard about how some EPs support service pupils in my previous role as an AEP I was expecting to learn more about service CYP as a TEP. However, throughout my journey as a TEP this population have not been mentioned by my current EPS nor my training institution. I felt it was important to give a voice to this population and allow them to provide EPs and educational professionals with an insight into how they experience education.

Despite conducting this piece of research within what has been an extremely challenging year for many, I was fortunate to the charities and organisations who supported me along the way. The national lockdown as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic made participant recruitment particularly challenging. School closures made recruiting through schools difficult and some charities and organisations had furloughed staff making it challenging to liaise with them.

I was initially nervous about interviewing CYP online and worried about potential technology difficulties, but as soon as the first interview began I started to gradually feel more comfortable. After the first interview I reflected upon how I felt nervous and may have overcompensated for this through speaking more than I wanted to. This was a helpful reflection as I focussed on trying to remain relaxed throughout the other interviews.

I was genuinely interested in hearing the participants' experiences and had not anticipated how reflective, honest and open they would be with me. This made me feel a sense of responsibility towards ensuring that their experiences were valued and highlighted throughout the research process. I was aware that I had no personal connections to the military and wondered whether this would have affected my relationship with participants. I thought about how participants may have seen me as more relatable if I had military connections, but I also considered how having a military connection may have been a barrier to them being open with me. I reflected upon how participants may have not wanted to expose any potential vulnerabilities if I were part of the military community.

The participants I interviewed appeared comfortable being interviewed remotely from the comfort of their own homes, as a result of this, the current study yielded rich data. I feel as though this research study can therefore add to a growing body of research on the benefits of remote interviewing. Within their interviews, some participants mentioned engaging in remote teaching sessions via video conferencing software during to COVID-19 pandemic and spoke about how they enjoyed connecting with friends remotely via online gaming consoles. This could suggest that CYP feel comfortable connecting with others using online platforms as they are familiar to them. The virtual nature of remote interviewing could mean that CYP can 'hide' behind a screen relieving additional social pressures that are involved with in-person interactions.

I kept a reflective research diary which was supportive when collecting and analysing data. It helped me process my emotions during these stages and allowed me to reflect upon my interaction with the data. This diary was useful to note initial research ideas as they emerged and record reflections throughout the research

process. I also found individual and group supervision sessions helpful to reflect upon the research process, particularly during the data analysis phase. I found these sessions particularly helpful during this phase as it felt important to momentarily step away from the data and reflect before going back to immersing myself in the process. I recognise the benefits and importance of continued reflective practice throughout the research journey.

6. Conclusion

The current study aimed to explore the educational experiences of secondary school pupils from military families. The research captured the lived experiences of seven secondary school pupils from military families. Despite differences in the educational experiences of participants, five overarching themes emerged from the IPA:

- Searching to Belong

- The Impact of Loss and Separation

- Establishing a Sense of Self

- Adapting to Changes

- The Need for Empathy and Understanding

Participants spoke about their experiences of re-locating, transitioning to new schools and parental deployments. Moving schools posed challenges including having to re-establish friendships, relationships with teachers and an overall sense of belonging at school. Geographical re-locations and transitions to new schools meant that participants had to try to adapt to new cultures, school environments, teaching styles and expectations. Participants also spoke of how (within these new school environments), they had to re-establish a sense of self which included working out how to act as a new pupil and comparing themselves to other learners. Some participants spoke of how they view themselves as sociable, adaptable and *"self-sustainable"* (03:350) and related these traits to their military connections.

Service pupils in the current study expressed the importance of forming peer relationships and connecting with MC peers or teachers in school. They articulated the difficult feelings they associated with loss of these friendships when they transitioned to new schools. Participants also spoke of parental deployment and

voiced the turbulent emotions they experienced during this time. The experience of prolonged separation of a parent and fear of death impacted how they coped at school. Although participants shared the difficulties they experienced in response to transitioning to new schools and coping with parental deployment, they felt there is a lack of understanding of these experiences in some schools. Previous research has suggested that many civilian teachers may be unprepared to sensitively support MC students during parental deployment (De Pedro et al., 2011; Mmari et al., 2009) and has highlighted that school responsiveness to MC pupils' requires improvement (De Pedro et al., 2014a). The findings from the current study further develop these US findings as they include rich, insights into the thoughts, feelings and lived educational experiences of MC secondary school students in the UK.

A prominent need for empathy in relation to the experiences service pupils face and an understanding of the military lifestyle was highlighted by participants in the current study. Participants expressed a desire for peers and teachers in schools to be more understanding of the experiences service CYP go through. Increased understanding of the military lifestyle in schools may facilitate a more attuned, empathetic approach towards service pupils in schools and provide them with a sense of emotional 'containment' (Bion,1963) during times of parental deployment or school transitions. Participants inferred that they would like their experiences to be acknowledged. They voiced that they felt it is helpful for school staff to talk to them, listen to them and try to understand.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Detailed Search Strategy

Search terms: (TI "service child*" OR TI "forces child*" OR TI "military" OR TI "military-connected" OR TI "forces-connected")

AND

(AB "pupil*" OR AB "student*" OR AB "young pe*" OR "adolescen*" OR "youth") AND (TI "school*" OR TI "education") AND (AB "experience*" OR AB "perception")

=174 papers
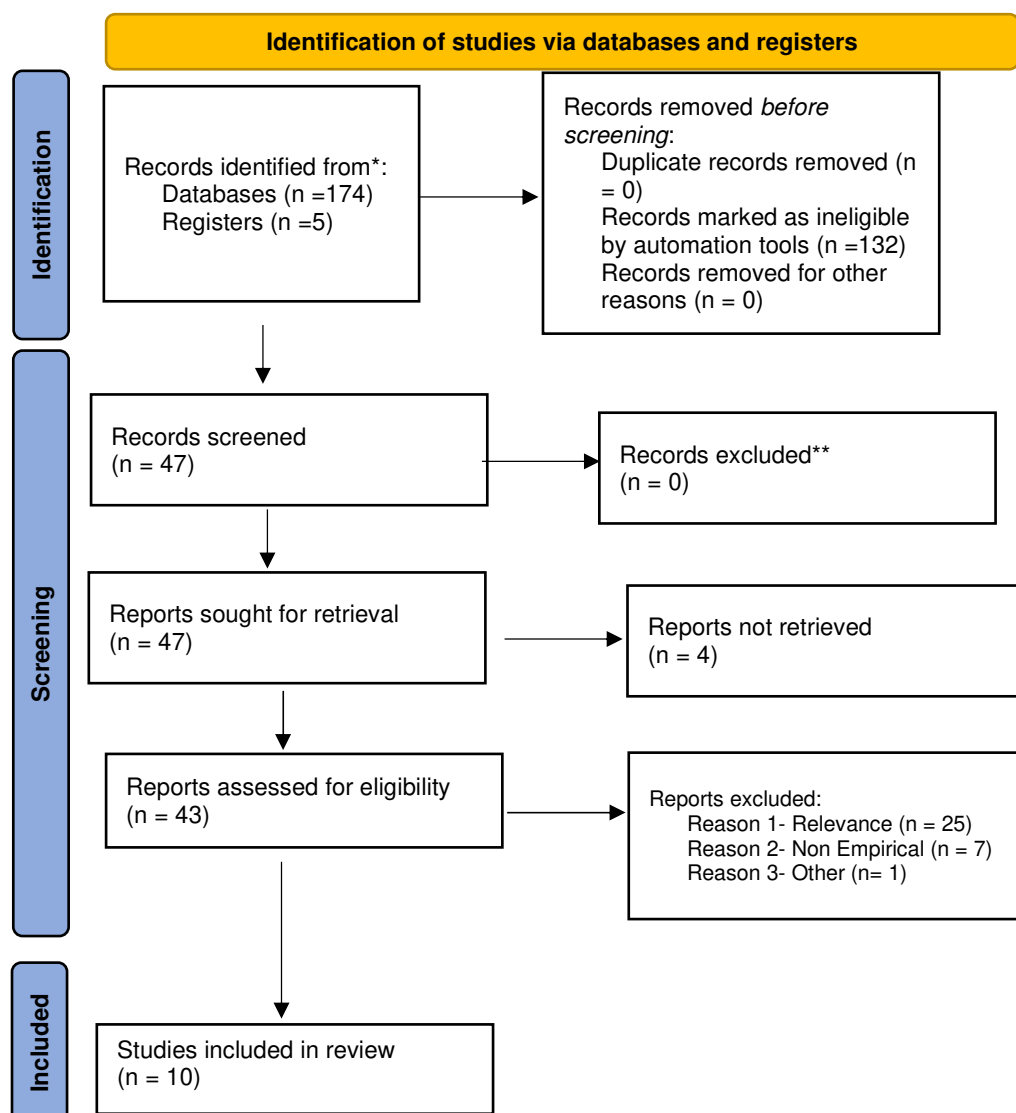
Limited to peer-reviewed= 113

Limited by date (2010-2020)= 42

Limited to English only= 42

42 results of 2010 search included in table below plus 5 snowballed= 47 papers

PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram:
From: Page MJ, McKenzie JE, Bossuyt PM, Boutron I, Hoffmann TC, Mulrow CD, et al. *The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews*. doi: 10.1136/bmj.n71

Included Research Papers	Excluded Research Papers	Reason for exclusion
Title of paper	**Title of paper**	
Removing the Camouflage: A Deeper Look at Military-Connected Adolescent Perception of Identity in Secondary Schools		
	Inter-professional education: A disaster response simulation activity for military medics, nursing, & paramedic science students	Not related to school age children or young people- Further education
	The Application of a Self-Labeling Approach among Military-Connected Adolescents in a Public School Setting	No paper access- not retrieved
	Promoting Faculty Education on Needs and Resources for Military-Active and Veteran Students.	Not related to school age children or young people- Further education
	Technically and Tactically Proficient: How Military Leadership Training and Experiences are Enacted in Engineering Education	Further education. Not relevant to school aged military-connected pupils or their educational experiences
	Functional outcome and mental health symptoms in military personnel and veterans pursuing postsecondary education after traumatic brain injury: A VA TBI model systems study.	Further education. Not relevant to school aged military-connected pupils or their educational experiences
	Military Service and Educational Attainment of High School Sophomores after 9/11: Experiences of 2002 High School Sophomores as of 2012. Stats in Brief. NCES 2019-427	Not related to military connected school age children or young people
	Impact of 'transition blind spots' on access to Higher Education diploma students with a military background: why filling gaps in information, advice and guidance matters.	Further education
	Application of an empowerment perspective among military-connected adolescents in public school settings.	Non empirical research. Conceptual article
	Who Goes to College, Military, Prison, or Long-Term Unemployment? Racialized School-to-Labor Market Transitions Among American Men.	Not related to military connected school age children or young people
	From giving orders to engaging in dialogue: Military norms being challenged at the Swedish riding school.	Only relevant to equestrian education. Not relevant to military- connected children or young people
	Group Education and Multidisciplinary Management for Chronic Headaches Among Adolescents in a Military Treatment Facility: A Retrospective Chart Review.	Not relevant to military-connected children or young people and not relevant to experiences of education
	School Participation and Children in Military Families: A Scoping Review	No paper access. Non empirical

The impact of fathers' military deployment on child adjustment. The support needs of primary school children and their families separated during active military service: A pilot study.		
	Caring for the Veteran, military and family member nursing competencies: Strategies for integrating content into nursing school curricula	Not relevant to military-connected children or young people and not relevant to experiences of education
	Australian School Student Aspirations for Military Careers.	Not relevant to military-connected children or young people and not relevant to experiences of education
	A survey of military counseling content and curriculum among council on rehabilitation education- and council for accreditation of counseling and related educational programs-accredited programs.	Not relevant to military-connected children or young people and not relevant to experiences of education
	Associations between school violence, military connection, and gang membership in California secondary schools.	Focus is on gang membership not educational experiences
	After the Post-9/11 GI Bill: A Profile of Military Service Members and Veterans Enrolled in Undergraduate and Graduate Education. Stats in Brief. NCES 2016-435	Not relevant to school aged military-connected pupils or their educational experiences
	Military Service and College: An Exploratory Examination of Military-Connected Latina/o Undergraduates and Access to Higher Education.	Further education. Not relevant to school aged military-connected pupils or their educational experiences
	Assessment of military viewpoints regarding post-secondary education: Classroom preferences and experiences.	Not relevant to school aged military-connected pupils. Relates to the experiences of military and veteran students.
	Toward an understanding of the democratic reconceptualization of physical education teacher education in post-military Brazil.	Not relevant to school aged military-connected pupils or their educational experiences
	Understanding Military Culture: A Guide for Professional School Counselors.	Non empirical research
Well-being and suicidal ideation of secondary school students from military families		
District, school, and community stakeholder perspectives on the experiences of military-connected students.		
	A Professional Development School in Action: Meeting the Needs of Military-Connected Students and Families	Non empirical research

	Supporting military-connected students: The role of school social work.	Non empirical research. Review paper
	Impact of geographic mobility on military children's access to special education services.	Specifically relates to experiences of service CYP with SEN accessing SEN services- not how they experience school
	Development and use of the California Healthy Kids Survey Military Module to support students in military-connected schools.	Describes the development and use of the CHKS Military Module to provide data about MC students. Not relevant to their educational experiences
	Student–instructor assessments: Examining the skills and competencies of social work students placed in military-connected schools.	Not relevant to school aged military-connected pupils or their educational experiences
Understanding teaching and learning with military students in public school contexts: Insights from the perspectives of teachers.		
Responding to the needs of military students and military-connected schools: Perceptions and actions of school administrators.		
Challenges faced by military families: Perceptions of United States marine corps school liaisons.		
	Discrepancies in military middle-school adolescents' and parents' perceptions of family functioning, social support, anger frequency, and concerns.	Not related to exploring their experiences of school
	The Catholic school community as a protective factor for students whose military parents have been deployed	Non empirical research
	A call to duty: Educational policy and school reform addressing the needs of children from military families.	Non empirical research relevant to educational policy & school reform not MC pupils' experiences of education
	E-Learning and Immersive learning in military education	Not related to service CYPs experiences of or within school
	Should we end military recruiting in high schools as a matter of child protection and public health?	Not relevant to military-connected students and their school/education experiences
School Transitions Among Military Adolescents: A Qualitative Study of Stress and Coping.		

	A Composite Counterstorytelling: Memoirs of African American Military Students in Hawaii Public Schools.	No full text
	Braiding narratives of relating being and growing: A metissage of students' experiences in pre-service child and youth care education.	Not relevant to the educational experiences of school aged military-connected pupils
HAND SEARCHED PAPERS………… Examining the relationship between school climate and peer victimisation among students in military-connected public schools	**HAND SEARCHED PAPERS**……………………	**HAND SEARCHED PAPERS** ……………………………….
The impact of parental deployment on child social and emotional functioning: perspectives of school staff		
	Application of an empowerment perspective among military-connected adolescents in public school settings	Non empirical secondary research
	The education of children from military families: identity and agency.	Focus was on progression to higher education. Participants included undergraduate students
	School Engagement among Youth in Canadian Forces Families: A Comparative Analysis	Data for the study was gathered in 2008
	Exploring the Role of Social Connectedness Among Military Youth: Perceptions from Youth, Parents, and School Personnel	Focus is on role of social connectedness in the lives of military families not specifically related to MC pupils, school or school experiences

Appendix B: Participant Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Included	Rationale/ Exclusion Criteria
Secondary school aged pupils (11-16 years)	Only pupils in secondary school education will be recruited as they are likely to have had a longer experience of being 'in education' compared to younger pupils. They are also more likely to be able to engage in and contribute to a lengthy one to one interview compared to younger pupils. Most of the literature focuses on the impact on younger children and the wider family so interviewing pupils of this age will fill a gap in the literature. Chandra et al (2009) found that young people in middle and later adolescence experienced more problems with parental deployment and parental reintegration than their younger counterparts.
Pupils in mainstream secondary school	Pupils in special schools will be excluded as the researcher would like to find out about the educational experiences of pupils that have attended mainstream schools.
Service CYP that are able to fully understand the nature of the study and have given informed consent (participants under 16 will also need to have parental consent) to take part. Service CYP with SEN who fully understand and can fully engage in the interview process.	Participants will only be included if they understand the nature of the study and have given fully informed consent to take part. Participants under the age of 16 will require parental consent to take part. Pupils on the school's SEN register may be included if they fully understand the nature of the study, do not have any known speech and language needs, will be able to engage in conversation for up to one hour without difficulty focusing and have parental consent to take part i.e. CYP with physical needs.
Service CYP who understand and speak English fluently	Pupils who speak English as an additional language will need to be considered as 'fluent in English'. The researcher will ask the pupil's headteacher if they think that the pupil will be able to understand questions and confidently respond, at length to any given question.
Service CYP who have at least one *parent* who is currently classed as 'service personnel' and serving in the British Armed Forces	Only CYP that have at least one *parent (biological or step parent)* who lives with them at home for some length of time, is currently classed as 'service personnel' and serving in the British Armed Forces will be included in this study to ensure a homogenous sample.
Service CYP whose parent/s has been deployed at least once since they started school	Research shows that 'deployment' is a significant factor in the lives of some service CYP however some service CYP may never experience their parent/s being deployed. To ensure a homogenous sample the researcher would like to

	ensure all of the participants interviewed have had some similar experiences (this particular experience may or may not have influenced their educational experiences).
Pupils who do not have recognised speech and language needs	Pupils with speech and language needs will be excluded from the study as the research heavily relies on participants being able to verbally communicate effectively.
Pupils who are not known to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.	Pupils who are known to CAMHS or have had previous involvement with CAMHS during their lives will be excluded from this study as the researcher does not want to risk triggering difficult experiences for these vulnerable CYP during the interview process.

Appendix C: Recruitment Advert

Appendix D: Semi-structured Interview Script and Schedule

Test audio and video quality with participant

'Hi………..my name is Laura. I'll tell you a little bit about me and then I'll talk to you some more about today's call if that's ok? I'm a Trainee Educational Psychologist and as you know I'm really interested in the school experiences of children and young people who have parents in the armed forces. Thank you so much for agreeing to speak to me about this today for my research project.

I'm just going to run through a few key points before we begin recording the interview.
- Due to the current situation (Covid-19) we're speaking via video call. I know that this might feel a little different to a normal interview, but I hope you can feel as comfortable as possible and are able to treat it as a normal conversation.
- This interview might feel quite strange at first because I would like you to do lots of the talking with me doing lots of listening. Sometimes there might be some pauses before I speak because I want you to be able to tell me as much as you'd like to.
- I'm not going to be sharing anything you tell me with your school or your parents, it will all be confidential (kept between us). But if you tell me something that means you are at risk of being harmed then I will need to let other people know to keep you safe. Does this make sense?
- There could be some technology problems with video or sound but I hope it will run smoothly. If the internet totally cuts out then hopefully we can arrange another time to re-do the call.
- I know that your mum/dad read the information sheet and you both signed the consent forms but I want to remind you that you do not have to take part if you do not want to.
  - Have you got any questions about what I'm doing or what you would be asked to do?
  - Can I check that you would still like to take part?
  - Just a reminder- if you'd like to stop at any time just let me know and we will stop. If you decide later that you don't want to take part anymore and would like me to remove your interview from my research project please just ask your parents to let me know and I can remove it before it's analysed.
  - Can I check - are happy for me to begin recording? The recording will be securely stored on my laptop and won't be accessible to anyone else. It will be deleted once I've written up our interview.

Start recording

1) Can you tell me about your experiences of school so far?

Other possible questions:

2) Can you tell me more about what primary school was like for you?

3) Can you tell me about what life has been like for you whilst you have been in this school?
4) Can you tell me about a time when you have moved school?
 ➢ What was it like for you? What happened? How did you feel? /How did you cope?
5) How would you describe your relationships with teachers and friends in your school/ the schools you have been to?
6) Can you tell me about your learning in school?
7) How have you coped with tests and exams at school?
8) Have you experienced any challenges at school? (If so, add: 'Can you tell me about them?')
9) Have you experienced any positive aspects of school? (If so, add: 'Can you tell me about them?')
10) Can you think of anything that would help you at school?

Possible Prompts:

 ➢ Can you tell me a bit more about that?
 ➢ What do you mean by…..?
 ➢ Why?
 ➢ How?
 ➢ What did that look like?
 ➢ Can you think of an example of that?
 ➢ Tell me what you were thinking…
 ➢ How did you feel?
 ➢ What did you do?

Ending question:

Is there anything else that we haven't spoken about in relation to your school experiences that you would like to talk about?

Appendix E: Example of Stages 2 & 3 for Alice- Initial noting and Emergent themes

Stage 3:		Stage 2:
Emergent Themes	Interview 07- 'Alice' Researcher (R) & Participant (P) [33 mins 03 secs]	Exploratory Comments (Descriptive, *linguistic*, conceptual)
1. Stress of leaving friends behind- loss 2. Lost contact with old friends 3. Re-connected with old friends 4. Emotional six month parental deployment 5. Difficulties keeping up with school work 6. Falling out with friends during parental deployment 7. Sensitive and upset 8. Difficulties dealing with loss 9. Debilitating feelings of sadness 10. First time experiencing 'proper loss' 11. Struggled to do homework 12. Excessive thinking 13. Unpredictable lifestyle 14. Turbulent emotions at school	1.R: Could you tell me about your experiences of school so far? 2.P: I've been to around seven or eight schools, I think. I've moved a lot in primary schools, but I've 3.been in the same secondary school for the past few years. It didn't really change that much after the first 4.two moves. I got very much used to it, and actually, the transition from primary to secondary didn't affect 5.me as much as I thought it would because of how much I've moved around. 6.So, I did get quite upset because I've had many different friend groups over the years. But I have moved 7.back to where I've been before and met up with my old friends. So, the main bit of it wasn't the stress of 8.moving, it was the stress of leaving my friends and not having a group of friends that I knew too well that 9.affected me most. But I got over that. 10.R: Could you tell me a bit more about those friends and what happened? 11.P: Yeah. I had some friends I went to a school for Year 3 through Year 5. And I had a very close-knit 12.group of friends, and that was in [name of current town]. Then, I moved away to [county X], and I lost 13.contact with them, apart from a few of them I played some online games with, stuff like that. And I grew 14.new friends there, that I've recently got back through Instagram messaging services. 15.And I came back, and it turns out because the schools were very close together, like a 10-minute walk to 16.my old primary school. So, most of the people from that school went to my new secondary school and I 17.was able to meet back with them then, but it didn't really affect me much. I met up with them and I was 18.very excited, but I've got basically the same friend group as I did before now. 19.R: Could you tell me a bit more about primary school? 20.P: Yeah, in primary school, my dad went on deployment when I was in Year 4. He went to the 21.Bahamas for six months, and the first two months were really hard to deal with. And I struggled to keep 22.up with work, I started falling back on work and falling back on homework and that really affected me. 23.But after the first two months, it just started to get better. I started to get used to it. 24.But still, I wasn't as good as I was until my dad came back. And I think I had a lot of fall out with friends 25.at that time. Not big fall outs, just fall outs over little things because I was very sensitive and I was upset 26.quite a lot of the time, because I was always thinking about my dad and how he wasn't there. So, that's 27.the main thing I remember about it, just falling out with my friends a lot, because my dad wasn't at 28.home. 29.R: Thank you for sharing that. You said that it really affected you, could you tell me a bit more 30.about that? How did it affect you? 31.P: I've never been good with dealing with loss, whether it was my dad going away or a family 32.member or pet passing away. I've never dealt with it very well, I've always been very much it gets really 33.into my head, and I have about a week of just I can't do anything but be sad, basically. And it really 34.affects me. So, I think…because obviously I was younger at the time, I'm better now. 35.But I was just not used to it at all, I've never lost anyone important, apart from my great grandma, who I 36.didn't see too often. So, it just really affected me, that was the first time I actually felt like proper loss. 37.So, it just really made me feel really upset. 38.R: You said that it affected you at school and you mentioned you fell out with friends, and you fell 39.behind on work. Could you tell me a bit more about that? 40.P: Yeah. I think I was just thinking too much, and I was too much in my own head. It happened 41.when we bought a house here, because my dad had to stay at a separate military base. And I struggled 42.to do homework on time because I was wondering if he was going to come back at the weekend or if he 43.wasn't because he was able to come back, usually on Fridays, but not always. 44. I would have breakdowns in class, and I would start to cry randomly because I'd be happy one 45.second, and then I'd be crying the next and I wouldn't understand it. It was just very overwhelming for 46.me.	Been to 7 or 8 schools Felt that moving got easier after the first two moves- got used to it Having experience of moving schools helped ease the transition from primary to secondary- didn't affect her 'as much' as she thought it would- was she mentally preparing herself for a worse experience? Mentions the 'upset' and 'stress' of leaving friends behind when moving plus not having a group of friends that she knew well- difficult experience *'but I got over that'-* is she trying to repress this difficult memory? Does it feel too difficult to talk about? Had a 'close-knit' group of friends then moved away and lost contact- did this feel difficult? Kept in contact with some via online games and social media *'I grew new friends there'- suggests that friendships take time to grow and flourish* Returning to the same area after being away meant she could reconnect with old friends- is this what made the transition to secondary school easier than expected? *'it didn't really affect me much'-*is she down-playing how 'excited' she was to be reconnecting with old friends in her new secondary school? She add that she was 'very excited' when she met up with them When asked about primary school instantly mentions father's 6 month deployment *'the first two months were really hard to deal with'- found the start of her father's deployment difficult- an emotionally difficult experience* *Repetition of the phrase 'falling back'- suggests she thought things were deteriorating* Her school work and homework was affected because of her emotional needs during her father's deployment- intense feelings of loss? She said she 'struggled'- found it very difficult to cope 'I started to get used to it' after the first two months- learnt to live with feelings of loss? Emptiness?- She was 'good' again when her father returned Lots of fall outs with friends during her father's deployment Describes herself as 'sensitive' and 'upset' a lot of the time- always thinking about how her dad 'wasn't there'- feelings or fears of abandonment...being left behind? Perhaps she feared that her father would not return? Links 'dealing with loss' to her father being deployed- also links this same feeling with family members or pets passing away Does she feel as though she should be better at 'dealing with loss'? Perhaps blames herself for not being able to cope well with loss?- 'gets into my head'- overwhelming feelings of sadness? About a week where she can't do anything but 'be sad'- debilitating? Perhaps her feelings were so strong that they took over. Does she think that her father's deployment would have been easier to cope with if she had experienced loss before? Does she think that loss is easier to cope with as she gets older- blames the fact that she was younger on why it affected her so much. *'this was the first time I actually felt like proper loss'- emotional impact of deployment- it really 'affected' her and made her feel 'really upset'* Perhaps thinking too much about her dad being away- has she learnt that it's easier to repress difficult feelings rather than allowing them to surface? Homework suffered during deployment- struggled to hand it in on time- perhaps it was difficult to concentrate/ homework did not feel like it was a priority when her mind was focused on other things? Wondered if her dad was going to come home at the weekend or not? Sometimes he did, sometimes he didn't- was the lack of predictability uncontaining?

Codes	Transcript	Notes
15. Overwhelming emotions	47.R: Yeah, that sounds really challenging. What did you do to help yourself cope during that time? 48.P: I would call my dad very often; my mum would let me use her WhatsApp to text him. But 49.obviously, he wasn't able to reply all the time but usually, he could. He'd get about a 30-minute slot of 50.phone calls a week, I think. So, we phone called him every Friday, I believe. But it was usually quite late 51.at night, because of different time zones, and when he got off work.	Emotional 'breakdowns' in class- crying 'randomly'- happy one second then crying the next- felt difficult to understand this unpredictable emotional response- felt very overwhelming Stayed connected with deployed parent via phone to help cope. Her dad wasn't always able to reply to texts- did it worry her when she didn't receive a reply? Her dad got allocated periods of time to call- different time zones
16. Remotely connected during deployment 17. Sense of autonomy over maintaining connections during deployment 18. Transitional object to improve ability to cope during deployment	52. Now I can text him more often, because I have my own phone and I have my own WhatsApp 53.and all that. But what we have is we have this teddy we call Sailor Pooh. And he goes on deployment 54.with my dad, and he takes pictures of him at all the landmarks he goes to. Because Winnie the Pooh has 55.been my childhood, that's my favourite teddy, my favourite toy. When he sent us pictures of them, 56.that's what really made me happy and made me deal with it a bit better. 57.R: That's lovely. And you mentioned did you say you've been to eight schools? 58.P: I think about six to eight schools, quite a lot. 59.R: Can you tell me about a time that you've moved school?	Now has he own phone to connect with him- does this feel important? Doesn't have to borrow mum's anymore? More autonomy? Perhaps she feels like this gives her a closer link to him when he's away? Teddy bear as a transitional object? Perhaps this teddy acts as a physical link between her father being home and him being deployed? A physical object that reminds her that he father is thinking of her? That she's being held in his mind? it's her favourite toy that he has chosen to take away with him and send photos back to her- helps her to cope- made her 'happy'
19. Strong desire to fit in 20. Feeling different to others 21. Uncomfortable feeling of 'sticking out'	60.P: Yeah. When I moved from my school in [county X] to my primary school here, because I usually 61.start off first few weeks, I don't really like to talk to people. I maybe talk to the teacher, maybe 62.one person if I really need help, but I'll keep to myself until somebody talks to me because I don't want 63.to stand out. I just want to be normal, because I've never been normal. 64. I've always come in halfway through a year and then gone away 65.Year 5. So, I don't like sticking out, it just makes me feel very uncomfortable.	First few weeks of new school- doesn't talk to many people…maybe the teacher if she really needs help Waits for someone to talk to her/ approach her for fear of standing out 'I just want to be normal, because I've never been normal'- strong desire to try and fit in, wants to be just like everyone else at that school. Feels different to peers? Fears of not being the same as everyone else…standing out? Fears of rejection? Has always starting school halfway through a year as the new pupil been difficult? She doesn't like standing out as it makes her feel 'uncomfortable'- too much attention on her perhaps? Just wants to slot into everyday life without feeling different?
22. Comparisons between self and non-military-connected peers 23. Realisation of lifestyle differences between self and non-military-connected peers- odd 24. Relating to military-connected peers 25. Peers who 'understand' experiences of transition	66.R: And what do you mean by normal? 67.P: It's just most of the people I know have lived in this town their whole lives. And some people I 68.know have only ever been to London or Devon on holidays. So, they're all like, "Oh, I would feel really 69.upset if I moved." And they're all shaken by this move to secondary school, anything. It just makes me 70.feel really odd, because they were like, "Oh I never could picture myself living anywhere else." 71.Whereas I could picture 10 places in my head where I've lived or could live. And it's just never made 72.sense to me that people sometimes don't move, and that's just their part of life. 73.R: How does that make you feel? 74.P: It makes me feel quite odd, really. Because I know about two people that have been in the 75.military. I remember my friend, his dad was I think army. And he would move around a lot, and I met up 76.with him, but I lost contact with him recently. And he obviously moved around a lot, so he could talk to 77.me, because he'd moved from Portugal as a kid. 78.But there's no one else, apart from my friend, who moved from Poland. The foreign kids, they 79.understand, because they've had big moves, moving from countries or understanding the language or 80.talking a separate language. But it's never anyone in my friendship group, they've all lived in [name of 81.current town] their entire lives or they've just lived in one place. It's never they've gone round the entire 82.country, like I have.	Comparisons between herself and her non-military connected peers Peers have said they'd feel upset if they had to move and have been 'shaken' by the transition to secondary school- she finds this 'odd'- perhaps she has had such different experiences to them that she finds it hard to imagine how they experience transitions. Finds it difficult to understand how different the military lifestyle is when compared to a non-military lifestyle. It's just 'part of their life' that they stay in the same place-perhaps this feels mundane to her? Unimaginable? Makes her feel 'odd' Met two other military-connected children- not many MC peer moved around a lot and to different countries so understood her and her experiences 'but there's no one else' suggests it feels lonely not knowing any other MC children Suggests that pupils who have moved to the UK from foreign countries 'understand' because they have experienced 'big moves' and need to understand a new language or speak a 'separate language'- does this suggest that these children perhaps feel alienated? Separated? Different to others? Is she comparing herself to these children because this is how she feels when she starts a new school? Other peers don't understand this…don't understand her lifestyle/ her experiences
26. Fears of 'standing out' 27. Feeling 'out of place'	83.R: It makes sense. So, you said that you don't like to stand out, can you give an example of a time 84.where you've felt like you stood out? 85.P: Like the first day of school, when you go back, I went in October, and the teacher was 86.introducing me to the whole class. I just felt really weird. I didn't like being the centre of attention, I've 87.never liked being the centre of attention. I've liked being in charge, but if I want attention, I'll do theatre. 88.That's when I like it, when I do it myself, my own choice. But when somebody puts the attention on me, 89.and I didn't ask for it that's when I feel really out of place, because I'm put on the spot and I don't do too 90.good on the spot.	Does not like to be the centre of attention when she first joins a school Likes to be in control of when people notice her and when they don't- likes to have the choice- to be autonomous perhaps? Perhaps she feels she lacks control over other aspects of her life so likes to maintain control over other aspects? Feels 'out of place' when she's 'put on the spot' – does being put on the spot as the new pupil highlight differences between her and others? Feels as though she doesn't quite fit. Does she feel pressured to acknowledge that she has to now try and fit in within the new school
28. Predictable teaching style 29. Being singled out by teachers 30. Establishing a sense of belonging within the class 31. Different views to peers	91.R: And you mentioned teachers there as well. Could you tell me a bit more about teachers at the 92.schools you've been to? 93.P: Yeah. I've really had a hit and miss with teachers. Some teachers I've really liked, mainly male 94.teachers, because I don't know, they've got a bit of a stricter way of teaching, but they're still good at it. 95.But some teachers at my school I don't like because they underestimate me, they're always like, "Oh do 96.you understand this?" To the class. 97.And it's like making me feel like they think we're stupid or something. Or it's like a teacher that doesn't 98.give enough help, when I've got my hand up, he's going round to everyone but me. And it's just mainly 99.the teachers that don't make you feel stupid, but they'll also help you when you need it. It's kind of in 100.the middle, and it's always different for every person I've met, because I'll say, "I don't like this	Pauses- finds it hard to describe why but Prefers male teachers- do they remind her of her father? Does it feel comforting to have support from male teachers when her father is away? Appreciates a stricter teaching style- is this because it's predictable? Does not like teachers patronizing her in front of the class-does this make her feel alienated? Different to others? When she has her hand up and teacher goes around to everyone but her- how does this make her feel? Perhaps it makes her feel as though she shouldn't be there? Doesn't belong?

	Transcript	Notes
32. Reassuring teacher- ideal	101.teacher." And they'll be like, "What? They're my favourite teacher." So, it's very different for every 102.person. I guess it's just based on your experiences with other teachers. 103.R: Yeah. And what do you like most about the teachers that are 'good teachers' or the teachers that you like? 104.P: They just let you have fun. Like obviously, they don't let you throw paper airplanes across the 105.classroom. But I really like my history teacher, because as long as you do the work, he'll let you have 106.debates about what actually happened. I liked my teacher I had in Year 5, because he would always find 107.a way to give you positive criticism, no matter how bad your work was. And he just always made me 108.feel really reassured that what I was doing was good and boosting my confidence. So, I guess a teacher 109.that doesn't harshly criticise you to where you feel bad, that's ideal teacher.	Likes to feel reassured that teachers will help her when she needs help Peers have different opinions on their favourite teachers- these opinions are different to hers- is this one of many differences she feels she has to her peers? Likes a fun but fair teaching style Positive criticism, reassurance and confidence boosting- ideal teacher
33. Upset and coping with loss at school **34.** Emotionally supportive teachers **35.** Longing for empathy and reassurance	110.R: And how did the teachers help you cope when your dad was deployed? 111.P: They let me have a lot of time out of class, especially in this school, I can just ask to go, I can't 112.remember, there's a teacher called Ms Porter and she's really helpful. And she deals with the military 113.kids, so she understands a lot of the different struggles that military kids go through. And if I feel really 114.upset, she helped me a lot when I didn't get used to my dad not being there, or in the week when my 115.grandma passed away or something, she was really helpful with that. 116.R: And how was she helpful? 117.P: She just listened, and she didn't tell me what I did was like you're acting irrational, she didn't do 118.that. She just listened and she gave me advice. She let me sit in a lounge for a bit and just let me out of 119.lessons when I've had too much and was really stressing about something. It's just sometimes you need 120.someone to listen and not butt in and go, "Oh, but, well, maybe somebody's had it worse." 121.Yeah, I know people have had it worse, but I feel really upset and you telling me that people have it 122.worse isn't going to make me feel better about my situation. It's just those kinds of people that just try 123.and make it so like, "Other people have had this, other people have had that." Just listen to what I have 124.to say and give me some reassurance that I have a right to feel upset at this current moment in time.	Time out of class helpful when dad was deployed Helpful to have a teacher who can support MC pupils- someone who understands the 'different struggles' that MC pupils 'go through'- helped when she felt upset- when dad went away and when grandma died- did these feel like similar experiences? Experiences of loss and grief for someone that was once there? This teacher listened and gave advice- helpful Let her out of lessons when she had 'had too much' or was 'really stressing about something'- emotional impact of deployment – appreciated individual support? Made her feel like her difficulties were worthy of their time? An empathetic teacher who validated feelings and provided reassurance was supportive- empathy not sympathy
36. Overwhelming emotional experience **37.** Inability to focus on school work **38.** Pre-deployment stress **39.** Differentiated work during deployment **40.** Anticipating loss- upset and stress	125.R: Thank you, it's really helpful to know, thank you for sharing. Have you experienced any 126.challenges at the schools you've been to? 127.P: Because I like to be challenged when I do work, but sometimes, you know when you're in 128.primary school they just give the entire class the same set of work. Sometimes I felt like the work is too 129.easy and then other times I'll say, "This work is too hard." And they'll be like, "Oh, you're top set, you 130.should be able to do it." "I don't understand the work." "But you're in top set." 131.You can never say just because somebody's finding the work hard, they should be able to do it because 132.you know they're academically smart. People are good at different things, like I'm good at maths, but 133.when it comes to certain areas such as fractions, I'm terrible. I'm good at English, but when it comes to 134.writing without a prompt I'm not good, and you can't look at everything else I've done because it's 135.different. And just go, "Well, you've done this, you can do that." It's not the same. 136.R: Can you tell me a bit more about work and learning in school? 137.P: Sometimes there was this period in Year 3 where it was coming up to when my dad was going 138.to be deployed. And I was just completely overwhelmed. I would be able to do the work, if you gave me 139.that work two weeks before I would have got it done and been on the next work within 20 minutes. But 140.I just got so overwhelmed by facing the fact that my dad was going to be on deployment. 141.And also that we were going to have this big holiday coming up to Portugal and I was stressing about 142.that because I was packing and trying to understand a bit of Portuguese and all this. And it was making 143.me really stressed. So, I just got really overwhelmed at this one period, and my teacher just kept having 144.to give me the groups down work, which she was very nice, and she just let me get on with the work 145.that I wanted to do. 146.But it was just the stress that my dad was going to eventually go away to the Bahamas and not be there 147.for my summer holidays that was making me upset.	Example of how people are challenged in different ways- have different academic abilities- acknowledgement that people are good at different things and how some teachers expect you to be able to be good at certain things if you are generally good at that subject- is this a reflection of how perhaps some people expect her to be able to cope well with loss and she unexpectedly found the 6 month deployment extremely difficult? Perhaps this is a reflection of how she believes that people should appreciate that people cope with things in different ways? How they all experience things differently Prompted to talk about work and learning in school- mentioned emotional impact of parental deployment and how it affected work and learning *Repetition of the word 'overwhelmed' to describe how she felt about her father upcoming deployment* Work that she would have once been able to complete easily became challenging to complete- did not have capacity to focus on work- felt 'stressed' and emotionally 'overwhelmed' by upcoming deployment and the fact that her dad was going to miss their family holiday Teacher gave her less challenging work and let her 'get on with' the work that she wanted to do- this was helpful Felt 'upset' and stressed about dad missing out on her Summer holiday period and being deployed again- does the unpredictable nature of her father's job also feel un-nerving? Feelings of loss- pre-deployment
41. Fear of parent dying **42.** Unpredictability as unsettling **43.** Fear of frontline deployment **44.** Reliance on technology	148.R: Can you tell me what you were thinking when you knew that was approaching? 149.P: I thought a lot about 'what if he doesn't come back?' Because I always think worst-case 150.scenario, I've always thought worst-case scenario. And when I was seven, eight, I didn't understand 151.really what a deployment was and that I would be able to keep in contact, but I just wouldn't be able to 152.see him face to face for a while. And it was just the overwhelming not understanding what was going to 153.happen that made me really upset and made me really stress about it and made me really self	Feared that her father would not return- fear of death on military operation- additional worrying, stressful feelings on top of feelings of loss?- does thinking about the worst-case scenario feel more sensible than thinking about the joys of him returning? Perhaps more realistic given what she could possibly hear or see on the news/ social media where negative news is highlighted?

	Transcript	Notes
45. Difference between self and peers 46. Reminders of father to cope	154.conscious about it thinking all this stuff. 155. And six months seemed like a really long time, and it still seems like a really long time. Because 156.he is on the frontline now, and if we got another six-month draft, I think I'd be in the same situation. 157.R: What did you do to help yourself get through that? 158.P: I mainly watched a lot of videos online. I watched a lot of Minecraft videos because Minecraft 159.was my favourite game at the time. And I relied on these YouTubers, I was always watching this guy 160.called Stampy's Minecraft videos made me really happy because he was so enthusiastic, and he had 161.this funny laugh. And it was just watching YouTube and having all these figures that made me happy 162.and had the same passions as me, when girls at school weren't playing video games.	Her younger self didn't fully understand what deployment entailed Words such as 'overwhelming', 'upset', 'stress' to describe emotional impact of deployment Did it make her 'self-conscious' or were these actually feelings of paranoia? Fear of loss? Her father is currently working on the frontline- did she mention this because she knows this means he is at a higher risk of being harmed? Thoughts of her perhaps being told that he would be deployed on another 6 month draft make her think that she would experience the same emotions as it 'still seems like a really long time' Watching videos online helped her to cope with deployment Says she 'relied' on the Youtubers...that they made her really happy- used these videos to support her? To help her feel better when she was feeling down or alone?
47. Outcast by peers	163.I would always watch my dad play games like Scarum and stuff. It was just watching them reminded me 164.of watching my dad play these games. So, I would watch people play games, and it would make me feel 165.a lot more comfortable in a situation. 166.R: And have you experienced any other difficulties at school or in the schools that you've been to? 167.P: I've had a bit of a hard time with some girls at my school because they don't like me for some	Girls at school didn't play Minecraft video games- did these Youtubers make her feel as though she belonged? That other people had similar interests to her? That she fitted in? These videos also reminded her of her dad- a common interest that they shared which she could use to help herself psychologically feel connected to him even if he wasn't physically there?
48. Desire to be liked by peers	168.reason. I don't know if it's something I've said or the way I act or it's my friendship group that they 169.don't like me. And they'll laugh at me, they'll make jokes about me and it didn't really get to me until I 170.got to about Year 8, when I started caring a lot about what people think.	Bullied by girls in her school Difficulties fitting in and being 'liked' by girls at her school- yr 8 starting caring a lot about what people think- it felt very important to be liked and to feel like she fitted in
49. Re-establishing social dynamics at secondary school	171.Like, I could like a song and I could watch a video online, and they'll say, "Oh, this song is bad, I don't 172.like it." And I'll remove that song from my playlist and it's really made me think about how much I care 173.about other people's opinions and stuff. 174.R: Thank you. It does sounds like that's been a bit of a challenge. Is that in the school that in the 175.school that you're in now?	Example of how she changed her own opinions and behaviour in order to fit in and be liked by her peers- acknowledgement that she knows that she did this
50. Feelings of acceptance	176.P: Yeah, the school I'm in now, about end of Year 7 they just started to dislike me. And it was one 177.of my old friends that I had in Year 4, and she just all of a sudden just didn't talk to me anymore. And I 178.think it was a new friendship group, and they just decided they don't like me. 179.R: And could you tell me about friendships in the other schools that you've been to? 180.P: When I was in the school in Hampshire, I was really good friends with this girl called 'Annie'.	An old friend formed a new friendship group and decided she didn't like her anymore- re-establishing new social dynamics at secondary school?
51. Desire 'to be like everyone else'	181.And I've got back in contact with her recently through Instagram. And she had a love for cats, and so 182.did I. So, when I found out that she had cute cats, and when she found out I had three cats, the only 183.thing we talk about was cats and drawing cats. And she taught me how to draw these cats in her style. 184. I liked drawing, too, a lot, and I still do, just not as much as I did when I was in Year 6, and I'd	Re-connected with an old school friend from previous area via social media platform Had shared interests with old friend, this friend made her 'feel normal'- shared interest in cats and games like Minecraft. Had 'always felt outcast' for liking 'boyish stuff' – did this feel isolating? Did she feel different to others?
52. Conforming to fit in	185.just draw everything that I saw. And she really made me feel normal, because not only did she draw 186.and like cats, she also played the games I did, like Minecraft. And she just made me feel really normal, 187.even though I'd always felt outcast for liking this boyish stuff, which I realise isn't as boyish, because I 188.realise a lot of people actually play these games. I've just been looking in the wrong place. 189.R: Yeah. And what do you mean by normal, [name]? What's normal? 190.P: I'm not sure, if I'm honest. I just wanted to be like everyone else, because all these girls like pink 191.and had all these interests. I had a good friend called 'Louise', who again, I've got back in contact with. 192.She liked these things called Shopkins, and the moment she told me she liked Shopkins, I went home, 193.and I was like, "Mum, can you buy me these?"	Repetition of the word 'normal' She recently discovered that lots of people also share this interest- does it feel good to belong to this online community? 'I just wanted to be like everyone else' / 'looking back I just really wanted to fit in'- suggests that there was a strong desire to belong, to be accepted by her peers even if it meant doing things she wasn't interested in- peer pressure to conform? Did conforming feel easier than being 'outcast'?
53. Teachers who understand 54. Friendships as essential to school life 55. Importance of feeling accepted by peers	194.So, I wanted to be like my friends. I wanted to even though pink wasn't my favourite colour, I forced 195.myself to make it my favourite colour. Looking back I really just wanted to fit in. 196.R: And we're all different, aren't we? We all like different things..... 197.P: Yeah. 198.R: But I guess, sometimes it feels important to fit in. I know you've already spoken about some 199.friends who you have things in common with and you've spoken about some positive aspects of school. 200.Could you tell me if you've experienced any other positive aspects of school in the schools you've been 201.to? 202.P: At school, my teacher, my form tutor's been really nice, and she's been understanding. She'll let 203.me out of form if I'm upset. And also, I've been hanging around with some new friends called 'Hayden' 204.and 'Sam' and I've got all these friends that are really nice. It's just I like school when I've got friends, 205.it's not fun unless you have friends at school. 206.And when all these people just let you hang out with them for no reason, other than they want you to 207.hang out with them makes you really happy. And not like because they think you're cool or because	Understanding teacher= helpful. Teacher will give her some time out if she feels upset She likes school when she's got friends, "school isn't fun unless you have friends"- perhaps it feels unbearable to be lonely at school? Not worth going to unless you feel accepted by some peers? Feeling fully accepted and wanted by peers feels important- knowing that they value her company rather than valuing some kind of social status means a lot

	208.they think you're attractive. They just want to be your friend. 209.R: And why is that important? 210.P: Because when somebody is judged by their looks or how popular they are, I don't think that's a 211.good representation of who they are. Because it's like googling a celebrity, finding out the date they 212.were born and saying you know everything about them. So, you really need to understand the person 213.and know the person before you should count them as your friend.	Feels strongly that people should be friends with others for who they are as people and not for their looks or how popular they are-should 'know and understand the person' before they are counted as a friend- frustrated with the social dynamic at secondary school?
56. Future emotional support at school as helpful	214.And just being friends with someone because they've got some nice clothes that they wore on a non 215.school uniform day or they're friends with the popular kids. It just makes me really happy that they 216.don't care that I'm not as popular, they just want to be my friend. 217.R: Thank you, and you said that that kind of thing helps you at school, having friends and people to 218.hang out with. But could you think of anything else that would help you at school?	Feels happy that her friends like her for who she is and not for what she wears or how popular she is *'they just want to be my friend'- suggests she feels accepted and wanted by them*
57. More focused, individual support in schools needed	219.P: I think maybe a bit more focus on real world issues, because I like doing history, and I like 220.learning about all this. But I would really like to learn about politics and learning about what jobs pay 221.the best and all this. And just learning about the real world. I know some people find it boring, but I 222.think that's what school needs to teach us, about how to be successful people out of school.	would like to learn about the 'real world', 'what jobs pay the best' and 'how to be successful people out of school'- perhaps she is thinking about the future? Trying to learn and map out what her life might be like after school?
	223.R: Yes. Could you think of anything else that could help you at school or would have helped you at 224.the schools you've been to? 225.P: I think just a bit more individual support, we're always talked to as a class. In my current school, 226.individual support is good but at my old school if you were upset, you were allowed to sit out the 227.classroom for five minutes. You came back in and you'd do the work again. They didn't talk to you 228.about much, apart from if there was a bullying issue.	Individual support would be helpful in school- talk to pupils about why they might be feeling upset in secondary school
58. Turbulent emotions in lessons	229.So, it's just more individual support in primary school, especially Year 5 and Year 6 when you really start 230.to understand that especially military kids, they've come round and realised that it's real. The 231.deployments are a long time, and that really affects them. It just needs more focus; they need as much 232.help as the next kid.	More individual support in primary would have been useful- military children begin to realize that 'deployments are real'- realization that parent will be away for a prolonged period of time- really affects them- 'needs more focus'
59. Blame from teachers- 'unfocused'	233.R: And you think individual support could support with that? 234.P: Yeah, because even just take them out of lessons for five minutes every week, and just say, 235."How is everything going? What's been going on at home?" Just like they do with the kids who have 236.learning problems, they always seem happy. It's just you need to sometimes just take them out of 237.lessons and talk to them because it can be overwhelming being at school when your parents are away	Suggests more emotional support is needed for military children in school Suggests teachers should seem interested in military children's lives- ask them questions- take them out of class- individual attention?
60. Talking, listening and understanding them 61. Validate feelings at school	238.or when you're just having a hard time at home. 239.R: And you've used the word overwhelming, could you tell me some emotions that you 240.experience with that overwhelming feeling?	Mentions that it can be overwhelming being at school when your parent is away or you are having a difficult time at home- suggests this is how she felt? suggests teachers should recognize this and provide some emotional support in school
62. Establishing a sense of community between military-connected students	241.P: I get quite burned out. I'll feel overwhelmed in one lesson, and then the next lesson I'll just feel 242.kind of emotionless. Just get on with the work and don't chat. I had a thing, I was doing computer 243.science and I got really excited about it, and I got overwhelmed. And then, I went to geography, and we 244.had a test and I was just spaced out and completely out of it.	*'burned out'- nothing left to give in school? Emotionally drained?* *Uses the words 'overwhelmed', 'emotionless', 'excited' and 'spaced out' to describe the different emotional states she experienced in lessons whilst her father was deployed*
	245.Same thing happened in C&T and it's just that it's always going to be a crash and burn with being 246.excited or being overwhelmed. It always happens and then, the teachers blame it on you for being 247.unfocused, when you've got all this stuff going on.	Describes the up and down emotional states as a 'crash and burn'- perhaps it feels like she's lost control of her emotions in these states? Lost her ability to regulate her emotions?
63. Sense of reassurance from military-connected peers	248.R: Thank you, and can you think of anything else that the schools you've been to could do to help 249.or support you? 250.P: There's not really much else, there's nothing else really. I think just talking to them, listening to 251.them, understanding them is the best way to make them feel better about themselves. Just tell them 252.that what they're feeling is completely normal and that they have the right to feel sad in that situation. 253.And that there are hundreds of thousands of kids like them in the south west of England.	Teachers blame her for being unfocused when she's actually experiencing lots of different emotions and struggling to regulate them Reassurance, validating students emotions, talking to them, listening to them and understanding them- to make military students feel better
	254. Maybe even have a club where the military kids can meet up, because there was one of them in 255.my school in [county X], and it really helped me. Because these kids understood what I've been 256.through, they understood moving, they understood deployments. And it was just the understanding of 257.people who've been through it that really helps.	Suggests it would have helped her to be told that there are lots of other children 'like her'- perhaps she felt alone without this knowledge as she didn't know many other military children? Suggests a club for military children would have been helpful where they could meet up- where they could all belong to something together perhaps?
	258.R: Thank you. How does it make you feel when you meet somebody else that's been through it? 259.P: It makes me feel more assured that I'm not the only one like this, because obviously I've said 260.that most of my friends have lived in [name of current town] their whole lives. When somebody tells 261.me that, "Oh, yeah, my dad's in the RAF and he went on deployment when I was in Year 5." It just	*Repetition of the word 'understood'- military children understood things non-MC peers didn't* Military children understood what she had been through, understood moving and understood deployments- this understanding 'really helps' *Speaking to other military children makes her feel 'assured' – confident? Protected?* Reassurance that she is 'not alone or alienated' and makes her feel 'comfortable'- does this infer that she felt alone and alienated when her dad was deployed and she didn't have any military-

262.makes me feel so reassured that someone's felt what I have and I'm not alone or alienated in my
263.current situation, it just makes me feel really comfortable.
264.R: Thank you. And thank you for sharing. Is there anything else that we haven't spoken about in
265.relation to school experiences that we should discuss or talk about?
266.P: I don't think so. Nothing off the top of my head.
267.R: Spoken about quite a lot, haven't we? But I'm just trying to think is there anything else that you
268.want to share with me about your school experiences?
269.P: No, not really.
270.R: No.
271.P: I think I've told you everything.

connected peers to speak to? Perhaps she felt uncomfortable about that situation? It's comforting to know that others are like her- that she belongs to a group?

Thoughts from my first read through:

Lots of focus on fitting in with peers/ having friends at school/ being liked- desire to be like her peers

Moved lots of times- she said she'd been to 7/8 different schools- primary-secondary transition felt easy because of all of the school moves she'd experienced

Found times of deployment difficult at school- emotional. Reading this through also made me feel emotional.

Expressed difficulties coping during deployment- remembered dad through playing online games when he went away

Likes being around MC peers- likes that they understand her experience

Appendix F: Example of Stages 4 & 5 for Alice- Connections between emergent themes to develop subordinate and superordinate themes

Emergent themes were copied from step 3 then highlighted where patterns or connections between them were identified. Emergent themes in **bold**, underlined and marked with '←' were the emergent themes used to inform the subordinate themes below in figure 4.

Emergent themes:

1. **Stress of leaving friends behind- loss** ←
2. Lost contact with old friends
3. Re-connected with old friends
4. **Emotional six month parental deployment** ←
5. **Difficulties keeping up with school work** ←
6. Falling out with friends during parental deployment
7. **Sensitive and upset** ←
8. **Difficulties dealing with loss** ←
9. **Debilitating feelings of sadness** ←
10. First time experiencing 'proper loss'
11. **Struggled to do homework** ←
12. Excessive thinking
13. **Unpredictable lifestyle** ←
14. Turbulent emotions at school
15. Overwhelming emotions
16. **Remotely connected during deployment** ←
17. **Sense of autonomy over maintaining connections during deployment** ←
18. **Transitional object to improve ability to cope during deployment** ←
19. Strong desire to fit in
20. **Feeling different to others** ←
21. Uncomfortable feeling of 'sticking out'
22. **Comparisons between self and non-military-connected peers** ←
23. **Realisation of lifestyle differences between self and non-military-connected peers- odd** ←
24. **Relating to military-connected peers** ←
25. **Peers who 'understand' experiences of transition** ←
26. Fears of 'standing out'
27. Feeling 'out of place'
28. Predictable teaching style
29. Being singled out by teachers
30. **Establishing a sense of belonging within the class** ←
31. Different views to peers
32. Reassuring teacher- ideal
33. Upset and coping with loss at school
34. **Emotionally supportive teachers** ←
35. **Longing for empathy and reassurance** ←
36. **Overwhelming emotional experience** ←
37. **Inability to focus on school work** ←
38. **Pre-deployment stress** ←
39. **Differentiated work during deployment** ←
40. Anticipating loss- upset and stress
41. **Fear of parent dying** ←
42. **Unpredictability as unsettling** ←
43. **Fear of frontline deployment** ←
44. **Reliance on technology** ←
45. Difference between self and peers
46. **Reminders of father to cope** ←
47. Outcast by peers
48. Desire to be liked by peers
49. Re-establishing social dynamics at secondary school
50. Feelings of acceptance
51. **Desire 'to be like everyone else'** ←
52. **Conforming to fit in** ←
53. Teachers who understand
54. **Friendships as essential to school life** ←
55. **Importance of feeling accepted by peers** ←
56. **Future emotional support at school as helpful** ←
57. More focused, individual support in schools needed
58. **Turbulent emotions in lessons** ←
59. **Blame from teachers- 'unfocused'** ←
60. **Talking, listening and understanding them** ←
61. **Validate feelings at school** ←
62. **Establishing a sense of community between military-connected students** ←
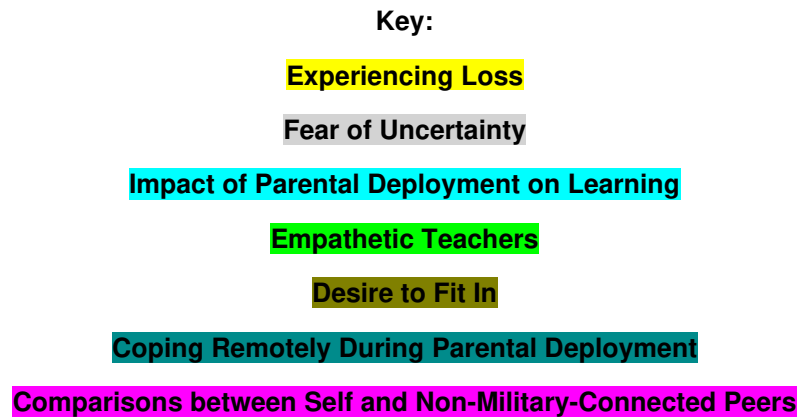63. **Sense of reassurance from military-connected peers** ←

Key:

Experiencing Loss

Fear of Uncertainty

Impact of Parental Deployment on Learning

Empathetic Teachers

Desire to Fit In

Coping Remotely During Parental Deployment

Comparisons between Self and Non-Military-Connected Peers

Figure 4: Graphic representation of the structure of emergent themes to subordinate themes.

Subordinate Theme   **Emergent Themes**

Fear of Uncertainty
- Unpredictable lifestyle
- Fear of parent dying
- Unpredictability as unsettling
- Fear of frontline deployment

Experiencing Loss
- Stress of leaving friends behind- loss
- Emotional six month parental deployment
- Difficulties dealing with loss
- Debilitating feelings of sadness
- Overwhelming emotional experience
- Pre-deployment stress

Empathetic Teachers
- Emotionally supportive teachers
- Longing for empathy and reassurance
- Future emotional support at school as helpful
- Blame from teachers- 'unfocused'
- Talking, listening and understanding them
- Validate feelings at school

Comparisons between Self and Non-Military-Connected Peers
- Comparisons between self and non-military-connected peers
- Realisation of lifestyle differences between self and non-military-connected peers- odd
- Relating to military-connected peers
- Peers who 'understand' experiences of transition
- Establishing a sense of community between military-connected students
- Sense of reassurance from military-connected peers

Impact of Parental Deployment on Learning
- Dificulties keeping up with school work
- Sensitive and upset
- Struggled to do homework
- Inability to focus on school work
- Differentiated work during deployment
- Turbulent emotions in lessons

Coping Remotely During Parental Deployment
- Remotely connected during deployment
- Sense of autonomy over maintaining connections during deployment
- Transitional object to improve ability to cope during deployment
- Reliance on technology
- Reminders of father to cope

Desire to Fit In
- Feeling different to others
- Establishing a sense of belonging within the class
- Desire 'to be like everyone else'
- Conforming to fit in
- Friendships as essential to school life
- Importance of feeling accepted by peers

Table 14: Details of where key words and phrases corresponding to these subordinate themes can be found in transcript 07.

Subordinate themes	Line Number	Key phrases from transcript (and key words highlighted)
Fear of Uncertainty	42-43	'I was wondering if he was going to come back at the weekend or if he wasn't because he was able to come back, usually on Fridays, but not always.'
	88-90	'But when somebody puts the attention on me, and I didn't ask for it that's when I feel really out of place, because I'm put on the spot and I don't do too good on the spot.'
	149-154	'I thought a lot about 'what if he doesn't come back?' Because I always think worst-case scenario, I've always thought worst-case scenario. And when I was seven, eight, I didn't understand really what a deployment was and that I would be able to keep in contact, but I just wouldn't be able to see him face to face for a while. And it was just the overwhelming not understanding what was going to happen that made me really upset and made me really stress about it and made me really self-conscious about it thinking all this stuff.'
	154-156	'And six months seemed like a really long time, and it still seems like a really long time. Because he is on the frontline now, and if we got another six-month draft, I think I'd be in the same situation.'
Experiencing Loss	6-9	'I did get quite upset because I've had many different friend groups over the years. But I have moved back to where I've been before and met up with my old friends. So, the main bit of it wasn't the stress of moving, it was the stress of leaving my friends and not having a group of friends that I knew too well that affected me most.'
	12-13	'Then, I moved away to Hampshire, and I lost contact with them'
	20-21	'my dad went on deployment when I was in Year 4. He went to the Bahamas for six months, and the first two months were really hard to deal with.'
	24-28	'I had a lot of fall out with friends at that time. Not big fall outs, just fall outs over little things because I was very sensitive and I was upset quite a lot of the time, because I was always thinking about my dad and how he wasn't there. So, that's the main thing I remember about it, just falling out with my friends a lot, because my dad wasn't at home.'
	31-37	'I've never been good with dealing with loss, whether it was my dad going away or a family member or pet passing away. I've never dealt with it very well, I've always been very much it gets really into my head, and I have about a week of just I can't do anything but be sad, basically. And it really affects me. So, I think…because obviously I was younger at the time, I'm better now. But I was just not used to it at all, I've never lost anyone important, apart from my great grandma, who I didn't see too often. So, it just really affected me, that was the first time I actually felt like proper loss. So, it just really made me feel really upset.'
	146-147	'But it was just the stress that my dad was going to eventually go away to the Bahamas and not be there for my summer holidays that was making me upset'
Empathetic Teachers	106-109	'I liked my teacher I had in Year 5, because he would always find a way to give you positive criticism, no matter how bad your work was. And he just always made me feel really reassured that what I was doing was good and boosting my confidence. So, I guess a teacher that doesn't harshly criticise you to where you feel bad, that's ideal teacher.'
	112-124	'there's a teacher called Ms. [name] and she's really helpful. And she deals with the military kids, so she understands a lot of the different struggles that military kids go through. And if I feel really upset, she helped me a lot when I didn't get used to my dad not being there, or in the week when my grandma passed away or something, she was really helpful with that. R: And how was she helpful? P: She just listened, and she didn't tell me what I did was like you're acting irrational, she didn't do that. She just listened and she gave me advice. She let me sit in a lounge for a bit and just let me out of lessons when I've had too much and was really stressing about something. It's just sometimes you need someone to listen and not butt in and go, "Oh, but, well, maybe somebody's had it worse." Yeah, I know people have had it worse, but I feel really upset and you telling me that people have it worse isn't going to make me feel better about my situation. It's just those kinds of people that just try and make it so like, "Other people have had this, other people have had that." Just listen to what I have to say and give me some reassurance that I have a right to feel upset at this current moment in time.'
	143-145	'I just got really overwhelmed at this one period, and my teacher just kept having to give me the groups down work, which she was very nice, and she just let me get on with the work that I wanted to do.'
	202-203	'At school, my teacher, my form tutor's been really nice, and she's been understanding. She'll let me out of form if I'm upset.'
	225-232	'In my current school, individual support is good but at my old school if you were upset, you were allowed to sit out the classroom for five minutes. You came back in and you'd do the work again. They didn't talk to you about much, apart from if there was a bullying issue. So, it's just more individual support in primary school, especially Year 5 and Year 6 when you really start to understand that especially military kids, they've come round and realised that it's real. The deployments are a long time, and that really affects them. It just needs more focus; they need as much help as the next kid.'
	234-238	'even just take them out of lessons for five minutes every week, and just say, "How is everything going? What's been going on at home?" Just like they do with the kids who have earning problems, they always seem happy. It's just you need to sometimes just take them out of lessons and talk to them because it can be overwhelming being at school when your parents are away or when you're just having a hard time at home.'
	246-247	'the teachers blame it on you for being unfocused, when you've got all this stuff going on.'
	250-253	'I think just talking to them, listening to them, understanding them is the best way to make them feel better about themselves. Just tell them that what they're feeling is completely normal and that they have the right to feel sad in that situation. And that there are hundreds of thousands of kids like them in the south west of England.'

Comparisons between Self and Non-Military-Connected Peers	67-82	'most of the people I know have lived in this town their whole lives. And some people I know have only ever been to London or Devon on holidays. So, they're all like, "Oh, I would feel really upset if I moved." And they're all shaken by this move to secondary school, anything. It just makes me feel really odd, because they were like, "Oh I never could picture myself living anywhere else." Whereas I could picture 10 places in my head where I've lived or could live. And it's just never made sense to me that people sometimes don't move, and that's just their part of life.
		R: How does that make you feel?
		P: It makes me feel quite odd, really. Because I know about two people that have been in the military. I remember my friend, his dad was I think army. And he would move around a lot, and I met up with him, but I lost contact with him recently. And he obviously moved around a lot, so he could talk to me, because he'd moved from Portugal as a kid. But there's no one else, apart from my friend, who moved from Poland. The foreign kids, they understand, because they've had big moves, moving from countries or understanding the language or talking a separate language. But it's never anyone in my friendship group, they've all lived in [name of current town] their entire lives or they've just lived in one place. It's never they've gone round the entire country, like I have.
	254-257	'Maybe even have a club where the military kids can meet up, because there was one of them in my school in Hampshire, and it really helped me. Because these kids understood what I've been through, they understood moving, they understood deployments. And it was just the understanding of people who've been through it that really helps.'
	259-263	It makes me feel more assured that I'm not the only one like this, because obviously I've said that most of my friends have lived in [name of current town] their whole lives. When somebody tells me that, "Oh, yeah, my dad's in the RAF and he went on deployment when I was in Year 5." It just makes me feel so reassured that someone's felt what I have and I'm not alone or alienated in my current situation, it just makes me feel really comfortable.'
Impact of Parental Deployment on Learning	20-26	'in primary school, my dad went on deployment when I was in Year 4. He went to the Bahamas for six months, and the first two months were really hard to deal with. And I struggled to keep up with work, I started falling back on work and falling back on homework and that really affected me. But after the first two months, it just started to get better. I started to get used to it. But still, I wasn't as good as I was until my dad came back. And I think I had a lot of fall out with friends at that time. Not big fall outs, just fall outs over little things because I was very sensitive and I was upset quite a lot of the time, because I was always thinking about my dad and how he wasn't there.'
	40-46	'I think I was just thinking too much, and I was too much in my own head. It happened when we bought a house here, because my dad had to stay at a separate military base. And I struggled to do homework on time because I was wondering if he was going to come back at the weekend or if he wasn't because he was able to come back, usually on Fridays, but not always.
I would have breakdowns in class, and I would start to cry randomly because I'd be happy one second, and then I'd be crying the next and I wouldn't understand it. It was just very overwhelming for me.'
	137-140	'there was this period in Year 3 where it was coming up to when my dad was going to be deployed. And I was just completely overwhelmed. I would be able to do the work, if you gave me that work two weeks before I would have got it done and been on the next work within 20 minutes. But I just got so overwhelmed by facing the fact that my dad was going to be on deployment.'
	143-147	'I just got really overwhelmed at this one period, and my teacher just kept having to give me the groups down work, which she was very nice, and she just let me get on with the work that I wanted to do. But it was just the stress that my dad was going to eventually go away to the Bahamas and not be there for my summer holidays that was making me upset.'
	237	'it can be overwhelming being at school when your parents are away'
	241-247	'I get quite burned out. I'll feel overwhelmed in one lesson, and then the next lesson I'll just feel kind of emotionless. Just get on with the work and don't chat. I had a thing, I was doing computer science and I got really excited about it, and I got overwhelmed. And then, I went to geography, and we had a test and I was just spaced out and completely out of it. Same thing happened in V&V and it's just that it's always going to be a crash and burn with being excited or being overwhelmed. It always happens and then, the teachers blame it on you for being unfocused, when you've got all this stuff going on.'
Coping Remotely During Parental Deployment	48-56	'I would call my dad very often; my mum would let me use her WhatsApp to text him. But obviously, he wasn't able to reply all the time but usually, he could. He'd get about a 30-minute slot of phone calls a week, I think. So, we phone called him every Friday, I believe. But it was usually quite late at night, because of different time zones, and when he got off work. Now I can text him more often, because I have my own phone and I have my own WhatsApp and all that. But what we have is we have this teddy we call Sailor Pooh. And he goes on deployment with my dad, and he takes pictures of him at all the landmarks he goes to. Because Winnie the Pooh has been my childhood, that's my favourite teddy, my favourite toy. When he sent us pictures of them, that's what really made me happy and made me deal with it a bit better.'
	158-165	'I watched a lot of Minecraft videos because Minecraft was my favourite game at the time. And I relied on these YouTubers, I was always watching this guy called Stampy's Minecraft videos made me really happy because he was so enthusiastic, and he had this funny laugh. And it was just watching YouTube and having all these figures that made me happy and had the same passions as me, when girls at school weren't playing video games. I would always watch my dad play games like Scarum and stuff. It was just watching them reminded me of watching my dad play these games. So, I would watch people play games, and it would make me feel a lot more comfortable in a situation.'
Desire to Fit In	62-65	'I'll keep to myself until somebody talks to me because I don't want to stand out. I just want to be normal, because I've never been normal. I've always come in halfway through a year or randomly appeared in Year 3 and then gone away Year 5. So, I don't like sticking out, it just makes me feel very uncomfortable.'
	85-90	'Like the first day of school, when you go back, I went in October, and the teacher was introducing me to the whole class. I just felt really weird. I didn't like being the centre of attention. I've never liked being the centre of attention. I've liked being in charge, but if I want attention, I'll do theatre. That's when I like it, when I do it myself, my own choice. But when somebody puts the attention on me, and I didn't ask for it that's when I feel really out of place, because I'm put on the spot and I don't do too good on the spot.'
	167-173	'I've had a bit of a hard time with some girls at my school because they don't like me for some reason. I don't know if it's something I've said or the way I act or it's my friendship group that they don't like me. And they'll laugh at me, they'll make jokes about me and it didn't really get to me until I got to about Year 8, when I started caring a lot about what people think.
Like, I could like a song and I could watch a video online, and they'll say, "Oh, this song is bad, I don't like it." And I'll remove that song from my playlist and it's really made me think about how much I care about other people's opinions and stuff.'
	176-178	'it was one of my old friends that I had in Year 4, and she just all of a sudden just didn't talk to me anymore. And I think it was a new friendship group, and they just decided they don't like me.'

	180-188	'I was really good friends with this girl called 'Annie'. And I've got back in contact with her recently through Instagram. And she had a love for cats, and so did I. So, when I found out that she had cute cats, and when she found out I had three cats, the only thing we talk about was cats and drawing cats. And she taught me how to draw these cats in her style. I liked drawing, too, a lot, and I still do, just not as much as I did when I was in Year 6, and I'd just draw everything that I saw. And she really made me feel normal, because not only did she draw and like cats, she also played the games I did, like Minecraft. And she just made me feel really normal, even though I'd always felt outcast for liking this boyish stuff, which I realise isn't as boyish, because I realise a lot of people actually play these games. I've just been looking in the wrong place.'
	190-195	'I just wanted to be like everyone else, because all these girls like pink and had all these interests. I had a good friend called 'Louise', who again, I've got back in contact with. She liked these things called Shopkins, and the moment she told me she liked Shopkins, I went home, and I was like, "Mum, can you buy me these?" So, I wanted to be like my friends I wanted to even though pink wasn't my favourite colour, I forced myself to make it my favourite colour. Looking back I really just wanted to fit in.
	203-216	'I've been hanging around with some new friends called 'Hayden' and 'Sam' and I've got all these friends that are really nice. It's just I like school when I've got friends, it's not fun unless you have friends at school. And when all these people just let you hang out with them for no reason, other than they want you to hang out with them makes you really happy. And not like because they think you're cool or because they think you're attractive. They just want to be your friend. R: And why is that important? P: Because when somebody is judged by their looks or how popular they are, I don't think that's a good representation of who they are. Because it's like googling a celebrity, finding out the date they were born and saying you know everything about them. So, you really need to understand the person and know the person before you should count them as your friend. And just being friends with someone because they've got some nice clothes that they wore on a non-school uniform day or they're friends with the popular kids. It just makes me really happy that they don't care that I'm not as popular, they just want to be my friend.

Subordinate to Superordinate Themes for Alice

Subordinate Themes	Superordinate Themes
Experiencing Loss Emotional Impact of Parental Deployment on Learning Coping Remotely During Parental Deployment Fear of Uncertainty	Experiences of Loss The Impact of Loss on Learning
Empathetic Teachers Comparisons between Self and Non-Military-Connected Peers	A Desire for Teachers and Peers to Empathise and Understand
Desire to Fit In	A Need to Belong

Appendix G: Stage 6- Looking for patterns across cases. Developing overarching themes from superordinate themes

Superordinate Themes (Closely related themes grouped together)	Jack	Tom	George	Ava	James	Lucy	Alice	Present in over half the sample?	Overarching Themes
Experiences of Loss/ Emotional Impact of Loss and Separation/ Loss of Friendships/ The Impact of Loss on Learning	x	x	x		x		x	YES	**The Impact of Loss and Separation**
New Teaching Styles and Expectations/ Adapting to Changes/ Adjusting to a New Home and a New School	x	x		x	x	x		YES	**Adapting to Changes**
Searching to Belong/ A Need to Belong/ Fear of Loneliness	x			x		x	x	YES	**Searching to Belong**
Re-establishing an Identity/ Sense of Self as a Military Child	x	x	x	x				YES	**Establishing a Sense of Self**
Emotional and Academic Support Following a Transition/ Emotional and Academic Impact of Previous and Upcoming Transitions/ Physical and Emotional Impact of Transitions	x		x		x				Link to 'The Need for Empathy and Understanding'
Building Friendships/ Exploring New Social Dynamics		x	x		x				Link to 'Searching to Belong'
Lack of Understanding of Military Culture/ A Desire for Teachers and Peers to Empathise and Understand the Military Lifestyle		x	x			x	x	YES	**The Need for Empathy and Understanding**

Overarching Themes:

Searching to Belong

The Impact of Loss and Separation

Establishing a Sense of Self

Adapting to Changes

The Need for Empathy and Understanding

Appendix H: Interview transcript 01

1.R: Can you tell me about your experiences of school so far?
2.P: Um? Well…they've been quite good. So…so far I'm in year 10 obviously, and the teachers I've
3.met.....the teachers I've met have been really kind. However. I have been bullied before...for quite a
4.while, and the school didn't do too much about it. It's fine now because I guess people just matured or
5.whatever. Um….and I go to a school where it's quite normal to have parents in the armed forces
6.and they also like give you some special things because
7.of it for instance they might get you a textbook instead of asking you to get it which is quite nice.
8.R: So what other things do they do in your school? you said that there's a lot of children with parents
9.in the forces and you said that they will give you a text book, but could you tell me a bit more about
10.the other things that they do?
11.P: Uh, yeah, what they do is they put the children who have Armed forces parents they put them
12.under service child and every service child would be able to attend special meetings or be given extra
13.like textbooks, instead of asking you to buy them, for instance, all my science textbooks, I never had
14.to get them myself I was given them by the school. In the meetings they bring in previous armed
15.force members, so adults to talk about their experiences and basically tried to comfort everyone.
16.R: can you tell me how that makes you feel?...that they do those things…
17.P: it does feel quite nice to know that it is acknowledged that it can be difficult. Yeah. It does feel
18.quite nice to be acknowledged and recognize that there are other people who are dealing with
19.that. And, um, that they are there to support you and that there are resources available.
20.R: You spoke earlier about teachers and you said "it's good now". Could you tell me a little bit more
21.about your relationships with teachers and what you mentioned earlier?
22.P: I've got... well every kid has got
23.their favourites but i've got some favourites that I like for instance I like my science teachers as they are
24.quite nice and like to help you and not just interested in getting their paycheck. They actually want to
25.help you through different things and help you achieve what your goal is. My biology teacher...my
26.biology teacher knows I'm a doctor, she's constantly trying to help me to become better and
27.study hard for it.
28.R: Did you say you want to be a doctor…? Can you tell me more about that?
29.P: I want to be a doctor, yeah. My biology teacher would just kind of bring it up and constantly try to
30.help me and some of her students she really wants to push hard. She gives kind of extra help too. Well,
31.maybe not extra help, but she gives some opportunities to apply their knowledge and really improve.
32.R: And how does that make you feel?...that you get that?
33.P: It was nice to know that there is someone who believes in you. Obviously you have your parents who
34.also believe in you. However, it is quite nice to know that a teacher believes in you and can actively
35.help you with getting to your goal.
36.R: Okay, thank you. Could you tell me more about what can you tell me about what primary schools
37.like for you?
38.P: Oh God. Well. I didn't have too many friends as I was always moving. However, in the old school…I
39.moved to four different primary schools, and in.... and in three of them I had really good friends but I
40.only stayed there for a short while, for instance, year five and six....I was only at that school for one
41.year before we had to move. So of course, you didn't have much chance to make friends and then build
42.or become popular in your class and really make a lot of friends in it. And it's frustrating to constantly
43.be in a new environment and never know if you're going to stay somewhere or how long it's going to
44.be until you have to move again.
45.R: How did it make you feel when you when you knew those things were happening?
46.P: Made me feel worried that I would never have an actual place to say that I spent most of my time
47.there. And for a while, if anyone ever asked...and I'd always be the odd one out, that I'd always be from
48.somewhere else. Because obviously I came from [name of city] and I and I refer to that to this day as my home
49.and where I was, because it's where I spent half my life so far. And it's where I'm planning on moving
50.back to for University I still refer to that as my home and if someone asks me where I'm from because I
51.have a unique accent or I'm new I will always say there, but it's nice to say that you have somewhere
52.that you have you lived too but it's also so weird to know that where you are at that moment isn't your
53.home at that moment and instead you live somewhere else.
54.R: That sounds like it is quite difficult.
55.P: It was, but it's gotten a lot better, seeing as we've now settled down here, and we're obviously going
56.to stay here for a while, at least until I do my A levels but I'm not sure what's going to happen when I
57.move out but it is nice to know that I finally have settled down and can stay here
58.and build relationships that I can sustain and not worry about leaving behind
59.R: You said that friends changed quite a lot when you moved could you tell me more about that?
60.P: You'd always have to find a new friend if you moved and you'd always have to do something new
61.and luckily I was quite an extroverted kid and I quite liked to go out there and speak out and to make
62.friends and in a lot of my schools I did make some good friends and then of course there are some
63.schools that you don't really make as many which can be frustrating but you...you...at least you know
64.that you can make friends again because you weren't permanently there....if something wasn't going
65.too well you could fall back on it. There are positives and negatives to moving about because at
66.least you can make new friends somewhere if you can't make them there.
67.R: Could you give me an example of when you've had to make new friends?
68.P: Erm when I first moved from [name of city] to X I couldn't talk to any of my friends and I rarely saw
69.any of them because it was a three hour journey. And I think once during the summer holidays I
70.managed to see one of my friends, my old friends, but that was it. And I didn't make
71.any new friends. I was on good terms with everyone, but I didn't make any solid friends there and I
72.would often just join in on whatever big game was being played.
73.R: And can you tell me a bit more about... So you told me that you've been to four primary schools?
74.Could you tell me what that was like for you?
75.P: Um? It was always different because the school, wouldn't know how far you've gotten and would
76.have to rely on previous school's information which could always get muddled up. And you'd always
77.have to... when you first moved you always have to make sure that you that you put yourself out there
78.to make sure that you're put in the right groups and make sure that you make good relationships
79.with your teachers and stuff and basically tell them who you are. I was lucky coz I was quite
80.extroverted I didn't have too much problem making friends with my teachers and making sure that I
81.said why I thought I belonged in say a higher group or something if I was in a lower group.
82.R: Can you think of a time when that happened at school and tell me about it?
83.P: erm, well, one big change was from year five to year six. I only stayed at Year 5 for that year and that

84.was it. And it was a really small school with only one class per year. So when I moved there were about
85.the same number of groups and I had to make sure that I thought that I was in the correct group and
86.that if the work was too easy or too challenging that I talked about it and said that I thought I need to
87.be moved up or down.
88.R: Do you mean the set?
89.P: Yeah, the set. Yeah.
90.R: You mentioned that there was information that had to be passed school to school and you said
91.sometimes that information got...I think you used the term 'muddled up'. Could you tell me more
92.about that?
93.P: it wasn't for me it was mainly for my brother who has some special needs and some of the
94.information that would be passed on from school to school would be mixed and they wouldn't give him
95.the proper support that he needed which was quite irritating to just see happen. And then at home of
96.course, he'd have to release it, release the energy or whatever at home so you'd be the one to deal
97.with it where the school could have taken proper measures or something like that to make sure it
98.was dealt with
99.R: And how did that make you feel?
100.P: Annoyed because of course, information needs to be clearly passed on and that can be difficult for
101.moving 2 hours apart and moving throughout years 'cause each year has a new set of challenges that
102.will be presented.
103.R: It sounds like that was tricky. Earlier you mentioned friends and you mentioned teachers. Could
104.you describe your relationships with friends and teachers in the schools that you've been to?
105.P: Erm in most of the schools they're quite good. I made good friends and they're really kind. And if I
106.moved away, then would I maintain contact with them for quite a while but eventually it would just
107.become a big hassle or we would find new friends and we would still maintain contact. It was just very
108.loose contact. I'm lucky to have grown up with phones and video games and video game systems
109.because quite a few of my old friends from previous schools I still keep in contact with and play games
110.with because we couldn't do that and it was very good way of A- communicating and B- doing
111.something together. And teachers......It was always just trying to figure out what the new teachers
112.like now that I think about it. Quite a lot of my teachers were quite similar so I was lucky to be able to
113.make good relations with them. Make sure that we got to know each other quite well.
114.R: What did that good relationship with the teacher look like?
115.P: Um. It was just we both, uh, and she knows about my skill level and of course I know how to
116.behave in her class and what she accepts and won't accept in her class in terms of behaviour wise. I
117.know to behave properly and make sure that I do the work to the level she expects.
118.R: And when you've moved into the different schools that you spoke about, have you found that easy
119.or hard to establish that with teachers...how have you found that?
120.P: I found it quite easy. My teachers were quite similar. And they would often have similar teaching
121.techniques. In primary school there isn't much difference in behaviour it's normally just sit down,
122.listen, raise your hand and basic stuff like that and if there was something new I'd quickly learn it and
123.I'd ask other students about it and that.
124.R: and can you tell me more about your learning in the schools you've been to?
125.Erm, each one had a different way of teaching and of course each one has different layouts, so you'd
126.have to very quickly learn it. And the schools always look different when you first go to them
127.compared to when you actively go to them. They always look a bit different and you need to learn the
128.basic layout and what they do and how they teach, and for instance, a school in year four had two
129.sets. However, next year in year five it had like five different sets you've got to learn about and learn
130.where you belong within those sets. And...each school, of course, takes off from the old one each year
131.takes off from the old year, so moving school means you learn about different things and would have
132.to then catch up. Or, you'd be ahead in a particular subject which can be irritating, but you can
133.eventually, with enough time, learn how to catch up. We can actually catch up and make sure that
134.you're on the right area of learning.
135.R: What has supported you to do that?
136.P: well of course you have your family at home which can always support you and make sure that you
137.get the work done. And also the teachers understand that you're new and of course you therefore will
138.have to learn separate things and they might give you work that is better suited for you. If you
139.are behind then they can help you to catch up and make sure that you're getting the support that you
140.need because you've moved.
141.R: and I noticed that you said that they all look different so when you 'move to a new school it looks
142.different' could you tell me more about what that means?
143.P: It's just because every new school has a new layout and new equipment so one school might have a
144.room filled with instruments and give you ages to play with them. Others might have just one
145.instrument and you just choose to specialize in that one for the school year.
146.R: I noticed that you said belong or belonging earlier. I wondered if you could expand a little bit more
147.on that.......I think you said it when you spoke about sets...
148.P: it's just the sets so if the work is too hard or too easy then you make sure that you're in the correct
149.set one that will challenge you but won't be too difficult for you so that you are unable to get it
150.R: can you tell me what your set is like for you, what, what set are you in?
151.P: Well for quite a few things I'm in the top set. Which is a bit easier than, say, a middle set its just
152.about the right balance and the top set, of course, you still have to make sure that the work isn't too
153.difficult and it's bit easier.
154.R: Can you tell me about any tests or exams or anything you have to sit at school?
155.P: Um, all the tests and exams have been alright, of course each one is a bit different, each school is a
156.bit different in how they do exams however I quite often moved at the end of the school year and had
157.summer holidays to learn my new environment, learn my new house and when I get back to school
158.it's the beginning of the year so you're not doing exams right then and there and you're given time to
159.learn the stuff that would be in the example
160.R: And this might sound strange but...could you tell me what you were thinking when you had to
161.move schools?
162.P: erm, well there's a mixture of excitement and you being annoyed because you have to leave
163.everything that you've built and learnt and all of your friends behind however you also get to move to
164.a new environment, new house, meet new people and go to a new school so it's a mixture of
165.excitement and annoyance
166.R: what are the most exciting aspects about it?
167.P: Erm probably the fact that there are new people and just a new place to live so it's never boring
168.really you always have somewhere new that you can figure out and find all of the little nooks and

169.crannies
170.R: And what are the annoying things?
171.P: Erm...just of course leaving your old place behind everything that's familiar behind and all your
172.friends so all of the relationships you've built over the last year or two have just been left behind and
173.you now have to build new ones
174.R: And can you give me an example of when they've been left behind
175.Erm...like in year 1, 2, 3 and 4 each time I moved through those years I moved school twice during
176.those years and all of my friends from there….I wasn't able to maintain contact with them coz I always
177.moved too far away to be able to do that and of course I was very young so it wasn't as if I was able to
178.get a lot of things...I didn't have many things personally that I could use personally to keep in contact
179.with them
180.R: and how did that make you feel?
181.P: annoyed because of course you've got to know this person, they've got to know you and you've
182.become really good friends over the years and now you've got to leave that and you've got to re-start
183.and build...and get to know new people and build new relationships with them.
184.R: and you said that when you were young you couldn't keep in contact with them, what do you do
185.now when that happens?
186.P: erm now I have my own phone and my own gaming devices that I can use and I can either save
187.them as contacts, arrange times to meet and just ask my parents to drive me there and of course with
188.the games you can always schedule times with your friends to play and just chat and make sure that
189.everything is going quite well
190.R: and how is that?
191.P: it's a lot better because of course I now retain a lot of my friends from year 5 and 6 as I still have
192.their contacts and by the time that I did get my own gaming devices I was able to re-establish those
193.friendships and basically get a head start on making new friendships and always having that thing to
194.fall back on if I'm unable to make friends in my new school.
195.R: and how did you cope in your new schools?
196.P: well the school was supportive and so were my parents and they knew how frustrating it could be
197.to have to do this and as I was extroverted I didn't have too much trouble putting myself out there
198.and making sure that people knew who I was…well maybe not knew who I was but I was able to make
199.friends and make sure that my teachers erm make sure that I understood what my teachers wanted
200.and they understood where I was in my education.
201.R: what does 'being extroverted' mean to you?
202.P: erm it just means…it's kind of easier to express yourself and make relationships with other people
203.R: thank you. I know you spoke earlier about a particular one but have you experienced any other
204.challenges at school if so could you tell me about them
205.P: erm well there's the challenge of being somewhat new in education as each school does things
206.differently so you might be ahead in some things but behind in others and of course it's difficult to
207.find that balance of going back down to learning the things that you already know and going up to
208.things that are totally knew to you. And the challenges of understanding how do new teachers teach
209.and what they expect and stuff
210.R: you also mentioned bullying earlier and if you don't want to revisit it its fine but would you say that
211.was a challenge too?
212.P: it was only really a challenge in secondary school and it was…it was erm big…I was kind of picked
213.out when I first got there because I had been taught to stand against it and basically the entire year
214.was slightly bullied by the higher years but I was the big target because I was the one that would not
215.back down so I became a bit of a bigger target for them and they didn't like me to say the least.
216.R: and how long had you been in that school when that began?
217.P: erm this was the first time. This was when I first got to secondary school. Thankfully I'd been
218.through the same secondary school all of the time. All this time I have been in the same secondary
219.school so I haven't moved secondary school but for quite a lot of the time in secondary school I was
220.bullied.
221.R: Thank you for sharing that [name]. I know you've mentioned a couple already, but have you
222.experienced any positive aspects of school and if so could you tell me about them?
223.P: well its quite exciting to see a new way and always being able to learn about the different
224.opportunities for instance clubs or extra-curricular activities that you could do there and erm of
225.course how they teach, what their way of learning is and the layout of the school because each school
226.has a different layout whether its multiple floor or just one big area.
227.R: thank you. Could you tell me more about the clubs and extra-curricular activities and who they're
228.for?
229.P: well each school has different ones. I always loved acting and there wasn't many acting clubs when
230.I was at primary school but then I got to secondary school and there were a lot more clubs and
231.opportunities for stuff to do there which was quite nice to be able to spend my free time doing things
232.that I love instead of just staying at home and not really doing anything.
233.R: you said that learning how schools teach was a positive aspect, could you tell me more about that?
234.P: well of course each school has a different timetable…different times that they do things, different
235.start times, different end times and each teacher has a different way of teaching, some might prefer
236.you to be listening in the lessons some might actively get you to constantly be doing something and
237.it's quite nice to figure out how…which.…what the best way is for you to capitalize on their way of
238.teaching.
239.R: thank you, can you think of anything what would help you at school?
240.P: erm, I'm not really sure to be honest. At the moment I'm doing quite well and I don't think that
241.there would be much to help me with at the moment.
242.R: I know you mentioned earlier than you are given text books…does that help or not really?
243.P: erm, it does help that they're able to do that and basically say that you don't have to worry about it
244.too much and that they'll supply you with it and you have a bit of extra stuff to help you along.
245.R: and is there anything that we haven't spoken about in relation to your school experiences that we
246.haven't spoken about…any area that I haven't mentioned or anything that would be valuable for me
247.to know
248.P: no not really. Nothing that I can think of.
249.R: so speaking about how *you* experience school…you feel as though we've spoken about the main
250.things?
251: P: yeah

Appendix I: Interview Transcript 02

1.R: So, I just want to ask you to be as open as possible….you can share with me anything you want
2.to share with me. I'm going to start by asking quite an open question…Can you tell me about
3.your experiences of school so far?
4.P: I've been to lots of different schools. So, I've spent nursery down at RAF [name of base], and then I've
5.gone to Italy for Reception, then back to Surrey through Year 1 to 3. So, like, going up to Year 2,
6.which is the infant school. So, it's quite a bit smaller, but it's still quite big, because it's linked to the
7.junior school which is… I think it was an ex-boarding school, so it had all the really good facilities.
8.So, I just went up to Year 3 there. And then I moved………………, so I went to Primary
9.School. It's a bit odd, because I made some really good friends, and then I'd suddenly leave them again.
10.And then I'd make new friends, and then I'd keep making new friends. And then we kind of stopped
11.moving around, and then I'm still here, and I'm now at 'Fairfields', and it's an all-boys school, so
12.some questions asked are a bit odd, but.
13.R: Like what?
14.P: I tend to get, "What does your dad do?" "Has he killed anyone?" and stuff like that. So, it's a
15.bit odd, but I guess it's this thing that boys would do, so… yeah.
16.R: And how does that make you feel?
17.P: It makes me feel a bit odd, but I understand why they say it.
18.R: And you said that you'd moved to lots of schools…
19.P: Yeah, I moved lots through primary and infant school, but I've kind of like now stayed put for
20.secondary.
21.R: And what was that like for you, moving schools?
22.P: Sometimes it could be sad, because I made a load of good friends, and then… well, we
23.sometimes arrange to meet up with them, but I definitely lost touch with a lot through primary and
24.secondary. But, with primary school I'm still friends with some of them. I have, like contacts on my
25.phone, and my mum's good friends with their mums and dads. So, yeah.
26.R: So, you said that you use your phone. Is that how you contact them now?
27.P: For some of the ones I keep in touch with, I have them on my Xbox, so I can chat through them
28.whilst playing games as well.
29.R: Oh, okay. So, how would you describe the relationship you have with your friends now?
30.P: I have some good relationships, and then I have some ones that maybe I can agree with and just
31.kind of hang around with, but they tend… so, like, secondary school, since it's an all-boys school, you can
32.have a group, so everyone goes off. But I can freely mingle between both groups, really.
33.R: And can you tell me a little bit more about what primary school was like for you?
34.P: Erm primary school… it was all right. I had some really good friends in primary… in infant school,
35.and then suddenly they didn't quite work out in primary school. But then, I have an older friend who was
36.in Year 5 at the time, when I was in Year 3. I ended up playing with him for a while. There's 'Josh' and I
37.spend a lot of time on the Xbox, and we chat to him, but now we can't really see him since Covid-19, so…
38.R: Oh, so online…
39.P: It's a way I can talk to him and stuff.
40.R: That's online gaming?
41.P: Yeah, online games.
42.R: Oh, okay. So, you spoke about times that you've moved school in primary school. What
43.happened, and how did you feel about the move?
44.P: Well, I was quite lucky, actually, because I managed to finish my Year 3 term at 'St Thomas''
45. and then I moved… I viewed the school just before the end of term, so I got to see what it was
46.like. But then I spent the summer holidays moving around to our new house. That was quite odd,
47.because I had a summer, and I didn't know anyone. So then when I came to 'Fairfields',
48.the first day, I was like, "Oh, do I want to…" You know, "I don't want to…" I was kind of shy, but then
49.everyone was all right, but… yeah, it went a lot better than I thought it would.
50.R: That's great. And how did you cope with that, in your new school? Being new?
51.P: It was actually quite nice. Loads of people actually volunteered to show me around, and I ended
52.up sticking with some good people who I still know now, so, it's all nice.
53.R: Oh, lovely.
54.P: And welcoming as well.
55.R: Oh, great. Can you tell me about learning in your school?
56.P: It was hard, because sometimes… because I did a load of things in Year 3. When I went into Year
57.4, I think a few of them, I might have done at the same time as they're doing in Year 4, so the learning's
58.a lot different. So, it took a while for me to get the hang of it maybe the different ways from London to
59.Lincolnshire.
60.R: How was it different?
61.P: Like, the ways of teaching, and some of the ways it works.
62.R: Can you think of an example?
63.P: So, like, we were taught times tables by blocks in Year 3, and we learned with those blocks, and
64.we kind of played and as we played, we learned with them. Year 4 was super fun, but instead, it was kind
65.of like playing a game at the same time. So, we would have leader boards, but I was always at the
66.bottom because we had some really clever people, so… And it was a lot different, because we ended up
67.using times table mats, and lots of different things.
68.R: Okay. And can you tell me about teachers?
69.P: My first teacher in 'St Antony's' was 'Mrs Carey'. She was great. We basically every Friday
70.afternoon, we would have a thing called VIP, and you would just go and sit and everyone would
71.compliment you. The thing is, because I was there that year, I got some things that I could agree with,
72.and then others were just things that people, because they didn't know me, they would just say like
73.what they got from me.

74.But, yeah, it was nice. Everyone was welcoming. And in Year 5, I had 'Mrs West'. She was nice. Primary
75.school, I can't really remember… [tried to recall their names] like, Year 3, I can't really remember. Year 2
76.and 1, I can't remember. Well, I have a vague idea of what they looked like, but I just can't remember
77.their names. In Year 6, I had two teachers. I had 'Mrs Winter' and… no, no.
78.R: Don't worry
79.P: Who was the other Year 6 teacher? [shouts out to mum]
80.R: It doesn't matter about the names. No need to tell me their names.
81.P: He was good. Year 7… oh, God, I don't know any names. Well, I can remember a few, but not
82.sure.
83.R: What was good about the teachers? You said that they were good… What was good about
84.them?
85.P: They're kind of fun. They're quite welcoming. And then as you go along, it was a bit different. In
86.Italy, it was an MOD school, so it was all military children. So, no civilians, really. It was just us, that's in
87.like the military. So, everyone there was military, so I couldn't really socialise with those who weren't
88.out of the military. So, like, a lot of the children were military, so we could all relate. So, there was
89.nothing really odd about it. But then definitely as you move into more schools with maybe children who
90.don't have a military background, it definitely gets a bit difficult, because they all have different
91.questions, and then they want to ask you about how was it, and what was it like here, here, here. Yeah.
92.It can be frustrating, but at the same time, it can be quite nice.
93.R: What makes it easier to relate to those children?
94.P: Erm like, I can relate to moving around a lot, living in military blocks, as well, and…definitely the
95.experiences I have. Like, my dad going away, and… It's just a lot easier, because lots of people, they have
96.their parents go away like for a few weeks, like on work trips. But not many of them could relate to lots
97.of birthdays and Christmases being missed, and six months away or abroad somewhere, in a war zone.
98.They can't really relate to that unless they have some sort of aspect that the RAF or Army or Navy might
99.need.
100.R: And what are those sort of times like for you?
101.P: They can be quite sad, because I only have my mum around, and sometimes I might need my
102.dad, but he's not here. He's somewhere else, and we can only Skype call him, and we have to negotiate
103.some time early or late in the afternoon, just because then it's not midnight for him, or 2:00 in the
104.morning for us. So, yeah, it can be quite hard to keep in contact.
105.R: And you mentioned military blocks. Can you tell me what they are?
106.P: So, they're like little patches where military families move into. That's how I met [name of close
107.friend], and we met quite a lot of people from different things. I know we know a few people from the
108.Army, I can't remember anyone from the Royal Navy, but I definitely know a few people who are Royal
109.Navy and not in… who weren't living with us at the same time.
110.R: Okay. And you said that you moved to Italy. Could you tell me a bit more about that?
111.P: So, we moved to [name of city], and it was quite different, because we had to be careful with
112.everything, because there's a lot of crime. Because we were in this three little block… two- or three
113.storey buildings. And it was good. We had two people either side of us. We ended up becoming good
114.friends, apart from one of them had an aggressive dog.
115.R: (Laughs).
116.P: Whenever I'd try to go in, they would bark and chase me, but then one day it became nice, so I
117.was like, "Oh, yeah," so I went that week and it was nice that week, and then as soon as we started
118.moving away and we met them again, the dog hated me again (laughs).
119.R: Aww. Can you tell me about the school in Italy?
120.P: Since it was an MOD school …yeah, so, we all spoke in English. There were no Italians. We
121.learned some Italian, but I can't really remember much of it. And it was quite odd, because it also had
122.kind of another school built into it which was a junior school, and it was all separated by a fence… like,
123.one of those little wooden ones, because we couldn't climb over it at the time. And we had little bikes…
124.like, what every normal infant school would have, but we were kind of isolated from the different side
125.of it.
126.R: Oh, okay. And how did it feel that you were sort of isolated from the others?
127.P: Well, because I was young, and it was Reception, I felt fine, because I think there was only two
128.classes of us, and we would go around and… yeah. We didn't really notice.
129.R: And then what happened after the school in Italy?
130.P: So, we moved back to England. That was quite odd, because we were used to it being hot,
131.sunny days. Maybe sometimes I'd be wearing a jumper, and it was a bit odd. But other than that, it was
132.fine. We just had to get used to the time difference.
133.R: And then you went to a school in England?
134.P: Yes, I did. That was the Infant and Junior School. The junior school was actually really,
135.really big. I think it got the same amount of students that I have in my secondary school, which is a bit
136.alarming. But at the same time, it was quite nice, because since there were so many people, I gradually
137.got used to it. But we also had quite a big playing field and playground at the same time, so it wasn't
138.really overcrowded at all…..erm…
139.R: And could you tell me… sorry.
140.P: No, no, go on.
141.R: I was going to say, how would you describe your relationships with teachers and friends in your
142.school, or the schools that you've been to?
143.P: In secondary school, especially this school, I think some of the teachers… I actually love some of
144.the teachers, but then some of the teachers, maybe I don't like so much, either… because sometimes
145.there's some teachers I don't like because maybe they're… because some teachers get angry quite
146.easily, and sometimes get a bit shouty. Because I look quite similar to some people in… definitely in
147.some of my year groups, I get shouted at, and it's not me, it's the other person.
148.I had that quite a lot in primary school, because I ended up sitting next to a person who was the same

149.height, had the same hair colour, so we ended up getting told off a lot, even though it wasn't us; it was
150.either one of us or the other (laughs).
151.R: Aw. And what about friends?
152.P: Definitely within the primary and infant and the reception schools, I've not really kept in touch
153.with many of them. Definitely those from Year 3 onwards, I still know quite well… Because we have
154.three schools where I go, we have a girls' grammar school, a boys' grammar school and then Forests
155.Academy, which was quite big. We kind of all end up running into each other on the street at some
156.place, because it's always really local, and we've got some good schools, so loads of people tend to end
157.up going to the same town every day, so I meet some people on the bus, some people on the streets.
158.R: And what's that like?
159.P: Sometimes it can be like, "Ooh, hello," (laughs) and then it's like a quick, "Hello," just sit, have a
160.chat, and then end up going, "Oh, no, I'm going to miss my bus," running out, down the street, and
161.trying to get on the bus in time. But my bus always leaves early, so I need to get there way before. It
162.was two minutes early, and it's a public transport bus, so I think, "Ooh, that's maybe not allowed."
163.I've missed the bus twice because it leaves early, and our bus is always late, so in the mornings.
164.R: Can you tell me have you experienced any challenges at school, in any of your schools?
165.P: Yes, definitely in… oh, no, I can't remember… erm well I had some odd moments
166.where some people will say certain things, and sometimes… now, because I'm an air cadet, loads of
167.people think now, all of a sudden, I'm now joining the military, when really I have loads of different
168.ideas, and I'm not sure what I want to do yet. But I don't consider a lot of things in the RAF or any of
169.the armed forces. So, yeah…
170.R: What is that like for you, when people say those things?
171.P: It can be quite annoying. Just because I grew up on a lot of military bases, I ended up getting a
172.lot… asked about aircraft, but I can answer a lot of their questions, because I know quite a lot of my
173.military jets. So, yeah…
174.R: Any other challenges?
175.P: Challenges… oh, yeah. It can be quite challenging because some of the questions asked, I can't
176.relate to at all. So, like, "What's it like to live in a war zone?" But then, because they told me, and I'm
177.like, "I don't live in a war zone. It's my dad who ends up flying away to a war zone. I never lived in one."
178.I definitely think sometimes some of the challenges I can face is, some people, I tell them I moved to
179.Italy and then some people now think I'm Italian, and then start speaking Italian to me because they've
180.gone overnight and found some Google Translate answers. So, that can be quite challenging. I can't
181.really relate more than that.
182.R: Yeah. Are there any other challenges that you've experienced at school?
183.P: Definitely the first few weeks are a bit awkward, when I move from school to school, because
184.no-one knows me, and they're like, "Who are you? How did you get in here so quick?" And… yeah,
185.definitely. The way the education changes is quite challenging at the same time because… just the way
186.it changes, I'm used to one way of being taught, and then suddenly I just, like, come back and then it's a
187.completely different way and I'm like, "What's happening?" And, yeah… it was kind of hard, because I
188.have to remake friends, and I do, and then sometimes I end
189.up forgetting the old friends, and then I kind of just move on, which is a bit… which is good, but I'm glad
190.because I made some really good friends, and because I haven't kept in touch, I can't remember any of
191.them.
192.R: Can you give me an example of when that's happened?
193.P: In Year 3, I got a load of things saying, "Goodbye, have a good time in your new school," and
194.that's the only way I can actually remember them, which sometimes can be good, because some of
195.them are actually quite annoying, so I'm kind of glad to get away from them. And others, I really liked
196.them, just because back in Year 3, you don't really get phones, so there was no way I could keep in
197.touch. And then slowly but surely we lost contact with them, and I ended up moving on through.
198.R: Yeah. And have you experienced any positive aspects of school? Can you tell me about some of
199.those?
200.P: Yes, I can, actually. It's quite nice, because when you're military, you move around a lot, so you
201.get to experience lots of different cultures. And definitely within England, I definitely noticed that lots
202.of people suddenly changed. From when I was in London, it was always "grass," and then when I
203.moved to secondary school in [name of current county], it's kind of like, it's either "grass" or "grass" or "bath…"
204.So, like, they're all, like… everyone has a split opinion, and it's a bit odd, because it's not just one.
205.Because loads of other people… because my nanna and granddad live in [North of England], it's always "bath," and then because I
always lived down… because when I lived in London, it was always "grass,"
206."bath,"
207.no "grass" and "bath" and… so, I'd definitely start switching, and it could get confusing, because lots of
208.people can make fun of you, because you're like, "Haha you say this, you're posher," and that.
209.R: I see, the accents?
210.P: Yeah, but it's a good laugh. And you get to meet lots of new people, which is also quite nice,
211.because you end up just growing branches of friends, because you keep in touch with those who you
212.really like, or maybe your parents keep in touch with their parents, so then you end up meeting up a
213.lot. But then you also end up meeting new people, which is also really, really good.
214.R: What sort of things have helped you in school?
215.P: Definitely some of the understanding that teachers have, because they realise that because I'm
216.a military child… definitely my learning support teacher, she can relate, because her dad was in the
217.Army, so she's trying to set up a load of Skype things so that you can contact parents and stuff, which is
218.actually quite nice. We have a lot of teachers as well, like I said, who have military parents and who
219.understand what I've gone through. So, that's also quite positive because I end up understanding more,
220.because more and more people, as I get to know them, suddenly go, like, "Oh, yeah, I was in this, this,
221.that." So, yeah, it's actually quite nice, and I end up meeting lots more people, and end up moving from
222.different sports teams and focusing on what I really like and doing maybe less of what I don't like.

223.R: And how does it make you feel? Because you said that your… did you say your learning support
224.teacher… did you say she's in the military?
225.P: Her dad was in the military, so she grew up within the military.
226.R   How does that make you feel, having her?
227.P: It makes me feel nice, knowing that it's not just me and, like, a few others who have gone
228.through it. Like, there's a lot more who have gone through what I maybe have gone through, and who
229.understand why sometimes I'm sad, why sometimes I'm happy
230.R: And when you say "what you've gone through," can you tell me a bit more about what you
231.mean by that?
232.P: So, like, my mum and dad… like, dad going away for six months, and people may not be able to
233.relate to their dad just going away regularly.
234.R: Can you tell me a bit more about that?
235.P: Sometimes it can be a bit concerning because he ends up going into… away for six months, and
236.you don't really know… because you can't really send a letter and it comes back straight away. So, you
237.end up Skyping, and it can be quite hard to get a Skype call. And then… yeah. And definitely having my
238.dad go away into somewhere that he could possibly get killed in lots of different ways can be quite
239.concerning as well.
240.R: How does it make you feel?
241.P: It makes me feel nervous, and when he does come home, I get a sigh of relief and… I just don't
242.want him to leave.
243.R: That must be difficult. Thank you for sharing all of that. Can I ask what would help you
244.at school? If you were to be given anything, what would help you at school?
245.P: Actually, I was going to… because my learning support teacher, she's making up a new room
246.where she's going to get computers and headsets so you can Skype. So, that's what I would say maybe
247.schools could do. So, like, maybe make up a room where during school time, maybe there's a time
248.where you dad can speak… so, you can just like maybe miss a bit of a lesson to go and talk to your dad,
249.maybe at a time… or your mum, who's away on an operation somewhere. Because that may be the
250.only time you can say hello, and speak to them, which is actually quite good. And they're deciding to do
251.that, so… I'm quite happy to say that I'm actually going to be helping in that.
252.R: Oh, excellent. That sounds brilliant. So, you think that that is something that would help you?
253.P: Yeah, that would help me.
254.R: And you said that Skype would allow you to connect with your dad?
255.P: Yeah.
256.R: Okay. So, you have shared so much with me, but I'm sure there's other things that I've sort of
257.missed out, and I wondered if there's anything you want to add that I haven't sort of specifically asked
258.about, that you want to share with me about your experiences of school?
259.P: It's definitely nicer now, because my dad, he's now started to become a reserve, we've now
260.stopped moving. So, it's a lot nicer, because I can actually keep my friendship groups. But I still have the
261.experience. And I can make friends with those who would maybe think about joining it. And I can tell
262.them things that maybe not many other people can tell them. So, actually, it's quite nice now because I
263.can just stick with the friendship groups I've got. And, yeah, I can definitely get a lot more contacts
264.now, with people I like, because I end up don't moving away and missing out on something.
265.R: And you said that you could tell them things that you'd want to tell them. Can you explain that a
266.bit more?
267.P: Because some of the people I end up knowing turn out to have military connections. Like, I
268.know one person, and his dad flies [name of plane] and he understands what I go through. And that's
269.quite cool, because we end up talking a lot about experiences around… like, he grew up in a military
270.block, and now he lives in [name of location]. And then, yeah, it's quite nice just to know that there's
271.other
272.people, as well. And I like talking to normal people, like, just people who are outside the military, who
273.actually want to become… because I can just tell them the experiences I've gone through, and help
274.them out, like, tell them what could happen and what can't happen in the military.
275.R: And what would you tell them?
276.P: So, I have a few people who are interested in the RAF, so that would be, like… so, sometimes
277.they ask questions, like, "What does it take to come in the RAF?" and then I'm like, "Well, it depends
278.what you want to do." Because lots of people just think the RAF is pilots, but really it's just a lot more
279.than just the pilots. So, you've got, like, the ground forces of the RAF; you've got the air traffic
280.controllers; you've got the mechanics; and you've just got so many other branches that no-one knows
281.about. Not just one aspect of the RAF that there's loads and loads.
282.R: What would you tell them about the emotional side of things, with your dad being in the RAF.
283.P: So, yeah, I'd… yeah, sometimes I'd go through and I would go [sound cut out], but families end
284.up leaving for quite a while, and it can be quite hard to really understand what others have gone
285.through. Because maybe some people, they may have, like, had their mum or dad go somewhere on an
286.operation and never come back. So, like, that's one thing I can't relate to, but I can relate to some of it.
287.Just not the end part. So, that can get me quite sad. But then, I don't know many people who that's
288.happened to, so I'm quite lucky. But definitely lots of things can get me upset, when people ask stupid
289.questions, and… there's another few things that upset me, but I don't really know...
290.Some of the most stupid things that I just don't understand why I get upset to them but... others, I'm
291.just not really sure. But sometimes someone asks a question, and it just gets me sad that I can't really
292.relate to more than that, really.
293.R: I can understand that those questions must be quite tricky. They must be quite hard for you. Is
294.there anything else that you'd like to share about your school experiences that we haven't gone
295.through?
296.P: Not really. I've kind of covered a lot of my experiences.
297.R: Yeah. You've gone through a lot. You've really spoken to me at great length so thank you so

298.much. I'm going to stop the recording now, unless there's anything else you want to add?
299.P: No, that's fine.

Appendix J: Interview Transcript 03

1.R: Yeah. Okay, great. So can you tell me about your experiences of school so far?
2.P: So the earliest I can remember with schooling, is when I was up in Scotland – and this was
3.primary years, so from primary five to primary seven [……………]. And it was all right because
4.was going into secondary school anyway; so everyone was going to different schools. So leaving
5.wasn't actually that big of a deal, to be honest. The RAF and the military support there was good,
6.because we actually had quite a number. So they had special liaison officers to look after us,
7.basically, and it was all right.
8.   And then after that, for the secondary years, I moved – me and my sister – moved to a
9.private school in [name of English county 1], 'St George's' [pseudonym]. And there were a
10.substantial amount of military kids there, because there were military discounts and stuff like
11.that. So there were loads of us, and the majority of people wanted to be there, so they didn't
12.have to move around as much.
13.   So my sister's main reason was because she wanted to get the education that it provided,
14.whereas mine was I kind of found it tricky moving from place to place, and not having the
15.availability to basically make friends, and stuff like that; I found it tricky trying to fit in. So moving
16.to 'St Georges', was I thought I was going to stay there, and keep my friends for life basically.
17.   But then that didn't work out. So then my sister stayed there, but I moved with my family
18.to [name of current city], where I joined a public school again. Which was a completely different
19.experience and change, in that I am literally the only military kid in the area. So it is strange, but
20.doable. Do you know what I mean?
21.R: And how does that make you feel?
22.P: Moving around, or that I'm the only kid?
23.R: Both.
24.P: So moving around, it's exciting. So before Scotland, it was Cyprus. So I moved from Cyprus
25.to Scotland. And moving to Cyprus, my little brother was just born, and so it was good. It was
26.exciting because it was hot, there was a waterpark round the corner. So it was really exciting. But
27.then the downside was that my dad wasn't there, because he was away in Afghanistan, Iraq and
28.Iran. So that was kind of stressful on the family – mainly my mum, because she had to look after
29.two kids and one baby, in this little house. But to be fair, I don't really remember the start, I only
30.remember leaving, and then enjoying Scotland. And I didn't like it at the start – I obviously hated
31.it, because I was used to all the hot weather.
32.   But it was stressful moving around, especially the move from [name of English county 1]
33.to [name of English county 2]. That's the one that hit the most, because obviously I was a bit more
34.mature, I was grown up; I thought that 'St George's' was going to be my forever school and I was
35.going to leave there with everyone else. But then I'm moving in December, but this time it's to
36.Australia. So that is going to be the most anticipated move I really want to do – I really want to
37.move there, it's going to be good. So there are downsides and upsides to moving.
38.   And then being the only military kid in the area; so in [name of current city] there are two
39.halves, and all the military houses are on the hill. So all my friends from the school are
40.on the other side. And the only people around here are navy, because
41.[name of current city] is navy.
42.   So my dad has to travel to [name of city two hours away] every week. But [that city]
43.wasn't really a family environment that we were comfortable going to, so we basically got put in
44.[name of current city] instead. Which was good, but I'm like the oldest on our street; there are
45.military houses around but they're literally all navy or army, so we're basically the only RAF kids.
46.And then there are schools around here that probably have more military kids, but I go to school
47.more central [name of current city]. So I am the only military kid in the area.
48.R: And what is that like for you?
49.P: It's annoying being obviously away from the friends that I've made. But then also
50.annoying because at least in 'St George's', people understood; like if Dad was going away, they
51.understood what was going on. And the teachers, they try to understand, they say they
52.understand, but they really don't. So it is saddening, but I can deal with it – I've done it before.
53.R: And you mentioned you're going to Australia…
54.P: Yeah.
55.R: Could you tell me more about that?
56.P: So we had the plan to move over because my auntie and uncle from Scotland moved over
57.three years ago. So they planted the little seed in our head. So then about last September a job
58.offer came up, and we were like that's really exciting, shall we take it? So we were going to take
59.it, we started the process, but then my dad found a lump on his neck. So that actually fell through,
60.because we had to get the lump removed. And so that was a very difficult time.
61.   But now the lump is removed and he's all healthy, and we've had our medical checks. So
62.we tried it again because a second wave of offers came through, and we've been confirmed and
63.we've enrolled in the schools. So on [date of move] we are actually moving to Australia.
64.R: And how are you feeling about the move to that new school?
65.P: So I'll be going into college years, so it was like in Scotland – so I moved just as everyone
66.else was moving. So I'm going into college years out there. So I feel like in my head doing that,
67.that's going to be easier for me, because I'm not going to be the only new kid like I was in [name
68.of English county 2] – because I joined halfway through the year. So there won't be as much
69.attention on me – obviously because of my accent and they'll all be Australian, but it's exciting

70.and we just can't wait to get there and start moving. But Dad's promised us – so Mum's getting a
71.handbag, me and my sister are getting new phones.
72.   So it's an exciting move, we all want to do it. It wasn't like my dad wanted to do it and
73.then just pressured us to do it. We all had a little family meeting kind of, and all decided together
74.that we wanted to move.
75.R: And have all of the moves been this exciting?
76.P: (Laughs) No, definitely not. The move to Cyprus, we were all excited. And my friends say it
77.would be saddening to leave their families, because they've all got their nan down the road, their
78.aunties round the corner, but then I've never had that – we've never had that as a family. So this
79.is actually the closest we've been to any family; my uncle is half an hour away, and this is the
80.closest we've ever been. And we see him a lot, so that is going to be the only downside.
81.   But we only see them every three years anyway. They live up north. Me and my sister see
82.them more, because they come and pick me up from school. But as a family, we only saw our
83.outer family – so when we were in Scotland, only every three years we'd see them. So now it will
84.be more like every five years.
85.   So it's going to be a change, and obviously I'm going to change in five years massively, and
86.so will me little brother, and stuff like that. So it will be sad but we've done it before, and as long
87.as I've got my inner family, it's okay.
88.R: It sounds exciting. So what is life like for you at the moment in this school that you're in;
89.what has it been like?
90.P: So with the move a lot of the attention was on me. And especially coming from up north,
91.where I was for quite a while, then coming down, I had an accent, a proper accent. So everyone
92.was like, "Say this, say that…" And a lot of attention was on me being the new kid, and that I could
93.dance and stuff like that. And so people were really surprised and obviously excited to have a new
94.kid.
95.   So eventually, thank god, the attention died down, and I was just like becoming a normal
96.kid, and it was okay. But then also – so I thought it was going to be really hard to find friends, and
97.stuff like that. But there was a girl who moved from Tenerife, and she started on the same day as
98.me, and we had the same class.
99.   So we kind of just looked at each other on our first day, and I was like, "Hi, I'm new." And
100.she was like, "Hi, I'm new too." And then we kind of just became best friends from that. So it
101.was nice having her by my side, obviously sharing my experiences. Because she has moved
102.around, she's moved from America to Thailand, to this to that – Thailand? Tenerife.
103.   So it was good to have someone to share my experience, but then it was like hard to
104.explain; where people were like, "I'd hate being in the military, you just get blown up all the
105.time." And I'm like my dad's been there about three times. And then there are people that are
106.like saying – even though they have no military experience – and I get comments that – so we're
107.an RAF family – that the army is better than the RAF; the RAF just sit on their bums all day, and
108.stuff like that. And I was like okay.
109.   So then it was a stage of annoyance because everyone was asking me stuff – which is
110.normal; I found that completely normal. But at the end of the day when they were just asking
111.me to say dance, or bath like 10 times a day, it was getting annoying. And then it was like a bit of
112.anger, everyone talking about… because the hot topic was the RAF and the military at that point.
113.So it was really annoying, because obviously I didn't go there to make a school argument about
114.the military.
115.   And then it was trying to fit in was also a downfall, because I feel like… so I'm kind of like a
116.class clown you could say, because especially in my old school I was kind of naughty, in
117.detention every day. But here I definitely calmed down, the move calmed me down. But then
118.trying to find my feet, I didn't know whether to act like the brainy kid I know I can be; because I
119.knew all the answers, but I never said the answers, if that makes sense, in case people would
120.judge me for being too smart. So then I'd just be funny.
121.   And then people liked me because I was funny, and then when I made friends I then lost
122.friends, because I have, you could say like trust issues. Because every move I've had, I kind of got
123.it into my head, even when I first joined 'St George's' – so at first, I didn't – but in Scotland,
124.Cyprus and 'St George's', I had in my head that these aren't
125.going to be my lifelong friends. These aren't going to be my lifelong friends, so don't get too
126.attached, don't get too close. So that was a massive wall for me.
127.   And it kind of hasn't come down yet, you could say. It was – it was coming down slowly,
128.brick by brick. And then when we found out we were actually moving, instead of being closer to
129.my friends; just being like this is going to end soon, we need to spend as much time as we can
130.together, I distanced myself, to like prepare myself for not having them there. So especially in
131.lockdown, they would send me messages and Snapchats, and I'd just like send them one-word
132.replies, and not be like the bubbly character I was.
133.   But then we started integrating back into school, going once a week – and it's just
134.lockdown – going back in once a week, when I actually saw my friends again, I realised that I
135.can't just do this and I need to spend as much time with them as possible.
136.R: Thank you. Could you tell me a bit more about friendships and relationships within
137.school?
138.P: So in [name of English county 2] as a whole, I've got three friends that I can really call my
139.best friends. And I've made a bond with them that I told myself I wasn't going to make. So it just
140.happened naturally. And it's the girl that started with me, a girl that I met along the way, and a
141.girl from extra-curricular activities. So all girls, (Laughs) because that's just my personality.
142.   So it was really hard, to be honest. And I'm more like a… I don't have a secure group; I'm
143.friends with everybody, if that makes sense. I call myself a floater. So I can sit with these people
144.at lunch one day, and then sit with the other ones another day. So I'm basically friends with

145.everybody, but I know which people to avoid.

146.	So sometimes that can get annoying, because obviously not that many people are waiting
147.for me after school and stuff like that. So I don't have a secure group. I did at one point, but then
148.I broke away from it because I was getting too attached. So I was like really starting to like them,
149.they used to wait for me after class and stuff like that. And then I think one day I was just like
150.[name of English county 2] is definitely not going to be my last move, so I can't do this, I can't get
151.too attached.

152.	So I ended up distancing myself from them, and then that caused an argument which also
153.then caused me not being able to be friends with them any more. So friendships are difficult
154.when you are a military kid, I feel. So if you're going somewhere like 'St Georges', I think
155.friendships will be easier because obviously they're lifelong, and you know you're secure there –
156.well at least that's what I thought. But knowing that you're moving with your family, moving to a
157.different school, it's like friendships are really hard.

158.	But then there are friendships and relationships with teachers that are okay. So some
159.teachers just don't get it. So some of the teachers are just telling me to bring down my wall, do
160.this, do that; and I was like, okay, you move around every three and a half years – you do it, you
161.try and do that; because you've been in the same house since you were a child, do you know
162.what I mean? So it's difficult but then it has also made me more adaptable, and easier to
163.integrate into groups, and kind of weasel my way in.

164.	Relationships with teachers are okay, but there are only certain teachers that I do talk to
165.about my experience; with the military and moving, and stuff like that. And then relationships, I
166.don't tend to get myself into them, because I know they just break away anyway. So my sister is
167.actually in a current relationship, and she has been in it for a little bit. But it's kind of breaking
168.her heart a little bit and she's more upset during the day, because she knows that she's going to
169.have to break this thing that they've built up, because she is moving halfway across the world.
170.So it's a bit difficult, yeah.

171.R:	Yeah, that sounds really challenging. And you mentioned teachers and how you – I think
172.you said that you have a better relationship with some of them. Could you tell me a bit more
173.about that?

174.P:	Okay, so I tend to get along with the teachers that have had more experience. So there's
175.one teacher that has moved – he's like a travelling teacher – so he's moved from school to
176.school, from country to country; like from places in Africa, to up north, to I don't know, Iceland,
177.Greenland, who knows, but he's a travelling teacher. So he's had more experience about taking
178.his family from place to place; obviously getting into social groups with teachers etc. So I do get
179.along with him. He gives me good grades as well.

180.	So I get along with him quite a bit, because he talks to me about the experiences he's had
181.moving. And he's also a military child, so his parents were in the military. And there are some
182.teachers that have had military parents but then they say, "Couldn't you just settle down?"
183.Because one of the rules with 'SG's' was that you had to move every three and a half years.

184.	So that was fine for my parents; my little brother not so much, but he is only young. So it
185.was fine for my parents, but then when I left – obviously I've had to move now as well. So I
186.didn't realise every three and a half years we had to move for us to stay in the school, and to
187.continue with the military funding.

188.	So some teachers just say, "Why don't you stay in the same place like we did?" But again,
189.it's just a boundary that some people don't understand; we've got one child in a private school,
190.who's starting their GCSE years, and another who's currently properly revising for their GCSEs.
191.So it's restraining – I have to restrain myself from what I say, because they look at me like, I
192.don't know, like I've got something on my face. They're a bit like, "Eh?" When I'm talking about
193.something that they really don't understand.

194.	So in my school I wouldn't say much, because there are obviously not very many military
195.kids; I'm the only one. But in schools that have a high military count – because there is one
196.called [name of local school], around here – it would be good to have a military child officer, or
197.like a safeguard leader, specifically for military children, because they don't have that.

198.	And they did say, when we first joined, to my dad, that every couple of months, every
199.term, they have a military day. So the military kids will be able to go into this room, and just have
200.a little café party, and talk about what's going on with their parents, and stuff like that. But it's
201.fake promises; they say that to my parents, and they probably say that to other military families,
202.but yet it hasn't happened once, and I've been there over a year and a half now. So yeah.

203.R:	Can I ask what 'SG' is?

204.P:	Yeah, 'St George's' stands for [St George's], which is a private school.

205.R:	Okay. Sorry, yeah, I thought it was, I just wanted to check. And you mentioned GCSEs, and
206.you said you were revising for your GCSEs, could you tell me more about GCSEs and learning in
207.school?

208.P:	So I moved to [name of current school] in the end of Year 9. So I just kind of plonked
209.myself right in. And they were already studying some GCSE topics, because I think you start
210.halfway through Year 9. So I did miss out on that, but then at home it was easy to catch up. So I
211.just read the books that they were studying in English, and asked the teachers about what topics
212.they were doing in maths, and stuff like that – only the core topics.

213.	But then so GCSE has been all right, and it was actually going really well. We were meant
214.to move this December – no, we were meant to be moving now, basically. So I would have had
215.to have done my last year in a different school. But my dad had to push at the top of the RAF to
216.get us to stay in [name of current city], just until I finish my GCSEs. So literally the day I finish my
217.GCSEs, we'd have to pack up and go – that was the rules.

218.	So that was going to be an extra stress of packing and revising. But revision was okay
219.during schools. Obviously, they didn't take into account that my dad had been away and stuff

220.like that. So they were telling me to go to these extra-curriculars and stuff like that, but my mum
221.had to go and pick up my brother, had to go and pick up me, had to cook tea, had to take us to
222.other stuff.

223.   So they didn't really take that into account. But then me being the only child, I didn't
224.expect them to have a whole new plan for me. So I wasn't phased by that, I was like I can do this,
225.it's fine. I can take the bus sometimes. So I was going to be able to deal with it myself, but then
226.also knowing I am moving this Christmas, I've kind of like slacked school off a little bit.

227.   So I'm not actually doing my GCSEs any more. So there's no testing that I need to do at
228.the end of my British school career, time. So I've obviously been revising, learning since I'm five
229.years old, preparing myself for my GCSEs and A Levels and stuff like that, and I'm not even doing
230. it.

231.   So when lockdown has been happening, since we found out in May that we're moving,
232.I've kind of been like – school's been sending me essays to write and stuff like that, and I've just
233.been half-arsed doing them. Because they're towards my end grade, but I don't need them. So
234.we have mocks – test papers – and as long as I do okay in my test papers, those will get sent off
235.to my new school.

236.   And so as long as I do okay in those mocks, and we've got some testing to complete in
237.September for my new school, to send over; as long as I revise towards the end of summer and
238.know what topics it's on, I think I'll be okay. But otherwise I'm not going to destroy other
239.people's learning, but I'm not going to try as hard as I was trying in Year 10.

240.R: And just to clarify for the recording as well, the exams aren't happening; is that because
241.of school closures?

242.P: Yeah.

243.R: Thank you. Have you experienced any challenges at school, in any of your schools; and if
244.so, could you talk about them?

245.P: Challenges to do with…?

246.R: Any difficulties at any of your schools, or the one that you're in at the moment.

247.P: In 'St George's' they originally thought I had an educational problem or issue. So they
248.were having meetings with me, but they didn't tell me what it was basically. They just said come
249.in for a little catch-up and a cup of tea. But now I'm older and I've actually been told, they're
250.actually educational meetings. So like they probably just thought I had some problem.

251.   I don't know, maybe it's because of how I was acting in school, and how I was getting
252.excited. So they thought I had ADHD. But they didn't get an official testing, because they wanted
253.my parents to pay for it and my parents said no, basically. But then when I moved home, they
254.also wanted to get more testing, again; so they actually started believing it themselves.

255.   So we went to this lady – I didn't want to. And they said that you needed a thing from
256.school. And so I was like, whatever. So obviously I was like yes, I'm not going to school, because
257.this was in the period of time that I was actually not enrolled in any school. So I was like… What
258.am I saying? Yeah, so moving, mental health.

259.   So Mum talked about it when I was getting enrolled in [name of current school]; talking
260.about how they think I had ADHD, something like that, but the school needed to sign something.
261.And the school was like, well, let's take him in first, let's see how he is. And then the school
262.basically asked me if I was willing to do it, and I said no. So they didn't eventually end up signing
263.anything. So my parents still think I've got ADHD, but there's no official diagnosis because I
264.wouldn't let them basically.

265.R: And can you tell me what you were thinking when that happened?

266.P: So obviously when the meetings were happening at 'St George's', I didn't have a clue
267.what was going on. So I was obviously fine with it, talking to the lady, stuff like that. And then
268.they did actually put me in for counselling; to talk about my experiences with not having my dad,
269.moving and stuff like that, they put me in for counselling. But then I was meant to go every
270.week, during a Spanish lesson, and I eventually just didn't go.

271.   I think I lasted two sessions, and then they asked me to go again, and I just said no.
272.Because it wasn't compulsory, it was voluntary, and I just said no, because no one else had it; it
273.was like a clear timetable, just me, bang in the middle on a Thursday. So I was like, yeah, no
274.thank you, I don't want to do this. And then eventually, if you miss a certain amount of
275.meetings, they just take you off. So that's what they did.

276.   And then obviously I said that I didn't want to do it, and I didn't want to be diagnosed
277.with anything or go to any meetings about it. So I eventually did just say no. But what was going
278.through my head was I'm not going. Because I knew I was going to be starting a new school at
279.some point, and I don't want to start a new school where they've already got a plan in place,
280.already have an opinion of me, or kind of feeling my vibe before I even get there.

281.   Like with it saying ADHD on my little medical thing or whatever, they'll already be like
282.okay we need a specific plan for him; this is how normal other ADHD kids act. So they'll already
283.have an idea of what I'm going to be like, and that just really unsettled me. So yeah.

284.R: And why did you not want that?

285.P: Because I just didn't want them having an opinion of me, a judgement of me, before I
286.even arrive. Like they didn't know me – they wouldn't know me until I arrived at the school. So
287.this is going to be my last move, hopefully. I'm going to stay in Australia for the rest of my life;
288.no moving back, I'm done with England. So if they decide that they want to put me on a plan
289.once I get there, and once they have a feel for me and a vibe of me, I think I'd cooperate a little
290.bit more.

291.   But I wouldn't do it here, knowing that there was another move ahead. Because I just find
292.it really unsettling that they think they know me, or have a vibe for me, when I don't even know
293.them. So I don't know these people, and they already know what's inside my head – it just
294.unsettled me and I didn't like it.

295.R: Thanks, [name]. And you said this is going to be your last move; how does that make you
296.feel?

297.P: Relieved. So it's exciting because if we stayed in England, we were going to have – I think
298.we were going to be moving until I move out, basically. So there were going to be three more
299.moves ahead of us, especially if my sister wanted to carry on her education in private school.
300.And then we were going to buy a house, and just make my dad travel on his own when it was
301.time for me to go to university.

302. So that obviously dawned on me, knowing that I might also have to move colleges; to
303.start college somewhere and then have to move and start a college somewhere else. So that
304.really annoyed me, and daunted me. So I wanted our next move to be our last move anyway, but
305.it wasn't going to be. And so now when this opportunity for Australia has come out, Dad has
306.actually – so he asked to leave the English RAF, and join the Australian RAF; so he's getting his
307.pay-out and his pension.

308. So we're moving out there. We're getting the military house that we get given and we're
309.paying rent for, but we're actually going to build our house. So we're actually going to have the
310.experience of actually having a house that is ours and that we own. So we can paint the walls,
311.we can damage the walls, do what we want. So that's going to be a fun experience, actually
312.building a house, and a relief that I know that this is my forever home. I think it will be weird
313.going to schools, and like kids around the neighbourhood – being, yeah, you're going to be
314.my friend for the rest of my life. Knowing that I'm not moving again is going to really help.

315.R: Thanks [name]. You mentioned that your dad might be moving on his own, that your dad
316.has moved a few times and that you were offered counselling at your school to talk about your
317.dad's job. Could you just tell me a bit more about that?

318.P: So my dad joined up when he was 16, and he actually met my mum when – because my
319.mum was originally in the RAF before. My MacBook is going to die, let me just go and get the
320.charger, sorry.

321. Sorry, I didn't think about the charging. My dad's move, yeah. So he actually met my mum
322.in Germany. Sorry, my sister has just weirdly come in. So he met my mum in Germany, and I was
323.born in Germany. And then after a year, we moved to [place 1], [place 2], [place 3], and
324.then eventually moved from there to Cyprus – that's where my brother was born – so in that
325.meantime we had my sister. And yeah, so we didn't have our own house.

326. And then we moved to Cyprus and stayed for actually quite a while. And then we thought
327.we were going to stay there, but then moved back. But during that time my dad was away for…
328.so not all at once, but together it was over a year and a half. So he was away quite a lot – loads
329.of birthdays, Christmas. So the thing is that they always get deployed during Christmas time – it's
330.like a trick they play; my dad was always deployed over Christmas, and that meant my birthday,
331.and his birthday.

332. So he missed quite a lot. He was there for first days of school and stuff like that, but then
333.straight after he was off. So it was like… You know, when parents are separated, going from one
334.household to another, that's what it kind of felt like – my dad just coming out and in, out and in.
335.So it was strange, to say the least, but we got through it.

336. But then when we move to Australia, he's actually going away for nine months when we
337.move there. So we were originally going to have to move to a place called 'X' – that's on the
338.other side of Australia, and then move to 'XX'. So we were only going to be there for less
339.than a year, in 'X'. So my parents were like, [name's] starting college, so we're not going to do
340.that. We're just going to move straight to 'XX', and Dad can move to 'X' for less than a
341.year.

342. And then Dad's going to be away a lot more. Because at least in the UK RAF, they did
343.eventually start understanding that Dad's getting higher up in the RAF, and he also has three
344.kids at home who need him. Because he was away for a lot of our childhood, so now going to
345.teenage years, they realised that he should be at home, and they could deploy someone who's
346.just starting up, or someone who's of the same age but doesn't have children, and stuff like that.

347. But in the Australian air force, especially with dad going over there and being new, they'll
348.deploy him a lot more. But then I'll be in college, so it won't be difficult for me; and [name of
349.sister] as well, because we're kind of used to it. It will be sad to say goodbye, but then we're self-
350.sustainable, so we can deal with that ourselves. But [name of younger brother], he's never had
351.that, really – so he is only X years old. He had that in Cyprus, but he didn't know it was
352.happening.

353. And then in Scotland, he went away for two weeks at a time. So it wasn't much, but
354.[name of younger brother] used to cry every night in those two weeks. So this is the first time
355.he's actually been deployed for four years, properly. So it's going to be really hard on [name of
356.younger brother], yeah.

357.R: And you said that your dad was away for a lot of your childhood. How did you cope at
358.school?

359.P: So actually, in Cyprus, we lived on a military base. So the whole school was actually
360.military kids, which was amazing and really helpful. And I actually kind of enjoyed that, obviously
361.being on a military base. So it was massive.

362. So even though I was seven, eight, it was safe for my mum to just let me out – like just let
363.me go out and play with my friends, go swimming in a little protected area with my friend's dad.
364.Because it was surrounded by military guards and it was safe, so there was always someone
365.around that you could call for, for help.

366. So it wasn't like a camp – there's always someone walking around with a gun and stuff
367.like that – but there is always someone in reach, in shouting reach that you know can rush there
368.and help. So it was a safe environment, yeah.

369.R: And how did that make you feel, that there was someone there?

370.P: Safe. And then we're no longer in contact with them, which is kind of sad, but there was
371.actually a man down the road – literally two doors down – and he was like kind of, I used to call
372.him my stepdad, because he used to invite… So say my mum was having a stressful night, or
373.obviously there were loads of kids, he used to invite us round and make us chilli, and chocolate
374.ice cream and stuff like that. So I used to call him my stepdad – well, I was a weird kid.
375.   Anyway, I used to call him my stepdad, and he was there for the family. And he was
376.actually there because it was his son who was moving around. So it was his son that was being
377.deployed; he was travelling with his son basically. So it was nice having obviously another
378.support system there. And my mum made friends with literally everyone; so it was like a massive
379.support group.
380.   So it was actually easy, safe, and it didn't feel like he was away. Well, it did at night-time
381.when we weren't around everyone, but during the day, you never thought of it, because there's
382.always someone you're speaking to, out playing with someone, so it was literally good.
383.R: And just to clarify, was that your school on that base?
384.P: Yeah. It was in the middle of the base, so everyone was in reach of it.
385.R: And so you spoke about some difficulties and challenges that you've had at school. Have
386.you experienced any positive aspects of school, and if so what are they; could you tell me about
387.them?
388.P: So obviously Cyprus, 'Mayes Green' primary school, was just a positive as a whole. Because of it
389.being on the base, everyone there was a military kid. Even the teachers lived on the base; my
390.teacher lived in the house in front of me. So if I wasn't in for a day, he'd probably come and pop
391.in my homework, and stuff like that. So Mayes Green as a whole was positive.
392.   And then Scotland, there were quite a few military kids. And there was a military officer
393.lady, who was there for the kids. It was refreshing, but obviously a difference from the amount
394.of support that we had in Cyprus. But at least it was something, and my teachers were cool, and
395.one of my teachers was actually military. So their husband was in the military but they had
396.chosen the option to buy their house, and the husband move away. So that was actually cool,
397.with them understanding; because they used to move around, but then they had kids and
398.settled. So that was useful.
399.   Obviously, 'St George's' was really useful, with the military aspect, because there were so
400.many military kids there. So that was nice, everyone kind of understanding. But then it's just
401.[name of current school] that hasn't had the support that I usually get, because of there not
402.being many military kids around, even though [name of current city] is massive for the navy. It's
403.kind of strange.
404.   But the positives of [current school] – it is kind of like no one understands, that can also
405.change into a positive. Because they don't actually know me, so they don't know my back story,
406.so they don't have to feel sorry for me and stuff like that, unless I tell them. So if I go to like 'St
407.George's', and I was a military kid, they'd obviously understand how it felt; but they don't
408.understand, so they just thought I was a normal kid – there was no need to be sad about me.
409.   But they all thought I was quite – this is another thing; a kind of bad thing, even though
410.you said positive – they all thought I was privileged. Because the hill, [name of current city] hill
411.has a stigma, because this is where all the big houses are in [name of current city]. Even though
412.we're only in a military house, there's still stigma about us being on the hill; everyone thought I
413.was a privileged rich kid, even though we actually aren't, if you think about it. Because we have
414.to pay for the house, we have to pay for Dad going away and stuff like that.
415.   So I don't think in any way we are more privileged, and I don't think it's fair that I got
416.called privileged and a rich kid, and stuff like that. I don't think that was fair. But then just
417.positive about [name of current school], is that it was fun being a normal kid – like no one
418.feeling sorry for me.
419.R: And you said that one of the schools had more support – I think did you mention Cyprus
420.had more support; what did that support look like?
421.P: So when we arrived, we actually had a military pack and stuff like that, for military kids,
422.and there was a teddy bear. So whenever our dads or mums were away for a substantial amount
423.of time, we'd actually have a teddy bear that we'd be able to cuddle at night. And so even
424.though our mums or other family members could, they actually did try and reach out to our
425.family members.
426.   And there were a few surprises; like kids' dads and mums were coming home, but like
427.surprising them in assembly and stuff like that. So they were like, "We have some very special
428.guests to do an assembly…" And about 10 kids' parents would come through after being away.
429.So it was really nice.
430.   We had little badges, and there was a buddy bench. So if we were feeling down there
431.were certain places we'd just go, special teachers that understood. So it was really fun, it was
432.like a military playground. We didn't feel like our parents were away, and even when our parents
433.were away, they made us feel like it was a positive thing. So yeah, it was really handy and
434.helpful.
435.R: That sounds great. Could you think of anything that would help you now at school?
436.P: In [name of current school], I think if they did have that every term – or every two terms –
437.just having a meeting of the military kids. So we can just talk about what's going on, and talk
438.about if our parents are going away, what our plans are, if we're moving and stuff like that, it
439.would have been really helpful.
440.   But it just wasn't – it was just kind of on my own. Like when my dad was away during the
441.week, they didn't really get that, and they were like, "Some people don't live with their dads…"
442.and stuff like that. So they're away every week. And I was like, yeah but… I don't know, it's like
443.they compared me to other people. So if they just understood what was going on and had a little
444.group, it would have just been so much easier.

445. I dealt with it fine, and [name of sister] obviously dealt with it fine, being at 'St George's'.
446.My brother's school was literally just down the hill, literally a two-minute walk away, so there's
447.quite a substantial amount of military kids there. So there is something in place for my brother,
448.and stuff like that. But I just think because there were so few military kids in [name of current
449.school] that that happened.
450.R: Thanks [name]. And you've said that you dealt with it fine – how have you dealt with it?
451.P: I've just kind of like ignored it. I didn't think about it, because there was no need to. I
452.thought about people that are worse off than me. Because my dad's only away for the week – so
453.was only away for the week or two weeks at a time – but there are people who don't see their
454.dad at all. And there are some people, like probably some military kids who haven't seen their
455.dads in six months, and stuff like that. There's always someone worse off than you. So I just
456.haven't dwelled on it much.
457.R: Thank you [name], and thank you so much for being so open and honest. I wanted to give
458.you the chance now, just to ask you if there's anything else that you haven't covered or
459.discussed, that you want to add in – anything that we haven't spoken about that's been
460.important?
461.P: It's just that military kids… so obviously we dwell on the negatives more as people; always
462.the negatives top-trump the positive aspects in life. So there are many, many positives of being a
463.military kid.
464.   Obviously you get to experience the world and new places, and you learn new skills –
465.adaptable, more responsibility, being able to do things like some people wouldn't even know
466.how to hammer a nail into the wall and stuff like that, but I have those because I had to be that
467.person at such a young age. I was cooking, chopping stuff with real knives and stuff like that,
468.making cups of tea at such a young age, because I had to do that. If my mum was giving my
469.brother some milk, when he was little, and she needed a drink or needed something, I would
470.have to go and get it, I couldn't just sit there on a tablet or whatever. So there are loads of
471.positives, and you definitely learn skills from being a military kid.
472.   And you learn understanding; because obviously Dad would come back and tell us stories
473.about what's going on in the world right now. So it kind of puts it into perspective. There are so
474.many people worse off than you, and it just puts it into perspective that we are quite lucky, as
475.society, as people living in [name of current city] or people living in London, as you are, we are
476.really lucky compared to some experiences. It's like soldiers only have to go there a week, a
477.month, a couple of months, but imagine living there permanently; it's just terrible, and it just
478.puts it into perspective for you. So yeah.
479.R: Thank you [name]. Is there anything you want to add in relation to school experiences,
480.that we haven't spoken about as well?
481.P: Only that in schools where there's a high population of military kids, there is a system in
482.place; but then even if there is just one kid at the school, who is a military kid, he or she still
483.needs to be checked up on and still needs to be understood. So that's what I've learned would
484.be helpful.
485.   They don't need a whole member of staff that is dedicated to being a military specialist,
486.just the headmaster or a teacher in general, just pulling him out – I'm saying him, but obviously
487.me – pulling me out of a lesson just to ask what I'm like. Or not even out of a lesson, just at
488.lunchtime, coming over and just wanting to have a little conversation with me about what's
489.going on; it just would have been really helpful. Yeah.
490.R: Thank you. Thank you so much [name]. Is there anything else that you'd like to add?
491.P: No.

Appendix K: Interview Transcript 04

1.R: So, could you tell me about your experiences of school so far?

2.P: So, at first, it was a bit weird, because it was all really stressed… we were all getting really
3.stressed out about… because we couldn't… because none of us knew how to work Moodle and, like,
4.Show My Homework and things like that. And then afterwards, because we had to have meetings with
5.our form teachers, to tell us what to do and stuff, because no-one knew what to do… because it's older
6.year groups who use Show My Homework and Moodle and all that, and we had to use it earlier, which
7.was a bit…
8.And none of us could log onto Zoom and stuff, so everyone was late for their lessons, which none of the
9.teachers were very happy about. But then it got so much easier, and most of all, there's people used to
10.turn off their videos, much to the teachers' annoyance, because they used to go… but there was… one
11.of the teachers used to get really panicked about it, that they couldn't hear or see anything. So, they'd
12.stop the lesson, so we all did it on purpose.

13.R: Oh, so this is since lockdown?

14.P: Yeah.

15.R: So, has it been a bit different?

16.P: Very different.

17.R: What was your experience of primary school like?

18.P: It was very different to my new school, because the days were shorter. Like, we'd start later
19.and end earlier, so when I first moved to my next school, it was very hard to kind of focus after. At my
20.old school, the teachers were a lot less strict, because they didn't really care, because they weren't as
21.nice, really. It was just, like, a very different school, kind of.

22.R: And what has life been like for you since you've been in this school?

23.P: It's been so much fun, because I've met so many new friends who I can now message and
24.FaceTime when I'm really bored and things like that. So, that has been a lot nicer.

25.R: Can you tell me about a time that you've moved school, and tell me a bit more about that?

26.P: I did it differently to my sister. So, I left in the summer term, so I would have had one more
27.term at my old school, but I didn't. So, I moved to the next school in the summer term, and that was
28.so much nicer, because at the weekends and things like that, when I came home, I could actually see
29.my friends, whereas my sister, she can't see her friends. So, it was like a phased change.

30.R: Oh. And why's that? Why can't she see her friends?

31.P: Because we've moved a long way away from my old school.

32.R: Okay. Why have you moved?

33.P: Oh, because of my dad getting posted to a new house.

34.R: Can you tell me a bit more about that?

35.P: Well, we've been very lucky to live in [name of previous city] for nine years, which is very unusual. So, when
36.we found out that we were going to be moving, it was really exciting. But we also had to get rid of
37.loads of stuff, because we hadn't moved, so we hadn't really got rid of loads of stuff. So, we had to get
38.rid of so much stuff to fit in all the boxes and things, because we didn't actually have enough room to
39.move (laughs).

40.R: And what was that like for you?

41.P: It was a bit sad, because some of the things that I got rid of were actually nice, and some of
42.them had memories and things, but I couldn't keep everything, because I was just like…

43.R: And how did you feel about the move?

44.P: I felt really excited, because I hadn't moved, that I could remember, because last time I
45.moved was when I… so, we moved across the patch, because it had a bigger garden and we were
46.allowed to do that, but the first proper move with, like, a van and things was when I was, like, two or
47.something. I can't remember (laughs).

48.R: And what do you mean by the "patch?" Could you tell me more about that?

49.P: Yeah. So, now we just live in one at my dad's rank house; I can't remember what it was. But
50.before, we lived in one house, and it was like attached houses and it was like a section. It was like a big
51.section where there were… I think it was, like, 50 houses, and they were all joined together and it…
52.yeah, and there was a big play area in the middle.

53.R: Okay. How did you cope?

54.P: At my new school?

55.R: Yeah.

56.P: Oh, it was a bit of a shock, because my first lesson was Geography, which I'd never done, and
57.it was really hard to do, because I didn't know where any of the places were in the world. And, the
58.days were a lot longer. But it was a lot more fun because we had a sports lesson every day, which was
59.a lot nicer than the one we had at my old school which was like one every other week.

60.R: And how would you describe relationships at your school, with friends and teachers?

61.P: There were some teachers where they were, like, really nice and you'd want to go to that
62.lesson. Like, they were like, "Oh, yeah, we've got this lesson now," and some of them were like, "Oh,
63.we've got this teacher now. It's like, sad."

64.R: And what about friends?

65.P: Oh, I've made so much nice… it's, like, such a difference. Because it's a lot better school,
66.because I have such nicer friends, who… because at my old school, there was this one girl who literally
67.whispered about everyone behind their back, and then she got paranoid that everyone else was
68.whispering about her. And it was just very stressful at break times and things, because you couldn't
69.say one wrong word, otherwise she wouldn't speak to you for a week or something. But at [name of
70.current school], you can say whatever you really want.

71.R: Can you tell me more about your old school? What was that like?
72.P: It was very, very different. Like, the playgrounds were so much smaller. You had a restricted
73.place. The astro where we'd play around on was… when I saw the new one that we had, it was tiny
74.compared to that. The food was like… you couldn't eat the food, it was so gross. It was, like, genuinely
75.not cooked.
76.R: Oh. Could you tell me more about why you moved from that school?
77.P: Oh, because my dad got promoted to a new job which meant because the barracks have
78.moved places, so from the one in [previous city], I think it was, to the one in [name of current area], we
79.couldn't live there, because he couldn't drive the hour and a half, really, to where his barracks are
80.now every day. So, it would be easier, because it's literally one minute away from our house now.
81.R: And how did you feel about moving?
82.P: Really, really excited, because I hadn't done it for a while.
83.R: And can you tell me more about your learning in school?
84.P: So, my new school, thinking about the work… because I'm still in the group chat that we had
85.at my old school, because they didn't have all the Zoom things that we did. They showed us some of
86.the sheets that they couldn't do the answer to, and they just didn't know the answer to the question,
87.and I'm like, "That's so…" I didn't say it, but I was like, "That's really, really easy." But I would probably
88.have found that hard if I was at my old school. But now, because I've had better education, really,
89.then I found it a lot easier, just looking at the question.
90.R: So, you said you've had better education. How has it been better?
91.P: Just the lessons; the teachers just get to the point, whereas at my old school, it would be,
92.like, half an hour into the lesson, the teachers would be like, "Okay, right. So now, then, you get the
93.books out." But as soon as you get into the classroom, they've laid the books out; they've got the work
94.up on the board; they've properly prepared for the lesson.
95.R: So what's been different about the schools?
96.P: My new one's a lot bigger than my old one, and I board at my new school, which is a big
97.change, but it's so much fun. And at my old school, the classrooms were tiny; the classes had 30
98.people in them, but the classes now have, I think it's 15 in each, and there are four classes. And at my
99.old school, you'd stay in one classroom for all the lessons, but with my new school, each lesson has a
100.different classroom.
101.R: And how do you feel about the change?
102.P: It was a bit of a shock at first because you had to walk to each classroom, and it was like…
103.because teachers get really angry when you're late for a lesson, but my classroom was in the science
104.block, which is the furthest classroom away from all of the places, which was really annoying. So, I
105.was literally always late for every lesson, because I needed to get all my books and things for that
106.lesson.
107.R: Can you tell me what you were thinking when you found out that you'd have to move?
108.P: Move house, or classrooms?
109.R: Both.
110.P: Oh, okay. So, when I had to move classrooms, I was like, "I'm literally going to be late for
111.everything. It's going to…" but then it's kind of like, you know, like in movies and things like that…
112.they do that, like, they walk to the different classes and things like that, so I thought that would be
113.quite fun. And, yeah, moving house was a bit of a shock, as well.
114.R: Why was it a shock?
115.P: Because it just felt different to be in a different house when I was getting driven back from
116.school at the weekends and things. It just didn't feel like home because when you're driving back, I
117.knew the route from school to [previous city]; I just knew all the routes and stuff off by heart. But now,
118.going to [name of current area], I'm like, "Whoa, this is all new." It just doesn't feel right.
119.R: What doesn't feel right about it at the moment?
120.P: Just the area, really, because it's all completely different. Like, everyone's so much nicer
121.(laughs) and there's just so much less houses, and, like, a lot less busy.
122.R: Is there anything else that's been different since the move?
123.P: Our house is a lot bigger. We've got non-Army neighbours, which is really weird. It's really sad
124.that none of my… because my sister goes to see all her friends, because her school's just round the
125.corner. But I can't see any of my friends during the holidays and things like that, because most of
126.them all live near school, because… there are only seven Year 6 boarders, so I can't really see any of
127.my friends because they all live in different places.
128.R: And how does that make you feel?
129.P: When my sister sees all her friends, it's just really like, "I wish I could see my friends and say
130.that."
131.R: Hmm.
132.P: But then it's nice, when you go back to school, to see your friends, because it's like a nice
133.surprise and things like that.
134.R: And you mentioned that you had non-Army neighbours. How is that different?
135.P: It just feels different, because we could talk about things related to the Army, and things like,
136."Oh, I'm going into work with my dad." And then we used to talk about that with my friends who
137.used to live on the patch, and they used to go with their parents like, "Oh, let's go in together," and
138.things. But now we can't really do that because they don't work back at the same place.
139.R: Could you give me an example of that happening, or that being different?
140.P: Well, all the houses are different, because everyone's built onto their houses, and all the
141.Army houses were literally exactly the same, but everyone else's house is different. So, it's quite nice
142.walking round and just seeing all the different houses and, like, what we could do to our… because
143.we bought a house in [name of area where holiday home is]… what we could do to our house there.
144.R: Oh okay. Have you experienced any challenges in your old school, or this school?
145.P: Well, challenges at my old school were to stay focused on the lessons, because me and my

146.friends literally, we wouldn't focus at all; we'd literally just be chatting away in the lesson and just
147.wouldn't care, really. And a challenge at my new school, is probably in sport, because it was really
148.weird. Because in Year 4, I was literally the fastest person in the whole school, going up to Year 6. But
149.when I went to 'Oak Hill', it was so different, because everyone was so much better,
150.and it just, like (silence).
151.R: Thank you. And have you experienced any positive things about school?
152.P: Oh, in boarding, it's so much fun, because, on Wednesdays, there'd be Tuck and Movie Night,
153.that's in X boarding… because I'm about to go to X boarding, when I start in September.
154.But one of the most fun things I've ever had was on the last night, we all climbed
155.over… we… the boys managed to figure out the night code, and we all climbed over the school fence
156.and onto the field.
157.R: Amazing. Are there any other positive aspects?
158.P: I've got so much nicer friends than I did at 'Barley Lane'.
159.R: And how does that make you feel?
160.P: It just makes me feel more relaxed and things. I have, like, nice friends, and I can kind of be
161.myself around them, if you know what I mean by that. Because… and also, they were just not as nice.
162.R: Can you tell me a bit more about your friends?
163.P: So, at my new school, 'Ava', she is just, like, so nice, because she's literally exactly the same
164.as me; it's really weird. That's how we kind of became friends. She's just like me; she doesn't… she's
165.in the exact same sets as me, and so in every lesson, we kind of just wandered to the lessons
166.together, and we were always late together.
167.R: And is she like you in other ways?
168.P: Well, yeah. She's got the same colour hair as me, and things like that. She's a boarder, so our
169.beds are next to each other, and she has a pet hamster, which I helped her persuade her mum to get
170.her.
171.R: Thank you. How have you coped with tests and exams in school?
172.P: Well, some of the tests are… well, for the last three weeks, I found 'Mr. Smith' is a really good
173.maths teacher. I found that he properly teaches you the things that are going to turn up in the exam,
174.whereas when we had the other teachers… my last teacher, 'Mrs. Jones', she didn't teach as much.
175.Like, if you asked her to help you with a question…
176.'Mr. Smith' would go, "Okay, so, this is how you should work out a different question and how to do
177.it," and then you know how to work out that question, not the other one. Whereas 'Mrs. Jones'
178.would tell you the answer to the question, and then she would say, "Do you understand that?" And
179.you're kind of like, "I don't really want to say no," because then she'll be like, "Oh, I'll have to do that
180.again, then." But you don't… so, you kind of just say yes, because… yeah.
181.R: And so, you mentioned that the teachers have been different
182.P: Yeah. So, for the last three weeks I've had 'Mr. Smith', but for the rest of the year, I've had
183.'Mrs. Jones'.
184.R: And are they different to the teachers in your old school?
185.P: Very different. So, they're dedicated to the subject, maths. So, all the teachers are dedicated
186.to one subject that they teach, unless they're a Year 3, who teach all of the lessons.
187.R: And can you think of anything that would help you at school?
188.P: Probably having smaller classes, really, because in the maths, I've only got seven people in
189.that lesson, but in science I've got 20, which is really distracting, because when one person starts
190.talking then the whole group starts talking, really, and it's just like, "Oh," because then he… 'Mr.
191.Taylor' has to just get everyone to be quiet, and that's wasted, like, 10 minutes of the lesson,
192.because some people are really disobedient and just don't…
193.R: Is there anything that helped you when you moved to school?
194.P: Well, I knew quite a lot of people… I mean, at my new school, which is really nice. I knew
195.about three people from Year 6, and, like, quite a few people from all the other years and things. So,
196.it's really nice to have them.
197.R: How did you know them?
198.P: Through the Army.
199.R: Oh, okay.
200.P: So, my dad used to work with some of the people there, and then my mum got friends with
201.the wives, and then everyone, literally, there were so many Army people at 'Oak Hill'.
202.R: Oh. Can you tell me a bit more about that? How it was that you knew them? How did that
203.help?
204.P: Because… well, 'Poppy', for example, her mum knew my mum through my sister's
205.Godmother. That's really confusing. And so 'Poppy'…we used to meet up with her all the time. And
206.then she became one of my friends and then… because that was how we kind of decided to go to
207.'Oak Hill' and things, because we had loads of friends that are there or are going
208.there.
209.R: So, how did it help you at school?
210.P: I just had those people to kind start off being friends, because I didn't really want to walk
211.around all by myself because that just looks like you have no friends. So, I'd walk around with them
212.so that it's just nicer to know people, because then those people their friends will become like
213.friends with you, and then their friends, and it just makes you have, like, more friends (laughs) and
214.stuff to play with and things.
215.R: And then how does that then make you feel that you can do that, you can get more friends?
216.P: Because if I'm hanging around with 'Poppy', then her best friend 'India', she became my
217.friend, and 'Bella', she's India's friend, and then all those people became my friend. And then 'Bella',
218.she knew 'Ava', and then 'Ava' became my best friend.
219.R: Great. Can you think of anything else about school that has been either challenging or
220.positive?

221.P: Well, during the Zoom time, it was really challenging to stay focused (laughs), because you
222.had so much else you could do. Like, you could just do random work, because they could only see
223.literally, like, the top half of your body, and they couldn't see what else you were doing.
224.   Also, I used to get really bad headaches, because I only used to look at the screen; literally,
225.that's all I did for the whole day, doing my lessons, was look at a screen of a teacher teaching, so it
226.was really hard not to, like… I got such bad headaches during the day.
227.R: Oh, so how has Covid-19 affected school and education for you?
228.P: It affected it because I can't do as much activities, like with sport and things that, I wouldn't
229.be able to do. Because at first, when I first started my Easter holidays, my dad would go, "Oh, do you
230.want to come for a run with me?" And I'd be like, "Oh, yeah, sure. Let's go." And then now, I'm just
231.like, "Oh, I can't be bothered" by the end of it, because I just didn't do as much sport as I usually
232.would do.
233.   Because at school, I'd do a sports game every day, and seeing as I didn't have that because
234.we only did essential lessons like Science, English, Maths and all those lessons like that, that we
235.didn't have… like, because DT, we didn't have, like, a chain cutter or something at our… at home,
236.because, like, we couldn't do all the things that we would be doing.
237.R: Yeah. So it was a bit different…
238.P: Yeah.
239.R: Is there anything else that you'd like to tell me that helped you cope when you moved
240.school?
241.P: Well, having my family around me really helped, because it's just so much nicer having them
242.there, because at school, if something went wrong, I just didn't feel like I could go to my house
243.mistress and be like, "Oh, this has happened." Like, if I'd hurt myself, I couldn't go crying to her,
244.because I couldn't do that. But I could do that normally.
245.R: Hmm. And you'd said that your sister went to a different school?
246.P: Yeah, she goes to the local school which is not a very good school. Because my mum did
247.home schooling with her.
248.R: Okay.
249.P: All I could hear, all my friends could hear in the background, in the lesson, was my sister
250.refusing to do any work and just wandering around the house.
251.R: And how does it make you feel, that you go to a different school?
252.P: It's a bit hard, because I've always been to the same school as her, and I just feel bad for my
253.sister, because I don't find it as hard as her. Because when she comes home, she has no-one to play
254.with. Yeah, that's what she's told me. And she's also going to be coming to my school… I think it's in
255.the summer term, or the spring term, because her school's so bad, my parents might just send her to
256.my school earlier.
257.R: Is there anything else that we haven't spoken about, that you'd like to add, about school, or
258.your experiences of school?
259.(Interruption 0:24:31).
260.P: I don't actually know.
261.R: No? It's fine; you don't have to add anything. Anything else that you want to add, that we
262.haven't already spoken about?
263.P: I actually can't think of anything.

Appendix L: Interview Transcript 05

1.R: Okay, great. So, can you tell me about your experiences of school so far?
2.P: So, obviously I don't remember experiences from my first school, but I can remember when I was in
3.[previous county] and I went to school at 'Winston Road' Primary School, and that was quite a friendly
4.school and I got along… I made some friends, all of that. I had a really good teacher who I think was the best
5.teacher at that school that was teaching our class that I was in. And then… I think that was from Year 3 to Year
6.5, and then I started Year 6 in Cyprus, which is where we moved to because my dad got a job there.
7.R: Can you tell me some more about that?
8.P: Cyprus? Yes. So, in Year 6 I was at the primary school that was on the RAF base where we were
9.based at, and that was just Year 6. So, I got introduced to some people there because there were a lot more
10.people there that I made friends with really… they understood the same experiences that I had been
11.through, like moving every three years or so, and moving and making new friends and leaving new friends.
12.So, I had Year 6 where… I don't much remember anything from that primary school because I didn't stay there
13.that long. But then, after Year 6, I went to the secondary school, and the secondary school there was an
14.English school in Cyprus, but it was just there for children of people in the military.
15.So, there was an RAF base in Cyprus, but there was also an army base at X. I was at [name of RAF base]
16.so, the secondary school was children from both, RAF bases and army base, and that was 'King Edward's'
17.and it was very good, it was a very big school. I don't know how to explain it.
18.R: That's okay. You mentioned your experiences of moving, could you tell me more about those? How
19.did you feel? What were you thinking?
20.P: Well, I don't really… I've tried to forget about it, but when I left[previous county], right before I left
21.I was saying to my Year 5 class, "Oh, I'm moving to Cyprus, it's going to be really cool," and
22.obviously some people were like, "Oh, I'll miss you, hope you have a good time," and, "Have fun in the sun,"
23.and stuff like that. But some of the friends I had, they said to me that they weren't really friends with me, and
24.they didn't really like me, and they wouldn't miss me in Cyprus.
25.So, that made me a bit sad, but then when I moved to Cyprus, I was glad that I made new friends. I was glad
26.to make new friends. I was more open where usually, when I moved here, I was quite shy because the friends
27.that I had there, they understood me and, yes, stuff like that. But the moving process was, I guess I was really
28.excited, and I didn't really want to stay in [previous county] anymore, I wanted to get away. When I moved to Cyprus
29.I obviously enjoyed it because of the weather and stuff like beaches and hotels and the food there.
30.R: Yes. And you said that you felt like those friends understood you, what do you mean by that? Could
31.you tell me more about that?
32.P: The first group of friends I had when I moved to Cyprus was… I made friends with them in primary
33.school in Year 6 and then I made friends with someone and then a few days later a new boy came who also
34.joined our group, but I felt a bit intimidated by him, that he was more friendly with the friend that I made
35.already.
36.And I was already feeling that, but then I was alright, we stayed friends until, I think, Year 7 and then… I can't
37.remember exactly what happened, but some things happened and one time I got a bit angry and a bit jealous,
38.but then I just stopped being friends with him because the… is it all right if I say names? Just so I don't… yes.
39.So, there was the boy called 'James' who didn't really… to me, he felt like he just wanted this other friend for
40.himself, which he eventually did. So, they were friends, so I just left that group and made other friends with
41.people called 'Ben' and 'Nick' and 'Will', and I remember that one of the things that we really enjoyed was
42.playing on Nintendo devices.
43.The thing about 'King Edward's' was the bus journey to and from [name of RAF base] to the school was
44.roughly about, maybe, 30 minutes, half an hour drive, but the buses there were just out of control. And, Year
45.7 I wasn't introduced to any swear words or anything like that, or anything… not like that. But those buses, I
46.could hear everything at the back, because at the back there were the older kids, and at the front there were
47.younger kids and it was just out of control.
48.R: What was out of control?
49.P: The bus itself, like the people on the bus, it was very loud and obviously we had to talk above one
50.another if we want to talk to each other.
51.R: And was this the Cyprus school?
52.P: This was the Cyprus school, this was the bus from the secondary school. There were bus monitors,
53.but they were Cypriot, they didn't speak much English, so the only stuff that I remember was just… that the
54.only thing they knew in English was: sit down, seatbelt and quiet. I didn't really like the experience of being on
55.the bus, but I tried to ignore it.
56.R: What about the experience of being at that school?
57.P: So, there was a lot of stuff going on at school, they had a lot of things they offered. So, they had
58.drama club, they had football club and swimming club, they had a play that they did every year and they
59.obviously had the whole corridor for maths, a whole corridor for English. They had seating areas and an
60.auditorium area, and good areas for ICT and geography and history and all that.
61.R: Sounds great.
62.P: Yeah. I'm trying to remember, but I guess it has been quite a while.
63.R: What has life been like for you since you've been in this school?
64.P: So, yeah, so when I moved from Cyprus to here, to [name of current area], I was upset that I had to
65.leave because I had made such good friends, I didn't want to leave, and I didn't want to leave Cyprus because
66.it was Cyprus and I didn't want to move to Wales where it's rainy every day and everything like that.
67.So, when I got into 'Queen Elizabeth's' , the secondary school I went to, I went in near the end
68.of Year 8, I think the Easter holidays, and I didn't really make any friends in Year 8 because I was quite shy and

69.just got on with work.
70.And then in Year 9, I started learning what type of people were in my class, and because 'Queen Elizabeth's' is
71.a private school and I could tell that there were people there that I knew were really… what's the word? Yeah,
72.false, and they put on an act. And there were some girls there who just were like, they just all the time talked
73.about make-up and everything like…
74.And I listened to literally every conversation they had and I eventually made friends with another boy who is
75.also called 'James', like me, which was a coincidence, and we got on a lot and we just made jokes about
76.everyone in the class, and we made up stories about people, even though we don't really know who they are,
77.and they probably didn't know who we really were, just that they're called 'James'.
78.R: And what else helped you to cope?
79.P: I do think that 'Queen Elizabeth's', for a private school, obviously there was a smaller number of
80.children in a class, so it gave the teacher more option, more time to spend with a student and talk about the
81.subject or whatever, and so you really understood what was going on. Where, at 'King Edward's' there was
82.like 20 people in a class and it was… there were people who messed about and the teacher always had to stop
83.and say, "Stop messing about, look at the board, blah, blah, blah."
84.But at 'Queen Elizabeth's', there were… so, in our maths class there were just 14, maybe 15 people in just
85.that class, and we all knew how to behave, then sometimes there were just little times where someone just
86.was talking to someone.
87.But the teachers are really good at the 'Queen Elizabeth's' school and I even got along with some of them. So,
88.my PE teacher, he was really friendly and he, like, was quite friendly towards the kids because he was
89.one of the younger teachers. And I took PE as a GCSE and he really motivated me to get things done and get
90.through it and stuff like that.
91.There was also my history teacher, who was probably the best history teacher I've had, or maybe the best
92.teacher I've had. And he made me enjoy history, he made history fun; he made it fun to learn about facts and
93.learn about the dates and to remember the dates, and how to remember certain things. And he always had a
94.PowerPoint, and a certain like game or a technique to get us to learning something.
95.So, one thing he had was a whiteboard… he was good with PowerPoint, so he had a whiteboard, a slide full of
96.numbers and he told us one at a time, "Pick a number," and it showed, like, a certain thing in history. So, if
97.the topic was Nazis, then it would be like explain the Third Reich, what was the Third Reich? Or what
98.happened at Munich, the Munich uprising? And you picked a number and then talked about it and if you
99.didn't then other people would help you out and stuff like that. Yes. Maths… what do you want?
100.R: Sorry, I didn't mean to cut you off. I was going to just ask if you could tell me a bit more about
101.learning in the schools that you've been to?
102.P: I guess I only thought about the learning process and liked the learning process at 'Queen
103.Elizabeth's'. I don't remember much about how good the teachers were at 'King Edward's' or the school
104.before that. I was that age where I didn't really care about the learning, I was more focussed on my friends
105.and what we did at the weekends and stuff like that.
106.But I think, when I moved here, I was more focussed on doing work and doing my homework and getting
107.stuff done, and if my friend said, "Oh, do you want to hang out a break time?" And I sometimes said, "No, I
108.have to do my maths homework, and stuff like that, so no."
109.So, I'd rather get it done at lunchtime because in 'Queen Elizabeth's' lunchtime was 45 minutes long, so it
110.was a long time to get stuff done. So, at home I could chill out and not do any… so, I don't need to do any
111.homework at home. But yes, and I guess I liked… at 'King Edward's' in Cyprus, I guess I remember the
112.teachers, but I don't really remember how the teachers taught and that, if you get what I mean.
113.R: No, that's fine. Have you experienced any challenges at any of the schools you've been to?
114.P: What type of challenges?
115.R: So, any difficulties with any aspects of school life at any of the schools you've been to? I know
116.you've already mentioned friends.
117.P: Yes. Just leaving friends behind and to make new friends. That is always a difficulty and I'll have to
118.do it again when I move from here to [previous county] again, which is where we're moving to.
119.R: And how does that make you feel?
120.P: I guess I know what to do now and not to get upset and not to think about it too much and just get
121.over it and say, "I have to leave it behind and make new friends." Or I could still be friends because I won't
122.be that far away, so I could still see them sometimes, or hang out with them, but obviously I will have to
123.make new friends at my new school I'll be moving to, which will be [name of new school].
124.R: Yes. And you said that you're going to have to do it again. Could you tell me more about what you
125.mean by that?
126.P: Well we'll have to move again from [name of current area] to England, because of my dad's job. My
127.dad, right now, is working near [name of city- 3 hour drive away], at the moment because that's where his
128.job is. That's the only job he could get. He couldn't get a job where we wanted to live, because my mum and
129.dad bought a house in [previous county], and we've decided to stay there and not move anymore. We want to live
130.there because I think we've all had enough of moving all the time, not just me but my whole family have got
131.tired of having to make friends with people and leave them behind and get out of the routine at this place,
132.and they can make a new routine at this place. Because it is a bit complicated and it does annoy me a bit.
133.R: Yes, yes, I can tell that it's quite difficult so thank you for sharing. What will it be like, because you
134.said that you're going to settle with the new house, what will that be like?
135.P: I really don't know because I haven't experienced it before, like staying in our own house and not a
136.house that is on a base with… yes, for the first time, with no planes flying around all day and having a lot of
137.neighbours and that. So, I don't really know.
138.R: Okay. And what do you hope it will be like?
139.P: I hope that I'll have a bigger room. But yes, I hope I will enjoy it and I'm glad that we're staying in the
140.house and we're not going to move anymore. I don't want to go through it again, even after moving from
141.here to England.
142.R: Yes, it's difficult, completely understand that. Have you experienced any positive aspects of the
143.schools that you've been at?

144.P: I think the one thing that I will remember from 'Queen Elizabeth's' was the ski trip, I loved the ski
145.trip. I didn't go because my friend was going, or something like that, I genuinely wanted to do skiing and I
146.loved it.
147.My PE teacher went, my history teacher went, and I think two people from my year went. I didn't really see
148.them as friends but I got along with them on the ski trip. And we had a night where there was a karaoke and
149.there was another night where we went into where we were staying and we went to a café or something
150.and people had pancakes, but I couldn't have any because I'm allergic to egg.
151.So, I was kind of at a disadvantage because of the food served there at the hotel and certain things, and I
152.get… one person at the ski trip did, sort of, I think they did make fun of me because I couldn't eat anything. I
153.was like, I don't really care, I'm fine with it. I'm not really missing out on much, just unhealthy stuff, basically.
154.But the ski trip was amazing. I'll remember my Duke of Edinburgh expedition that I went on with people in
155.my class, that was really fun. And I already had been on a few hill walks and mountain walks before that, so I
156.was ready to do the expedition and I got along with my friends there.
157.That was all at 'Queen Elizabeth's', those trips. I think. Although 'Queen Elizabeth's' doesn't have trips,
158.really, because obviously it's a private school and it can't just get money and have, like, four trips a year,
159.going to the zoo or something like that.
160.R: Any other positive aspects of school? In any of the schools that you've been to, any positives there?
161.P: I guess, yeah, at 'King Edward's', I guess there was more to offer at 'King Edward's' than at 'Queen
162.Elizabeth's', because it was… 'Queen Elizabeth's' was such a small school, so it didn't have many people who
163.wanted to do certain things like… so, at 'Queen Elizabeth's', they didn't have much to offer at GCSE.
164.So, they had maths and English, but they were all, what's the word? You had to do maths and English and
165.physics and biology and chemistry, but the stuff you could choose, there wasn't stuff on offer like at other
166.schools where there would be computer science and, like, film studies, maybe, or cookery, yeah, baking and
167.stuff like that. There was music, drama and art, but that was, like, as far as it went.
168.But at 'King Edward's' there was definitely more to offer. At 'King Edward's' I definitely liked the catering
169.lesson that we had, and each time we made something, like, a cake or a meal, I could bring it home that
170.night and have it with my family, which was… I liked doing that and I did get told from my family that I made
171.a good apple crumble once, but that was ages ago, and I haven't really carried on with that.
172.R: Maybe that's something you'll have to try and pick up.
173.P: Yeah.
174.R: Can you think of anything that would help you at school? Or that would have helped you at school?
175.P: I guess I can't really… what do you mean by help?
176.R: Just in general, anything that would have helped or supported you at school? Because I know you're
177.coming to the end of school now, aren't you?
178.P: I guess one major thing at 'Queen Elizabeth's' would be, because obviously you can leave school
179.after you've done your GCSEs, one thing they didn't really have at 'Queen Elizabeth's' was careers advice.
180.They didn't really have any advice for when you leave school you can go into an apprenticeship, or you can
181.go into a job, or you can carry on with A-levels if you want. They didn't really have anybody to talk to people
182.about that. That would have been more helpful if that was in place.
183.R: And what about for the moves, is there anything that would have helped or supported you when
184.you moved school?
185.P: I can't really think of anything that would have helped because… maybe if I kept in contact with
186.people more, but apart from that I don't really know anything that would help the move.
187.R: When you say keep in contact with people, who do you mean?
188.P: So, keep in contact with people that I have had at my earlier school. I've got people from Cyprus
189.who I follow on Instagram, but we don't really chat or talk anymore. But with people here I talk more to
190.them, so I haven't really kept in contact with people from earlier schools. I guess just gone away from it and
191.that.
192.R: And how does that make you feel?
193.P: I guess I moved on and I have made new friends, and they have moved somewhere else as well, they
194.have made new friends. Now they don't live in Cyprus anymore, they moved back to England somewhere, I
195.can't remember where. I don't know if they've told me or not. I think we still have the same interests. I think
196.I still have the same interests as people from Cyprus, or they might not be interested in that anymore, might
197.be interested in something else, I don't know because I haven't kept in contact with them.
198.R: And did you live with them in Cyprus?
199.P: The people that I was friends with in Cyprus, they were on the same base, they were on the RAF
200.base that we were on. But yes, the RAF base there was much more than the one we're at now. It had a
201.cinema, it had a swimming pool, it had like a medical centre, it had shops, it had a Costcutter, it had a lot
202.more streets, it had a rugby club, it had a racing track, it had a racing club with like a cart club. It had a
203.beach, and they put certain events on there, and bonfire nights, and Halloween was big, massive.
204.There was always something going on, yes. At the sergeant's mess there was always, every Friday, there was
205.sort of like a disco at X, which was good.
206.R: And how is that different or similar to where you are now?
207.P: Well here there is nothing like it. There is a pub with a bowling alley and a little shop and a little
208.cinema that they put movies on from time to time, but nothing like [name of RAF base].
209.R: And how does school relate to your base at the moment? I'm just being curious as to how it works.
210.P: So, from our Valley they put on a bus from people who live at [name of base] that goes straight to
211.'Queen Elizabeth's' and me and my sister both go on that bus and there are other people at this base that go
212.to 'Queen Elizabeth's' as well.
213.R: Excellent.
214.P: Yes, because that's really the only school that they have where the teachers speak English, because
215.at other school they will speak in Welsh and we don't know any Welsh.
216.R: Okay. And what is that like for you?
217.P: I guess I did do some Welsh at 'Queen Elizabeth's' in Year 9, but I just didn't get Welsh, I didn't really
218.like Welsh. But my sister enjoyed Welsh a bit more and she learned more than me. And because I go to Sea

219.Cadets, well, I used to go to Sea Cadets here and that was at [name of area] and some people there spoke
220.Welsh, and I was a bit anxious because I didn't know what they were talking about. And I was like, "Are they
221.talking about me?" And sometimes I asked, "What are you talking about?" I guess sometimes I felt a bit
222.nervous, but other times it was like, it's their language, so, yes.
223.R: Do you enjoy Sea Cadets?
224.P: I think I did. Some things, because I initially joined Sea Cadets because I was interested in sailing,
225.mostly sailing, but they did kayaking and rowing and that. I'm not interested in joining the Navy or anything
226.like that, I don't enjoy people who shout and tell me what to do, and all the terminology that they use.
227.But I guess I enjoyed some aspects. I enjoyed sailing a lot because I started sailing in Cyprus, and sailing in
228.Cyprus was amazing, obviously because one, there was no tide, which was great until I moved here and they
229.said, "There is this thing called tide, do you know what it is?" I'm like, "No." "It's this thing where in the day
230.the water moves from here to here," and I'm like, "What?"
231.   But sailing in Cyprus was… again I'll remember that. I want to carry on sailing. I have carried on sailing
232.here. I did a bit in Sea Cadets, but I didn't do enough; I wanted to do more, so I joined a sailing club and I've
233.sailed there a couple of times.
234.R: In Cyprus, was the sailing connected to school, or was it separate?
235.P: The sailing club was near the school and there were a few people from my school that went to that
236.sailing club as well, so I knew them, but I didn't go with my friends. But it was on the army base at X,
237.which was where 'King Edward's' was, but we had to drive from [name of RAF base] to X.
238.R: Great. Thank you, [name] for sharing, you've been very open and honest, which is great. So, thank
239.you. I also wanted to ask: is there anything else in relation to school or your school experiences that we
240.haven't spoken about yet?
241.P: I guess I don't like moving every so often, but I did like moving to Cyprus and getting a different
242.experience. And when I moved here I had a different experience. I don't like the moving part itself because,
243.obviously, it's sad and I don't really want to move, but I guess when I've been there for a while I get used to
244.it and I'm fine.
245.I've got experience of different schools and what schools I enjoyed, what schools I didn't really enjoy, what
246.aspects of that school I enjoyed. But I guess moving has, like, positives and negatives. And when I moved
247.here I saw I'd grown up a bit more, because at 'King Edward's' in Year 8 I wasn't acting like the other Year 8s
248.in that year. When I moved here, I'd grown up a bit more and focussed on education.
249.R: How else did you know that you'd grown up a bit more?
250.P: I just felt that I was acting more grown up and I was getting rid of stuff that I enjoyed doing with my
251.friends at Cyprus, but I don't do it now because no one here really likes that, so I just thought there's no
252.point in having this anymore, so I'll get rid of it.
253.R: Do you have an example of that?
254.P: So, I said that in Cyprus I played on Nintendo devices.
255.R: Sorry, yes, you said that, didn't you?
256.P: Yes, with my friends and stuff like Mario and that, but when I moved here, I still played it, but I
257.didn't really enjoy it that much because I wasn't playing it with my friends. So I nearly sold everything to do
258.with that and I've got a PlayStation now, I play more with my friends now, stuff that I enjoy more.
259.I guess the teachers at 'Queen Elizabeth's' also pushed me more and told me to, sort of told me to grow up
260.and don't get worked up about things, yes.
261.R: And you said that when you moved eventually you get used to it, what helps you to get used to it?
262.P: I guess, when I've been there for maybe a year, I've got used to it because the family have just done
263.certain things in that area that have, sort of, made it enjoyable. So, here, we've enjoyed things here like Zip
264.World and beaches here, and the sailing club that I'm going to, and Sea Cadets which I joined. Things to help
265.me get over Cyprus and forget about it and move on, and stuff like that.
266.R: Thank you [name]. And is there anything else that we haven't spoken about yet in relation to school
267.and your experiences of school?
268.P: I don't think so. No.
269.R: No?
270.P: I can't think of anything else.
271.R: No, you don't have to. I just thought I'd ask. Thank you. I'm going to stop the recording now if that's
272.okay, and then we'll have a little chat.

[Start of 05(2) audio only]- Participant asked researcher if they could add something so recording resumed.

273.P: Also, what I didn't say was where I'm living now, there isn't anyone here that is the same age as me,
274.and so it forced me to really make friends with people at school, which was complicated as, even though it's
275.a small school, the people are spread out across [name of area] and people live… people where I am, at
276.[name of current area], but there are people living in London, [town X], yes, like 50 miles away.
277.I can't really go to them, knock on the door and say, "Hey, do you want to hang out?" Can't really do that,
278.we have to arrange stuff and say, "Do you want to meet up here and hang out there?" Not really like, "Do
279.you want to come hang out at mine for an hour," because they don't really live near me. Like, which was
280.what I had in Cyprus, where people lived just a few houses away, and we could hang out whenever.
281.R: And how did that make you feel?
282.P: In Cyprus I liked it because we lived quite near. At that time I didn't use social media or anything like
283.that, so I just, if I wanted to talk to them, I went to them and I talked to them. I went to their house and
284.knocked the door, "Do you want to hang out at the park?" In the group… but here, when I moved here I was
285.quite sad there wasn't really anyone here at this base that I could do that with, and I was quite sad then and
286.I had a few moments when I moved here in the first, maybe, six weeks where I got a bit emotional.
287.R: That must have been tricky.
288.P: Yes.
289.R: Is there anything else you'd like to add, that we haven't spoken about, about school?
290.P: Just that the people going to the school, there wasn't really a big choice to make friends with, where

291.in Cyprus there was a lot more people and a lot more people that you can make friends with. But back here,
292.because there are, like, 15 people in the class, I understood that there was the cool kids group and the girl
293.group and then the people that I made friends with, we call ourselves, like, the outsiders because we
294.weren't like them, we weren't like the other people. We were just ourselves, we didn't fake it, we didn't just,
295.sort of, fake friends or act false or anything like that.
296.R: And is that how they acted?
297.P: Well to me they did, because sometimes, in break time, they acted false, but when they weren't
298.with their friends, when they were in class, they acted serious, obviously, and they acted differently, and
299.spoke normally, they didn't put on, like, a… because in break and lunchtime they sounded more enthusiastic
300.and obviously used different words and more often.
301.But, say, in class, when they weren't with their friends, they would act normally and sometimes even I spoke
302.to them normally, not… when they weren't speaking to their friends and they were acting false, when they
303.were with their friends.
304.R: Thank you [name]. Is there anything that we haven't spoken about in relation to the school
305.experience? Anything else?
P: I don't think so. I think that's it.

Appendix M: Interview Transcript 06

1.R: Can you tell me about your experiences of school so far?
2.P: Well, I've been to two primary schools and one secondary school and it can… because I've
3.only been to one secondary school and it's a private school, it's quite obviously hard to compare it to
4.anything else because I don't have any other experiences and it's quite different I would say, going to a
5.private school than to a normal school. But in my primary school, when I was about in Year 1, I don't
6.remember too much, but I remember some stuff and I remember that the teachers were nice and I had
7.lots of friends and it was a pretty good school.
8.And then when I moved to Cyprus of course it was… the school was on a base and literally every child
9.there had a parent or a relative who was part of the forces, and it was quite good because there were
10.lots of people there and they could relate to you easily than at other schools like [name of previous
11.school], or my first school, and everyone understood what everyone was going through and everyone
12.had been to the places, and it was quite interesting to learn about where they've been and it was
13.quite interesting to see… because they would talk… we would talk to each other about kind of our
14.experiences and it was nice having people who understood you.
15.The teachers were good as well, they were also very nice and caring and they were pretty good at if
16.there were any problems, they were quite good at kind of sorting them out.
17.R: You said that your teachers were nice and they were good, can you tell me a bit more about
18.the relationship you had with your teachers?
19.P: I would say they wouldn't… they were quite friendly and they weren't too stern or too strict.
20.They were quite… I would say…
21.R: Which school was this?
22.P: This was a school in Cyprus. They were good at kind of knowing that the children here are in
23.the forces and they may have problems fitting in or making friends and that kind of stuff, and they
24.were good at making you feel comfortable in your new school.
25.R: What did they do to make you feel comfortable in your new school?
26.P: I would say they were very… they would show you round the school, they would be quite
27.considerate about your different… like for example, if you haven't done this subject before or if you
28.haven't done much of this, they would introduce you to it, but not make you feel intimidated by a new
29.subject. And they introduced you to students quite nicely and calmly and it was… they would pair you
30.up with a buddy I think, who would introduce you to stuff and that was always good.
31.R: Thank you. What was it like for you when you moved school? Sorry, could you hear me?
32.P: Yeah. Well when I moved from Cyprus to Wales it was obviously completely different because
33.you're in a very different environment. In Cyprus it's always hot and sunny and you have… I felt like I
34.had a lot more freedom because school was on a base and our house was on a base so it was very
35.protected and stuff, and then when I moved here obviously the UK is very different from Cyprus and
36.maybe I didn't have as much freedom. Because obviously my parents are quite protective and they
37.want to keep us safe, so… and also there isn't really much to do here, I would say.
38.Also the school was very different because I had very little amount of RAF friends or military friends
39.that… I think had about one close friend and it's always hard settling… going into a secondary school
40.and it can be quite scary because there are lots of new things and I had never experienced them
41.before. So my first secondary school was 'St. Mary's'.
42.R: Can you give me an example of some of the new things that you hadn't experienced before?
43.P: I would say, for example, even small things like I had Welsh for a subject and lots of the
44.places around me I didn't recognise, I wasn't familiar with how they worked, and also the school, they
45.had different methods for teaching and stuff. So I would have to kind of work out, "This is how they do
46.stuff here. They write it like this," or, "They word it like this and they sit like …" I don't know, but yeah.
47.And also the people, they're very different as well.
48.R: How are they different?
49.P: I would say quite a lot of people, they kind of put on an act or something, or they act
50.differently when they're with other people, like the people in my class, and it was quite weird trying to
51.get to know somebody but they weren't being their true self.
52.R: Can you tell me what life has been like for you in this school that you're in?
53.P: In this school, I've done quite well academically and obviously because the class sizes are
54.extremely small, it helps as well, because I have mild hearing loss and sometimes it can be a little bit
55.hard to hear when you have classes of 20 or 25 or 30 people. But I think this school helped because
56.the teachers could easily make… if you needed help, they could help you very easily because there
57.weren't many people to help and they were quite… they were paying attention, they would think
58.about every person in that class and their strengths and weaknesses, and it was easy to just put my
59.hand up and say, "Can I have help with this?"
60.When in a big school, you may have five or six people putting their hand up and it may take a while for
61.them to come to you and that was always good. I don't know if this time I did quite well with friends,
62.because a lot of people were very different to when they were in Cyprus. Not just because some
63.people put on an act, but also because we're kind of growing up to be teenagers and into a new kind
64.of situation I would say, you know, dealing with different things to when you were when you were
65.seven or eight, that kind of stuff.
66.R: Can you tell me a bit more about your relationship with friends?
67.P: I would say that, of course, I had a few friends and some of my good friends, they would tend
68.to move or go to different schools and that was always kind of hard because I wasn't really in big
69.friend groups, I had a few friends. And sometimes, because our class sizes are so small, it's quite
70.exciting when someone new comes to the class, but when someone new comes to the class, I found
71.that one of my friends, they wanted to be friends with this person and she ended up kind of ignoring

72.me, which was a bit irritating.

73.And it was hard to kind of make new friends. I mean sometimes I just had to hang out with people I
74.didn't necessarily like too much or I didn't have much in common with, because… yeah, it wasn't
75.worth being lonely.

76.R: And how did you cope with that? How did you cope with the move to the new school?

77.P: I talk to my parents a lot and they kind of told me that it would be OK and, "You're just new
78.and everything will sort itself out soon," you know, "You'll feel like you fit in and everything will be
79.normal." And I have my brother who also found it hard to make friends and I talk to him too and he
80.was good to talk with because he understood me. So obviously because we're brother and sister, we
81.were quite close, so…

82.R: And how did the school help you to cope?

83.P: I don't know if the school helped me that much. Sometimes in Year 6 for example, there were
84.quite a few problems with some other girls and I felt like sometimes teachers weren't very good at
85.noticing that there were problems. So I don't know, I felt like they didn't really notice if someone, for
86.example, was sitting on their own or in the playground, they were kind of alone. I didn't feel like they
87.were good at noticing that.

88.R: Did the school or teachers help you in any way with the move, to cope with the move?

89.P: I would say, for example, there were a few RAF students at the school, and they introduced
90.me to them and maybe told me that maybe I could sit next to this person who was also RAF, and so
91.that was quite nice because of course you can sit next to someone who may live in the same place as
92.you and might have gone through similar experiences.

93.R: And how did that make you feel?

94.P: I'd say that helped me feel quite good because of course I was new and I didn't know any of
95.these people, I didn't know anybody who lived here, I didn't have any relatives who lived here. And it
96.was just… it was quite nice getting to know these people who also live in the same place as I do and
97.maybe they could talk to me or tell me a few things about the school or the area I live in, and that was
98.always… that was good and quite… they all were… the people were very friendly and kind.

99.R: And you also mentioned that your teachers were nice and you said 'good' as well, could you
100.tell me a bit more about the relationship you had with your teachers across the schools that you've
101.been to?

102.P: So in 'St. Mary's' I would say that in primary school, I don't think they were very good at
103.noticing problems and they tended to be quite… I don't know… it was more of a teacher-child
104.relationship and I don't know, some people felt nervous about even talking to them about problems.
105.But in my secondary school, there are teachers who are always very welcoming and they told and
106.they reminded students that you can talk with them if you're having problems with anything.
107.And they were always very open and yeah, for example, when my dad went on a four-month
108.detachment, there are teachers who kind of took that into recognition and knew that I might not feel
109.as… I might not act like I did before, I might be a bit a kind of shy or quiet, and one time I did talk to
110.them and they were quite helpful.

111.R: How were they helpful?

112.P: Well one of the teachers talked to me about her own experiences and that her dad was away
113.a lot, and they were just very nice and I would say they were kind of supportive, and they were just…
114.it was quite calm and nice conversation.

115.R: How were they supportive? Could you give an example of them being supportive?

116.P: They would tell me that it was okay to feel like this it was okay to miss people and that kind of
117.stuff.

118.R: Thank you. Have you experienced any challenges at the schools you've been to, or any
119.difficulties?

120.P: I'd say mostly with friendships and checking… I would say I make friends quite easily, but
121.obviously things like new people can kind of get in the way because they want to make friends with
122.them, and they may end up kind of neglecting you, and that was quite hard. And sometimes I would
123.say it's kind of hard to maybe share your friends with another person. I mean I had a few friends, but
124.I'd say I didn't really neglect them. But yeah…

125.R: Yeah, have you experienced any other challenges or difficulties at school?

126.P: I mean, I'd say sometimes academically there were some subjects I stumble with. Like I'm not
127.too fond of Maths and sometimes I stumbled a little on that, but I would find that I could ask the
128.teachers for help and I could ask my brother, who is very good at Maths, to help and that always
129.helped. But the teachers, they were always… they would explain it to me quite clearly and they
130.would make sure that I fully understood what the sum was or what subject we were doing it on, like
131.what we were doing.

132.R: And you mentioned Maths and you said about different subjects. Can you tell me more about
133.learning at school?

134.P: Learning at this school, they're always… they're good at, for example, if you have a different
135.ability from someone… like a person they may struggle with a subject but another person might excel
136.at it. You don't do the same work as the person who struggles, you do work that is suited to you. In
137.most of the subjects, I would say that is true, and some subjects I'd say maybe not as true, or most of
138.the time, but some subjects might find that we have to do it suited to the persons above you.

139.R: And how is that compared to the learning you've experienced in your other schools?

140.P: Well, I do remember some of the learning in Cyprus and I remember that if you had finished
141.an activity or exercise or worksheet, you wouldn't have to wait for everybody else to finish it, they
142.would give you another worksheet to do that might be a bit harder. I would say that made me feel
143.quite challenged, so I could try something new and different and I wouldn't be bored for the lesson
144.and I'd have lots of things to do.

145.R: Thank you. Have you experienced any positive aspects of the schools you've been to and can
146.you tell me some more about them?

147.P: I would say that there's always lots of things like clubs to do and there are things like the
148.library and computer room and you could always go there during lunchtime and with the clubs
149.there's always quite a lot of choice and I do a club; I do the netball club and the teachers were very
150.good there at pointing… they were good at pointing out of if we did any mistakes and they would
151.help you if you weren't doing something quite right.
152.And it was always fun doing things like playing games against other schools. And I always felt like
153.clubs were a big part of the school. And the outside area, that's always good too. So there are quite a
154.few different things you can do at lunch. You can stay inside and go to the library if you want or do
155.some homework, or you can play outside on the court, where there's a basketball and netball hoop
156.and there's a big field you can go on as well, and I always felt that there was quite a lot for you to do
157.at lunch and outside of school
158.R: Can you give me an example of that? About the clubs you've been to?
159.P: So I went to netball club at 'St. Mary's', and I went to a drama club for a bit as well. And in
160.Cyprus, I think I did… I can't quite remember if I did any clubs there.
161.R: How would you describe the club? Did it help or support you in any way?
162.P: Well, we also do netball as part of the PE curriculum, so when you're learning something in
163.the PE lesson at school about netball, I could work on it at netball club as well, so that was very
164.useful to have. And in drama club, I would also get to work on things that we might not work on in
165.class because the teacher wanted to do some stuff suited for everybody, but in drama club was
166.suited for people more higher-skilled at drama, and I found that quite fun doing something different
167.to what we were doing in class.
168.R: Are there any other positive aspects in the schools that you've been to?
169.P: The lessons are always very interesting and the teachers, they're very good at what they do
170.and I have done quite well, I would say, on things like my reports because they are good at helping
171.you and they ask if you do need help every so often, just to check in.
172.R: You said they check in with you, can you tell me a bit more about that?
173.P: Yeah, so it's they've given us an assignment to do and we're doing it… they will check in,
174.they'll go to the desk and make sure like, "Oh is everything okay, are you understanding it?" They
175.may mark some of the work you've done already and you know, for example, if you have made any
176.mistakes, they can talk with you about it and they do do that every so often in the lesson.
177.R: Thank you. Can you think of anything that would help you at school, or at the schools that
178.you've been to?
179.P: I would say I would prefer it if they talked to us more often about what's it like to be the…
180.kind of in the forces and what's it like to move around stuff. I think I would like that more.
181.R: How do you think that would help?
182.P: I think it would help as it would be nice to talk to other people that accept me, because I talk
183.to my parents and my brother about it quite a lot, but I think it would be nice to kind of tell them
184.about what I've been through and so not only would it be helpful for me, but it might be helpful to
185.them to know how to help children in future.
186.R: And what would you tell them?
187.P: I would tell them how it makes you feel moving around and having to make new friends
188.constantly and always adjusting and adapting to new and different lifestyles. And I think that maybe I
189.could tell them how maybe they could help people like me who are from the… who have forces
190.parents.
191.R: What would you say?
192.P: I would say that it's good to talk to people and ask how they're feeling and how everything…
193.maybe…for example, I'm moving and maybe they could ask people about how, "Are you excited
194.about your new place? Are you looking forward to it? Are you nervous about it?" Questions about
195.how they feel about it.
196.R: And you've just mentioned that you're moving. Could you tell me a bit more about that?
197.P: Yeah, I'm quite looking forward to moving because I've been to this place before so I won't be
198.completely unfamiliar with the area and I do have relatives there and the school looks very good and
199.there's things like cooking and design and technology which I haven't done at 'St. Mary's' because I
200.don't think they have funding for it.
201.R: And how does that feel?
202.P: It feels quite good and exciting because I really like cooking at home and I think it's quite cool
203.to try some new stuff.
204.R: And how do you think you'll cope with the move?
205.P: I think as I'm getting older and as I've moved many times before, it won't be too hard
206.because I wouldn't say this place has been… I would say it's been quite good, but I wouldn't say it's
207.too difficult to leave. But then obviously I'm quite excited to be moving shortly because not only are
208.there good schools, but I do have friends there which I was friends in Year 1 and stuff, and there's
209.also lots to do there. And so I would say this move might be not as hard, it might just be quite
210.exciting.
211.R: And you mentioned that you would tell teachers something about how you adapt and that
212.you changed to new and different lifestyles; could you tell me a bit more about that?
213.P: Yeah, so I've been in lots of different environments and, for example, in Cyprus, you would
214.wake up at different times and go to school at different times and obviously you have things like the
215.heat and the environment around you and you live on a base that's fully surrounded by a fence and
216.that's obviously… it's quite big, but it was quite different to just living normally in a town or a village.
217.And here, I would say there's not as… it's quite small where I live and I wouldn't say… I would say the
218.community isn't as good as it was in Cyprus, because there aren't many people living here. But in
219.Cyprus I felt like people were more sociable and there were more kind of events, social events, for
220.people in Cyprus and here there aren't as many.
221.R: Can you tell me more about this then?

222.P: Yeah, so in Cyprus they would have bonfire night, Halloween parties, they would have this
223.thing, it's like every first Friday of the month, I mean we would go the mess, which is for workers and
224.there would be fun things to do like things for kids and they would have meals. It was a nice place for
225.everyone to interact and get to know each other and ask how they're doing. It was always nice to
226.talk to people.
227.R: Can you tell me more about how the schools were different or the same?
228.P: Yeah, so schools were very different because in Cyprus, I most went… I went to a primary
229.school and class sizes were quite big I would say and you had very different personalities there.
230.There you had people for example, they are… everyone in Cyprus was forces, they were all from RAF,
231.Army, Navy, and in 'St. Mary's', it was very different. Especially one, because it's a secondary and
232.two, it's a private school and people may… you may feel that at school you don't have as many forces
233.children.
234. There were about three or four in my secondary school and with a private school, some of the
235.people there they feel a bit false and they may feel a bit kind of… they take things for granted and
236.you hear them talk about things and it's just quite… sometimes it can be a bit boring hanging out
237.with those kind of people because they're not being their true selves, they're just putting on an act.
238.R: So you mentioned that there were forces children in your Cyprus school, is that right?
239.P: Yeah.
240.R: And you mentioned that there aren't as many in the school you're in at the moment. What
241.makes that different? Why does that matter?
242.P: Because the forces children, they… we know how to adapt to different situations and we've
243.been through stuff that people who aren't in the forces may not have. We understand each other in
244.ways that non-forces children may not understand each other and obviously being it's quite hard to
245.talk about something you've been through when they may not understand or know what you're
246.talking about.
247.R: Can you give an example of stuff that you've been through that they haven't?
248.P: Yeah, so for example, some of the people here in Wales, they've always lived in Wales, and
249.they've never really known anything different. They've mostly gone to the same school, they mostly
250.know the same people, they've always had the same neighbour or friends and they've grown up with
251.people. But me, it's always been… I haven't had a permanent neighbour or someone that you've
252.known forever because I've moved a lot and you have to make new friends and know new people.
253.And you don't really have that kind of friend I would say. You try to, but over the time you kind of,
254.for example, someone moves and you send letters or texts, but you grow distant because you're with
255.a new life and you have new friends now and they may not have been through that kind of situation.
256.R: Is there anything else that you would say that you've been through that they hadn't?
257.P: I'd say generally just different places. They're obviously very familiar with where they live
258.because they've lived there for 10, 11 years or something like that, and me, when I move to a new
259.place, you have to get to know it and you have to know this is there, that was there, and these
260.people… and you have to know the different kind of people there. And it can be difficult adapting to
261.the new surroundings because once you find yourself familiar with a place, you start… like when I
262.moved from Cyprus to here, sometimes when I was just in… sometimes for a second, I thought, "Oh
263.I'm not in Cyprus, I'm in Wales," and they may not have that kind of experience, I would say.
264.R: Thank you. Is there anything else in relation to school experiences that we haven't spoken
265.about?
266.P: No, I don't think so.

Appendix N: Interview Transcript 07

1.R: Could you tell me about your experiences of school so far?

2.P: I've been to around seven or eight schools, I think. I've moved a lot in primary schools, but I've
3.been in the same secondary school for the past few years. It didn't really change that much after the first
4.two moves. I got very much used to it, and actually, the transition from primary to secondary didn't affect
5.me as much as I thought it would because of how much I've moved around.

6.So, I did get quite upset because I've had many different friend groups over the years. But I have moved
7.back to where I've been before and met up with my old friends. So, the main bit of it wasn't the stress of
8.moving, it was the stress of leaving my friends and not having a group of friends that I knew too well that
9.affected me most. But I got over that.

10.R: Could you tell me a bit more about those friends and what happened?

11.P: Yeah. I had some friends I went to a school for Year 3 through Year 5. And I had a very close-knit
12.group of friends, and that was in [name of current town]. Then, I moved away to Hampshire, and I lost
13.contact with them, apart from a few of them I played some online games with, stuff like that. And I grew
14.new friends there, that I've recently got back through Instagram messaging services.

15.And I came back, and it turns out because the schools were very close together, like a 10-minute walk to
16.my old primary school. So, most of the people from that school went to my new secondary school and I
17.was able to meet back with them then, but it didn't really affect me much. I met up with them and I was
18.very excited, but I've got basically the same friend group as I did before now.

19.R: Could you tell me a bit more about primary school?

20.P: Yeah, in primary school, my dad went on deployment when I was in Year 4. He went to the
21.Bahamas for six months, and the first two months were really hard to deal with. And I struggled to keep
22.up with work, I started falling back on work and falling back on homework and that really affected me.
23.But after the first two months, it just started to get better. I started to get used to it.

24.But still, I wasn't as good as I was until my dad came back. And I think I had a lot of fall out with friends
25.at that time. Not big fall outs, just fall outs over little things because I was very sensitive and I was upset
26.quite a lot of the time, because I was always thinking about my dad and how he wasn't there. So, that's
27.the main thing I remember about it, just falling out with my friends a lot, because my dad wasn't at
28.home.

29.R: Thank you for sharing that. You said that it really affected you, could you tell me a bit more
30.about that? How did it affect you?

31.P: I've never been good with dealing with loss, whether it was my dad going away or a family
32.member or pet passing away. I've never dealt with it very well, I've always been very much it gets really
33.into my head, and I have about a week of just I can't do anything but be sad, basically. And it really
34.affects me. So, I think...because obviously I was younger at the time, I'm better now.

35.But I was just not used to it at all, I've never lost anyone important, apart from my great grandma, who I
36.didn't see too often. So, it just really affected me, that was the first time I actually felt like proper loss.
37.So, it just really made me feel really upset.

38.R: You said that it affected you at school and you mentioned you fell out with friends, and you fell
39.behind on work. Could you tell me a bit more about that?

40.P: Yeah. I think I was just thinking too much, and I was too much in my own head. It happened
41.when we bought a house here, because my dad had to stay at a separate military base. And I struggled
42.to do homework on time because I was wondering if he was going to come back at the weekend or if he
43.wasn't because he was able to come back, usually on Fridays, but not always.

44. I would have breakdowns in class, and I would start to cry randomly because I'd be happy one
45.second, and then I'd be crying the next and I wouldn't understand it. It was just very overwhelming for
46.me.

47.R: Yeah, that sounds really challenging. What did you do to help yourself cope during that time?

48.P: I would call my dad very often; my mum would let me use her WhatsApp to text him. But
49.obviously, he wasn't able to reply all the time but usually, he could. He'd get about a 30-minute slot of
50.phone calls a week, I think. So, we phone called him every Friday, I believe. But it was usually quite late
51.at night, because of different time zones, and when he got off work.

52. Now I can text him more often, because I have my own phone and I have my own WhatsApp
53.and all that. But what we have is we have this teddy we call Sailor Pooh. And he goes on deployment
54.with my dad, and he takes pictures of him at all the landmarks he goes to. Because Winnie the Pooh has
55.been my childhood, that's my favourite teddy, my favourite toy. When he sent us pictures of them,
56.that's what really made me happy and made me deal with it a bit better.

57.R: That's lovely. And you mentioned did you say you've been to eight schools?

58.P: I think about six to eight schools, quite a lot.

59.R: Can you tell me about a time that you've moved school?

60.P: Yeah. When I moved from my school in Hampshire to my primary school here, because I usually
61.start off first few weeks, I don't really like to talk to people. I maybe talk to the teacher, maybe
62.one person if I really need help, but I'll keep to myself until somebody talks to me because I don't want
63.to stand out. I just want to be normal, because I've never been normal.

64. I've always come in halfway through a year or randomly appeared in Year 3 and then gone away
65.Year 5. So, I don't like sticking out, it just makes me feel very uncomfortable.

66.R: And what do you mean by normal?

67.P: It's just most of the people I know have lived in this town their whole lives. And some people I
68.know have only ever been to London or Devon on holidays. So, they're all like, "Oh, I would feel really
69.upset if I moved." And they're all shaken by this move to secondary school, anything. It just makes me

70.feel really odd, because they were like, "Oh I never could picture myself living anywhere else."
71.Whereas I could picture 10 places in my head where I've lived or could live. And it's just never made
72.sense to me that people sometimes don't move, and that's just their part of life.
73.R: How does that make you feel?
74.P: It makes me feel quite odd, really. Because I know about two people that have been in the
75.military. I remember my friend, his dad was I think army. And he would move around a lot, and I met up
76.with him, but I lost contact with him recently. And he obviously moved around a lot, so he could talk to
77.me, because he'd moved from Portugal as a kid.
78.But there's no one else, apart from my friend, who moved from Poland. The foreign kids, they
79.understand, because they've had big moves, moving from countries or understanding the language or
80.talking a separate language. But it's never anyone in my friendship group, they've all lived in [name of
81.current town] their entire lives or they've just lived in one place. It's never they've gone round the entire
82.country, like I have.
83.R: It makes sense. So, you said that you don't like to stand out, can you give an example of a time
84.where you've felt like you stood out?
85.P: Like the first day of school, when you go back, I went in October, and the teacher was
86.introducing me to the whole class. I just felt really weird. I didn't like being the centre of attention, I've
87.never liked being the centre of attention. I've liked being in charge, but if I want attention, I'll do theatre.
88.That's when I like it, when I do it myself, my own choice. But when somebody puts the attention on me,
89.and I didn't ask for it that's when I feel really out of place, because I'm put on the spot and I don't do too
90.good on the spot.
91.R: And you mentioned teachers there as well. Could you tell me a bit more about teachers at the
92.schools you've been to?
93.P: Yeah. I've really had a hit and miss with teachers. Some teachers I've really liked, mainly male
94.teachers, because I don't know, they've got a bit of a stricter way of teaching, but they're still good at it.
95.But some teachers at my school I don't like because they underestimate me, they're always like, "Oh do
96.you understand this?" To the class.
97.And it's like making me feel like they think we're stupid or something. Or it's like a teacher that doesn't
98.give enough help, when I've got my hand up, he's going round to everyone but me. And it's just mainly
99.the teachers that don't make you feel stupid, but they'll also help you when you need it. It's kind of in
100.the middle, and it's always different for every person I've met, because I'll say, "I don't like this
101.teacher." And they'll be like, "What? They're my favourite teacher." So, it's very different for every
102.person. I guess it's just based on your experiences with other teachers.
103.R: Yeah. And what do you like most about the teachers that are 'good teachers' or the teachers that you like?
104.P: They just let you have fun. Like obviously, they don't let you throw paper airplanes across the
105.classroom. But I really like my history teacher, because as long as you do the work, he'll let you have
106.debates about what actually happened. I liked my teacher I had in Year 5, because he would always find
107.a way to give you positive criticism, no matter how bad your work was. And he just always made me
108.feel really reassured that what I was doing was good and boosting my confidence. So, I guess a teacher
109.that doesn't harshly criticise you to where you feel bad, that's ideal teacher.
110.R: And how did the teachers help you cope when your dad was deployed?
111.P: They let me have a lot of time out of class, especially in this school, I can just ask to go, I can't
112.remember, there's a teacher called Ms. [name] and she's really helpful. And she deals with the military
113.kids, so she understands a lot of the different struggles that military kids go through. And if I feel really
114.upset, she helped me a lot when I didn't get used to my dad not being there, or in the week when my
115.grandma passed away or something, she was really helpful with that.
116.R: And how was she helpful?
117.P: She just listened, and she didn't tell me what I did was like you're acting irrational, she didn't do
118.that. She just listened and she gave me advice. She let me sit in a lounge for a bit and just let me out of
119.lessons when I've had too much and was really stressing about something. It's just sometimes you need
120.someone to listen and not butt in and go, "Oh, but, well, maybe somebody's had it worse."
121.Yeah, I know people have had it worse, but I feel really upset and you telling me that people have it
122.worse isn't going to make me feel better about my situation. It's just those kinds of people that just try
123.and make it so like, "Other people have had this, other people have had that." Just listen to what I have
124.to say and give me some reassurance that I have a right to feel upset at this current moment in time.
125.R: Thank you, it's really helpful to know, thank you for sharing. Have you experienced any
126.challenges at the schools you've been to?
127.P: Because I like to be challenged when I do work, but sometimes, you know when you're in
128.primary school they just give the entire class the same set of work. Sometimes I felt like the work is too
129.easy and then other times I'll say, "This work is too hard." And they'll be like, "Oh, you're top set, you
130.should be able to do it." "I don't understand the work." "But you're in top set."
131.You can never say just because somebody's finding the work hard, they should be able to do it because
132.you know they're academically smart. People are good at different things, like I'm good at maths, but
133.when it comes to certain areas such as fractions, I'm terrible. I'm good at English, but when it comes to
134.writing without a prompt I'm not good, and you can't look at everything else I've done because it's
135.different. And just go, "Well, you've done this, you can do that." It's not the same.
136.R: Can you tell me a bit more about work and learning in school?
137.P: Sometimes there was this period in Year 3 where it was coming up to when my dad was going
138.to be deployed. And I was just completely overwhelmed. I would be able to do the work, if you gave me
139.that work two weeks before I would have got it done and been on the next work within 20 minutes. But

140.I just got so overwhelmed by facing the fact that my dad was going to be on deployment.

141.And also that we were going to have this big holiday coming up to Portugal and I was stressing about

142.that because I was packing and trying to understand a bit of Portuguese and all this. And it was making

143.me really stressed. So, I just got really overwhelmed at this one period, and my teacher just kept having

144.to give me the groups down work, which she was very nice, and she just let me get on with the work

145.that I wanted to do.

146.But it was just the stress that my dad was going to eventually go away to the Bahamas and not be there

147.for my summer holidays that was making me upset.

148.R: Can you tell me what you were thinking when you knew that was approaching?

149.P: I thought a lot about 'what if he doesn't come back?' Because I always think worst-case

150.scenario, I've always thought worst-case scenario. And when I was seven, eight, I didn't understand

151.really what a deployment was and that I would be able to keep in contact, but I just wouldn't be able to

152.see him face to face for a while. And it was just the overwhelming not understanding what was going to

153.happen that made me really upset and made me really stress about it and made me really self

154.conscious about it thinking all this stuff.

155.   And six months seemed like a really long time, and it still seems like a really long time. Because

156.he is on the frontline now, and if we got another six-month draft, I think I'd be in the same situation.

157.R: What did you do to help yourself get through that?

158.P: I mainly watched a lot of videos online. I watched a lot of Minecraft videos because Minecraft

159.was my favourite game at the time. And I relied on these YouTubers, I was always watching this guy

160.called Stampy's Minecraft videos made me really happy because he was so enthusiastic, and he had

161.this funny laugh. And it was just watching YouTube and having all these figures that made me happy

162.and had the same passions as me, when girls at school weren't playing video games.

163.I would always watch my dad play games like Scarum and stuff. It was just watching them reminded me

164.of watching my dad play these games. So, I would watch people play games, and it would make me feel

165.a lot more comfortable in a situation.

166.R: And have you experienced any other difficulties at school or in the schools that you've been to?

167.P: I've had a bit of a hard time with some girls at my school because they don't like me for some

168.reason. I don't know if it's something I've said or the way I act or it's my friendship group that they

169.don't like me. And they'll laugh at me, they'll make jokes about me and it didn't really get to me until I

170.got to about Year 8, when I started caring a lot about what people think.

171.Like, I could like a song and I could watch a video online, and they'll say, "Oh, this song is bad, I don't

172.like it." And I'll remove that song from my playlist and it's really made me think about how much I care

173.about other people's opinions and stuff.

174.R: Thank you. It does sounds like that's been a bit of a challenge. Is that in the school that in the

175.school that you're in now?

176.P: Yeah, the school I'm in now, about end of Year 7 they just started to dislike me. And it was one

177.of my old friends that I had in Year 4, and she just all of a sudden just didn't talk to me anymore. And I

178.think it was a new friendship group, and they just decided they don't like me.

179.R: And could you tell me about friendships in the other schools that you've been to?

180.P: When I was in the school in Hampshire, I was really good friends with this girl called 'Annie'.

181.And I've got back in contact with her recently through Instagram. And she had a love for cats, and so

182.did I. So, when I found out that she had cute cats, and when she found out I had three cats, the only

183.thing we talk about was cats and drawing cats. And she taught me how to draw these cats in her style.

184.   I liked drawing, too, a lot, and I still do, just not as much as I did when I was in Year 6, and I'd

185.just draw everything that I saw. And she really made me feel normal, because not only did she draw

186.and like cats, she also played the games I did, like Minecraft. And she just made me feel really normal,

187.even though I'd always felt outcast for liking this boyish stuff, which I realise isn't as boyish, because I

188.realise a lot of people actually play these games. I've just been looking in the wrong place.

189.R: Yeah. And what do you mean by normal, [name]? What's normal?

190.P: I'm not sure, if I'm honest. I just wanted to be like everyone else, because all these girls like pink

191.and had all these interests. I had a good friend called 'Louise', who again, I've got back in contact with.

192.She liked these things called Shopkins, and the moment she told me she liked Shopkins, I went home,

193.and I was like, "Mum, can you buy me these?"

194.So, I wanted to be like my friends. I wanted to even though pink wasn't my favourite colour, I forced

195.myself to make it my favourite colour. Looking back I really just wanted to fit in.

196.R: And we're all different, aren't we? We all like different things…..

197.P: Yeah.

198.R: But I guess, sometimes it feels important to fit in. I know you've already spoken about some

199.friends who you have things in common with and you've spoken about some positive aspects of school.

200.Could you tell me if you've experienced any other positive aspects of school in the schools you've been

201.to?

202.P: At school, my teacher, my form tutor's been really nice, and she's been understanding. She'll let

203.me out of form if I'm upset. And also, I've been hanging around with some new friends called 'Hayden'

204.and 'Sam' and I've got all these friends that are really nice. It's just I like school when I've got friends,

205.it's not fun unless you have friends at school.

206.And when all these people just let you hang out with them for no reason, other than they want you to

207.hang out with them makes you really happy. And not like because they think you're cool or because

208.they think you're attractive. They just want to be your friend.

209.R: And why is that important?

210.P: Because when somebody is judged by their looks or how popular they are, I don't think that's a
211.good representation of who they are. Because it's like googling a celebrity, finding out the date they
212.were born and saying you know everything about them. So, you really need to understand the person
213.and know the person before you should count them as your friend.
214.And just being friends with someone because they've got some nice clothes that they wore on a non
215.school uniform day or they're friends with the popular kids. It just makes me really happy that they
216.don't care that I'm not as popular, they just want to be my friend.
217.R: Thank you, and you said that that kind of thing helps you at school, having friends and people to
218.hang out with. But could you think of anything else that would help you at school?
219.P: I think maybe a bit more focus on real world issues, because I like doing history, and I like
220.learning about all this. But I would really like to learn about politics and learning about what jobs pay
221.the best and all this. And just learning about the real world. I know some people find it boring, but I
222.think that's what school needs to teach us, about how to be successful people out of school.
223.R: Yes. Could you think of anything else that could help you at school or would have helped you at
224.the schools you've been to?
225.P: I think just a bit more individual support, we're always talked to as a class. In my current school,
226.individual support is good but at my old school if you were upset, you were allowed to sit out the
227.classroom for five minutes. You came back in and you'd do the work again. They didn't talk to you
228.about much, apart from if there was a bullying issue.
229.So, it's just more individual support in primary school, especially Year 5 and Year 6 when you really start
230.to understand that especially military kids, they've come round and realised that it's real. The
231.deployments are a long time, and that really affects them. It just needs more focus; they need as much
232.help as the next kid.
233.R: And you think individual support could support with that?
234.P: Yeah, because even just take them out of lessons for five minutes every week, and just say,
235."How is everything going? What's been going on at home?" Just like they do with the kids who have
236.learning problems, they always seem happy. It's just you need to sometimes just take them out of
237.lessons and talk to them because it can be overwhelming being at school when your parents are away
238.or when you're just having a hard time at home.
239.R: And you've used the word overwhelming, could you tell me some emotions that you
240.experience with that overwhelming feeling?
241.P: I get quite burned out. I'll feel overwhelmed in one lesson, and then the next lesson I'll just feel
242.kind of emotionless. Just get on with the work and don't chat. I had a thing, I was doing computer
243.science and I got really excited about it, and I got overwhelmed. And then, I went to geography, and we
244.had a test and I was just spaced out and completely out of it.
245.Same thing happened in V&V and it's just that it's always going to be a crash and burn with being
246.excited or being overwhelmed. It always happens and then, the teachers blame it on you for being
247.unfocused, when you've got all this stuff going on.
248.R: Thank you, and can you think of anything else that the schools you've been to could do to help
249.or support you?
250.P: There's not really much else, there's nothing else really. I think just talking to them, listening to
251.them, understanding them is the best way to make them feel better about themselves. Just tell them
252.that what they're feeling is completely normal and that they have the right to feel sad in that situation.
253.And that there are hundreds of thousands of kids like them in the south west of England.
254.   Maybe even have a club where the military kids can meet up, because there was one of them in
255.my school in [name of county], and it really helped me. Because these kids understood what I've been
256.through, they understood moving, they understood deployments. And it was just the understanding of
257.people who've been through it that really helps.
258.R: Thank you. How does it make you feel when you meet somebody else that's been through it?
259.P: It makes me feel more assured that I'm not the only one like this, because obviously I've said
260.that most of my friends have lived in [name of current town] their whole lives. When somebody tells
261.me that, "Oh, yeah, my dad's in the RAF and he went on deployment when I was in Year 5." It just
262.makes me feel so reassured that someone's felt what I have and I'm not alone or alienated in my
263.current situation, it just makes me feel really comfortable.
264.R: Thank you. And thank you for sharing. Is there anything else that we haven't spoken about in
265.relation to school experiences that we should discuss or talk about?
266.P: I don't think so. Nothing off the top of my head.
267.R: Spoken about quite a lot, haven't we? But I'm just trying to think is there anything else that you
268.want to share with me about your school experiences?
269.P: No, not really.
270.R: No.
271.P: I think I've told you everything.

Appendix O: Ethical Approval from the Tavistock and Portman Trust Research Ethics Committee

The Tavistock and Portman **NHS**

NHS Foundation Trust

Quality Assurance & Enhancement
Directorate of Education & Training
Tavistock Centre
120 Belsize Lane
London
NW3 5BA

Tel: 020 8938 2699
https://tavistockandportman.nhs.uk/

Laura Potts

By Email

11 May 2020

Re: Trust Research Ethics Application

Dear Laura,

Title: Exploring the educational experiences of young people from military families

Thank you for submitting your updated Research Ethics documentation. 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.

Please be advised that any changes to the project design including changes to methodology/data collection etc, must be referred to TREC as failure to do so, may result in a report of academic and/or research misconduct.

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,

Paru Jeram
Secretary to the Trust Research Degrees Subcommittee
T: 020 938 2699
E: academicquality@tavi-Port.nhs.uk

cc.   Course Lead, Supervisor, Research Lead

Appendix P: Information Sheet

The Tavistock and Portman **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

Department of Education and Training
Tavistock Centre
120 Belsize Lane
London
NW3 5BA
www.tavistockandportman.nhs.uk

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7435 7111
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7447 3837

'Exploring the educational experiences of children and young people from service families'
Laura Potts, Trainee Educational Psychologist. lpotts@tavi-port.nhs.uk

My name is Laura Potts and I am currently looking for children or young people (aged 11-16 years) from service families who would like to volunteer to take part in my research study.

This doctoral research study aims to explore the educational experiences of service children and young people. The research study will require participants to take part in one audio-recorded interview that will last approximately 45 minutes. Within this interview participants will be asked a small number of questions and encouraged to openly talk about their experiences of education so far. I hope that this research will provide a platform for service children and young people to share an insight into their personal experiences. The findings will be typed up as part of my thesis which will be read by examiners and be available at the Tavistock and Portman library. I may also publish the research at a later date in a peer reviewed journal. You will have the option to read a summary of my findings or the full thesis once the analysis has been completed.

Due to the in-depth analysis of the data collected I will only be recruiting a small number of participants to take part in the research. The participant selection process will therefore work on a first come first served basis. The small number of participants used within this study means that this may have implications for anonymity as participants may be able to identify their own responses in the final write up. However, no names or personal details will be disclosed. Participant's contact details will be destroyed after the research study has been fully completed but participants are welcome to contact the researcher at any time using the email address given at the top of this information sheet.

Please also note that:
 ➢ Due to the current climate and upcoming uncertainties with regards to the coronavirus outbreak it may be that interviews are conducted via a secure video conferencing platform called 'Zoom'. In this instance, participants will be asked to sit in a quiet, private area that is familiar to them (e.g. their home or a family member's home) where they are unlikely to be interrupted during the interview.
 ➢ Involvement in this research study is voluntary and participants are free to withdraw their consent to participate at any time. After the interview has taken place participants also have the right to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
 ➢ Data collected during the study will be stored and used in compliance with the UK Data Protection Act (1998) and the University's Data Protection Policy. All electronic data will be securely disposed of after the research project has been completed. All records related to your participation in this research study will be handled and stored securely on an encrypted drive using password protection. Participant's identity on these records will be indicated by a pseudonym rather than their name. The data will be kept for a minimum of 5 years.
 ➢ Data collected from participants is confidential however the confidentiality of this information is subject to legal limitations.
 ➢ There are limitations to maintaining confidentiality where disclosure of imminent harm or risk to self and/or others may occur.
 ➢ This research project has received formal approval from the Tavistock and Portman Trust Research Ethics Committee (TREC)
 ➢ If participants or their parents have any concerns about the conduct of the researcher or any other aspect of this research project, they should contact Simon Carrington, Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance (academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk)

Thank you for taking the time to read through this information sheet. I hope that you (or your child) will consider taking part in this study and helping me with my doctoral research project.

Best wishes,　　　　　　　　　　Laura Potts　　　　　　　　　　7th May 2020

Appendix Q: Consent Forms

Consent form- young person

***'Exploring the educational experiences of children and
young people from service families'***
Laura Potts, Trainee Educational Psychologist

My name is Laura Potts and I am interviewing children and young
people (aged 11-16 years) from service families for my doctoral
research study.

This study aims to explore the educational experiences of service children and young people. The
research study will require you to take part in one audio-recorded interview that will take
approximately 45 minutes. Within this interview you will be asked a small number of questions and will
be encouraged to openly talk about your experiences of school so far.

The findings will be typed up as part of my thesis which will be read by examiners and will be
available at the Tavistock and Portman library. I may also publish the research at a later date in a
peer reviewed journal. You will have the option to read a summary of my findings or the full thesis
once the analysis has been completed.

Due to the in-depth analysis of the data collected I will only be interviewing a small number of
participants to take part in this research project. The small number of participants used within this
study may mean that you are able to identify your own responses in the final write up. However, I will
not disclose your name or any other personal details. Your contact details will be destroyed after the
research study has been fully completed but you and your parents are welcome to contact me at any
time using the email address given at the top of this information sheet.

Please also note that:
➢ The interview will take place using a video conferencing platform called 'Zoom'. For this, you
will be asked to sit in a quiet area that feels comfortable you for example, your home or a
family member's home where you are unlikely to be interrupted during the interview.
➢ Involvement in this research study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw your consent to
participate at any time. After the interview has taken place you also have the right to withdraw
any unprocessed data previously supplied.
➢ Data collected is confidential however the confidentiality of this information is subject to legal
limitations.
➢ The Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust has given ethical approval to carry out this
research. The Local Authority Educational Psychology Service has also given permission for
the research to go ahead.
➢ There are limitations to maintaining confidentiality where disclosure of imminent harm or risk
to self and/or others may occur. This means that if you tell me something and I think that this
means you are at risk, or you impose a risk to yourself or other people then I will need to I will
need to share this with people who can help to keep you safe.

If you are aged between 11-16, attend a mainstream secondary school, have a parent who has
served in the Armed Forces since you have been in education and would like to volunteer to take part
in this study please give your consent by marking the box and signing below:

I give my consent to take part in this research study ☐

Signed: **Print name:**   **Date:**

Consent form- parents

'Exploring the educational experiences of children and young people from service families'
Laura Potts, Trainee Educational Psychologist

The Tavistock and Portman **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

Department of Education and Training
Tavistock Centre
120 Belsize Lane
London
NW3 5BA
www.tavistockandportman.nhs.uk

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7435 7111
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7447 3837

My name is Laura Potts and I am currently looking for children or young people (aged 11-16 years) from service families who would like to volunteer to take part in my doctoral research study.
This study aims to explore the educational experiences of service children and young people. The research study will require your child to take part in one audio-recorded interview that will take approximately 45 minutes. Within this interview your child will be asked a small number of questions and will be encouraged to openly talk about their experiences of education so far.

The research findings will be typed up as part of my thesis which will be read by examiners and will be available at the Tavistock and Portman library. I may also publish the research at a later date in a peer reviewed journal. You will have the option to read a summary of my findings or the full thesis once the analysis has been completed.

Due to the in-depth analysis of the data collected I will only be recruiting a small number of participants to take part in the research. The participant selection process will therefore work on a first come first served basis. Please note that no names or personal details will be disclosed. All participant contact details will be destroyed after the research study has been fully completed but you are welcome to contact me at any time using the email address given at the top of this information sheet.

Please also note that:
  ➢ Due to the current climate and upcoming uncertainties with regards to the coronavirus outbreak it may be that interviews are conducted via a secure video conferencing platform called 'Zoom'. In this instance, participants will be asked to sit in a quiet, private area that is familiar to them (e.g. their home or a family member's home) where they are unlikely to be interrupted during the interview.
  ➢ Involvement in this research study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw your consent for your child to participate at any time. After the interview has taken place you and your child also have the right to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
  ➢ Data collected is confidential however the confidentiality of this information is subject to legal limitations.
  ➢ The Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust has given ethical approval to carry out this research.
  ➢ There are limitations to maintaining confidentiality where disclosure of imminent harm or risk to self and/or others may occur. If your child makes a disclosure to the researcher, the researcher will discuss this with you. The researcher may then discuss the possibility of making a referral to an appropriate organisation to ensure your child is safeguarded.

If your child has a parent who has served in the Armed Forces since they have been in education, is aged between 11-16 years, attends a mainstream secondary school, and would like to volunteer to take part in this study, please give consent for your child to participate by marking the box and signing below:

I give consent for my child to take part in this research study ☐
Child's name:
Parent signature: **Print name:**
Date: **Relationship to the child:**

Appendix R: De-brief Slip

Thank you so much for taking part in my research study. If you have any further questions or if you would like to be sent feedback once the study has been completed please contact me by emailing lpotts@tavi-port.nhs.uk.

If today's interview brings up any unanticipated difficult feelings for you and you would like to seek support from a charity that could help please contact one of the following organisations:

www.britishlegion.org.uk/about-us/who-we-are/get-in-touch offers specific support for service children.

www.youngminds.org.uk/find-help offers support for young people experiencing mental health difficulties.

www.smaritans.org/how-we-can-help/schools/young-people offers emotional wellbeing support for young people.

Appendix S: Recommendations for practice leaflet - School Staff (Version 1)

SUPPORTING SERVICE PUPILS IN SCHOOL

ADAPTING TO CHANGES

WHAT ARE SERVICE PUPILS TELLING US?

- They experienced difficulties adapting to new school environments
- They discovered new subjects not previously taught at other schools
- They experienced difficulties repeatedly adapting to new surroundings and different lifestyles
- They worried about navigating the physical layout of new schools
- They sought predictability, consistency and familiarity during stressful times
- They experienced difficulties adjust to new teaching styles and work out the expectations of new teachers
- They experienced difficulties adapting to cultural changes i.e. time zones, school start times and the weather

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL STAFF

- Enhance consistency and predictability where possible e.g. provide a structured and predictable classroom environment, routinely provide new students with structured timetables, visual maps or videos of the school environment, lists of the names of teachers and subjects taught at the school
- Be mindful that it may take some service pupils time to adjust to new routines and practices (including staff expectations and teaching styles) within a new school– make allowances for this
- Be mindful that there may be some subjects that newly transitioned service pupils may have never been taught. Sensitively introduce these pupils to new subjects and ensure work is appropriately differentiated

SEARCHING TO BELONG

WHAT ARE SERVICE PUPILS TELLING US?

- They experienced difficulties forming and maintaining friendships with peers
- They felt that positive peer relationships helped to develop a psychological sense of belonging in school
- They experienced a strong desire to 'fit in' and establish new relationships with peers quickly
- Friendships felt superficial – particularly those who knew they were going to be moving again
- Opportunities to develop relationships with other service pupils promoted feelings of acceptance and belonging within school
- They felt a need to check that teachers placed them in the correct ability groups in new schools

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL STAFF

- Provide increased opportunities for service pupils to form friendships in school - encourage them to join clubs or engage in extra-curricular activities
- Offer service pupils regular opportunities to connect with other service pupils e.g. set up and facilitate peer support groups or clubs specifically for service pupils
- Offer to pair service pupils up with a 'buddy' who can help them navigate the new school systems
- Where ability groupings are used, reassure new service pupils that assessments will be used to ensure students are placed into the most suitable sets

ESTABLISHING A SENSE OF SELF

WHAT ARE SERVICE PUPILS TELLING US?

- They have to repeatedly re-establish who they are within new social groups and as learners within new school settings
- They sometimes express extrovert behaviours to help them to cope in new social situations and classroom environments
- They can be bullied or made fun of in schools by non-military- connected peers
- They view themselves as self-sustainable, adaptable and responsible

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL STAFF

- Be considerate that newly transitioned service pupils will be seeking to re-establish their sense of self as learners, and within new peer groups i.e. comparing themselves to others and trying to 'fit in'
- Be mindful that transition related difficulties may be masked by extroversion– appearing outgoing may have social benefits for some service pupils but these pupils may still require support to make new friends
- Ensure all staff are aware that there may be an increased risk of bullying for service pupils
- Designate a member of school staff who service pupils can seek support from- provide quality time with an adult in school where the adult is present, attentive, attuned and responsive is important so they can be mindfully aware of any challenges the pupil may be experiencing

EMPATHY AND UNDERSTANDING

WHAT ARE SERVICE PUPILS TELLING US?

- Some non-military staff and students lack understanding of the military lifestyle making it difficult for them to empathise with the experiences of service pupils
- It feels supportive to feel listened to and understood by school staff
- It feels supportive to have their feelings acknowledged and validated leading up to, and during parental deployment and transitions
- They feel comfortable, reassured and understood by other military-connected pupils
- It feels frustrating when non-military-connected peers and school staff lack understanding of the military lifestyle e.g. teasing from peers or emotionally dismissive comments from school staff during parental deployments

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL STAFF

- Be curious about service pupils' lives- talk to them, actively listen to them and ask them questions. Show an interest in their experiences and who they are as people
- Provide opportunities for service pupils to connect with other service pupils or staff in school e.g. clubs, groups or activities for service pupils
- Create a whole school approach to positively promote understanding of the military lifestyle- particularly important for schools with low populations of service pupils on roll who do not currently have support systems in place e.g. staff training, a space for service pupils to video call deployed parents, policy development, development of whole school support systems

LOSS AND SEPERATION

WHAT ARE SERVICE PUPILS TELLING US?

- They experienced difficulties concentrating and regulating their emotions leading up to and during parental deployments
- They found it difficult to meet homework deadlines or complete school work leading up to and during parental deployments
- They tried to avoid forming attachments with peers in new schools and psychologically distanced themselves from peers before moving to try and avoid feelings of loss
- They experienced difficult feelings leading up to and during parental deployments that could be associated with feelings of grief

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL STAFF

- Be mindful that newly transitioned service pupils are likely to have experienced loss in different forms including loss of friendships and loss of familiarity
- Actively listen, validate emotions and be empathetic - maintain positive, attuned relationships with service pupils
- Be flexible with work expectations and homework deadlines during times of parental deployment
- Allow service pupils to take time out of the classroom when they feel overwhelmed. Provide a named adult or a quiet space that they could choose to go to during this time
- Provide regular opportunities for service pupils to access emotional support sessions with the school's designated mental health lead or Emotional Literacy Support Assistant if they would like to
- Provide structured times and opportunities for service pupils to catch up on any lost learning as a result of transitions

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Service Children's Progression (SCiP) Alliance
https://www.scipalliance.org/tools-resources

Service Children in State Schools (SCiSS)
https://www.sciss.org.uk/support

Royal British Legion
https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/campaigns-policy-and-research/best-practice-guides/support-for-service-children

Reading Force
https://www.readingforce.org.uk/

Little Troopers
https://www.littletroopers.net/little-troopers-at-school/resources-for-schools/

Royal Caledonian Education Trust (RCET)
https://www.rcet.org.uk/help/we-help-teaching/education-resources/

Supporting Service Children in Education (SSCE) Wales
https://www.sscecymru.co.uk/toolkits/schooltoolkit/default.htm

Army Families Federation (AFF)
https://aff.org.uk/advice/education-childcare/service-pupil-premium/

Naval Families Federation (NFF)
https://nff.org.uk/teaching-resources-2/

RAF Families Federation
https://www.raf-ff.org.uk/education/

Appendix T: Recommendations for practice leaflet – EPs (Version 1)

SUPPORTING SERVICE PUPILS

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGISTS

- Assist schools to set up systems and employ whole school approaches to positively promote a wider understanding of what the military lifestyle may entail for some service pupils
- Offer training to help staff to understand more about the experiences of service pupils and how these experiences can have an impact on how they behave and function at school
- Recommend appropriate school-based interventions for service pupils who may be finding it particularly difficult to regulate emotions around times of parental deployment or cope with transitions
- Train staff in schools with service pupils to effectively support the emotional wellbeing needs of service pupils
- Provide supervision sessions to school staff who regularly support service pupils
- Draw upon knowledge of adolescent development and theories of attachment to emphasise the importance of relationship formation between service pupils, other students and staff in secondary schools
- Facilitate discussion groups with staff and/or parents to discuss topics related to the experiences of service pupils
- Use consultation to respond to the needs of school staff, service pupils or their parents
- Develop working parties with other Educational Psychologists across different services to share good practice and keep up to date with recent research developments

USEFUL LINKS

Service Children's Progression (SCiP) Alliance
https://www.scipalliance.org/

Royal Caledonian Education Trust (RCET)
https://www.rcet.org.uk/

Royal British Legion
https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/

Service Children in State Schools (SCiSS)
https://www.sciss.org.uk/support

Supporting Service Children in Education (SSCE) Wales
https://www.sscecymru.co.uk/

RAF Families Federation
https://www.raf-ff.org.uk/education/

Naval Families Federation (NFF)
https://nff.org.uk/

Army Families Federation (AFF)
https://aff.org.uk/

Armed Forces Covenant
https://www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk/localauthorities/useful-resources/

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)
https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/2019/supporting-military-families

Appendix U: Tavistock and Portman Trust Research Ethics Committee Form with appendices

The Tavistock and Portman **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

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)

SECTION A: PROJECT DETAILS

Project title	Exploring the educational experiences of young people from military families
Proposed project start date	May 2020	**Anticipated project end date**	July 2021

SECTION B: APPLICANT DETAILS

Name of Researcher	Laura Potts
Email address	lpotts@tavi-port.nhs.uk
Contact telephone number	07548403597

SECTION C: 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 ☐   NO ☒   If **YES**, please detail below:

FOR ALL APPLICANTS

'Is your research being commissioned by and or carried out on behalf of a body external to the trust? (for example; commissioned by a local authority, school, care home, other NHS Trust or other organisation). *Please note that 'external' is defined as an organisation which is external to the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust (Trust)	**YES** ☐ **NO** ☒ **NA** ☐
If **YES**, please supply details below:	
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) If **YES**, please supply details of the ethical approval bodies below **AND** include any letters of approval from the ethical approval bodies:	**YES** ☐ **NO** ☒
If your research is being undertaken externally to the Trust, please provide details of the sponsor of your research?	
Do you have local approval (this includes R&D approval)?	**YES** ☒ **NO** ☐ **NA** ☐

SECTION D: SIGNATURES AND DECLARATIONS

APPLICANT DECLARATION	
I confirm that: • The information contained in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and up to date. • I have attempted to identify all risks related to the research. • I acknowledge my obligations and commitment to upholding our University's Code of Practice for ethical research and observing the rights of the participants. • I am aware that cases of proven misconduct, in line with our University's policies, may result in formal disciplinary proceedings and/or the cancellation of the proposed research.	
Applicant (print name)	Laura Potts
Signed	*[signature]*
Date	07/05/20

FOR RESEARCH DEGREE STUDENT APPLICANTS ONLY

Name of Supervisor	Dale Bartle
Qualification for which research is being undertaken	Child, community and educational psychology doctorate (M4)

Supervisor –
 • Does the student have the necessary skills to carry out the research?
    YES ☒
 ▪ Is the participant information sheet, consent form and any other documentation appropriate?
    YES ☒
 ▪ Are the procedures for recruitment of participants and obtaining informed consent suitable and sufficient?
    YES ☒
 ▪ Where required, does the researcher have current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance?
    YES ☒	

Signed	
Date	07.05.20

COURSE LEAD/RESEARCH LEAD • Does the proposed research as detailed herein have your support to proceed? **YES** ☒ **NO** ☐	
Signed	
Date	11.05.20

SECTION E: DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED 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)
The proposed research will be explorative. It will explore the educational experience of young people who have one or more parent/s that have served in the British Military.   The research will require participants who meet the inclusion criteria to take part in semi-structured interviews where they will be asked to speak openly about their experiences of education for between 40-60 minutes. The researcher will have an interview schedule to follow, however, (in keeping with IPA formalities) this schedule will be iterative and may change throughout the interview process depending on what the participant brings. The interviews will take place in a quiet room, free from interruptions within a familiar environment for the young person (the young person's school in the case of face to face interviews).
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)
The proposed research study will not attempt to prove or disprove a hypothesis but instead provide a rich insight into the educational experiences of service CYP which could inform a direction for future research.   Professionals are increasingly aware of the impact military service has on those serving in the Armed Forces but there is less awareness of the impact it has on the children and young people within military families. Whilst children and young people within service families (service CYP) will, in some cases, face the same challenges as civilian CYP, there are some unique aspects to Armed Forces life which could potentially add additional challenges. 'Service CYP' have been found to

experience additional difficulties including frequent separation from parents due to deployment or training, regular moves and relocations, indirect exposure to and awareness of conflict and violence, and exposure to a family member who is at risk of returning from combat with psychological or physical injuries (Park, 2011). However, research on how these difficulties impact British service CYP is scarce.

In UK schools, pupil premium grants are provided by the Department for Education to help schools decrease the attainment gap of disadvantaged children and young people. In 2011 the Department for Education introduced a 'Service Pupil Premium' (SPP) which recognised the specific, unique challenges that CYP from service families face. The SPP can be used by schools to support service CYP's wellbeing during times of parental deployment transitions during times of change. The SPP grant was introduced as part of the commitment to delivering the British Armed Forces Covenant (MOD, 2011) which acts as a promise between the government and service personnel. The Armed Forces Covenant (MOD, 2011) has no legal basis but "…it implies that in return for the sacrifices that Service personnel make, the State has an obligation to recognise that contribution and retains a long term duty of care toward Service personnel and their families" (Taylor, 2011, p.1).

There is currently no single, accurate record of the number of service CYP in the UK however, the 2019 report of pupil premium allocation identified that 77,151 service CYP were registered for SPP in England (Department for Education, 2019). The introduction of the SPP in England has emphasised the need for schools to offer additional support to service CYP. Studies in the UK have highlighted school-related disruption for service children (Cramm & Tam-Seto, 2018) and found that service children reported increased levels of anxiety and stress symptoms at each stage of parental deployment (Pexton et al, 2018).

Cramm and Tam-Seto (2018) emphasised that service CYP experience challenges with managing transitions between schools, maintaining academics, engaging in extra-curricular activities and also developing social relationships. Their study concluded that 'occupational therapists' should be encouraged to consider military-connected students as a vulnerable population and should encourage the use of school-based services to address mental health issues. This study provided an insight into which areas professionals could best support service CYP with in UK schools however most of what is known about children from military families currently stems from US research.

In a US study, Chandra et al (2009) explored service children's social and emotional well-being from the perspectives of both the child and non-deployed parent and found that older youths and girls of all ages reported significantly more school, family, and peer-related difficulties with parental deployment. It was also found that both the length of parental deployment and poorer non-deployed caregiver mental health were significantly associated with a greater number of challenges for children both during deployment and deployed-parent reintegration. Although many studies have focused on the impact of parental deployment for younger service children (Pexton et al, 2018) this study reported that young people in middle and later adolescence were found to experience more difficulties with parental deployment and parental reintegration than their younger counterparts. I will therefore focus on exploring the educational experiences of service CYP aged between 11-16 years.

Emotional and social difficulties experienced by any child can have an impact on both their behaviour and/or attainment in school. In a UK based study (Noret et al, 2013) that analysed attainment data of service children in years 6, 10 and 11 as well as pupil, teacher and parent surveys found that 66% of teachers reported that service children have a different school experience to civilian children and 78.8% of teachers reported that service children have additional needs to non-service children. With many other studies failing to incorporate the service child's perspective this study elicited the CYP's perspective through questionnaire data. It was found that a higher proportion of service CYP reported sometimes and often feeling lonely in school and a more service CYP reported that they 'disagreed' with the statement that they 'enjoy school' compared to non-service pupils. A higher proportion of service CYP compared to civilian children also reported that they had moved primary and secondary schools twice or more. Alongside these findings the attainment data showed a significant difference in year 10 and 11 English attainment scores with service CYP performing significantly lower compared to civilian CYP.

The above research suggests that service CYP are likely to have different experiences of education compared to non-service CYP. However, although the findings of the above studies are informative and insightful, the research has not solely focussed on understanding the experiences of service CYP. My research question aims to explore *how* service CYP experience education. It attempts to understand the educational experiences of this group through an interpretive phenomenological analysis.

I anticipate that the proposed research will benefit the service family community as it will provide a rich insight into the educational experiences of children and young people from service families. This research could help inform professionals as to what it is like for these CYP in UK schools which, in turn, may raise awareness of any challenges that this group commonly face and any impact this may have on their experiences of education.

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)**

The proposed research will make use of pre-established and generally accepted qualitative research techniques in the form of semi-structured interviews as part of an Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

Data Collection

In order to obtain an in-depth exploration into service CYP's experiences of education the researcher proposes to use individual, semi-structured interviews as part of an Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). This will allow a flexible approach where some questions can remain structured and others can be modified in accordance with participants' responses. It will also allow the researcher to further explore interesting areas as they arise. The semi-structured interviews will be guided by the interview schedule but will not dictate it. The interviews will be audio-recorded (or video recorded if interviews take place remotely via 'Zoom') with the participant's consent.

This form of data collection is considered appropriate for an IPA approach as the research can attempt to establish rapport with the participant, there does not have to be a set order of questions and the researcher is free to delve deeper into interesting areas as they arise (Smith & Osborn, 2015). Semi-structured interviews will allow for rich data to be produced giving participants the opportunity to share their experiences.

In light of the current context (as of 20/03/20) face to face interviews may not be possible due to school closures therefore interviews may need to take place remotely via 'Zoom' which is secure online video conferencing software. Where face to face interviews are able to take place, the researcher will ensure that she takes steps to minimise the risk of the participant or herself contracting Coronavirus in line with up to date Government guidance.

Analysis

Using a transcription service, a semantic record of the interview will be produced from the audio-recorded interviews. In order to become familiar with this qualitative data and learn something about the participant's psychological world the researcher will engage "…in an interpretative relationship with the transcript" (Smith & Osborn, 2015, p.66). The researcher will listen to the audio-recording repeatedly and will re-read over the transcripts to familiarize herself with the data and engage with the transcript. This will support the process of interpretation of the data as IPA is concerned with the researcher's own interpretation of the participant's experiences.

The researcher will attempt to develop interpretive themes from the data gathered on two levels. At the first level 'emergent' themes will be produced from an initial interview transcript. The researcher will then look to make connections between these themes and categorise them together to create 'sub-ordinate' themes. The researcher will then begin this same process from scratch with each interview transcript before constructing a final table of prioritised, sub-ordinate themes across the whole dataset (see figure 1).
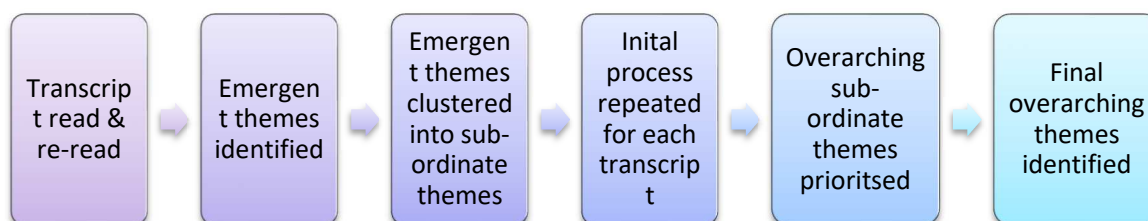
Figure 1: Process of data analysis

After transcription of interview data, the duration for the data analysis process will take approximately three months to complete.

SECTION F: 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)
As the proposed research is an IPA study it will consist of a small sample of participants and will use purposive sampling. This sampling technique will aim to achieve a homogenous sample of participants who are from the same group/community (service families) for whom the research question is relevant.

With one of the distinctive features of an IPA study being that in-depth, interpretive analysis is drawn from the data collected it is recognised that this can only realistically be done through using a very small sample of participants (Smith & Osborn, 2015). The intended participant sample for the proposed study will therefore be 6-8 participants.

The researcher used to work for Essex County Council and still has links with a senior Educational Psychologist who works in schools with a high population of service children (located close to army barracks in Essex). This senior EP has stated that (after the research has been ethically approved) they will introduce the researcher to these schools if need be. Alternatively, the researcher will use a government website (www.get-information-schools.service.gov.uk) to search for secondary schools in close proximity to Army Barracks or RAF bases. The Principal Educational Psychologist for Essex County Council has given local approval for the research to take place in Essex schools.

The researcher will approach these schools via email or telephone, introduce themselves and ask if they would support the research study. The researcher will fully inform the school's headteacher of the proposed study before asking if any service pupils at their school would like to volunteer to participate. The researcher will ensure that the headteacher is fully informed of the nature of the research and the requirement for participants. The researcher will then ask the headteacher to communicate this to all children in years 7-11 and ask if any children or young people that meet the inclusion criteria would wish to participate. Service pupils who wish to participate will be provided with an information sheet and consent form explaining the nature of the study and will be asked for both their signed and verbal consent. Participants who are under the age of 16 will follow a separate process of consent as their parents will also be provided with information sheets and consent forms (see appendix) asking them for signed parental consent to participate.

Once consent has been obtained, the semi-structured interviews will either take place in a quiet room within the school that the pupil attends or (in light of the current coronavirus pandemic 07/05/20) the interviews may take place remotely via 'Zoom' (secure video conferencing software). In the case of remote interviews, participants will be asked to sit comfortably in a quiet, private area that is familiar to them and where they are unlikely to be interrupted during the interview (e.g. their home or a family member's home).

If the researcher finds it difficult to recruit a minimum of 6 participants through these means the researcher will contact charities that offer support to children and young people from military families. The researcher will ask these charities to inform CYP, families and/or military personnel that they work with about the research study (provide them with a recruitment advert created by the researcher) and ask them if they would like to volunteer to take part. The recruitment advert (see Appendix) will provide the researcher's contact details for participants over 16, participant's parents (for children aged 11-16) or the charity themselves to get in touch.

Participants who are recruited via schools will be given the option to 'opt out' of their headteacher being informed about their participation in the research. Headteachers will be informed that students will be given the option to opt out of them knowing about their participation in the research. If students choose to 'opt out' of their headteacher knowing about their participation in the

research then the interview will take place remotely (with relevant consent) to avoid the researcher interviewing them at their school. The researcher will be asking headteachers to help share the recruitment advert (see Appendix) with students so they will be aware that the research is happening and that pupils in their school may wish to volunteer. However, the researcher has chosen to give an 'opt out' approach to ensure participant confidentiality is considered.

The researcher will not inform the student's headteacher (or any other member of school staff) that the student is participating in the research if the pupil chooses to 'opt out' of their headteacher being informed. However, the pupil will be informed that in circumstances where the researcher has safeguarding concerns there will be a need for the researcher to communicate with the designated safeguarding lead at their school and follow safeguarding protocol. They will be informed that there will be limitations to maintaining confidentiality where disclosure of imminent harm or risk to themselves and/or others may occur.

The inclusion and exclusion criteria for the participant sample is as follows:

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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 research).
☒ 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 Management Service (NOMS).
☐ Young Offenders, where ethical approval may be required from the National Offender Management Service (NOMS).
☐ Healthy volunteers (in high risk intervention studies).
☐ Participants who may be considered to have a pre-existing and potentially dependent[3] 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.

[1]*If the proposed research involves children or adults who meet the Police Act (1997) definition of vulnerability[3], any researchers who will have contact with participants must have current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance.*
[2] *'Adults with a learning or physical disability, a physical or mental illness, or a reduction in physical or mental capacity, and living in a care home or home for people with learning difficulties or receiving care in their own home, or receiving hospital or social care services.' (Police Act, 1997)*
[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.

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6. Will the study involve participants who are vulnerable? YES ☐   NO ☒

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. Please consult Health Research Authority (HRA) for guidance: https://www.hra.nhs.uk/

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)*

N/A

However, the study proposes to interview children and or young people aged between 14-16 years. Therefore, the researcher will follow the safeguarding procedures outlined by their schools, will have an up to date and clear DBS certificate and will (if need be) use their professional knowledge and skills of CYP to make decisions if they believe it will not be appropriate for a specific child or young person to take part in the study for any reason.

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7. Do you propose to make any form of payment or incentive available to participants of the research? YES ☐   NO ☒

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.

N/A

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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 who have speech, language or communication needs, who do not adequately understand verbal explanations or written information provided in English will be excluded from the study (see section 4).

All participants will be given a consent form outlining the nature of the study and what they will be required to do (see Appendix). Participants aged 16 who wish to take part will be asked to sign this consent form to take part. The researcher will also verbally outline the nature of the study and ask if they would like to take part in the interview before the interview begins to gain the YP's verbal consent. Participants will also be asked to give their consent for their interview to be recorded prior to the start of the interview.

Participants under the age of 16 who have volunteered in school to take part will be given a parental consent (see Appendix) form outlining the nature of the study and what they will be required to do to take home. Participants under the age of 16 will require signed parental consent to be given prior to the start of the interviews to enable them to take part in the study. For participants under 16 who have volunteered to take part and have parental consent, the researcher will verbally outline the nature of the study and ask if they would like to take part in the interview before the interview begins to gain the child's verbal consent. Participants and parents of participants aged under 16 will also be asked to give their consent for their interview to be recorded prior to the start of the interview.

Included	Rationale/ Exclusion
Secondary school aged pupils (11-16 years)	Only pupils in secondary school education will be recruited as they are likely to have had a longer experience of being 'in education' compared to younger pupils. They are also more likely to be able to engage in and contribute to a lengthy one to one interview compared to younger pupils. Most of the literature focuses on the impact on younger children and the wider family so interviewing pupils of this age will fill a gap in the literature. Chandra et al (2009) found that young people in middle and later adolescence experienced more problems with parental deployment and parental reintegration than their younger counterparts.
Pupils in mainstream secondary school	Pupils in special schools will be excluded as the researcher would like to find out about the educational experiences of pupils that have attended mainstream schools.
Service CYP that are able to fully understand the nature of the study and have given informed consent (participants under 16 will also need to have parental consent) to take part. Service CYP with SEN who fully understand and can fully engage in the interview process.	Participants will only be included if they understand the nature of the study and have given fully informed consent to take part. Participants under the age of 16 will require parental consent to take part. Pupils on the school's SEN register may be included if they fully understand the nature of the study, do not have any known speech and language needs, will be able to engage in conversation for up to one hour without difficulty focusing and have parental consent to take part i.e. CYP with physical needs.
Service CYP who understand and speak English fluently	Pupils who speak English as an additional language will need to be considered as 'fluent in English'. The researcher will ask the pupil's headteacher if they think that the pupil will be able to understand questions and confidently respond, at length to any given question.
Service CYP who have at least one *parent* who is currently classed as 'service personnel' and serving in the British Armed Forces	Only CYP that have at least one *parent (biological or step parent)* who lives with them at home for some length of time, is currently classed as 'service personnel' and serving in the British Armed Forces will be included in this study to ensure a homogenous sample.
Service CYP whose parent/s has been deployed at least once since they started school	Research shows that 'deployment' is a significant factor in the lives of some service CYP however some service CYP may never experience their parent/s being deployed. To ensure a homogenous sample the researcher would like to ensure all of the participants interviewed have had some similar experiences (this particular experience may or may not have influenced their educational experiences).

Pupils who do not have recognised speech and language needs	Pupils with speech and language needs will be excluded from the study as the research heavily relies on participants being able to verbally communicate effectively.
Pupils who are not known to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.	Pupils who are known to CAMHS or have had previous involvement with CAMHS during their lives will be excluded from this study as the researcher does not want to risk triggering difficult experiences for these vulnerable CYP during the interview process.

SECTION F: 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
☐ investigation of participants involved in illegal or illicit activities (e.g. use of illegal drugs)
☐ 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 (<u>risk assessment attached</u>)
☐ research overseas (<u>copy of VCG overseas travel approval attached</u>)

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 ☒
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 does not foresee any but participants will be provided with a 'signposting' slip (see Appendix) at the end of the interview signposting them to support services if they happen to feel as

though the interview has brought up any difficult feelings for them that they (and the researcher) were not anticipating it to. The signposting slip will also give the researcher's email address should they wish to contact the researcher after the interview process.

The researcher has over 13 years professional experience working with children and young people. The researcher has experience of conducting 'sensitive' research during their undergraduate 'Psychology with Child Studies' BSc Hons. The researcher also has experience of working as a teacher and therefore understands how to effectively interact with children and young people including a good knowledge of the types of questions that will be appropriate to ask them. The researcher is currently training to become an Educational Psychologist and the training course so far has taught the researcher how to effectively work with vulnerable CYP in a sensitive way.

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 research will aim to make a contribution to the limited field of research into the experiences of service children and young people. The research will make a contribution to the field of education and educational psychology in the sense that these CYP's educational experiences will be explored. The research will give the CYP who belong to this niche group a voice and allow professionals to gain a glimpse into the experiences of these CYP at school. Professionals may be able to use this research to help them understand what school is like for this group of CYP and adapt practice based on what is found.

Also, the interview process itself could potentially also be a space for service CYP to reflect upon their own personal experiences in depth. This could perhaps open up their thinking about next steps for them in terms of their educational or professional aspirations for the future.

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)

The researcher does not foresee any adverse outcomes and does not anticipate that the stress experienced during the interviews will be indifferent to that of which these CYP ordinarily experience in everyday life. However, the participants will be told that if they experience distress during the interview and would like to stop at any time they should let the researcher know and the interview will not continue.

All participants will be informed that the researcher has an obligation to inform their school if they mention anything that could relate to a safeguarding concern. They will be told that if the researcher believes that anything the CYP has mentioned puts them at risk or eludes to them being harmed by someone else or themselves then they will make the CYP's headteacher/ safeguarding lead aware of this in the case of school recruitment.

In cases where participants have been recruited via charities who have shared the researcher's recruitment advert, the researcher will inform the participant that maintaining confidentiality will not be possible if the researcher has safeguarding concerns. If the researcher has concerns relating to the welfare of a child or young person the researcher will make the necessary referrals to relevant organisations in order to safeguard the child or young person (this could include a referral to MASH-if deemed relevant).

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)

Participants will be told that if they experience distress after the interviews they should refer to the 'signposting' slip that they will be given at the end of the interview. This slip will signpost the CYP towards mental health charities that will be able to support them and charities that offer specific support to service CYP.

The slip will also give the researcher's email address. The researcher will be available to offer an additional follow up session with them to discuss anything relating to the interview that may have caused distress should they feel as though they need it.

The signposting slip that participants will be given will provide the researcher's contact details and participant's will be asked to contact the researcher if they would like to be sent a copy of the final research study.

FOR RESEARCH UNDERTAKEN AWAY FROM THE TRUST OR OUTSIDE THE UK

15. Does any part of your research take place in premises outside the Trust?

☒ **YES,** and I have included evidence of permissions from the managers or others legally responsible for the premises. This permission also clearly states the extent to which the participating institution will indemnify the researchers against the consequences of any untoward event

16. Does the proposed research involve travel outside of the UK?

☐ **YES,** I have consulted the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website for guidance/travel advice? http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/

☐ **YES,** I am a non-UK national and I have sought travel advice/guidance from the Foreign Office (or equivalent body) of my country of origin

☐ **YES,** I have completed the overseas travel approval process and enclosed a copy of the document with this application

For details on university study abroad policies, please contact academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk

IF YES:

17. Is the research covered by the Trust's insurance and indemnity provision?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

18. 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.

NOTE:
For students conducting research where the Trust is the sponsor, the Dean of the Department of Education and Training (DET) has overall responsibility for risk assessment regarding their health

and safety. If you are proposing to undertake research outside the UK, please ensure that permission from the Dean has been granted before the research commences (please attach written confirmation)

SECTION G: PARTICIPANT CONSENT AND WITHDRAWAL

18. 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:

19. Have you attached a copy of your participant consent form (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:

20. The following is a <u>participant information sheet</u> checklist covering the various points that should be included in this document.

☒ Clear identification of the Trust as 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@tavi-port.nhs.uk)
☒ Confirmation on any limitations in confidentiality where disclosure of imminent harm to self and/or others may occur.

21. The following is a <u>consent form</u> checklist covering the various points that should be included in this document.

☒ 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.

SECTION H: CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY

22. 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)?
☒ The responses are anonymised or are an anonymised sample (i.e. a permanent process of coding has been carried out whereby direct and indirect identifiers have been removed from data and replaced by a code, with <u>no</u> record retained of how the code relates to the identifiers).
☐ The samples and data are de-identified (i.e. direct and indirect identifiers have been removed and replaced by a code. The investigator or researchers <u>are</u> able to link the code to the original identifiers and isolate the participant to whom the sample or data relates).
☐ Participants have the option of being identified in a publication that will arise from the research.
☒ Participants will be pseudo-anonymised in a publication that will arise from the research. (I.e. the researcher will endeavour to remove or alter details that would identify the participant.)
☐ The proposed research will make use of personal sensitive data.
☐ Participants consent to be identified in the study and subsequent dissemination of research findings and/or publication.

23. 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.

SECTION I: DATA ACCESS, SECURITY AND MANAGEMENT

24. 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:

25. 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.

☐ 1-2 years ☐ 3-5 years ☒ 6-10 years ☐ 10> years

NOTE: Research Councils UK (RCUK) guidance currently states that data should normally be preserved and accessible for 10 years, but for projects of clinical or major social, environmental or heritage importance, for 20 years or longer.
(http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/reviews/grc/grcpoldraft.pdf)

26. 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 **28**).
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.
☒ All electronic data will undergo secure disposal.
NOTE: 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 overwritten 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 secure disposal.
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.

27. Please provide details of individuals outside the research team who will be given password protected access to encrypted data for the proposed research.

Following receipt of a non-disclosure agreement and agreement for them to permanently dispose of the audio-recorded data after it has been used, a UK based transcription service will be given password protected access to the interview data but no other personal details of the participants will be shared.

28. Please provide details on the regions and territories where research data will be electronically transferred that are external to the European Economic Area (EEA).

N/A

29.   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 ☒

If **YES** please provide details:

<div style="border:1px solid black;"></div>

SECTION J: PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

30. How will the results of the research be reported and disseminated? *(Select all that apply)*

☒ Peer reviewed journal
☐ Non-peer reviewed journal
☒ Peer reviewed books
☒ Publication in media, social media or website (including Podcasts and online videos)
☒ Conference presentation
☐ Internal report
☐ Promotional report and materials
☐ Reports compiled for or on behalf of external organisations
☒ Dissertation/Thesis
☒ Other publication
☒ Written feedback to research participants
☒ Presentation to participants or relevant community groups
☐ Other (Please specify below)

SECTION K: OTHER ETHICAL ISSUES

31. 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)?

No

SECTION L: CHECKLIST FOR ATTACHED DOCUMENTS

32. Please check that the following documents are attached to your application.

☐ Letters of approval from any external ethical approval bodies (where relevant)
☒ Recruitment advertisement
☒ Participant information sheets (including easy-read where relevant)
☒ Consent forms (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)

34. Where it is not possible to attach the above materials, please provide an explanation below.

TREC Appendices

Appendix 1a: Participant Information Sheet (Recruitment via School)

'Exploring the educational experiences of children and young people from service families'

Laura Potts, Trainee Educational Psychologist. lpotts@tavi-port.nhs.uk

My name is Laura Potts and I am currently looking for children or young people (aged 11-16 years) from service families who would like to volunteer to take part in my research study.
This doctoral research study aims to explore the educational experiences of service children and young people. The research study will require participants to take part in one audio-recorded interview that will take approximately 45 minutes. Within this interview participants will be asked a small number of questions and encouraged to openly talk about their experiences of education so far. I hope that this research will provide a platform for service children and young people to share an insight into their personal experiences. The findings will be typed up as part of my thesis which will be read by examiners and be available at the Tavistock and Portman library. I may also publish the research at a later date in a peer reviewed journal. You will have the option to read a summary of my findings or the full thesis once the analysis has been completed.

Due to the in-depth analysis of the data collected I will only be recruiting a small number of participants to take part in the research. The participant selection process will therefore work on a first come first served basis. The small number of participants used within this study means that this may have implications for anonymity as participants may be able to identify their own responses in the final write up. However, no names or personal details will be disclosed. Participant's contact details will be destroyed after the research study has been fully completed but participants are welcome to contact the researcher at any time using the email address given at the top of this information sheet.

Please also note that:
  ➢ Due to the current climate and upcoming uncertainties with regards to the coronavirus outbreak it may be that interviews are conducted via a secure video conferencing platform called 'Zoom'. In this instance, participants will be asked to sit in a quiet, private area that is familiar to them (e.g. their home or a family member's home) where they are unlikely to be interrupted during the interview.
  ➢ Involvement in this research study is voluntary and participants are free to withdraw their consent to participate at any time. After the interview has taken place participants also have the right to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
  ➢ Data collected during the study will be stored and used in compliance with the UK Data Protection Act (1998) and the University's Data Protection Policy. All electronic data will be securely disposed of after the research project has been completed. All records related to your participation in this research study will be handled and stored securely on an encrypted drive using password protection. Participant's identity on these records will be indicated by a pseudonym rather than their name. The data will be kept for a minimum of 5 years.
  ➢ Data collected from participants is confidential however the confidentiality of this information is subject to legal limitations.
  ➢ If participants would rather their headteacher was not informed about their participation they have the option to opt out of them being informed.
  ➢ The researcher will follow the school's safeguarding procedure if a child or young person makes a disclosure to them. There are limitations to maintaining confidentiality where disclosure of imminent harm or risk to self and/or others may occur.
  ➢ This research project has received formal approval from the Tavistock and Portman Trust Research Ethics Committee (TREC)
  ➢ If participants or their parents 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@tavi-port.nhs.uk)

Thank you for taking the time to read through this information sheet. I hope that you (or your child) will consider taking part in this study and helping me with my doctoral research project.

Best wishes,   Laura Potts   7th May 2020

Appendix 1b: Participant Information Sheet (Recruitment via Charity route)

'Exploring the educational experiences of children and young people from service families'
Laura Potts, Trainee Educational Psychologist. lpotts@tavi-port.nhs.uk

The Tavistock and Portman **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

Department of Education and Training
Tavistock Centre
120 Belsize Lane
London
NW3 5BA
www.tavistockandportman.nhs.uk

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7435 7111
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7447 3837

My name is Laura Potts and I am currently looking for children or young people (aged 11-16 years) from service families who would like to volunteer to take part in my research study.

This doctoral research study aims to explore the educational experiences of service children and young people. The research study will require participants to take part in one audio-recorded interview that will last approximately 45 minutes. Within this interview participants will be asked a small number of questions and encouraged to openly talk about their experiences of education so far. I hope that this research will provide a platform for service children and young people to share an insight into their personal experiences. The findings will be typed up as part of my thesis which will be read by examiners and be available at the Tavistock and Portman library. I may also publish the research at a later date in a peer reviewed journal. You will have the option to read a summary of my findings or the full thesis once the analysis has been completed.

Due to the in-depth analysis of the data collected I will only be recruiting a small number of participants to take part in the research. The participant selection process will therefore work on a first come first served basis. The small number of participants used within this study means that this may have implications for anonymity as participants may be able to identify their own responses in the final write up. However, no names or personal details will be disclosed. Participant's contact details will be destroyed after the research study has been fully completed but participants are welcome to contact the researcher at any time using the email address given at the top of this information sheet.

Please also note that:
➢ Due to the current climate and upcoming uncertainties with regards to the coronavirus outbreak it may be that interviews are conducted via a secure video conferencing platform called 'Zoom'. In this instance, participants will be asked to sit in a quiet, private area that is familiar to them (e.g. their home or a family member's home) where they are unlikely to be interrupted during the interview.
➢ Involvement in this research study is voluntary and participants are free to withdraw their consent to participate at any time. After the interview has taken place participants also have the right to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
➢ Data collected during the study will be stored and used in compliance with the UK Data Protection Act (1998) and the University's Data Protection Policy. All electronic data will be securely disposed of after the research project has been completed. All records related to your participation in this research study will be handled and stored securely on an encrypted drive using password protection. Participant's identity on these records will be indicated by a pseudonym rather than their name. The data will be kept for a minimum of 5 years.
➢ Data collected from participants is confidential however the confidentiality of this information is subject to legal limitations.
➢ There are limitations to maintaining confidentiality where disclosure of imminent harm or risk to self and/or others may occur.
➢ This research project has received formal approval from the Tavistock and Portman Trust Research Ethics Committee (TREC)
➢ If participants or their parents have any concerns about the conduct of the researcher or any other aspect of this research project, they should contact Simon Carrington, Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance (academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk)

Thank you for taking the time to read through this information sheet. I hope that you (or your child) will consider taking part in this study and helping me with my doctoral research project.

Best wishes,   Laura Potts   7th May 2020

Appendix 2a: Participant consent form (Recruitment via School)

The Tavistock and Portman **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

Department of Education and Training
Tavistock Centre
120 Belsize Lane
London
NW3 5BA
www.tavistockandportman.nhs.uk

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7435 7111
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7447 3837

'Exploring the educational experiences of children and young people from service families'
Laura Potts, Trainee Educational Psychologist

My name is Laura Potts and I am currently looking for children or young people (aged 11-16 years) from service families who would like to volunteer to take part in my doctoral research study.
This study aims to explore the educational experiences of service children and young people. The research study will require you to take part in one audio-recorded interview that will take approximately 45 minutes. Within this interview you will be asked a small number of questions and will be encouraged to openly talk about your experiences of education so far.

The findings will be typed up as part of my thesis which will be read by examiners and will be available at the Tavistock and Portman library. I may also publish the research at a later date in a peer reviewed journal. You will have the option to read a summary of my findings or the full thesis once the analysis has been completed.

Due to the in-depth analysis of the data collected I will only be recruiting a small number of participants to take part in this research project. The participant selection process will therefore work on a first come first served basis. The small number of participants used within this study means that this may have implications for anonymity as you may be able to identify your own responses in the final write up. However, no names or personal details will be disclosed. Your contact details will be destroyed after the research study has been fully completed but you are welcome to contact me at any time using the email address given at the top of this information sheet.

Please also note that:
➢ If it is difficult to meet face to face for an interview at your school then you will be asked to take part in an interview over a video conferencing platform called 'Zoom'. For this, you will be asked to sit in a quiet area that feels comfortable you for example, your home or a family member's home where you are unlikely to be interrupted during the interview.
➢ Involvement in this research study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw your consent to participate at any time. After the interview has taken place you also have the right to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
➢ If you would prefer that your headteacher did not know that you are taking part in this research study, please let the researcher know.
➢ Data collected is confidential however the confidentiality of this information is subject to legal limitations.
➢ The Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust has given ethical approval to carry out this research. The Local Authority Educational Psychology Service has also given permission for the research to go ahead.
➢ I will follow the school's safeguarding procedure if you make a disclosure to me. There are limitations to maintaining confidentiality where disclosure of imminent harm or risk to self and/or others may occur. This means that if you tell me something and I think that this means you are at risk or you impose a risk to yourself or other people then I will need to let your headteacher know.

If you are aged between 11-16, attend a mainstream secondary school, have a parent who has served in the Armed Forces since you have been in education and would like to volunteer to take part in this study please give your consent by marking the box and signing below:

I give my consent to take part in this research study ☐

Signed_____Print name _____Date_____

Email address: _____

I give my consent for the researcher to contact me via this email address and use this email address solely for the purpose of conducting the above research study ☐

I give my consent for my email address to be used solely for the purposes of this research study ☐

Appendix 2b: Participant consent form (Recruitment via Charity route)

The Tavistock and Portman **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

Department of Education and Training
Tavistock Centre
120 Belsize Lane
London
NW3 5BA
www.tavistockandportman.nhs.uk

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7435 7111
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7447 3837

'Exploring the educational experiences of children and young people from service families'
Laura Potts, Trainee Educational Psychologist

My name is Laura Potts and I am currently looking for children or young people (aged 11-16 years) from service families who would like to volunteer to take part in my doctoral research study.
This study aims to explore the educational experiences of service children and young people. The research study will require you to take part in one audio-recorded interview that will take approximately 45 minutes. Within this interview you will be asked a small number of questions and will be encouraged to openly talk about your experiences of education so far.

The findings will be typed up as part of my thesis which will be read by examiners and will be available at the Tavistock and Portman library. I may also publish the research at a later date in a peer reviewed journal. You will have the option to read a summary of my findings or the full thesis once the analysis has been completed.

Due to the in-depth analysis of the data collected I will only be recruiting a small number of participants to take part in this research project. The participant selection process will therefore work on a first come first served basis. The small number of participants used within this study means that this may have implications for anonymity as you may be able to identify your own responses in the final write up. However, no names or personal details will be disclosed. Your contact details will be destroyed after the research study has been fully completed but you are welcome to contact me at any time using the email address given at the top of this information sheet.

Please also note that:
  ➢ If it is difficult to meet face to face for an interview at your school then you will be asked to take part in an interview over a video conferencing platform called 'Zoom'. For this, you will be asked to sit in a quiet area that feels comfortable you for example, your home or a family member's home where you are unlikely to be interrupted during the interview.
  ➢ Involvement in this research study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw your consent to participate at any time. After the interview has taken place you also have the right to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
  ➢ Data collected is confidential however the confidentiality of this information is subject to legal limitations.
  ➢ The Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust has given ethical approval to carry out this research.
  ➢ There are limitations to maintaining confidentiality where disclosure of imminent harm or risk to self and/or others may occur. This means that if you tell me something and I think that this means you are at risk or you impose a risk to yourself or other people then I will need to share this with people who can help to keep you safe.

If you are aged between 11-16, attend a mainstream secondary school, have a parent who has served in the Armed Forces since you have been in education and would like to volunteer to take part in this study please give your consent by marking the box and signing below:

I give my consent to take part in this research study ☐

Signed_____Print name _____Date_____

Email address: _____

I give my consent for the researcher to contact me via this email address and use this email address solely for the purpose of conducting the above research study ☐

I give my consent for my email address to be used solely for the purposes of this research study ☐

Appendix 3a: Assent Form (Recruitment via School)

'Exploring the educational experiences of children and young people from service families'
Laura Potts, Trainee Educational Psychologist

My name is Laura Potts and I am currently looking for children or young people (aged 11-16 years) from service families who would like to volunteer to take part in my doctoral research study.
This study aims to explore the educational experiences of service children and young people. The research study will require your child to take part in one audio-recorded interview that will take approximately 45 minutes. Within this interview your child will be asked a small number of questions and will be encouraged to openly talk about their experiences of education so far.

The research findings will be typed up as part of my thesis which will be read by examiners and will be available at the Tavistock and Portman library. I may also publish the research at a later date in a peer reviewed journal. You will have the option to read a summary of my findings or the full thesis once the analysis has been completed.

Due to the in-depth analysis of the data collected I will only be recruiting a small number of participants to take part in the research. The participant selection process will therefore work on a first come first served basis. Please note that no names or personal details will be disclosed. All participant contact details will be destroyed after the research study has been fully completed but you are welcome to contact me at any time using the email address given at the top of this information sheet.

Please also note that:
➢ Due to the current climate and upcoming uncertainties with regards to the coronavirus outbreak it may be that interviews are conducted via a secure video conferencing platform called 'Zoom'. In this instance, participants will be asked to sit in a quiet, private area that is familiar to them (e.g. their home or a family member's home) where they are unlikely to be interrupted during the interview.
➢ Involvement in this research study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw your consent for your child to participate at any time. After the interview has taken place you and your child also have the right to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
➢ Data collected is confidential however the confidentiality of this information is subject to legal limitations.
➢ The Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust has given ethical approval to carry out this research. The Local Authority Educational Psychology Service has also given permission for the research to go ahead.
➢ If your child would prefer that their headteacher did not know that they are taking part in this research study, please let the researcher know.
➢ I will follow the school's safeguarding procedure if your child makes a disclosure to me. There are limitations to maintaining confidentiality where disclosure of imminent harm or risk to self and/or others may occur.

If your child has a parent who has served in the Armed Forces since they have been in education, is aged between 11-16 years, attends a mainstream secondary school, and would like to volunteer to take part in this study, please give consent for your child to participate by marking the box and signing below:

I give consent for my child to take part in this research study ☐

Signed_____ Print name_____
PTO

Relationship to the child_____   Date_____
PTO

Email address: _____

I give my consent for the researcher to contact me via this email address and use this email ☐
address solely for the purpose of conducting the above research study

I give my consent for my email address to be used solely for the purposes of this research ☐
study

Appendix 3b: Assent form (Recruitment via charity route)

'Exploring the educational experiences of children and young people from service families'
Laura Potts, Trainee Educational Psychologist

My name is Laura Potts and I am currently looking for children or young people (aged 11-16 years) from service families who would like to volunteer to take part in my doctoral research study.
This study aims to explore the educational experiences of service children and young people. The research study will require your child to take part in one audio-recorded interview that will take approximately 45 minutes. Within this interview your child will be asked a small number of questions and will be encouraged to openly talk about their experiences of education so far.

The research findings will be typed up as part of my thesis which will be read by examiners and will be available at the Tavistock and Portman library. I may also publish the research at a later date in a peer reviewed journal. You will have the option to read a summary of my findings or the full thesis once the analysis has been completed.

Due to the in-depth analysis of the data collected I will only be recruiting a small number of participants to take part in the research. The participant selection process will therefore work on a first come first served basis. Please note that no names or personal details will be disclosed. All participant contact details will be destroyed after the research study has been fully completed but you are welcome to contact me at any time using the email address given at the top of this information sheet.

Please also note that:
  ➢ Due to the current climate and upcoming uncertainties with regards to the coronavirus outbreak it may be that interviews are conducted via a secure video conferencing platform called 'Zoom'. In this instance, participants will be asked to sit in a quiet, private area that is familiar to them (e.g. their home or a family member's home) where they are unlikely to be interrupted during the interview.
  ➢ Involvement in this research study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw your consent for your child to participate at any time. After the interview has taken place you and your child also have the right to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
  ➢ Data collected is confidential however the confidentiality of this information is subject to legal limitations.
  ➢ The Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust has given ethical approval to carry out this research.
  ➢ There are limitations to maintaining confidentiality where disclosure of imminent harm or risk to self and/or others may occur. If your child makes a disclosure to the researcher, the researcher will discuss this with you. The researcher may then discuss the possibility of making a referral to an appropriate organisation to ensure your child is safeguarded.

If your child has a parent who has served in the Armed Forces since they have been in education, is aged between 11-16 years, attends a mainstream secondary school, and would like to volunteer to take part in this study, please give consent for your child to participate by marking the box and signing below:

I give consent for my child to take part in this research study ☐

Child's name:

Parent signature:　　　　　　　　　　　**Print name:**

Date:

Relationship to the child:

Appendix 4: Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule

We're here today because you have agreed to take part in my research project which is 'Exploring the Educational Experiences of Children and Young People from Service Families'. Thank you so much for agreeing to take part- I'm really interested in your experiences of school as a child/young person who has a parent in the forces.

11) Can you tell me about your experiences of school so far?

Other possible questions:
12) Can you tell me more about what primary school was like for you?
13) Can you tell me about what life has been like for you whilst you have been in this school?
14) Can you tell me about a time when you have moved school?
  ➢ What was it like for you? What happened? How did you feel? /How did you cope?
15) How would you describe your relationships with teachers and friends in your school/ the schools you have been to?
16) Can you tell me about your learning in school?
17) How have you coped with tests and exams at school?
18) Have you experienced any challenges at school? (If so, add: 'Can you tell me about them?')
19) Have you experienced any positive aspects of school? (If so, add: 'Can you tell me about them?')
20) Can you think of anything that would help you at school?

Possible Prompts:
  ➢ Can you tell me a bit more about that?
  ➢ What do you mean by…..?
  ➢ Why?
  ➢ How?
  ➢ What did that look like?
  ➢ Can you think of an example of that?
  ➢ Tell me what you were thinking…
  ➢ How did you feel?
  ➢ What did you do?

Ending question:
Is there anything else that we haven't spoken about in relation to your school experiences that you would like to talk about?

Appendix 5: Local Consent

See below- email correspondence with Principal Educational Psychologist of Essex County Council

Appendix 6: Signposting slip for participants

Thank you for taking part in my research study. If you have any further questions or if you would like to be sent feedback once the study has been completed please contact me by emailing lpotts@tavi-port.nhs.uk.

If today's interview brings up any unanticipated difficult feelings for you and you would like to seek support from a charity that could help please contact one of the following organisations:
www.britishlegion.org.uk/about-us/who-we-are/get-in-touch -offers specific support for service children.
www.youngminds.org.uk/find-help -offers support for young people experiencing mental health difficulties.
www.smaritans.org/how-we-can-help/schools/young-people -offers emotional wellbeing support for young people.

Appendix 7: Recruitment Advert