What are the contexts and mechanisms behind successful inclusion practices in secondary schools for pupils at-risk of exclusion?

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Abstract

Introduction

School-based exclusions can have a detrimental impact on the individual, their family and the system, therefore it may be important to explore any preventative measures available. There are many studies that have explored factors that lead to exclusion such as a school's location, challenging behaviour displayed by pupils, unconscious bias and the ethnicity of the pupil, staff communication and leadership, competing pressures for schools to achieve academically, government policy and support from parents. There has been less focus on 'inclusion' practices aiming to reduce exclusion rates, particularly from the perspective of Educational Psychologists.

Aim

The aim of this research is to identify what contexts and mechanisms are behind successful inclusion practices for students at risk of exclusion in a secondary school from Educational Psychologists involved with secondary school pupils. The research specifically looks at what schools are implementing to support inclusion and reduce the likelihood or need to exclude.

Method

I used opportunistic sampling to recruit six educational psychologist participants from one local authority. Semi-structured interviews were conducted using a strengths-based framework. Interviews were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (RTA**).**

Results

I have identified a range of contexts and mechanisms that support successful inclusion practices within secondary schools, with supportive factors clustered around four overarching themes: ‘Relationships’, ‘Systemic Factors’, ‘School Culture and Leadership’ and ‘Support and Interventions’.

Conclusion

From understanding what ‘helps’ in this situation, Educational Psychologists could use this information as a framework when supporting schools in developing their inclusion practices. This may allow schools to draw on strengths and think of exclusion from different perspectives, taking a more ‘early intervention’ approach and promoting an ‘inclusive’ ethos. Having an evidence-base to draw from may allow Educational Psychologists to help schools and families to reduce the use of exclusions.

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List of Abbreviations

AP	*Alternative Provision*
BPS	British Psychological Society
CASP	Critical Appraisal Skills Programme
CYP	Children and Young People
DfE	Department of Education
EP	Educational Psychologist
EPS	Educational Psychology Service
GT	Grounded Theory
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
LA	Local Authority
PRISMA	Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCo	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
TREC	Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust Research and Ethics Committee
RTA	Reflexive Thematic Analysis

1. Introduction

1.1 Overview of Chapter

This thesis is focused on the topic of school-based exclusions and aims to identify what contexts and mechanisms are behind successful inclusion practices for students at risk of exclusion in a secondary school from the perspective of educational psychologists (EPs). The research specifically looks at what schools are implementing to support inclusion and reduce the likelihood or need to exclude. The introductory chapter explores the current issue and prevalence of exclusions, particularly in a secondary school context, before discussing the history and terminology often associated with this concept. It also briefly focuses on the causes and impact of exclusions in our current socio-political context and the prevalence of this area in relation to EP practice.

1.2 Key Definitions and Concepts

1.2.1 Exclusions

The term ‘exclusion’ in this context, can be defined as when a pupil is removed from school, either on a temporary or permanent basis. It can also be referred to as a suspension (otherwise known as a temporary/fixed-term exclusion) when it occurs for a fixed period of time. Sometimes it can be referred to as an expulsion, when relating to permanent exclusions or dismissals, although that is not a term often found in UK-based statutory documents or research (Department for Education, 2022). Specifically, within the UK context, it is thought of as a disciplinary consequence that bans students from attending school for either a certain amount of time or permanently (Gazeley, 2010). It is important to note that exclusion is thought of in this research as the result of disciplinary procedures, but it can also occur

through ‘feelings of isolations, disaffection, unresolved personal, family or emotional problems, bullying, withdrawal or truancy…’ (Osler et al., 2002, p.57).

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced statutory guidance on school suspensions and permanent exclusions for local-authority maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units. This document, which was originally published in 2012, details the legal responsibilities for those who suspend and permanently exclude which include head teachers, local authorities and governing bodies. According to the guidance, those who are excluding (i.e. a headteacher) must provide a clear rationale of why the pupil is being excluded and how this relates to the school’s behaviour policy. It is also suggested that they should consider whether the exclusion or suspension is an appropriate sanction and what additional strategies should also be embedded to address behaviour (DfE, 2022). Under the Equality Act (2010), schools also must not discriminate against their pupils based on their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender orientation or if they are pregnant/a parent and this is to be upheld during the exclusion process.

1.2.2 Categorisation of Exclusions

There are different forms of exclusions that a school can utilise as a sanction. These range based on the length of the time that the pupil is required to be removed from school. For example, exclusions (or suspensions) from school for a fixed length of time is referred to as a temporary exclusion or a fixed period exclusion. A pupil who receives this sanction may be suspended for one or more fixed periods, for up to 45 days in a single academic year (even if a child has changed school). After this period, they will return to school on a specific day. A parent or legal guardian is required to ensure that during the first five school days of an exclusion, their child

isn’t in a public place during normal school hours and the school must provide and mark set schoolwork for the pupil. If the exclusion is longer than five school days, the school is required to arrange suitable full-time education from the sixth day (e.g. at a pupil referral unit) (DfE, 2022). Schools may also choose to internally or externally exclude or suspend a pupil. For example, if a setting chooses to internally exclude, the pupil may be permitted to attend school, but they must attend classes in a separate room or a different classroom during the fixed term period set by the headteacher. The term ‘external exclusion’ refers to removing a student from school (Gordon, 2001).

A permanent exclusion is when a pupil is expelled from their school and no longer allowed to attend (unless they have been reinstated). Schools are legally not allowed to permanently exclude a pupil if it is for non-disciplinary reasons such as being unable to meet their special educational needs (SEN), they are not performing academically, there is a disagreement with a parent or legal guardian or if a pupil is already on a fixed term exclusion (DfE, 2022).

A managed move is a voluntary agreement between two schools, a pupil and their parents that permits a child who is facing permanent exclusion to transfer to another school. Managed movements are frequently utilised as an alternative to permanent exclusion which as a consequence, no exclusion is legally recorded on the student's school record. Many local authorities have set up a system such as a ‘Fair Access Panel’ in which transfers are brokered between different schools (DfE, 2022).

Off-rolling has been defined by the DfE as the practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion. It is also the practice of encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll. It is believed that the

removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the child (DfE, 2022). Ofsted stated that while it is lawful, it is deemed as unacceptable practice (Owen, 2019).

1.2.3 Pupils at-risk of exclusion

The national statistics from the DfE on exclusions (both fixed-term/suspensions and permanent) identifies the student populations who are more frequently ‘at-risk’ for exclusion and hence vulnerable, which can vary from term to term and year to year. Research has shown that the typical characteristics of pupils most at-risk of exclusion (both suspension and permanent) include male students, secondary-aged students (peaking at 13/14), students who qualify for the pupil premium, students with identified SEND, students with Education, Health, and Care Plans, students with Black Caribbean heritage, and students with Gypsy/Roma and Irish Traveller heritage. Children in foster care, often known as ‘looked after children’, those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, and people who have gone through substantial trauma, grief, family separation, or sickness, in comparison to their peers, also are at a higher risk of being excluded. Students that fit into many categories run the danger of experiencing ‘layered disadvantage,’ which means they are more likely to experience exclusion in comparison to their peers (McCluskey, 2008, 2015; National Statistics, 2023; Strand & Fletcher, 2014).

1.2.4 Inclusive Education & Practice

The concept behind inclusive education is that all children have the right to be in the same educational space. Inclusive education is defined in its positive outcomes for all children – regardless of any additional needs they may present with (Cobley, 2018). This concept has been shaped over the years by acts and guidance such as

the ‘Equality Act’ (2010) and the Salamanca Statement (1994). These frameworks and acts have a focus on inclusive education through prohibiting discrimination for disability and other characteristics and requiring support for all students regardless. In today’s context, this is sought through diverse and differentiated teaching strategies, enhanced professional development for educators, and increased collaboration with external support services.

My current understanding of inclusive practice draws from several legislations and guidance, for example, from my local authorities ‘Inclusion Strategy’ guidance from 2022 and UNICEF’S guidance on ‘Inclusive Education’ (2017). Both of these outline that an inclusive education system is thought to be a space where it welcomes and respects all children and families, regardless of their qualities, experiences, needs, or goals. It provides them all with fair access to education to reach their learning potential. This may involve offering children and young people access to a variety of education settings and pathways, as well as actively involving parents in decision making regarding their children, and ensuring staff are confident they have the skills and resources to meet the needs of all students. How this may present within individual settings and contexts can differ, with different systems holding a different perspective on what this may look like.

1.3 Current Context

1.3.1 Historical Background of Exclusions

The Education Act (1944) first established school exclusions as a measure to socially exclude pupils with disabilities from mainstream education and developed a category known as ‘educationally sub-normal’ to as a way to segregate those into alternative provisions. This act influenced a rise in a disproportionate rate of

exclusions for vulnerable and at-risk children particularly those from Black-Caribbean Heritage (Coard, 2021). The Education Act (1986) introduced exclusions as a disciplinary procedure where it was to be utilised in response to a student's difficult or negative behaviour. Headteachers were solely responsible in this area and would have to approve this move.

The practice of school-based disciplinary exclusions has evolved and changed as our statutory positions on the rights and responsibilities for children and young people has developed (Gazeley, 2010). For example, the SEND Code of Practice (2015) state that if a child with identified SEND is excluded, they have the right to a SEND expert present at independent review panels. This panel was created to determine whether a pupil's exclusion has been lawful, reasonable, and procedurally fair and identify what further actions might need to be considered.

The changes in legislation and policies relating to educational exclusions are heavily influenced by our socio-political context. For example, while policies and guidance have been introduced to support vulnerable groups of children and their families (e.g. Children and Families Act 2014), there have been alternative demands and focus been placed on school performance and academic outcomes. This has led to pressures on schools to manage behaviours in order to meet these external standards and expectations, potentially compromising a school's commitment and requirement to promote inclusive practice for all students (Children's Commissioner, 2013; Farouk, 2017).

1.3.2 Rates of exclusion

Although the exclusion procedure is a process that can be used across the UK, there are regional variations in how it is applied. For example, there are significant

differences in the rates of exclusion, with 97.4% of all permanently excluded pupils in the UK in 2016–17 attending schools in England. Official permanent exclusions have significantly reduced in Scotland, but there are still some instances of fixed-term exclusions and ‘managed moves’ (McCluskey et al., 2019). According to England's statistics, this is a very concerning number showing that exclusions are happening at an alarmingly high rate, which in turn affects the group that is most at risk.

According to National Statistics in England (2023), in autumn term 2022/23, there were 247,366 suspensions, which is an increase from 183,817 in the same term the year before (although this is to be viewed with caution due to the impact of the global pandemic). This rate, however, also surpasses the pre-pandemic levels of 178,400 suspensions in autumn 2019/20. The rate of suspensions has also increased, reaching 2.96 per 10,000 pupils, which is higher than both the previous autumn term (2.21) and pre-pandemic levels (2.17). The number of permanent exclusions (3,100) remains lower than the final pre-pandemic term (3,200), with an increase compared to the previous autumn term (2,100), which was impacted by the global pandemic. The rate of permanent exclusions is 0.04, which is equivalent to 4 permanent exclusions for every 10,000 pupils. This is similar to rates seen before the pandemic, which remained around 0.03 and 0.04.

1.3.3 Current policies and procedures in place

Understanding the impact that exclusions may have on a person, their family, and the country as a whole, it is crucial to consider what preventative measures the four UK jurisdictions have put in place. This is frequently accomplished through government-led measures. For example, in Scotland, the government has issued national guidelines on school exclusions titled *‘Included, Engaged, and Involved Part*

2: A Positive Approach to Preventing and Managing School Exclusions.' This emphasises the significance of long-term preventive and early intervention measures. This advice also emphasises inclusion measures that schools may use, such as building strong connections between staff and students (Scottish Executive, 2017). The tone of this text is established in a more positive light, with an emphasis on 'inclusion' and 'engagement' rather than a focus on 'exclusion,' 'prevention,' and 'management of exclusion'. This is because it emphasises the necessity of utilising exclusion measures as a last choice, with educators doing everything they can to ensure that students are supported, safe, and fully engaged in school (McCluskey et al., 2019). A comparable approach may be found in Welsh government instructions (Welsh Government, 2015), although Northern Ireland currently lacks similar guidance

The corresponding regulation in England is said to be more punitive in tone, with a focus on sanctions and words like 'reasonable force' and 'powers to search without consent.' It describes how tactics like isolation and seclusion can be used as part of this process (DfE, 2016). When exclusions are used as a regular disciplinary consequence, this can have an impact on a school's culture and attitude. Hatton (2013) investigated how a school's ethos influences the use of exclusion as a consequence. They discovered that schools that successfully help children without using disciplinary exclusion include a school culture that celebrates positive behaviour, as well as consistent behaviour management, an emphasis on student-staff relationships, and person-centered approaches to supporting students. With this in mind, and reflecting on the statistics raised above, there may be a relationship between the government's approach to exclusion and the number of exclusions that are authorised within school settings. Scotland, whose policy can arguably have a

more inclusive tone, has substantially fewer numbers than England, which may take a more punitive approach and tone. The variation in vocabulary between the two policies may have an influence on how schools view exclusion as a disciplinary tool, which is something to have in mind when thinking about how best to help schools.

There is also research into how disciplinary exclusions are not used consistently within schools or across a number of different schools within the UK, highlighting the difficulty in consistency and equitable practice. To explore this, there have been several reviews conducted by the Department for Education on the disproportionate exclusion of certain children within schools and general reviews of overall exclusion practice. For example, the Timpson Review of School Exclusions (2019) highlighted the variation in exclusion practice across different schools, local authorities and groups of children. While acknowledging the range of factors and differing contexts that the school systems are placed in, the report raised concerns around how exclusion practices differed based on how schools approached the matter, resulting in inequity around inclusive practice. The report highlighted that vulnerable groups of children are more likely to be excluded, specifically children with special educational needs who make up 78% of permanent exclusions at the time of the report. From this, they suggest thirty recommendations to the Government to ensure exclusions are used appropriately, including guidance on government action and commitment to supporting schools through funding and access to training and resources.

1.3.4 Media Interest

The increasing number of exclusions in England has drawn increased public attention in recent years, with news organisations like the BBC and the Guardian adding to the conversation. In the media, documentaries like the BBC's ‘Don't

Exclude Me" and movies like "Excluded" show that this is no longer only an issue that affects the educational system but is now a societal problem that is more widely acknowledged on a national level.

1.4 Factors that can impact exclusions

Many studies have been conducted to investigate the factors that contribute to exclusion as a whole, such as a school's location (typically more exclusions in areas of high deprivation), challenging behaviour displayed by students (Hatton, 2013), unconscious bias and the ethnicity of the student (Gillborn & Demack, 2018; Hamilton, 2018; Wilkin et al., 2009), failure in communication between the school and the pupil (Gillborn & Demack, 2018), gender (Rudoe, 2014), staff communication and leadership, competing pressures for schools to achieve academically (Rustique-Forrester, 2005), government policy (McCluskey et al., 2019), and difficulties between home and school communication and partnerships (Embeita, 2019). Other environmental factors can include schools not being able to meet the needs of children with identified or unidentified SEN and social, emotional and mental health needs and teacher training and awareness (Graham et al., 2019). It is important to note that these factors do not often solely or exclusively contribute to exclusion but rather they can be interrelated and multi-layered. The intersectionality of these multiple factors can influence the educational experience of children and the increased likelihood of experiencing the different types of exclusion-based sanctions.

1.5 Rationale

1.5.1 Impact of exclusions

There are several negative effects of exclusions that we must be aware of and keep in mind, especially as EPs who support schools that employ exclusion as a

disciplinary measure. To begin, from an individual standpoint, students who have been excluded may find it difficult to reintegrate back into education and may have lower-than-average educational performance (Levitas et al., 2007). This may have long-term consequences for their career goals and opportunities, and enhance links to offending and crime, such as becoming involved in gang-related activities (Pirrie et al., 2011). For example, nearly six in ten (59%) children that had been permanently excluded had also been cautioned or sentenced for an offence, with 22% involving sentencing for serious violence and 21% a high number of offences (DfE & Ministry of Justice, 2022). At my local authority (LA), nine out of ten young men and three-quarters of young women in custody were formerly excluded from going to school. There are also substantial negative consequences linked to their mental health needs (Cole, 2015). Additionally, one of the identified routes to poverty is educational failure (Centre for Social Justice, 2007). Given these characteristics and the impact on children and young people in the UK, there is an urgent need to develop innovative approaches to understanding and supporting these students who are most at risk of exclusion, particularly in a local setting. Looking more broadly, the cost of permanent exclusions to the state each year amounts to an additional £2.1 billion (Gill et al., 2017). This once again emphasises the huge impact that exclusions may have, not just on the individual but also on the national level.

1.5.2 Relevance to Educational Psychology Practice

Given the context and rising concerns, as raised above, EPs are increasingly being called upon by schools and local authorities to support the needs of pupils at risk of exclusion or who have been excluded, often when these issues can become out of hand. Part of the EP role includes supporting vulnerable populations of children and their associated needs and how this may impact their academic outcomes and ability

to access their education (British Psychological Society, 2019; Health and Care Professions Council, 2015). With research indicating the detrimental effects of exclusion on areas such as academic outcomes and social, emotional and mental health needs, it seems important for the EP profession to continue to understand and explore preventative and supportive measures for these groups of vulnerable children. By identifying what is currently in place and what is working well, EPs can use their level of expertise to facilitate and collaborate with key adults and pupils involved in these processes to develop strategies and foster a supportive and inclusive learning environment. This highlights how important it is for the profession to understand what factors are underlying these inclusive practices so that the profession can be best placed to support the wider system around the child. The next chapter will review the current literature that exists for inclusive practice in schools within the UK educational context.

2. Systematic Literature Review

A systematic literature review was conducted to explore, analyse, and summarise the most recent findings on what factors are impacting school's inclusive practice, including what they are doing currently for pupils at risk of exclusion in a UK context. This was also used to assess how complete the available evidence is. The question that it aims to answer is:

- ***What factors impact the inclusive practice for pupils at risk of exclusion in UK secondary schools, including what schools are currently doing?***

2.1 Search Strategy

A literature search was conducted using APA PsychINFO, APA PsycArticles, APA PsycExtra, Education Source and ERIC (via EBSCO host) on 28th December 2022. These specific databases were selected to provide a comprehensive search based on areas such as education and psychology to ensure all relevant research was obtained. The following search terms combined using the title field *AND*:

1. secondary school* or education or class*

2. exclusion* or exclude*

3. inclusion or include* or prevent*

4. pupil or student* or adolescen*

Prior to this search, I conducted a scope search, in which a variety of different search terms were sampled such as success* OR effect* OR positive. One scope search with similar key terms as above (as well as including the terms 'at-risk or vulnerable*'), resulted in 1,366 articles. I felt the key terms were too narrow and

broadened the search term criteria. To abbreviate words, asterisks were also used, enabling linked terms that have different ends to be included. Another search was conducted on 19th April 2023. No new or additional papers were found that fit the inclusion criteria of this systematic literature review.

I established the inclusion and exclusion criteria prior to the literature search to ensure that the literature selected would be appropriate and relevant to the current focus of the study (please see Table 1).

Type of Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion	Researcher's Rationale
Year of Publication	Studies which were published between 2012- 2023	Studies which were published prior to 2012 (2011 and below)	To obtain up to date and relevant articles that capture the current context of this research
Peer Reviewed	Peer reviewed articles	Articles that are not peer reviewed	To obtain articles that have been quality assured
Geography	United Kingdom	Articles that took place outside of the United Kingdom	To obtain articles that represent the UK school context
Language	Written in English	Written in a language other than English	To obtain articles that were accessible for me as the researcher
Participants/Sample	Secondary school aged children	Age groups relating to early years, primary school, third-level education and adult-hood.	To obtain articles that represent the secondary school context

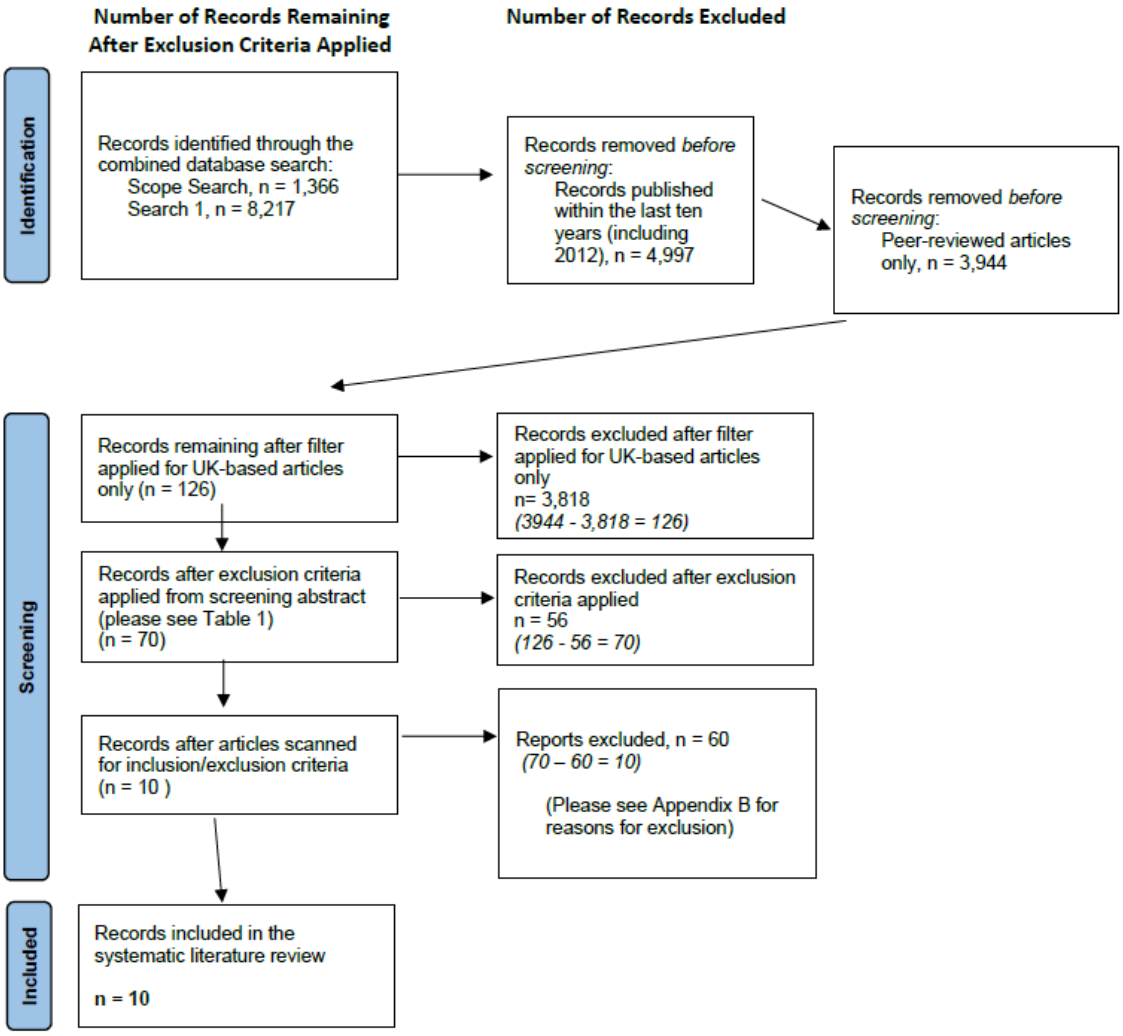
Publication Host Site	Publication journals relating to education and/or psychology	Publication journals not relating to education and/or psychology	To obtain articles relevant to the field of education and/or psychology.
Research Scope	Articles that covered topics relevant to inclusion in secondary school contexts (including articles that also explored other educational contexts alongside secondary schools). Articles that made reference to exclusion in a secondary school context. Articles focusing on other professions linked to education were included.	Articles that covered social exclusion (e.g. studies around diversifying the curriculum around LGBTQ practices and racial equality) Articles that focused on reintegration from alternative provisions back to mainstream education Articles that were systematic literature reviews/opinion pieces Articles that only focused on inequalities and/or factors of school exclusion in the education system	To obtain articles relevant to the field of inclusive practice in secondary school educational contexts and are associated with topics such as exclusion. To obtain empirical studies that involved participants that work in or attend a secondary school context

Table 1. *Inclusion and Exclusion criteria*

There were 8, 217 items found during the initial literature search. To gather the most up to date research in this area, the following articles were then limited by their publication dates to those that were written during the last 10 years (including 2012) which resulted in 4, 997 articles. Peer-reviewed articles were then filtered for, and this produced 3, 944 results. Articles were then filtered based on their geography/location of study conducted, including only UK-based articles. This produced a result of 126 articles. Table 1 seen below contains the inclusion and exclusion criteria that were used to filter the articles found during the literature search conducted. This table also contains my rationale and type of criteria considered. The 126 articles were scanned with the inclusion/exclusion criteria in mind such as participants/sample and research scope. For example, several articles were excluded based on their education context (i.e. non-secondary school context), with others being removed due to a non-UK based study context. In articles where the abstract was unclear, the contents of the paper itself were examined.

The filters applied based on the criteria below produced 70 results (please see Appendix A for a list of articles that were not included based on the exclusion criteria applied). Based on their abstract, the remaining articles were included for further examination. As a result of further examination in relation to the inclusion and exclusion criteria listed in the table below, 10 articles were selected for further exploration which will be discussed in the *Section 2.2* (please see Appendix B for a list of the second round of articles excluded from further examination and the brief explanation as to why). Figure 1 depicts this procedure using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) flow diagram (Moher et al., 2009).

Figure 1. *PRISMA flow diagram detailing identification, screening eligibility and included articles for the systematic literature review*



2.1.2 Critical Appraisal Tool

Several tools were considered to facilitate the critical appraisal of the studies selected above. An evaluation tool was used to organise the review and provide greater depth, which is often greatly encouraged to ensure that the relevance and quality of the selected literature could be reviewed in a consistent and replicable manner (Katrak et al. 2004). The Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) was

deemed appropriate for the type of methodological approach taken in the included studies (please see Appendix C for a copy of the checklist). This influenced the design of Table 3 that can be found in the methodology section (*Chapter 2.2.2*).

2.2 What factors impact the inclusive practice for pupils at risk of exclusion in UK secondary schools, including what schools are currently doing?

2.2.1 Aims and Rationale

Table 2 contains the details of the articles that were selected for review alongside their research aims.

Article Selected	Author & Date Published	Research Aims
1. Creating Inclusive Schools: A Self-Review Tool for Educational Practitioners	Eleni Dimitrellou & Dawn Male (2022)	This article explored the experiences of mainstream, secondary aged pupils (with and without SEND).
2. Exclusion and the strategic leadership role of SENCos in England: planning for Covid-19 and future crises	Elizabeth Done & Helen Knowler (2021)	This aim of this study was to investigate the role of Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) in preventing exclusion during the Covid-19 epidemic and future crises and what factors are exacerbated due to global pandemic.
3. Alternatives to School Exclusion: Interviews with Headteachers in England	Sarah Martin – Denham (2021)	The aim of the research is to determine strategies and processes used within mainstream schools through

		interviews with headteachers and explore the range of alternative approaches implemented.
4. Conflicts in Professional Concern and the Exclusion of Pupils with SEMH in England	Ian Thompson, Alice Tawell & Harry Daniels (2021)	The aim of the research is to explore factors that contribute to the exclusion of students in England who have social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) difficulties.
5. Attachment Aware Schools: The Impact of a Targeted and Collaborative Intervention	Janet Rose, R. McGuire-Snieckus, Louise Gilbert & Karen McInnes (2019)	The aim of the research is to examine the impact of a targeted and collaborative intervention known as Attachment Aware Schools on supporting pupils with additional needs, with the focus on whether it impacts the use of sanctions, exclusions and overall difficulties presented in schools.
6. 'You Kind of Don't Want Them in the Room': Tensions in the Discourse of Inclusion and Exclusion for Students Displaying Challenging Behaviour in an English Secondary School	Alex Stanforth & Jo Rose (2018)	This article explores the conflicts that occur in the language of inclusion and exclusion for secondary school pupils who exhibit ‘problematic’ behaviour.

7. Managed moves: school and local authority staff perceptions of processes, success and challenges	Christopher Bagley & Susan Hallam (2015)	The study aims to improve understanding of the processes of managed movements for children at risk of exclusion from school, focusing on what factors contributed to success and the nature of the problems encountered.
8. What's a fixed-term exclusion, Miss?' Students' perspectives on a disciplinary inclusion room in England	Gwen Gilmore (2013)	The aim of the research is to explore the perspectives of students on the use of disciplinary inclusion rooms in English secondary schools.
9. 'Including' while Excluding: Race, Class and Behaviour Support Units	Val Gillies & Yvonne Robinson (2012)	The aim of the research is to explore the function of school-based behaviour support units (BSUs) in meeting the needs of students who display challenging behaviour.
10. What's so inclusive about an inclusion room? Staff perspectives on student participation, diversity and equality in an English secondary school	Gwen Gilmore (2012)	The aim of the research is to examine the perspectives of staff members in an English secondary school regarding the use of an inclusion room for students who have been excluded from mainstream classrooms. The article aims to critically evaluate the concept of inclusion and whether or not the

		use of an inclusion room is falls within appropriate practice.

Table 2. *Aims of the Selected Research Articles*

2.2.2 Summary of the articles selected

Dimitrellou and Male (2022) were interested in developing a practical approach to supporting educational practitioners in embedding inclusive practice for secondary school pupils with SEND. Their rationale for this was due to their belief that while there is research available around the ideology of what inclusive education is or could be, there is little research available in the area about how it is practically facilitated in secondary schools. Their overall aim was to support secondary schools in creating an inclusive setting, particularly for their most vulnerable population of students. As part of their research, they recruited 37 students with SEND (specifically pupils with SEMH & moderate learning difficulties) and 8 students without identified SEND from three secondary schools in a metropolitan area in England. Participants were asked to complete a 'Strengths and Difficulties' questionnaire as well as participate in a semi-structured interview exploring different areas that could impact inclusion such as sense of belonging, behaviour management, attitudes to school and inclusion. The researchers then mapped their findings on to Farrell's (2004) model of inclusion under the four headings or 'conditions': 'Presence, Acceptance, Participation, and Achievement'.

The researcher's goal was to build on Farrell's original model and create a self-review tool for educational practitioners to reflect on their own inclusive practice in secondary mainstream education, particularly for pupils with SEND. From this, they elaborated on the four conditions Farrell set out by placing emphasis on steps that

staff members, particularly teachers, could follow in order to create an inclusive environment with achievable outcomes. These steps included developing an appropriate safeguarding presence that is visible to students and faciliating appropriate identification of needs and differentiated support in both teaching and the school environment. Additional steps included active participation from students to ensure that all their voices are expressed in lessons and encouraging students by setting high aspirations with them, regardless of their SEND status. Although Dimitrellou and Male did not acknowledge any limitations, it is important to consider the feasibility of what they are proposing in relation to staff and systems implementing this self-review tool such as resources like additional staffing, time and budget constraints.

Done and Knowler (2021) explored the role of SENCos and the importance they play in promoting inclusion and support in schools, particularly in preventing exclusion during times of crisis (i.e. COVID-19). The research stems from concerns following the over-representation of students with identified SEN in exclusion data for a variety of different factors including misunderstanding challenging behaviour linked to SEND, reports of exaggerated accounts of negative behaviour to justify off-rolling underperforming students and being unable to accommodate SEND pupils needs. The researchers were specifically interested in how the SENCo role plays into these concerns from a preventive and protective perspective and how they can support these pupils in the most vulnerable of times in terms of inclusive practice both during and post-COVID-19. They were also interested in how the SENCo role is positioned as part of the senior leadership team and whether they are considered in decision-making factors around provision and support for vulnerable pupils (e.g. SEND).

There were additional concerns following the anticipation that children returning to school following the COVID-19 lockdown procedures, may struggle to adjust to the school environment and routine, resulting in a rise of formal exclusions due to ‘disruptive behaviour’. As part of their research, the authors used a mixed-methods research design involving a quantitative survey and semi-structured interviews for SENCos. Thirty-one SENCos responded to the initial questionnaire, with eight participants (four secondary schools, three primary and one post-16 setting respondents) responding to invitations for interview. The study found that prior to the first national lockdown, strategic planning was not a core part of the SENCos role however this lack of planning represented a sense of ‘unpreparedness’ when handling crisis situations such as COVID. This was in contrast to different international educational systems such as Singapore and Dubai. The researcher’s acknowledged that due to COVID-19 and repeated lockdowns, data analysis was a complicated process which resulted in a poor response rate to the online questionnaire. This means that findings lacked statistical validity. To conclude, the researchers hope that this research highlights the importance of SENCos to be members of the school SLT and for policymakers to take this on board while developing future legislation. The researchers argue that their role is crucial is undertaking crisis planning for students with SEND and that support for SENCos to develop their practice in this area should be considered in both statutory guidance and mandatory accreditation.

Denham (2021) was interested in exploring the alternative approaches to school exclusions used in different schools in England. Forty-six headteachers from various school settings, including secondary schools, participated in semi-structured interviews. They identified three themes which include exclusionary systems and

their processes and practices, the state of limbo between inclusive and exclusive practices, and what the inclusionary systems processes and practices are. Their findings showed that practices of isolation and segregation, which were types of exclusionary approaches, were more prevalent in secondary schools through the use of systems such as isolation booths. Many headteachers viewed this form of exclusion as an alternative to an official ‘exclusion’, with some isolation booths being located in ‘inclusion units’ within their school system. Headteachers believed that isolation was a necessary step to support self-regulation and provide respite for other members of staff and students. There was a mixed response as to whether it was seen as a ‘non-ideal’ solution as they acknowledged that it is not meant to be a permanent solution however alternative disciplinary systems can include detention measures and being placed on report.

Some headteachers reported that they were strictly against exclusion and took a more understanding and holistic approach into exploring the underlying reasons for behaviours. Many of the headteachers agreed that alternative approaches to exclusion are needed and taking a tailored approach would be helpful. This includes the use of specialist provision and spaces and tailored strategies to support their needs which could be implemented through the use of behaviour plans. Headteachers acknowledged that collaboration with parents is minimal in secondary education however the importance of seeing ‘parents as partners’ is recognised as well as seeking external support from professionals and the local authority through EHCPs.

While this study did not acknowledge limitations, it is important to consider how the information can be interpreted. For example, while they provide three overarching themes as mentioned, there was no discussion of how these themes related to each

other and how they can be viewed from the researchers' perspectives. The researchers, however, conclude with the importance of clear statutory guidance that defines 'inclusion' to support headteachers navigating through these complex factors and provide a clear process and rationale for schools to identify, assess and effectively respond to children's needs in an inclusive manner.

Thompson, Tawell and Daniels (2021) were interested in exploring the exclusion of pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH) through the perspectives of Local Authority Education Officers during the 2017/2018 period, when exclusion rates (permanent and fixed-term) were on the increase. The aim was to understand the disparities in permanent exclusion rates across the UK, with a particular focus on English schools. Using this information and perspectives, they then aimed to develop a model of different practices and outcomes of exclusion using the themes highlighted through policy analysis and interview. The study's methodology included an analysis of national datasets on permanent and fixed period exclusions in the four UK jurisdictions and relevant legislation, national policy guidance, and semi-structured interviews with 27 stakeholders across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. However, this paper's summary specifically emphasizes the findings from England-based interviews with six LA/Education Officers from two LAs and one Third Sector/Voluntary representative.

Drawing on the data collected from the semi-structured interviews and an analysis of the datasets impacting inclusion within UK based schools, the researchers argue that effective inclusive practice is built on mutual understanding and reciprocal support between all parties involved, including external professionals involved, not just within the educational setting. The study also highlights the role of harmful incentives within the English education system and demonstrates how differential

priorities and concerns among professionals involved can undermine inclusive practices, calling for a more collaborative approach. They also highlight the complexity of inclusive practice, balancing the needs of the most vulnerable students (SEMH pupils) and the needs of the wider community. Researchers were concerned that vulnerable pupils, particularly those who have identified SEMH needs will fall into a cycle of academic pressure which may result in displaying challenging behaviour leading to exclusion-based consequences.

From their key findings, they suggest looking to incorporating advice from the DoE's Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools guidance into existing exclusionary and disciplinary guidelines, which may provide a more inclusive approach to working with vulnerable pupils at risk of exclusion. The researchers also highlight the need for schools to be provided with comprehensive and accessible guidance that can support them when understanding pupils needs, particularly when making reasonable adjustments and cultivating positive behavioural cultures.

Rose and colleagues (2018) presented their findings from the Attachment Aware Schools project, which was a collaborative intervention involving academies and school-based practitioners across 40 schools in different Local Authorities within the UK. The project's initiative was centered on promoting relational-based strategies, particularly the use of the interventions such as Emotion Coaching, Nurture groups and Theraplay, as a way to support the needs of children and young people within schools. The research involved over 200 participants across 40 schools, which include 107 staff members and 94 pupils aged between 5 to 16 years old. There were four over-arching aims of the project which included developing a sustainable training program highlighting the significance of attachment, attunement, and trauma-informed practice, specifically focusing on supportive strategies for pupils,

particularly those who may fall into vulnerable groups. From a research perspective, they also wanted to explore the efficacy of attachment-based interventions, and to then see if they are useful in promoting positive pupil behaviour and well-being, as well as reduce the attainment gap, boost attendance, and reduce the use of exclusionary practice. Finally, the project aimed to contribute a robust evidence base, employing a mixed method research evaluation, showing both the positives and limitations of the Attachment Aware Schools model's success.

The methodology included a one-year action research approach, implementing and adapting the selected strategies into everyday practice. Participants, including case study pupils considered 'at risk,' were engaged in setting-based network meetings, receiving additional research team support and supervision. A mix of qualitative and quantitative data was gathered. Research findings were collated under four headings which include academic achievements, behavioural outcomes, professional practice and whole school ethos. The researchers highlighted that there were a number of considerable improvements across academic attainment across the sample, including in subjects such as reading, writing and maths. They also found that there was a significant decrease in the use of sanctions such as exclusions, with a shift in how behavioural difficulties were reported. Staff also reported both personal and professional effects such as confidence in discussing emotions with children as well as developing their own self-regulation and emotional wellbeing support strategies. Staff also reported a shift in whole-school ethos, with schools taking on a more ‘attachment-aware’ approach to both learning and wellbeing.

While the researchers highlight the number of success factors in enhancing academic attainment, reducing behavioural issues, and fostering positive professional development, they also report additional factors and limitations that are

important to consider. For example, they highlight the funding limitations which impacted their ability to collate pupil voice and perspective in this study, which may provide further insight into the efficacy of this approach and how pupils may have responded to these adopted strategies. The researchers are also conscious of the small size of the study and the lack of cross-cultural and socio-economic representation which may impact its generalisability. For example, whether this approach is feasible in an Inner-London-based school, with limited funding and higher rates of exclusion. With this, the researchers caution those taking this approach, to not view it as a 'one-size' fits all approach to inclusive practice as each school's culture and ethos is unique and sits within a different context and there may be external factors that could impact the efficacy of the approach. Nevertheless, they argue that this project offers a 'promising blueprint' for other educational institutions to consider when supporting their pupils, particularly those who are most at risk.

Stanforth and Rose (2018) were interested in the individualising and contextualising of causation for challenging behaviour in mainstream secondary schools due to the rise of national exclusion rates, particularly for those from vulnerable groups. From their research, they wished to explore whether it was possible for schools to be 'inclusive' and still exclude students from lessons. The methodology includes a mixed methods approach incorporating quantitative analysis of 2,515 referral records where they reviewed whether various characteristics of referred pupils differed from that of the school population as a whole and compared to the national data for exclusions. They also conducted semi-structured interviews with 20 staff members and 13 students at a mainstream secondary school which explored different behaviour based scenarios that had been mentioned in the referrals. They also

explored real experiences of ‘challenging behaviour’, and staff and students relationship to the behaviour presented.

Four main themes were identified by researchers which included the construction of the student, the construction of the context, the inherent tensions in discourse and resolution of tensions. For example, staff and students frequently framed student’s challenging behaviour in terms of the inherent problems such as using words ‘hyper’ or ‘unmanageable’. These labels would then shift responsibility onto the student rather than taking a holistic view and considering the systemic issues. There were also conflicting views when reflecting upon the impact of behaviour; one that viewed other students as victims and another that saw them as an audience encouraging the behaviour. Staff also attributed behaviour to external factors, such as gender or family issues, sometimes blaming parents. Staff and students shared that relationships and understanding of the context of the behaviour and the child’s needs are important for inclusive practices.

The researchers highlighted the importance understanding of challenging behaviour, with participants often swaying between individualising and contextualising it, but actively changing their position when given a reason to (i.e. understanding the children’s needs). Staff members and students also linked challenging behaviour to the teaching context, for example the quality of the lesson and the level of differentiation (if any) provided. Some staff members acknowledged the impact of their own expertise and knowledge (or lack of) as a factor in this also. When acknowledging and identifying that some issues can be outside a child’s control, staff still expressed preference for a punitive response. The researchers highlighted that this information is important to consider when taking on Initial Teacher Training or the equivalent professional practice to ensure that teachers have the opportunity to

better understand and gain knowledge of their students who are struggling with challenging behaviours and develop inclusive practice.

Bagley and Hallam's (2015) study aimed to explore the processes of managed moves for children at risk of exclusion. They were interested in focusing on the factors that contributed to the success of managed moves and what inherent challenges these moves cause, in an area that they argue is vastly under-researched. The researchers highlight that managed moves can be seen as a form of intervention that can support pupils who are at risk of exclusion, with the potential to give the student, their family and the school involved, a 'fresh start' and provide a 'clean slate'. When done well, researchers suggest that managed moves can boost well-being, enhance self-concept, increase pupil engagement and promote academic attainment. They argue, however, that managed moves also have the potential to label pupils as 'difficult' or a 'problem' which can impact both how the school and the pupil are able to engage. To explore this, researchers recruited within one LA in England, interviewing 11 school staff members and 5 staff members from the Local Authority. The role specifications varied, including participants from professional backgrounds such as headteachers, SENCos and inclusion officers.

The researchers shared findings from two superordinate themes which included 'Factors Contributing to Success' and 'Challenges associated with Managed Moves'. Subthemes falling under the superordinate theme of 'Factors Contributing to Success' include a fresh start/clean slate, open home-school communication, early intervention, pastoral support and active participation from the child involved. For example, researchers highlighted that by creating a supportive environment where key adults involved can collaborate in the child's best interest is vital as well having the resources and space to identify and address the issues arising earlier as a way

to prevent further escalation. It is also important that the pupil feels involved and empowered in this process and that they understand what is happening within this process. Subthemes falling under the superordinate theme of ‘Challenges associated with Managed moves’ include inter-school tensions, narratives around the pupils involved and whether a pupil has an accurate diagnosis to support understanding their needs. For example, the researchers report that issues with information sharing and the notion of ‘moving a problem’ can lead to inter-school tensions which can affect the narratives around the children involved. This is where stereotyping and objectifying language can both affect a pupil’s self-concept as well as how they are viewed within the school system by staff and peers. The researchers argue that managed moves sit within a larger societal issue around the inclusivity of the education system, given the current socio-political structure and views on education and priorities within it and that a more compassionate position to exclusions is necessary, such as a shift to focusing and understanding the needs of pupils and accommodating for this.

There were several limitations noted within this study. For example, the managed move process is context-dependent and local authorities can vary on how this process works. Therefore, the generalisability of the findings should be cautioned and further research across a wider scale is important for a more accurate understanding. The study also did not capture the perspectives of the children involved in the managed move, who are at the centre of this whole process, or the views of the parents involved, demonstrating only one perspective in this process. The data captured relied on the retrospective views of the participants involved, with some managed moves occurring over a year or more. The interpretations and perspectives of the views captured may have evolved over time as the participants

may not have been provided the resources to reflect at the time of the event. While acknowledging the limitations, the research does contribute further insights into the complexities of managed moves, revealing both the facilitating factors and inherent challenges that can be faced by all parties involved. It raises further questions as what can be done to create more inclusive and empathetic educational environments, particularly for the most vulnerable pupils.

Gilmore (2012; 2013) conducted a two part study exploring the use of disciplinary inclusion rooms in a secondary school in the UK, first from the perspective of staff and then from the perspectives of the students who have accessed the room. Gilmore was particularly interested in exploring the contradictory nature of disciplinary inclusion rooms as they offer an alternative to the use of exclusions as a consequence, while still also 'excluding' from regular classroom activities and lessons. The research (2012) originally emerged from the participating school's interest in promoting inclusion, aspiration and respect amongst staff and pupils and to move away from 'traditional' disciplinary approaches. The school was provided external funding to build an 'inclusion room' and hire new staff to target a reduction in exclusions, due to the high number they were experiencing at the time. There was also an additional focus on developing pastoral support across the school, including developing best practice within learning support units and within other school-based interventions. Since implementation of the disciplinary inclusion room, the school found that they had reduced their fixed-term exclusion rate from 10% to 0.01%. Due to this success, the school were interested in what factors led to this success, initially from staff within the school. Thirty staff members initially completed the 'Index for Inclusion' questionnaire to gauge inclusive practices across the school and explored policy and staff culture related to inclusion. From this, nine staff members, mainly

those involved in pastoral support and the inclusion room, were identified by both students and researchers as influential within the inclusion room context and were invited to further discuss the simultaneous themes of inclusion and exclusion within the inclusion room. These participants represented a 10% purposive sample within the school.

The researcher reported six themes that emerged from the questionnaire and further interviews which includes inclusion while excluding, learning versus other developmental aspects, punishment vs support, collaboration and responsibility, communication and transparency, and respect and community involvement. Staff views held a juxtaposition of acknowledging the positive and inclusive aspects of the inclusion room while also acknowledging the barriers and difficulties it can create. For example, although it does promote an alternative to exclusion, students are still excluded from their regular classroom activities. They are, however, still part of the school system and staff are dedicated to providing a space that can support learning and reflection time, which involved planning and collaboration from both staff and pupils. They do, acknowledge, however that the room is punitive in nature and whether the space allows for other important developmental aspects such as a focus on social and emotional learning that can occur within the classroom. This calls into question what the sole purpose of a school is, whether a place for academic development or whether it can hold a holistic approach to a child's development.

This initial exploration offers a multifaceted and contradictory perspective of inclusive practice within a secondary school context. The researcher argues that these complex contrasts between academic focus and holistic development, punishment and support, and the responsibility of all staff members, can open up a broader discussion about contemporary educational practices which are important to

acknowledge and can provide a valuable insight for educators. The researcher also acknowledges that the use of inclusion rooms has demonstrated promising results for reducing fixed-term exclusion rates however continuous evaluation is important to ensure its success. It is important to acknowledge that this research was conducted with a focus on exclusion rates between 2005 and 2010, with an additional look at the aftermath two years later. Therefore, given the subsequent changes over the years and the context of the global pandemic, the results must be considered within this historical framework. The researcher acknowledged that it was important to seek the views of the pupils, particularly those who access the inclusion room, which led to a follow-up study conducted in 2013.

Gilmore (2013) aimed to explore the perceptions of Year 8 and 9 students who access the room. The primary focus of the study was to understand the dynamics, impact and effectiveness of the inclusion room with the context of reducing fixed-term exclusions and improving the pupil's educational experiences. Five students were recruited and invited for interview. Additional context of the inclusion room was provided within this study, including its design and educational adaption. The room itself was described as 'uninviting and unattractive' by the students, with individualised booths created with minimal stimulus. Students were instructed to not talk and to raise their hands to speak with the designated qualified teacher. Students were instructed that this was a disciplinary intervention, with the room running from 12pm to 5pm with one break. The room was also strategically located in the centre of the school. Students who required additional support were not offered the support from a teaching assistant in the room, however curriculum materials were adapted to suit the inclusion room environment and to compliment what students would be missing in their regular lesson that day.

Key findings from the research include students using the space as a chance to reflect as they were provided a focused learning environment, with minimal distractions. There was also a space for them to reflect on how much they could accomplish without disturbing others and understanding the consequences of their own behaviour on others. While all students viewed the system as fair and saw its value in reducing distractions and providing a reflective space, there was a varied understanding on its overall purpose. For example, some students saw it as a space that aided their learning, while others saw it as a punishment. Some students found that it was an effective tool in supporting their behaviour as they were motivated not to return. As a result, some students found that it influenced their behaviour in different classes, while some found noted there were discrepancies in 'acceptable behaviour' in the inclusion room and in the classroom.

Finally, there were mixed views on the role of the staff within the inclusion room, whether they were there to reprimand or to teach and who held responsibility for behaviour and learning within the room. The researcher acknowledged that this was just the beginning step in exploring the use of inclusion rooms and further research is required, particularly in capturing a more collective student voice across the whole school, not just those who have accessed the inclusion room. There was also little mention of the characteristics of the pupils who access the inclusion room and those experiencing fixed-term exclusions, with the researcher acknowledging that more consideration is needed when thinking about the student's social graces. Finally, given the context of when the research took place, a more up to date review in the current socio-political context would be important when considering whether inclusion rooms are an effective tool to support pupils most at risk of exclusion. The researcher concludes that while the use of an inclusion room can provide a

structured learning environment as well as space for reflection, it also raises questions about its punitive nature and what responsibilities staff and students hold within that space. The researcher argues that the inclusion room could serve as more than just a disciplinary tool, rather a holistic approach in supporting students social and emotional wellbeing as well as their learning experiences.

Gillies & Robinson (2012) also conducted research into informal exclusion spaces, known as Behaviour Support Units. The researchers described Behaviour Support Units as an approach that resulted from an inclusionary drive to support students who may be lacking ‘support’ and ‘nurturing’ from their home life. The methodology included a three year study within three inner-city secondary schools in lower socio-economic areas. The researchers looked at three different types of units, two of which are self-contained and one that began as more integrated, however moved to a self-contained model during this study. The purpose of the units was to manage behaviour without resorting to formal exclusionary practices. They were often referred to as the ‘sin bin’, ‘zoo’ or ‘punishment room’ by staff. The study included 73 students (24 girls and 49 boys) aged between 12 and 15. Many of the students involved were from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, who researchers suggest were overrepresented within the units, although acknowledge they did not have the data to prove this. Many of the students involved experienced adverse conditions such as family challenges as well as having English as an additional language. During the study, three of the pupils were fatally stabbed and several were also involved in knife-related incidents. Students could spend any time between six weeks to several years within the unit, with no ‘formal’ procedure or process acknowledged.

The researchers took an ethnographic approach that involved participant observation, regular group work sessions with students as well as interviews with students, their teachers and parents, which was reported in an earlier study. The researcher reported several major findings during their time working with the students. This includes themes such as the pathologization of difference where despite the unit being used as an ‘inclusionary method’, students are excluded from their mainstream settings which can promote the self-concept of difference and how influence how others view them. Another theme includes the influence of white, middle-class ideals which do not align with the social, cultural and structural backgrounds of the students who are accessing the space. This disconnect raises concerns from the researchers on whether the space is not only effective but also ethical. There was also a strong, recurring theme with regards to blaming parents for students’ behavioural challenges and simplifying the complexity of these needs into a matter of parental failure. Students accessing the space also held varied perspectives on the unit, with some seeing it as a haven from a hostile mainstream experience and valuing staff members who acted as mentors and nurturing figures. Others saw it as a punitive space, highlighting the issue of a ‘one-size’ fits all approach to inclusion. Finally, there was also the issue of overrepresentation of black and ethnic minority students in the units from the researchers perspective (although with no data accompanying this), which raises concerns about what potential biases and structural issues are occurring within the school system.

While the researchers did not acknowledge any limitations within their study, there were several that were noted on review of the paper. While the researchers outlined the methodology that was used during the study, there was no clear breakdown or guideline as to how the themes were developed in this current paper, only a

reference to another paper for further information for the reader to explore. There was also no clear aim outlined within this paper, more examining ‘the workings’ of the unit. From the findings, the researchers highlighted the contradictive nature of Behavioural Support Units, which hold both protective and punitive characteristics for the pupils involved. The researchers argue that the issue around these units sitting within a much larger, structural issue raises questions around how the system can hold in mind a student’s social graces such as race, gender, class and ethnicity while promoting more equitable and inclusive practice. There were also concerns raised about the efficacy and monitoring of this intervention and the importance of consistent reviewing of whether it has been successful in promoting inclusion and reducing the risk of exclusion. To conclude, the researchers argue the importance of evaluating how difference is treated and portrayed within the education system and whether the inclusive practices in use currently are inadvertently supporting exclusionary dynamics. They hope this study opens up an important conversation for educators and those involved in policy making to reflect on cultural sensitivity in relation to inclusion and behavioural management and what is considered ‘ethical’ educational practices.

2.2.3 Methodology

The table below (Table 3) provides details of the methodology used in each of the selected articles that have been reviewed as part of this literature search. This includes details of their research design, the data collection method, identified participants, geographic location(s) and the appropriateness of the selected methodology to their research aims.

Article	Research Design	Data Collection Method	Participants	Geographical Location
Dimitrellou & Male (2022)	Mixed-methods	Self-reported questionnaire and semi-structured interviews	37 students with SEND (SEMH & MLD) and 8 students without	England
Done & Knowler (2021)	Mixed-methods	Survey & Semi-structured interviews	31 SENCos completed the questionnaire, with 8 interviews across different school settings.	England
Martin – Denham (2021)	Qualitative	Semi-structured interviews	46 headteachers from primary, secondary and special schools	England
Thompson et al., (2021)	Qualitative	Semi-structured interviews	Originally interviewed 27 LA stakeholders across UK. Study included 6 LA/education officers and 1 third sector/voluntary representative	England
Rose et al., (2019)	Mixed-methods	Post intervention staff questionnaire and academic and behavioural data from students Survey and semi-	107 Staff and 94 students (data only)	England

		structured interviews		
Stanforth & Rose (2018)	Mixed methods	Data Sample Analysis and Semi-structured interview	20 Staff Members and 13 Students Interviewed	England
Bagley & Hallam (2015)	Qualitative	Semi-structured	11 school staff members and 5 staff members from the Local Authority	England
Gilmore (2013)	Qualitative	Focus group	5 students who access the Inclusion Room in a secondary school	England
Gillies & Robinson (2012)	Qualitative	Ethnographic approach including observation and working with students directly	73 students (24 girls and 49 boys) in a secondary school	England
Gilmore (2012)	Mixed methods	Questionnaire (using Index for Inclusion) Semi-structured interviews	30 staff members completed questionnaire 9 staff members interviewed	England

Table 3. *Methodology Information in selected research articles*

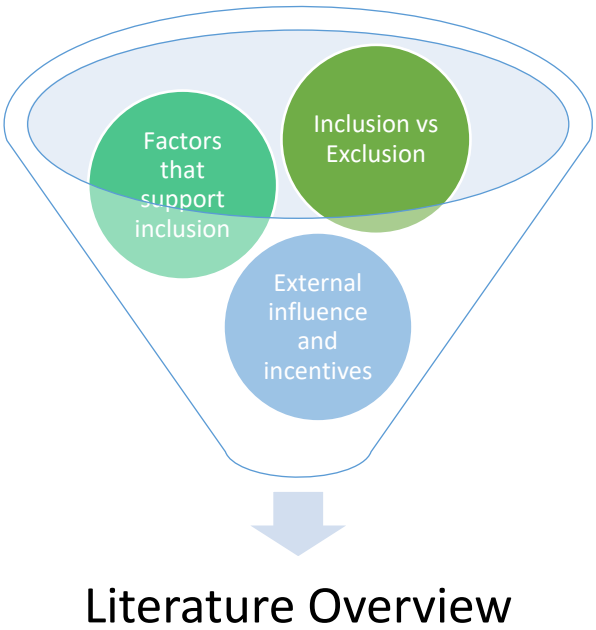
The focus of the studies ranges from capturing the views of students within the secondary school education system, to the involvement of staff members including members of senior leadership such as headteachers. Only one study drew from the perspectives of professionals outside of the secondary school system (Thompson et al., 2021) where the views of professionals from the local authority employees who have been previously involved with secondary school students were captured. Other participants such as EPs and parents of the secondary school pupils have not been involved in the studies mentioned above, although some studies (Gillies & Robinson, 2012) noted that previous studies linked had involved parental voice. A variety of different methodology have also been used such as an ethnographical approach, the use of semi-structured interviews, the use of questionnaires and the analysis of policy and related documents. The voice of the Educational Psychologist could be an interesting perspective to gain due to the position they take across multiple different educational settings and the ability to apply psychology and frameworks to these concepts.

2.2.4 Findings and Discussion

There are a number of different themes that have emerged from the findings of these studies outlined above. There have been several overlapping themes including the challenges of balancing inclusion and exclusion, the importance of relationships and interventions in promoting inclusion, and the impact of factors such as policy, global pandemics, school ethos and leadership on inclusive practices. The articles compare and contrast various approaches to managing challenging behaviour and the effectiveness of alternative strategies, such as managed moves and inclusion rooms. They also highlight the importance of understanding and addressing the needs of

students with SEMH and attachment difficulties to support 'genuine inclusion'. This will be discussed in further detail below.

Figure 2. *Themes that have emerged from overview of literature*



2.2.4.1 Inclusion vs Exclusion

Thompson et al. (2021) highlighted that inclusion in schools is a complex process that requires meeting both the requirements of the individual and the school community as a whole. This was also highlighted with the research by Gilmore (2012; 2013) and Gillies & Robinson (2012). Both studies investigate the paradoxical nature of spaces that seek to promote inclusion while simultaneously resulting in exclusion from mainstream settings. While the spaces are perceived as punitive by some and supportive by others, there is an emphasis on the individual perspectives that are important to capture, particularly those who are directly impacted by this

form of ‘inclusive practice’ and if it is the most ethical and useful form of inclusive practice.

Bagley and Hallam (2015) also toyed with the inclusion paradigm and the juxtaposition that managed moves can hold in being both inclusionary and exclusionary practice. While some school staff expressed the view that 'managed moves' are a preferable alternative to permanent exclusion, there is considerable doubt regarding how this practice is implemented. While some students felt a fresh start was helpful with the right factors put into place initially, there were also the consequences of negative labelling of the students involved, leading to negative relationships with peers and staff and self-fulfilling prophecies.

This complex position highlights the difficulties in measuring and understanding inclusive practices for vulnerable pupils and perhaps opens the dialogue around the difficulty schools may be experiencing in trying to ‘get it right’.

2.2.4.2 Factors that support inclusion

Relationships

Rose and colleagues (2019) highlighted the importance of relational-based strategies in supporting students, particularly those in vulnerable groups, and the significant outcomes this can have on pupil behaviour, well-being, academic attainment, attendance, and reduction of exclusionary practices. The adoption of an 'attachment-aware' approach also reportedly boosted confidence among staff in discussing emotions with children, enhancing their ability to support students' emotional well-being and fostering a more empathetic and inclusive school environment. The model's focus on fostering attachment and promoting trauma-informed practices empowers educators, enabling them to respond more effectively

to behavioural challenges without resorting to more punitive responses. The research encourages us to rethink how we perceive education, emphasizing the importance of emotional awareness and connection in our schools in order for pupils to successfully access their education and aid their social and emotional development. Thompson and colleagues (2021) also highlight the important of inter-agency relationships around the child, to ensure that there is consistent and collaborative information being shared to develop and maintain support over periods of time. Without these relationships, individuals within the system can feel isolated and unsupported when managing the complex challenges of supporting children with varying needs.

Student Involvement

Dimitrellou and Male (2022) report that an inclusive school environment requires active participation of all students within the school community, achieved through interactive teaching methods and the encouragement of student voices. They also acknowledge that it is a two way interaction and that teachers active participation and attunement to student voice is required and essential to foster inclusive practice. Bagley and Hallam (2015) also acknowledge the importance of student voice and views, particularly around their own feelings of inclusivity and support. They report that while local authority participants feel that young people involved in organising and implementing of managed moves is important for successful transition, school staff rarely mentioned this issue suggesting that this is something which they may not normally take into account. They believe that without having a sense of control over the process, the transition will be less successful and deemed as a non-inclusive form of practice. Without these voices, students may not feel an active member in their own inclusive practice and may become more resistant to support

and change. From my perspective, it is important to ensure that there is a balanced approach when supporting inclusive practice, including respecting the child's wishes and needs, while also using evidence-based approaches and knowledge from appropriate professionals to ensure that staff are not solely relying on one perspective or voice.

Staff Commitment and School Ethos

Dimitrellou and Male (2022) shared that in order to facilitate acceptance and inclusion, staff are required to develop comprehensive knowledge about each pupil's characteristics and needs and the application of appropriate and consistent accommodation strategies. Subsequently, this knowledge directs the process of differentiation, enabling teachers to adapt their teaching approaches to each student's needs. They acknowledge that, while this is important for fostering inclusivity and good practice, it can be complex and challenging to accommodate for the unique and diverse needs of all pupils. Staff are tasked with a demanding role, and it requires a collective commitment and effort from all educational practitioners involved. This reflects on the difficulty that schools are facing with the challenge of balancing academic goals and holistic approaches when supporting the development of their students. This was highlighted in a number of papers including Gilmore (2012; 2013) when questioning the purpose of certain inclusive practices and what the role of staff were in a school environment.

Rose and colleagues (2019) shared that in order for effective inclusive practice to take place, this requires whole school commitment and investment in staff training and uptake of interventions and strategies to support all pupils, particularly the more vulnerable groups. Without this collective commitment, systemic change towards

inclusive practice cannot occur successfully or be maintained. Dimitrellou and Male (2022) also believe that the commitment of schools in accepting, educating, and retaining pupils, regardless of their needs or backgrounds, is essential in order to create an inclusive environment. However, simply being aware of SEND students in a general education environment does not automatically equate to inclusion. They emphasize the significance of taking proactive measures to ensure and safeguard these students' consistent presence. Such measures may include revising school schedules to implement later start times and shorter consecutive lessons, as well as promoting positive behaviour management techniques. These measures could aid in the promotion of inclusivity by fostering an environment where students want to be present and attend their school setting.

With regards to school ethos, both Gilmore (2012;2013) and Gillies and Robinson (2012) recognize the need for balance between an academic focus and a holistic approach to child development. Within their study, Gilmore emphasizes the contradiction between learning and other developmental aspects and the focus that is placed on academic attainment within a typical school setting. Gillies and Robinson emphasize the disconnect that often occurs within learning with social, cultural, and structural backgrounds of students. Both studies highlight the significance of ethical considerations and cultural sensitivity as part of a school ethos is essential to fostering inclusive practice, specifically with Gillies and Robinson highlighting the overrepresentation of Black and ethnic minority students and the need for cultural sensitivity.

Home-School Parent Relationships

Bagley and Hallam (2015) highlight that communication between the home and school is crucial to successful interventions such as ‘managed moves’. This is to ensure that parents do not feel alienated or excluded from the school and consequently disempowered. This requires schools to be transparent about what was in place for the children involved and what the processes occur. The home–school relationship must be equitable, with parents and students believing that their opinions were sincerely considered throughout the entire process. This takes place through regular, scheduled opportunities for information sharing. Martin-Denham (2021) also acknowledge the importance of home-school parent partnerships however, the headteachers participating acknowledged the difficult in fostering these relationships, despite placing a value on the impact this can have on fostering inclusive practice. This is contradictory to findings from Stanforth and Rose (2018) and Gillies and Robinson (2012) which showed school staff attributing negative behaviour to parental fault and essentially creating a fixed lens when understanding and supporting a child’s needs. This can impact the inclusive approaches that are taken and potentially bias other contextual factors that could be impact a child’s needs and relating behaviour.

2.2.4.3 External Influence and Incentives

Several of the studies spoke of the impact of external statutory guidance and policies on implementing inclusive practices within schools and the attitudes that schools, staff and pupils can adopt due to this. Thompson and colleagues (2021) study noted a change in political discourse over recent years, moving from the concept of ‘inclusion’ to focusing on managing challenging behaviour and granting head

teachers additional powers to exclude students. They referenced specific policy documents, including the new statutory guidance on school exclusion (2017) and the ‘Behaviour and Discipline’ in schools document (DfE, 2016). Some within the study specifically criticised the ‘Behaviour and Discipline in Schools’ guidance, noting its emphasis on disciplinary procedures overshadowed the need for positive behaviour policies, enhancing staff-student relationships, and addressing the underlying needs of pupils. This change in language was seen to have resulted in less inclusive and less tolerant schools, particularly towards students with additional needs such as SEMH. By focusing on the consequences and punitive responses and moving away from empathy and understanding need, this could create a rigid, less inclusive environment where flexibility and tolerance for difference and difficulties are not prioritised.

Done and Knowler (2021) shared that Senior Leadership Teams are constantly having to adjust to rapidly changing guidance and polices while also maintaining and managing the needs of the students within the school. For example, during COVID-19, emergency legislation was issued and required schools to continue provision for students with more complex needs and EHCPs as well as changing terminology from 'best endeavours' to 'reasonable endeavours', which was originally set out in the Children and Families Act (2014). There were discrepancies in how 'endeavours' were interpreted by local authorities which resulted in varied levels of inclusive provision for these students across the country. Participants within the study noted that the decision to allow 'vulnerable' children to attend depended on interpretation of risk assessments. Participants also discussed insufficient differentiation and access to offsite learning materials for students with SEND. To support future crisis planning, Done and Knowler urge that these issues should be addressed as well as SENCos

capability to handle student anxiety, mental health, and well-being issues in order to promote inclusive practice although these may conflict with the focus on academic 'catch-up' efforts post-pandemic. The researchers believe that in order to support further inclusive practice in these areas above, it should be mandatory for SENCOs to be members of the school SLT and for this to be implemented into future legislation and policy. Without this, undertaking crisis planning for students with SEND and further support for SENCos to develop their practice in this area will be impacted, resulting in inconsistent inclusive practice. Reflecting on this, in relation to the literature review question, this can leave at-risk pupils vulnerable to exclusion, with less consistent time and resources available to ensure they are supported and can access their education.

Martin-Denham (2021) also acknowledged the impact of statutory guidance on the ability to foster and promote inclusive practice. They draw attention to the fact that statutory guidance, at the time of the study, for SEND does not define inclusion despite stating that schools have a duty to prevent discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and foster good relations. Similarly, the statutory framework for the early years foundation stage does not mention 'inclusion' or provide a definition. In addition, the National curriculum framework for key stages 1-4 lacks a definition of inclusion and only instructs teachers that they 'should' set appropriate challenges, respond to students' requirements, and overcome obstacles. The lack of clarification and legal statutory guidance may explain the difficulty in understanding and promoting inclusive practice.

Bagley and Hallam (2015) also argue that school staff are forced to face the conflicting task of supporting challenging students while supporting the interests of the larger student community. This complexity arises from the performativity

paradigm, where schools compete against each other and are judged based on their academic results. Students who are labelled ‘challenging’ are often seen as a negative factor in this context. Schools are expected to be inclusive, but they are also evaluated by Ofsted on, what the authors describe as rigid, norm-based success metrics. As a result some students, are viewed as 'problems' to be transferred elsewhere. While acknowledging the benefits, the authors are concerned that due to these external influences, managed moves could inadvertently contribute to this harmful trend, for example, disrupting a child’s education and social relationships as well as creating an environment where difference and ‘difficulties’ are removed and sent elsewhere.

2.3 Summary of Chapter

This chapter highlights the current research that explore factors that impact inclusive practice in secondary schools with reference to what is being implemented at this time, specifically from the perspectives of staff and students in secondary schools as well as some external professionals from local authorities. These factors include the importance of staff commitment, staff-student relationships, student voice and maintaining positive home-school relationships. Other factors also include identifying the complex issue of ‘including while excluding’, raising questions around how inclusive practice is defined (and by who) and how can schools obtain a balanced approach to this. It also acknowledges the varying pressures schools are under from external influences and how this can impact a school’s inclusive ethos and space to support those most at risk of exclusion.

From the literature, it highlights that inclusion in schools is a complex process that involves both meeting the individual needs of the child and the collective needs of

the school community. This can be a difficult process for systems to hold and can be explored through different psychological frameworks. One way of exploring this is through Bion's Group Dynamics theory (1961). Bion argued that groups operate on two different levels. On one level, they operate to complete a task or activity whereas, on another, the group manifests in behaviours that are designed to alleviate group anxiety, which may also be counteractive of the aims of the group on the conscious level. As such, when the feelings of anxiety occur, the group may appear to operate in a rational manner but actually its' behaviour and decision-making processes are intended to reduce anxiety in the group, regardless of the task. In the context of a school setting, one could argue that the 'school system' can be viewed as a group entity with its own unconscious processes and 'task' (e.g. inclusive education for all pupils). This 'group' may also develop their own unconscious anxieties about behaviour, external pressures or academic achievement and may seek to alleviate these anxieties as it may be impacting their ability to achieve the 'task'. This could then result in exclusionary practices aimed at students perceived as potential threats to the group's or school system's well-being and ability to function to complete the 'task'.

Another way of exploring this concept could be through 'cognitive dissonance' theory (Festinger, 1957). Cognitive dissonance refers to the mental discomfort one may experience while holding two conflicting beliefs or values at the same time. In the context of a school setting, they may hold genuine beliefs around inclusion and value the idea of creating an inclusive environment for all students. Due to, however, to a variety of factors such as difficulties to meet a child's needs successfully (which may result in challenging behaviours) or external pressures such as academic attainment results, the school may become overwhelmed and uncomfortable by the idea that

their ability to be inclusive and their current situation are not aligned. As a result they may engage in contradictory behaviours such as rationalising or justifying exclusions for specific students (deemed less worthy of ‘inclusive’ support) as it could impact the ‘inclusion’ of the majority of other students.

By bringing awareness to the underlying anxieties and conflicting beliefs that the school system may be holding, this could alleviate some of the systemic stress and dysfunctional behaviour that the ‘system’ is engaging in. This could be done through the creation of a containing space to alleviate some of these difficult feelings (e.g. consultation or supervision), thus creating reflective and emotional space for systemic change (e.g. whole staff training and investment in preventative interventions. It is important, however, to remember that schools sit within a complex system, and this requires careful consideration as to motivations behind exclusions, as there are often various factors contributing to exclusionary practices, not just unconscious processes.

To summarise, there are currently gaps in the research as what are the factors that impact specifically ‘successful’ inclusion and also from the perspectives from external professionals such an EP lens. This could be important to explore given the role of the EP in supporting schools with implementing inclusion practices and working with staff to support at-risk pupils. Understanding inclusion practices from a ‘strengths-based’ and positive lens, can also help identify what ‘helps’ in these difficult situations, given the number of approaches and strategies that fall under ‘inclusive practice’. The next chapter will demonstrate the research process as well as the aims, research question and epistemological position.

3. Methodology

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter provides an account of how the research was undertaken, my ontological and epistemological position as the researcher, the aims and overarching research questions. This chapter will also provide a detailed account of the research process including recruitment of participants, data collection and process of analysis while also exploring ethical considerations. Table 4 provides a summary of the current research framework.

Ontological Position	Critical Realism
Epistemological Position	Critical Realism
Methodology	Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA)
Data Collection	Semi-structured interviews
Participants	6 EPs from the EPS in the local authority where I am on placement

Table 4. *Summary of the research framework*

3.2 Research Design and Study

3.2.1 Research Paradigm

According to definitions, a paradigm is a ‘collection’ or pattern of ideas or behaviours that directs one’s study (Morgan, 2007). It can be considered a ‘philosophical’ way of thinking used to describe a researcher’s world view (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). A clear research paradigm will outline the researcher’s basic belief system and act as a guide during the research process. It is considered to comprise of four elements including epistemology, ontology, methodology and axiology (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

As one's ontological and epistemological viewpoints have consequences for study design and technique, researchers must first consider their research paradigm before choosing a suitable research methodology (Robson, 2011).

3.2.1.1 Ontology

Ontology refers to the nature of reality or being. It relates to the theories of what exists in the world or is real to the researcher and their understanding (Cresswell, 2007). The researcher's ontological position is determined by whether they can or cannot theorize if reality can exist separately from our research practice (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Willig, 2017). Research can be positioned in a variety of ontological stances, including as realism, relativism, and critical realism. Realism and relativism can be thought of as being on opposite ends of a continuum with regards to their stance, with critical realism falling in the middle. For example, according to a realist ontological position, there is considered one 'truth', and this cannot be changed. Reality is considered to be objective that exists independently of human thoughts or perceptions (Willig, 2017). Taking a relativist ontological position situates reality as a subjective experience that does not exist outside of human perceptions. Within this position, there is no absolute truth but rather truths that exist within an individual's perception, culture, or society (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Unlike realism, which believes in one true reality that can be tested for, relativism acknowledges that there are multiples realities which are context bound as knowledge is constructed in social situations. This means that knowledge is subject to differences in individual experiences (Killam, 2013; Scotland 2012). Critical realism sits between a realist and relativist position. Within this position, it is believed that there is a truth however it is difficult to identify due to human perception and knowledge (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

This research has taken a critical realist ontological position which will be discussed in more detail further on in this chapter.

3.2.1.2 Epistemology

Epistemology refers to how we come to know what we know (i.e., our truth or our reality) and whether this knowledge can be discovered through subjective construction or through an objective scientific lens (Crotty, 1998; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Willig, 2017). It considers the foundations of 'knowledge', how it is formed, how it is acquired and how it is communicated to others (Cooksey & McDonald, 2019). A researcher's epistemological position shapes the relationship between the researcher and their knowledge and how it can be further accessed and developed (Willig, 2013). There are a range of epistemological assumptions which include positivism, critical realism, and constructionism. Positivism, for example, assumes an objective and unbiased reality and was the dominant epistemological framework within scientific research for several centuries. This stance suggests that reality exists independently of human perception and input and a researcher can investigate the world without influencing it. Constructionism on the other hand, takes a subjective stance in which the truth and reality is created by social constructs and is context dependent. Researchers taking a constructionism stance look to produce and create rather than 'reveal' answers or evidence (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Killam, 2013). While critical realism holds that there is only one reality, it accepts that due to the subjective nature of knowledge discovery, it is challenging to get to an objective truth (Fletchers, 2017; Mertens, 2014). This research has taken a critical realist epistemological position which will be discussed in more detail further on in this chapter.

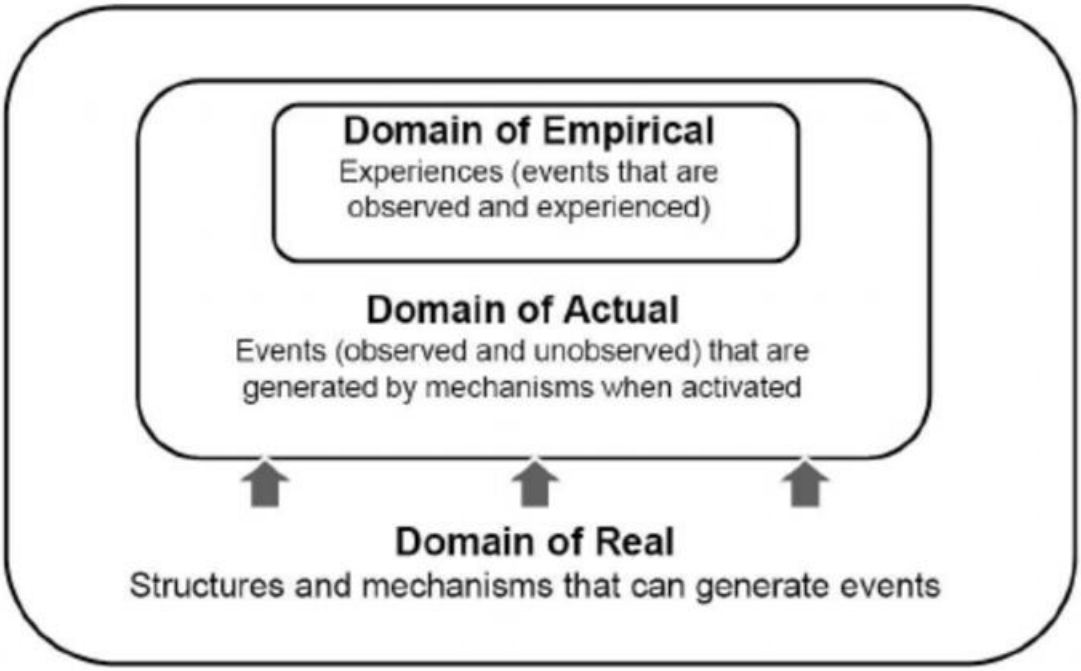
3.2.1.3 Critical Realism

Within this current study, I have taken the philosophical position of critical realism. This approach was developed from the work of Roy Bhaskar, who drew components from both positivist and constructivist paradigms to address social needs and problems (Bhaskar, 1978; Fletchers, 2017). According to critical realism, there is an external reality that exists outside of our comprehension and that should be referred to as the 'real' world. This is in line with a positivist ontological position. This reality is not observable and exists independently of our theories, creations, and experiences. It rejects the positivist approach, however, that these 'truths' or this reality can be discovered and measured objectively. Within critical realism, it suggests that our viewpoints and experiences that we can 'observe' form the 'observable' reality that we know and comprehend (Robson, 2011). Recognizing that visible information is frequently obscured by experience and interpretation, critical realism acknowledges that it may be difficult to expose the truth that is being sought after. This stance takes the position that our understanding of reality is subjective and is influenced by many factors including our context, experiences, beliefs, language, and culture (Bhaskar et al., 1998). Critical realism research approaches are both realist and subjectivist in its position because of this (Fletcher, 2017).

Within critical realism, the 'truth' or reality is divided into three different levels or domains which include 'empirical' level, 'actual' level and 'real' level as seen in Figure 2 below. The three levels are part of the same entity or reality. The real domain suggests that causal mechanisms within structures cause events at empirical level to occur. These properties are inherent within an object, or a structure and they act as a causal force in which events are produced and are seen at an empirical domain. For example, within this current study, this could refer to the

organisational or societal structures that impact ‘successful’ inclusion practice for young people who are most at risk of exclusion (Clark, 2008; Raduescu & Vessey, 2009). Between this, is the actual level, in which events occur, whether they are observed or not. These events are often different from what is experienced on the empirical level. For example, within this study, the contexts and mechanisms underpinning ‘successful’ inclusion practice are being investigated, however, how they are perceived within the research is impacted by human perception and other contextual factors. The empirical domain or level are experienced and observed events. These events can be measured empirically however are interpreted through human perception and interpretation (Clark, 2008; Fletcher, 2017). The main objective of CR is to explain social events by making use of these causal processes and the consequences they may have across the three domains of reality (Fletcher, 2017;Mingers, 2004).

Figure 3. *Three Overlapping Domains of Reality in the Critical Realist Ontology (Mingers, 2004)*



There are several reasons as to why critical realism was selected as an appropriate approach within this research. For example, a positivist stance was deemed inappropriate as this research is seeking to provide evidence in understanding the contexts and mechanisms behind ‘successful inclusion practices’, while also acknowledging that the experiences are subjective due to the nature of data collection (Braun & Clarke, 2022). A constructionism position was also deemed inappropriate for this research as it believes there is no one truth as multiple truths and knowledge exist. Within this research, I am seeking to explore one reality or ‘truth’, while acknowledging that reality is also constructed by human perception, experiences, and contexts. Therefore, critical realism was deemed the most appropriate for this research. Adopting a critical realism position can also be supportive for analysing societal concerns or difficulties to inform solutions for change, which fits with the purpose of this research, which will be discussed later in this chapter (Fletcher, 2017).

Understanding the processes and settings underlying events and examining how they might be understood in the specific context in which they function are important concepts in critical realism (Fox et al., 2007). This is in line with the objectives of the study, which are to investigate the settings and systems that facilitate the successful inclusion of students who are at risk of exclusion (which will be discussed in the next section in more detail). Findings from research using a critical realism approach are intended to be generalizable to other situations while also acknowledging subjective and interpreted realities. Discovering the circumstances and systems that enable the successful inclusion of students at risk in this situation may, in principle, be applied to other educational settings (Fox et al., 2007; Robson, 2011).

3.2.2 Researcher positionality

As referred to in the previous section, positionality refers to both a person's worldview and the stance they take on a research project and its social and political setting. The person's worldview, or ‘where the researcher is coming from,’ includes assumptions about human nature and agency (individuals' assumptions about how we interact with and relate to our environment), ontological assumptions (an individual's beliefs about the nature of social reality and what is knowable about the world), and epistemological assumptions. It affects the methods used in research as well as the findings and conclusions. It also affects what a researcher decides to investigate in the first instance. Positionality is often determined by situating the researcher in relation to three factors: the research topic, the research participants, and the setting and methodology of the study. Some features of positionality, such as gender, ethnicity, race, and country, are culturally assigned or usually perceived as being fixed. Others are more subjective, and contextual, such as political opinions, personal life histories, and experiences (Holmes, 2020).

What researchers bring to research encounters, the techniques they use, and how they interpret the results may all be influenced by the positionality they bring to their work and the personal experiences that define that positionality. Therefore, positionality may be observed to have an impact on the entire research process. It recognises that researchers are a part of the social environment they are examining and that current social actors have already understood this reality. A reflexive approach is a necessary pre-requisite and important part of the process for the researcher to identify their positionality. Reflexivity is the idea that researchers should be aware of themselves and how they disclose this in their work in order to

understand how they may have contributed to or influenced it (Cohen et al. 2011; Holmes, 2020).

There are several ways for researchers to identify and develop their positionality. Savin-Baden & Major (2013) proposed that it was important to reflect how a researcher may influence the research based on their personal position to the topic, how their identity is constructed and in turn how they may be viewed by participants or view participants as well as how they are locating themselves in the research process.

Holding this in mind, I acknowledge that my interest in this subject has been sparked by personal experiences. It is understood that my personal experiences as someone with identified SEN and with family members also identified with SEN, I would have been considered a pupil who was more at risk of exclusion than some of my other peers. Although this is an invisible part of my identity to others, it may impact how I view participants and the research. I also acknowledge that the area of inclusion practices for pupils at risk of exclusion is an area of interest for me given my role as a Trainee EP and the day-to-day experiences I have when working with CYP, schools and families who may be at risk of exclusion. I also acknowledge different cultural perceptions of inclusion and exclusion, given my own experiences of growing up outside of an English education system. Researcher reflexivity and how it was acknowledged throughout the research will be discussed further on in in this chapter.

3.3 Research Aims

This research aims to understand and explain the contexts and mechanisms underlying the successful inclusion of pupils at risk of exclusion from the perspective of the EPs. This research takes an explanatory approach. Specifically, this research

is looking at what schools are implementing to support inclusion and reduce the likelihood or need to exclude. In the case of this research, context can be defined as ‘the situation or circumstances in which an event occurs’. The event in this instance would be successful inclusion practices. In the context of this research, mechanism can be defined ‘a causal explanation for why a particular action or intervention had an observed outcome’. Previous research has examined the factors that contribute to exclusion, including a school's location (more exclusions typically occur in high-poverty areas), students' challenging behaviour (Hatton, 2013), unconscious bias and a student's ethnicity (Gillborn & Demack, 2018), staff communication and leadership, competing pressures on schools to achieve academically (Rustique-Forrester, 2005), government policy (McCluskey et al., 2019), and parental support (Embeita, 2019). However, there is less of an emphasis on ‘inclusion’ techniques that aim to decrease the number of exclusions, specifically in an English education context from an EP perspective. The research aims to offer a supportive contribution to a growing discussion and concern around the increasing number of fixed-term exclusions this country is facing. It also aims to contribute to the discussion from a positive angle by focusing on what schools are already doing well and continuing to build upon their strengths from a professional who both sits within a school system and as an external body. By beginning to understand what ‘helps’ when supporting pupils at risk of exclusion, EPs can use this information as a framework when supporting schools in developing their inclusion practices. This allows schools to draw on their strengths and think of exclusion from a different perspective, taking a more ‘early intervention’ approach and ‘inclusive’ ethos. Beginning to develop a framework to draw from, can support EPs to work across schools in a consistent

manner, exploring new ideas of what works well and being able to share and support other schools to develop this.

3.3.1 Research Question

What are the contexts and mechanisms that are behind successful inclusion practices for students at risk of exclusion in a secondary school context?

3.4 Methodology

The term methodology is used to refer to how knowledge is discovered and analysed. It encompasses the research's design, techniques, approaches, and processes (Keeves & Adams, 1997). The collection of data, the participants, tools employed, and data analysis also fall under this category (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). There are different types of methodological approaches that a researcher could use when undertaking their study, including quantitative, qualitative or a mixed methodology approach.

Based on my research orientation and my research aims discussed, a qualitative methods design was used. This is because it aims to record in-depth, rich narratives of people's viewpoints and experiences (Willig, 2017). Traditionally, qualitative research can offer substantial and thorough data that is helpful in understanding the underlying context of situations. These are based on the gathering and examination of facts from the real world (Braun & Clarke, 2016). Semi-structured interviews were used to provide open-ended data that captured participant's narratives and experiences. This type of data collection is the most widely used method in qualitative research and is compatible with several data analysis methods (Willig, 2017). Interviews have often been viewed as a 'professional' conversation to gain information about experiences and can be useful in providing answers to specific

research questions (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2007). As mentioned previously, researcher reflexivity was also significant components of this research. Therefore, a qualitative design offered the chance to consider one's own contribution to the research and how this may impact or influence the research outcomes. A small sample was decided upon due to the time limitations of this research. This also allowed me as the researcher to delve further into the information collected and provide a rich account of the data. Although a large sample would arguably allow for the research to become more generalisable, it was not feasible given the limitations with recruitment.

3.5 Research Process

Prior to beginning the research process, ethical approval was requested from the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust Research and Ethics Committee (TREC) (see Appendix D-G). This will be discussed in further detail later on in this chapter, when outlining the ethical considerations required.

Originally I sought to recruit secondary school staff from two schools however due to recruitment complications, this was changed to include EPs. This will be discussed in further detail as the chapter progresses.

3.5.1 Recruitment

3.5.1.1 Current Study

The inclusion criteria for this study were as follows:

- Educational Psychologists
    - Fully Qualified

- Have current and/or previous experience of working in secondary schools, particularly around supporting vulnerable pupils who may be at risk of exclusion
- Currently working within my local authority

Participant's experience of working in alternative provisions (AP), such as pupil referral units and provisions for pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties, were also considered. This was done to support reflection of participants mainstream secondary school experience, which as the researcher, I sought to understand what provisions are being implemented in mainstream secondary settings to prevent pupils from becoming excluded or moved to alternative provisions but also what factors can be helpful to draw from an AP. Although the main focus was on mainstream education, other experiences and settings that can impact inclusion are important to consider.

Secondary schools were regarded as a suitable demographic to explore when deciding which subgroup to target as exclusions continue to occur more often in Key Stage 3 than in earlier school years (although primary inclusions are increasing). The effect that exclusion can have on a student's GSCE preparation as well as the fact that it is their final stage of compulsory education were other considerations that went into this decision (McCluskey et al., 2019; Strand & Fletcher, 2014). Based on gaps identified in the literature in the previous chapter (please see Chapter 2) and the profession that I am currently training in, EPs were considered a suitable participant. I also chose to recruit in my EPS LA as different boroughs and EPS have a different organisational culture and the population of CYP and families that they support may have varying strengths, needs and cultural diversity. Therefore I thought

it was important to initially explore one LA EPS, with the possibility of expanding this research to compare and contrast EP perspectives from other LAs further down the line. I also reflected on the size and timescale of the study, due to experiencing previous limitations and difficulties with recruitment.

3.5.1.2 Previous Research Proposal

Originally, I had proposed that participants would be recruited from two schools within the borough (please see Appendix D-G). Schools were proposed to be identified based on their exclusions rates and whether they are above or below national average as well as considering whether they are above and below the local authority average within my EPS local authority. Ideally, I aimed to recruit from one school that's exclusion rates were below national average and one that was above and compare and contrast the results. Due to GDPR difficulties accessing individual school's exclusion rates from the local authority, I then proposed to use opportunistic and alternative methods instead to produce an appropriate sample to draw from. In terms of participants, the question of who holds the power in this setting was studied while deciding who the best participants would be to work with. When considering who influences decisions about inclusion and exclusion policies and procedures, it was determined that staff members would be acceptable to interview regarding what supports successful inclusion practices for students who are deemed 'at-risk' of exclusion.

The inclusion criteria for the original research proposal were as follows:

- Mainstream secondary schools within the local authority
    - Two participating schools – one school deemed 'inclusive', and one school deemed 'less inclusive'

- Staff members (e.g., teaching staff, teaching, or learning support assistants, senior leadership, SENCo)

Over a period of several months, I contacted eight schools, specifically headteachers and SENCOs, with some that I had previously worked with due to my role as a trainee EP. Many SENCos and headteachers expressed interest in participating, with some highlighting that this was an area that they would like to explore and support further in their school however for many, they acknowledged that they had limited staff capacity and resources to actually support a research study and were concerned regarding staff wellbeing and burnout. In other cases, some headteachers suggested that this was not an area that was prioritised for them to focus on, given external pressures they were facing such as falling roll and Ofsted inspections. When this recruitment process proved too difficult to continue and given the timescale that this research could be carried out in, it was decided with my supervisor, that alternative participants should also be considered alongside staff members (i.e. EPs). I continued to attempt to recruit staff members while also recruiting EPs. As a result of school staff capacity and limited resources as mentioned, EPs were the only participant group within this study.

3.5.2 Participant Information and Research Setting

Six EPs were recruited as part of this study. This includes five EPs who identify as female and one as male. While all EPs recruited in the study were main grade EPs, they all held various specialising roles and interests within their team including taking a lead within 'Youth Justice/Offending' teams, virtual schools and senior management. Some EPs also came from a teaching/teaching assistant background, including in secondary schools. All participants were fully qualified, with experience

ranging from 1 year as a newly qualified EP to 15+ years. All participants have been assigned a pseudonym as a method to protect anonymity and confidentiality.

Pseudonym	Gender
Jackie	F
Lukas	M
Laura	F
Zara	F
Niamh	F
Rebecca	F

Table 5 . *Participant Numbers*

The participants were recruited following a team meeting where I shared the research proposal with the intended participant sample. During this meeting, I referenced the local authority's (LA) recent ‘Inclusion Strategy,’ which highlighted that an inclusive education system welcomes and respects all children and families, regardless of their characteristics, experiences, needs, or ambitions. Practically, this involves offering diverse educational settings and pathways, engaging parents in decision-making, and ensuring staff have the necessary skills and resources to support all students.

Due to this, I did not provide a definition of ‘successful’ inclusion practices. This was acknowledged in the interviews (either prior to recording during the informed consent check or during the recorded interview). As the focus of the research was not on exploring EP’s views of what constitute successful inclusion practices, but rather on the context and mechanisms underlying the successful inclusion of students, I did not specifically request a definition for this term during the interviews.

3.6 Data collection

3.6.1 Semi-Structured Interview

Information was gathered through semi-structured interviewing of participating EPs. I intended to learn more about the themes that had been associated with 'successful' inclusion practices thus semi-structured interviews were deemed the most appropriate and an interview schedule was developed (see Appendix K). When developing an interview schedule, I used guidelines developed by Spradley (1979). Spradley formulated four different types of questions that can be asked within a semi-structured interview. These include descriptive questions, which prompt the interviewee for a general account that may include biographical information, anecdotes, or life histories. Structural questions include how the interviewee may organize their knowledge. Using this type of question allows the interview to identify how the participant categorizes and develops frameworks of meaning for how they make sense of the world. With contrast questions, this allows the interview to make comparisons between different events and experiences. Finally, evaluative questions are focusing on the emotion that the interviewee may experience at a particular event, concept or even towards someone. Although interview questions and probes are pre-determined prior to the interview beginning as it is a pre-requisite of ethical approval, the researcher does not have to rigidly adhere to these. Rather, the researcher can use these as a guide and can retain their freedom in the wording of questions and sequencing, based on the flow and unplanned prompts/questions required in the interview (Willig, 2017).

Semi-structured, individual interviews on a one-to-one basis are often used in qualitative research for a number of reasons. Benefits in using this approach include

providing a platform for participants to share their experiences and reflect with the interviewer. Interviews are also beneficial as they provide researchers the opportunity to use probes and additional questions to follow the interviewees line of thought in comparison to using questionnaires. It also allows researchers to seek clarification and prompt elaboration which provides a rich and detailed narrative and further insight into the phenomena they are exploring (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Willig, 2017).

Individual interviews were decided as the most appropriate procedure for several reasons. For example, I reflected that focus groups, although a popular alternative to semi-structured interviews, would not be appropriate in this research. Willig (2017) suggests that semi-structured interviews may be more suitable if the issue at hand is delicate, and the participants are expected to discuss private elements of their experience. Although the purpose of the research is to focus on inclusion from a strengths-based perspective, the research also acknowledges that discussions about exclusion may be willingly brought up and may have a personal influence on the participant as well as arouse some strong emotions. Therefore, providing a containing space for the participant on a one-to-one basis is considered more appropriate.

There are some limitations with using interviews as a data collection method. One aspect that I considered is the time-costly nature of interviews, in comparison to other data collection techniques. There is a significant amount of time required for interviews as it involves, recruiting individual participants, developing interview schedules, administration of arranging each individual interview, travel time and the time required for the analysis and transcription (Gillham, 2000; Willig, 2017). When

considering the timeframe I was allocated to complete this research, this was a significant consideration and challenge.

3.6.2 Procedure

Semi-structured interviews were organised at a date, time, and location (either offered in the EPS office or via a video communication platform) of the participant's choice. Each interview was allocated an hour and was audio-recorded to facilitate accurate transcriptions. By participant choice, all interviews were carried out remotely and were recorded using the record feature available on the video communication platform which also records video. Once the audio transcript was saved however, the video recording was destroyed. Prior to beginning the interview, I obtained written and verbal informed consent from the participant to audio-record the interview. Confidentiality procedures were also provided both through written communication (see Appendix H & I) and verbally.

Each participant was provided with a copy of the Information Sheet (please see Appendix H) and the consent form (see Appendix I). The participant's informed consent was then obtained after I explained the research's aims and the structure of the interview. Participants were instructed to read the consent form and sign it if they were willing to participate, as well as to read and maintain the information sheet. Participants were informed that they had the option to obtain a copy of their interview transcript and a summary of the research and were provided with my contact details to request it. Finally, participants were given the chance to ask questions and were informed of their right to withdraw before the interview started. Participants were also informed of their right to withdraw during the interview, including stopping the interview if they felt uncomfortable or distressed or if they did not want to answer a

particular question (please see *'Ethical Considerations'* section for further information) The interview schedule (see Appendix K) was used by the interview in a semi-standardised manner. This means that, although the content and order of the interview questions were semi-structured and pre-determined, I was attuned to the participant and their responses and adapted the experience of the interview accordingly.

Braun and Clarke (2022) outlined the importance of transcribing the interviews in a 'verbatim' manner to ensure the accounts are as accurate and as reliable as possible. Additionally, they emphasize how crucial it is to take the time to transcribe interviews since it facilitates the development of a complete knowledge of the material (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Interviews were recorded verbatim, which means that all spoken words as well as any pauses and other utterances were recorded. The interviews were transcribed using Otter.AI, which is an online secure platform which uses a double authentication program (i.e. password and fingerprint). The interviews were then further transcribed manually by me as the researcher by adding any additional pauses and utterances that may have been missed using the computer software or correcting any words that may have been mis-transcribed. This allowed me to become familiar with the data set as I listened to each recording around three times each. Once the transcribing had been completed, the recordings were deleted from the program and the transcripts were stored on my laptop in a secure folder.

3.7 Data Analysis

3.7.1 Method of Analysis

I determined that reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) was the most suitable for this research to analyse the data that derived from the interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2013; 2022). This was deemed the most appropriate as I was interested in understanding the underlying factors and patterns that existed across the different data sets within different school contexts. It also aligned with my epistemological and ontological positioning which is critical realism. RTA is also deemed a more suitable method of data analysis by Braun and Clarke (2006; 2020) for those who are new to qualitative research. It also does not place any restrictions on sample size and is compatible with a number of different data collection methods and theoretical frameworks. Several other alternative qualitative methods of analysis were also explored such as 'Grounded Theory' and 'Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis' (IPA), however I deemed both to be unsuitable for my research, which will be explored in further detail.

Grounded Theory (GT) was originally developed by Glasser and Strauss as a qualitative research approach that has since gained popularity in the social sciences (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Glasser, 1992). It is a systematic collection of strategies and steps used to identify concepts and create theories from qualitative data. Research using this approach is conducted in a bottom-up manner. This contrasts with a 'top down' strategy, which uses data to validate or test pre-existing beliefs (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Fox et al., 2007; Willig, 2017). It could be argued that taking a 'Grounded Theory' approach may be suitable for this type of research due to my ontological and epistemological position. Within a critical realist position, it is

assumed that using this approach, psychological and social processes can exist independently of a researcher's perceptions, however, these processes may be understood by analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Grounded theory, in contrast to other qualitative methodologies, also places a greater emphasis on developing theoretical conceptualizations that may be used in other situations with a comparable setting (Willig, 2008). This method was not selected however for a number of reasons. Firstly, research using a GT approach can be considered less reflective and suggests that the researcher does not have any pre-conceived ideas or theories regarding what they are exploring (Willig, 2017). I have previously acknowledged, however that reflexivity is a key component to this research. In order to guarantee that I am aware of my own involvement in the production of knowledge and how this may impact the meaning gained from the data, it seemed vital to adopt a technique of data analysis where reflexivity is a fundamental component. RTA was therefore seen to be the most suitable method for figuring out what patterns exist to provide the phenomena while holding in mind my position to the data.

Another method that was explored was IPA. IPA was developed by Smith and colleagues over twenty years ago, as a way to explore in detail how individuals make sense of their world from both a personal and social stance (Smith & Fieldsend, 2021). Research that used IPA as a method of analysis is similarly interested in the experiences of participants and contends that interpretation is necessary for analysis to be meaningful (Willig, 2017). It also seeks to convey the unique experience of each person through the researcher's perceptions by delving deeply into each case, which would suit my position on reflexivity. Using IPA, themes are extracted from each data set and then grouped to make meaning of the participant's experiences (Smith et al., 2009). Instead of explaining the participant's experience or

comprehending why these sensations occur, however, it produces a more in-depth account of the individual voice (Willig, 2017). This would not suit the current research as it is explanatory and seeks to understand and explain the underlying contexts and mechanism that contribute to the concept successful inclusion of pupils in secondary schools more generally.

3.7.2 Reflexive Thematic Analysis

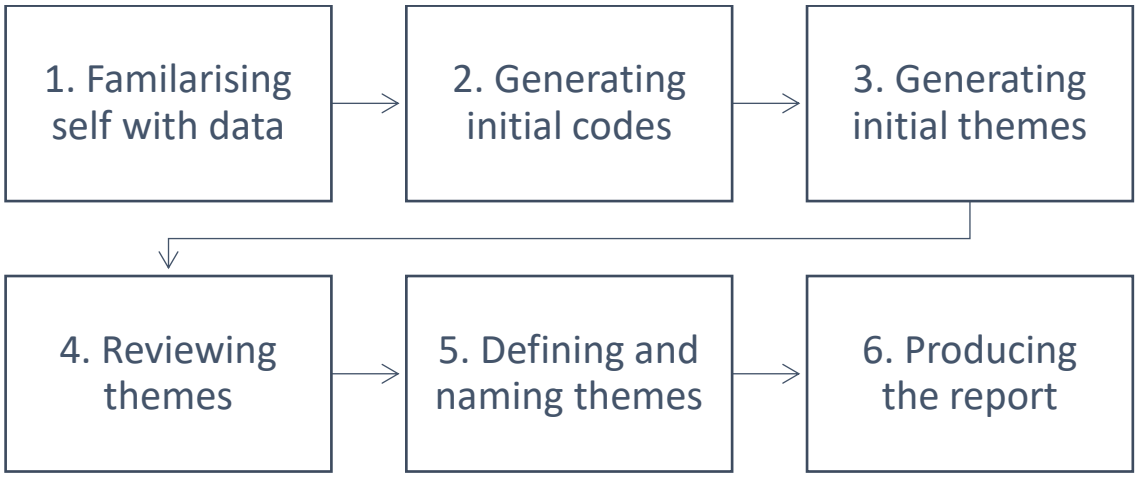
As previously mentioned, I acknowledged that assumptions and how I position myself within my research is difficult to avoid and can also play an important role in the data set (Willig, 2017). Therefore, I believed taking a reflexive approach with data analysis was important. Braun and Clarke (2022) emphasized that RTA offers 'guidelines rather than rules for the process of analysis' (p. 34). They wished to clarify that the use of 'process' and 'phase' is important in comparison to other process that use 'steps' in that RTA does not follow a segmented, rigid, and unidirectional model but rather robust process guidelines. This is because of how the researcher is situated within the study and the intersectionality of the dataset, the context of the research and the skills the researcher brings. These factors will guide the research journey, while RTA offers the conceptual tools, language, and processes to engage with the dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2022). They also acknowledge that, in comparison to other thematic analysis methods, RTA holds the view of researcher reflexivity as a vital part of the analysis. Therefore, I felt this was the most appropriate method to use. Braun and Clarke (2013; 2020) also express that RTA does not restrict itself to a specific ontology, epistemology, or theoretical paradigm. This allows me to identify my own ontological and epistemological position and adapt the analysis to this.

As with all data analysis methods, RTA also has a number of limitations that are important to acknowledge. For example, using an RTA method focuses on analysing themes across a whole dataset. Therefore, the individual voice can become 'lost' including whether their data contradicts any themes that are generated (Braun and Clarke, 2014). In the context of this research however, I was aiming to identify the contexts and mechanisms underlying successful inclusion practices for pupils most at risk of exclusion. Therefore, the individual voice was not the main objective of the study but rather the focus on the collective voice. There has also been an argument regarding the 'lack of clarity' surrounding RTA and what the 'process' is (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Holding the latter argument in mind, a clear description of the approach used to analyse the data using RTA can be found below.

3.7.3 Approach Used to Analyse Data

The researcher conducted the data analysis using a six-phase process that has been developed by Braun and Clarke (2022). The following sections will explore the procedure during each phase in detail (as seen in Figure 3 below).

Figure 4. *6 phase process of RTA used to conduct data analysis*



Phase 1: Familiarising self with the data

Within the first phase, Braun and Clarke (2022) emphasize the importance of becoming immersed and familiar with the content of the dataset. This involves processing including reading and re-reading the data, and in the context of this research, listening to the recordings of the audio data collected at least three times. While doing this, it is also important to make brief notes about analytic insights the researcher may have that is related to individual data items and the data set as a whole. By following this process, the researcher becomes actively engaged in searching for meanings and patterns within the data set. In the context of this research, I demonstrated active engagement with the data by keeping a reflective diary throughout the research process. This included during the initial stages of setting up the research proposal and after each interview. I also actively engaged and became familiar with the data set by transcribing the individual interviews, as discussed previously. This included listening to the interviews multiple times, while also making notes with my initial reflections when actively listening. I also reflected on assumptions I may have made when interpreting what the participant said, based on when a participant may have expressed views that either aligned or opposed to my position on inclusive practices.

Phase 2: Generating initial codes

Braun and Clarke (2022) identified the second phase as the production of initial codes. Within this stage, I will have identified parts of the data that appear interesting or meaningful to the research question. I will then apply code labels to them. Code labels can be semantic, which is when the meaning is very explicit, latent, which is when the meaning is more conceptual or implicit or both.

I used the computer software MaxQDA to generate codes. This was achieved by highlighting aspects of the data extract and assigning a code to the section. I then analysed the extract as to whether meaning can be applied to it semantically (meaning of the word itself), latently (underlying meaning or unconscious thought) or if both can be applied. It is important that codes capture something important and meaningful about the data, therefore the codes that I generated were usually a sentence, rather than a singular word.

Phase 3: Generating initial themes

During this phase, I began to identify shared patterned meaning across the dataset. This is achieved by compiling clusters of codes that have been defined during Phase 2 which appear to me to share a core concept with one another and that may possibly provide meaning to the research question. An overarching theme links codes together which describe broader and shared meaning (Braun & Clarke, 2022). It was important for me as the researcher to hold multiple questions in mind when carrying out this phase such as whether the theme was relevant to the research question proposed and if the potential theme identified can be evidenced across the different data items (Braun et al., 2015).

I extracted around 800 codes from my data set which was organised by MaxQDA and then moved them into sub-codes and eventually into potential themes. Using MaxQDA, I created an initial thematic map which visually represented the relationship between the different themes which are superordinate themes, themes and sub-themes.

Braun and Clarke (2021) suggested researchers create a ‘miscellaneous’ theme for codes that do not seem to belong anywhere else. This was very helpful as it helped

ensure that themes were not becoming too broad in order to fit in codes. I also tried to avoid ‘domain summaries’ when generating themes as they are more descriptive in comparison to capturing meaning and patterns within the data. I also continued to demonstrate reflexivity by becoming more aware of my own assumptions and checking my themes with peers and my research supervisor.

Phase 4: Reviewing themes

During this phase, I was tasked with refining the set of themes that were generated in the previous phase. This process involves the identified themes being combined, refined, separated and discard while also reflecting back to the full dataset. During this phase, I would check the viability of my overall analysis in two parts. Firstly, by reviewing whether the themes made sense in relation to both the extracts that were coded and secondly, with the full dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Once I felt confident with this part, I moved onto the next phase.

Phase 5: Defining and naming themes

Within this phase, each theme was reviewed for a final time, during which their labels were defined and finalised. This included developing a brief synopsis of each theme (Braun & Clarke, 2022). Braun et al., (2015) highlighted the importance of selecting a title could provide a clear indication of what the theme represented in order to provide a skeleton structure to the analysis.

Phase 6: Producing the report

During this phase, a written report was produced, which can be found in *Chapter 4.* This stage is important to not only present the data, but also to build an analytic

narrative that highlights the significance of the data and how it addresses the research question by providing supporting evidence (Braun & Clarke, 2022).

3.8 Trustworthiness

The idea of ‘’trustworthiness’’ was developed by Guba and Lincoln (1981) as a means of incorporating measurements of validity into qualitative research. The criteria that had been developed for quantitative research (i.e., internal validity, generalisability, reliability and objectivity) is not well suited to qualitative research. This is because within qualitative research, multiple and subjective insights can be accepted. Four separate trustworthiness indicators were developed by the authors and can be used in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Transferability: This indicator is referred to as a concept of trustworthiness relating to external validity. This refers to the reader’s ability to clearly understand what is being done within the research and how the research can be transferred to other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Yardley, 2008). This is achieved through a concept introduced by philosopher, Gilbert Ryle, and taken forward by Clifford Geertz (1973) called ‘thick description’. This is defined as providing contextual information on the research process. They argue that by detailing the research process using rich descriptions, the audience can determine whether the research is applicable within their context of interest and if transferability can be achieved. Within this study, I aimed to provide a ‘thick description’ throughout to facilitate the audiences decision on its transferability. Due to the small sample size and the chosen sampling method, I could not guarantee that all of its findings are generalisable within other local authority contexts. It can be argued however, that these findings can be used to

inform research and contribute to an ever-growing discussion within other contexts. Arguably, therefore, can provide an element of transferability.

Credibility: This indicator is referred to be a concept of trustworthiness relating to internal validity. It can be thought of as ensuring a true representation of the original data collected is confidently communicated within the research (Korstjens & Moser, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). There are a number of methods and strategies that can be used to ensure the accuracy of this process include triangulation, member checking, prolonged engagement, persistent observation and peer debriefing (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Member checking, for example, invites participants to correct and challenge interpretations made by the researcher after the initial data is collected. These strategies, however, may not always be applicable to all types of research, as it is dependent on the methodology that I have undertaken as the researcher. There were a number of strategies used within this research to ensure its credibility. For example, the transcription of the recorded interviews, for instance, was completed in ‘‘true verbatim’’ fashion, which means that vocalizations and non-verbal cues like pauses are preserved. This is done to guarantee that the transcript analysis remains as accurate as feasible, which is important when considering the reliability of qualitative research (Davidson, 2009). Due to time constraints, I was unfortunately unable to use member checking at the conclusion of the investigation. However, throughout the interview, interpretations were clearly checked and were either verified or modified.

Dependability: This indicator is regarded as a concept that closely resembles reliability in terms of trustworthiness. To achieve dependability within research, the research process should be clearly documented, logical and traceable. When the

audience can clearly follow and understand the research process, this can help determine the level of dependability of the research (Nowell et al., 2017). This has been completed through creating a reflective diary when conducting the research. These reflective notes comprised of initial notes from the interviews, the integration of the data (constructing and reconstructing themes and relationships), as well as reflections on decisions made throughout. This aided my ability to maintain objectivity when making decisions. Another method of addressing dependability within the research including the use of research supervision when discussing the process of the research and subsequent findings. This was to ensure the appropriateness of the research methodology and the steps taken by myself as the researcher.

Confirmability: This indicator refers to the idea that, when given the identical data, another study will corroborate the study's conclusions, suggesting the research is replicable and objective. It also suggests that the research results will provide a reflective account of the participant's views, rather than impacted by researcher bias (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Within this research, as previously mentioned, a reflective diary was used to help the audience understand the process I took, as well as to give the essential materials for verifying the study in order to make sure that this is made feasible in the future. By keeping a reflective diary, I can establish confirmability of their research through researcher reflexivity (Tobin & Begley, 2004).

3.8.1 Reflexivity

In order to reduce their influence on the data gathering and analysis processes, researchers have traditionally been expected to maintain a neutral, impartial, and detached perspective throughout the research process. There is, however, a

contrasting argument that I have an influence on the research process from both a personal and professional level. This is called personal and epistemological reflexivity, and it is integral to qualitative research (Corlett & Marvin, 2018).

Being self-aware and reflective about your personal participation in the data collection, analysis, and interpretation process as well as the preconceived notions you bring to your study is crucial for qualitative researchers. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge again that I have kept reflective notes throughout the process including with interviews, observations, discussions, and other analytical data (Korstjens & Moser, 2018).

Holding my research positionality in mind, I selected to write this research using a first-person style approach. I acknowledge that the very process of interpretation, central to critical realism and my chosen methodology of RTA, inevitably involves personal perspectives. This is acknowledged throughout the research, where I strive for transparency and incorporates personal perspectives and reflections as they arise. This aims to support the reader in critically engaging with both the presented information and the interpretive lens through which it is examined.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Prior to beginning the research process, ethical approval was research from the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust Research and Ethics Committee (TREC) (see Appendix D-G). The British Psychological Society Human Research Ethics (2021) and Code of Ethics and Conduct (2018) and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) ((General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Compliance Guidelines, n.d.) were upheld throughout this research process including within the planning, design and implementation of the research. A number

of main ethical issues that assure the safety and respect of the research participants will now be discussed in regard to this study (Wilig, 2017).

3.9.1 Informed Consent

The concept of 'Informed Consent' is crucial to every study as outlined by the BPS guidelines (2018; 2021). The consenting participant must be deemed 'competent,' meaning they have the mental competence to understand what is required of them during the research process and make the required decisions. This study's participants are adults with professional employment, thus I believed that everyone had the competence to provide permission. An information sheet (see Appendix H) detailing the research process, the goals of the study and what was required of the participants was provided to the participating EPS. Prior to interview, participants were provided with a consent form (see Appendix I) that required their written or digital signature. My research supervisor and academic quality assurance lead's contact details were also made available via the information sheet, if participants had further information both prior to the interview and post-interview.

3.9.2 Deception

I aimed to ensure that there was as much transparency as possible within the research study. Participants were provided an information sheet and consent form (see Appendix H & I) which outlined the research process and their rights as a participant.

3.9.3 Right to Withdraw

Participants were made aware of their right to withdraw from the research, without having to provide a reason for doing so. This could take place at any point throughout their involvement, including prior, during and after the interview, up until

the data analysis begun. They also had the right not to respond to any questions during the interview. Additionally, participants were made aware of their right to request the deletion of their personal data. The participants were notified that they had to remove their data by 17th April when data analysis started, as the research was to be written up as part of my thesis. The information sheet (see Appendix H) and consent form (see Appendix I) provide examples of how this information was communicated to participants and was again repeated verbally during the interview process.

3.9.4 Minimising Harm

It was not anticipated that taking part in this study would cause significant distress or discomfort to participants. This study emphasises a 'strengths-based' approach and focused on inclusion practices in a positive light. The positive psychology foundation of the questions allowed participants to discuss 'successful inclusion practices' for students at risk. The interview schedules were open and semi-structured, so participants are not required to provide any information with which they may feel uncomfortable. However, I acknowledge that discussions about exclusion may be willingly brought up and may have a personal influence on the participant as well as elicit some emotive feelings.

3.9.5 Debriefing

Participants were debriefed at the end of the interviews and were provided with a debriefing sheet for them to take away (see Appendix J) as recommended by the BPS (2021). As mentioned in the previous section, it was not anticipated that taking part in this study would cause participants any significant harm and steps were taken to ensure that risks to the participants were minimized (i.e., right to withdraw, use of

strengths-based questions, information sheet with details of the study). I, however, was aware that the conversations may elicit some emotive and personal feelings relating to the topic of exclusion, which may cause some discomfort or distress. To support with this, the participants were provided contact information of support services (Samaritans, British Psychoanalytic Council and British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy) who they could contact in the unlikely incident of experiencing this level of discomfort or distress. I also provided all participants with their contact details and their supervisors contact details at the end of the study via a debriefing sheet (see Appendix J) which could be used if participants wished to follow up with any questions, further information, queries or if they wished to withdraw from the study.

3.9.6 Confidentiality, privacy and anonymity

I made a conscious effort to avoid sharing any identifying information with anybody else, which helped to maintain confidentiality. Any other identifying information about participants—including their names, specific roles they hold within the team and the borough where it was located—was deleted. To reduce the possibility of identification, the participant's names were removed, and they were provided a pseudonym. Any identifiable information from their transcripts was also deleted. Additionally, as stated in the information sheet (see Appendix H), all participant data, including audio recordings, consent forms, and other materials will be securely maintained in accordance with legal requirements and the university's data protection policy.

Participants were advised that any information submitted would remain anonymous and confidential, barring the unlikely event that withholding this information may have

put them or others at serious risk of harm. Participants were also advised to refrain from mentioning their own or other people's names during the interview in the sake of confidentiality and anonymity.

Participants' names and other identifiable information that they accidentally submitted was deleted from the data collection. As acknowledged by Piper and Simons (2005), descriptions of a person's function and surroundings may offer hints as to who they are. Therefore, I carefully reviewed all interview transcripts and questionnaire replies to make sure that nothing pointed to the participants' names or employers inadvertently. Such remarks and information were not included in the analysis and were deleted from the transcripts.

3.10 Data protection

The Data Protection Act (2018) was followed when using and storing all collected data. On my laptop, all information was retained in electronic form and preserved in a password-protected, encrypted folder. When not in use, this laptop and the audio recording equipment were password protected and kept in a locked cabinet. Following the conclusion of the study, data will be retained for a 1 -2 years however in line with Research Councils UK (RCUK) guidance, doctoral project data can be stored for up to 10 years. All information will be deleted beyond this date.

The transcription platform that I used (Otter.AI) could only be accessed via two factor authentication. Once the interviews were transcribed, the audio was immediately removed from the platform. Otter.AI state via their policy (available online) that no user including employees will be able to view, recover, or access deleted data demonstrating that no GDPR principles were contravened in using this platform.

3.11 Summary of Chapter

This chapter emphasizes both my positionality as a researcher and my epistemological and ontological position. My position has influenced the methodology, research objectives and question. Along with the methods needed to make sure the study has been carried out ethically and can be trusted, data collection and analysis were also discussed in great depth. My findings will be discussed in the next chapter.

4. Research Findings

This chapter provides an analytic narrative of the data and aims to answer the following research question:

What are the contexts and mechanisms that are behind successful inclusion practices for students at risk of exclusion in a secondary school context?

The names have been changed and each participant was provided with a pseudonym to protect their identity. Any identifying information was removed from the transcripts found in the Appendices (please see Appendix L-Q). Additional quotations have been added to Appendix R.

4.1 Reflexive Thematic Analysis

To answer this question, RTA was carried out using the transcripts from the six interviews that took place with EPs (please see Appendix L-Q,). In the previous chapter, a detailed account of the methodology and process of reflexive thematic analysis was provided, including the positionality of myself as the researcher. I generated four overarching themes which corresponded to several themes and sub themes. These will be individually discussed with accompanying visuals, for example a thematic map. I will firstly discuss the overview of the overarching themes and then the themes found within, that attempt to answer the research question. Examples of quotes relating to each theme and subtheme will be shared.

4.1.1 Overview of Themes

The four overarching themes found were: **'Relationships'**, **'Systemic Factors'**, **'School Culture and Leadership'** and **'Support and Interventions'**. Figure 5 demonstrates an overview the overarching as well as the other themes and sub-

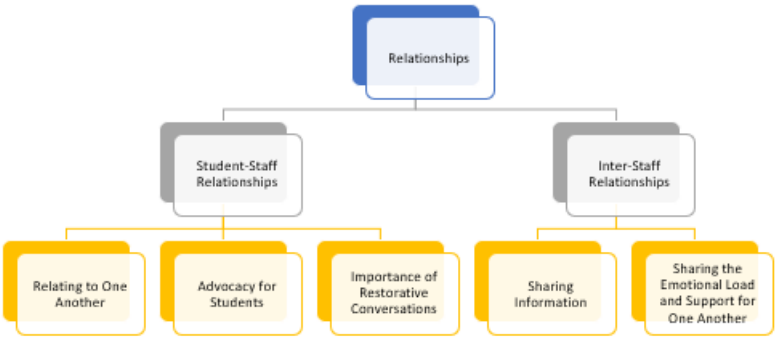
themes that were generated from this thematic analysis. The overarching themes have been highlighted.

Figure 5. *Overview of thematic analysis: the four overarching themes in the largest boxes*

4.2 Overarching Theme One: Relationships

This overarching theme captures the importance of relationships within a school system and how these can contribute to successful inclusion practices. It contains two themes: '*Student-Staff Relationships'* and *'Inter-Staff Relationships'.* This will be explained in further detail as each theme is discussed.

Figure 6. *Overarching Theme One: Relationships*



4.2.1 Theme: Student-Staff Relationships

Participants spoke about the importance of positive and supportive relationships in supporting students, particularly those vulnerable and at risk of becoming excluded. The factors contributing this relationship and how it can contribute to the successful inclusion practices of students at risk of exclusion have been named as the following subthemes: **'Relating to One Another'**, '**Advocacy for Students'**, and **'Importance of Restorative Conversations'**. These will be described in more detail below.

4.2.1.1 Subtheme: Relating to One Another

Three of the participants spoke of the importance of staff appearing as 'relatable' to students as a way to encourage children to engage with them and stay connected to the school system. By allowing students to see staff as 'human-like' rather than a removed professional figure, it may support them to develop trust towards others, particularly adults in a professional capacity.

‘But I think where you can see that teacher being… where the children can see that that teacher, that SENCo, whoever it is, being human almost, and that the child can see them as someone who's this human, and you can, you know, engage with them.’ (Rebecca, 182)

‘So they're often coming from a welfare background or a social, social care background or a youth mentoring background, and in this school setting, the pastoral academic leader is a really supportive, positive black male, adult’ (Laura, 145)

These two quotations spoke about the importance of having students being able to see themselves within staff members and able to connect on a personal level. This could be for a variety of reasons and factors such as shared culture, community, ethnicity and gender. It also allows staff to develop empathy and understanding towards a student’s needs as there may be a shared understanding, awareness or experience.

4.2.1.2 Subtheme: Advocacy for Students

All of the participants highlighted the importance of having key adult(s) in a child’s life, particularly within the school system, as this adult acts as a ‘champion’ or ‘advocate’ for them, particularly when they become at risk of exclusion. This can be a teaching assistant, a SENCo, teaching staff or mentor. In relation to the importance of advocacy for students, particularly those vulnerable and at risk of becoming excluded, some participants acknowledged the difficulty for some staff, particularly with SENCos, feeling like they are always taking up the role of ‘champion’ or advocate for vulnerable students, with little support or influence within the system. For these children, that advocate is important for them to stay connected, engaged and feel listened to within the school system.

‘And if that person does have a good relationship with the child, and can advocate for them, you know, can the child hear some of that? And I think also, yeah, just, if you can figure out who that person is almost trying to sow the seed of hope, with that person, that little base and trying to appeal to hearts and minds in that way. I guess, in the hope that maybe if that person, you know, champions, the child that maybe others will see that too, to try and build a bit of a different narrative for the child, or the young person I should say. So yeah, I think trying to kind of figure out who that key person is, identifying what kind of role they have within the school (Rebecca, 134).

‘…form tutors wanting to have time in their week to have one to one conversations with the kids and build that relationship. That key adult that stood in front of the kids owning the fact that they're the kids form tutor and anchoring that kid giving advocating for that kid within the system can be really powerful. I think in terms of stopping a kid being excluded. Often you'll see that kids who are on the risk of exclusion are kids who kind of don't have anyone championing them in the system’(Niamh, 496)

‘But they're those people that are like really embedded in it in a system. And they've been there for a long time. And they just seem to hold quite a lot of influence. And a lot of the students, I suppose that we're talking about a risk of exclusion, gravitate to those, that person and they're also quite strong and like advocating them because they've got that experience or like status within the school’ (Lukas, 258)

In the above quotation, Lukas acknowledged the importance of identifying who this staff member is within the system, as they can be a helpful support in ‘shifting the narrative’ about the child and how they and/or their behaviours are viewed by others

within the system. It is also important that the child becomes aware that this person exists as it can support their sense of belonging within the school and knowing that they are people who care and are concerned for them. Without this, they may be at risk of being excluded.

4.2.1.3 Subtheme: Importance of Restorative Conversations

The importance of repairing relationships between staff and students if they break down was highlighted by some participants as factor that can support a vulnerable child and their relationships within the school system. They suggest that restorative conversations can be used to address conflict and can be particularly beneficial for students at risk of exclusion. The use of reflective tools and strategies becoming embedded within everyday school practice was also suggested as a factor in supporting successful inclusion practices in a number of ways. For example, two participants acknowledged the importance of providing space for restorative conversations to take place to support staff and student wellbeing, as it can ensure that staff do not have to bring the emotional impact of their work home and students can continue to feel connected to someone in the school system. By doing this, both staff and students can feel listened to and can continue to develop a trusting relationship.

‘So we now have the kids fill in a reflective script, when reflective sheet when they come, that's really good, the kids helped make it brilliant, it is absolutely fantastic. And a huge example of excellent good inclusive practices that really support reflection, that they can stay until four to give staff the time to go and repair their relationship and have restorative conversations, it’s mandatory if you send a child to the internal exclusion centre, you must go and have a reflective conversation same

day to repair your relationship because we don't want children going home carrying that. And we don't want staff going out and carrying that. So that's an example of a system that is absolutely promoting inclusion, like something so simple as well, let's just keep the children to four, yes, it's crap, yes, they're there longer. But you're giving staff time to get down there and have that restorative conversation and repair relationships.' (Niamh, 432)

'…what's actually going to be beneficial for the child in this situation, is that having in place a restorative conversation, that means that the young person and the adult both feel heard about an incident, and the young person feels then comfortable to go back into that adults lesson' (Jackie, 394)

4.2.2 Theme: Inter-Staff Relationships

Participants also spoke about the importance of positive and supportive relationships amongst staff members. The factors contributing this relationship and how it can contribute to the successful inclusion practices of student's at risk of exclusion have been named as the following subthemes: ***'Sharing Information'***, and *'**Sharing the Emotional Load and Support for One Another'***. These will be described in more detail below.

4.2.2.1 Subtheme: Sharing Information

This subtheme highlights the importance of staff sharing information regarding their pupils, particularly those at risk of exclusion, with one another. This can be depicted as helpful in supporting inclusive practices in a number of ways including identifying what approaches to teaching and learning are working well and not so well for some pupils and supportive in creating a holistic image of the pupils strengths, needs and

views. By staff working with one another, it could allow for vulnerable pupils to be held in mind by multiple key adults in the system, creating more advocacy and support for them. It may also allow for staff to begin to 'shift the narrative' that has been created about the student, based on their own previous perceptions.

'And the pastoral academic leader would also be very good at getting round robin information. So, he would come to the school consultation with information from at least and for this young person, I think we got 10 out of 12 subject teachers had filled in information about patterns of learning. …. And then the form tutors will come with their knowledge of the young person in a social setting just from form time and PSHE. So again, another unique perspective. And then the SENCo being able to bring a particular role, a view on having gathered ta perspectives on particular subjects where the young person is supported and a view of how the support was working. So I think that it's very joined up and having three people who were all having different roles and bringing information to the consultations just means that meant that everyone felt we had a broad overview of a broad picture of what's going on. And rather than just feeling that the concerns were overwhelming, we will be able to say, well, look, eight out of 12 subject teachers actually say that X is focusing reasonably well, attaining reasonably well. completing homework, etc.' (Laura, 166)

4.2.2.2 Subtheme: Sharing Emotional Load and Support for One Another

This subtheme highlights the importance for staff in having their own peer support when supporting vulnerable children. All participants made reference to the benefits of having a peer network in providing a space to speak about the challenges that working with a vulnerable student can bring, but also additional access to resources and space to creatively think and plan.

‘But I guess by nature, sometimes of what teaching staff and support staff are having to support students with every day, there can be like highly intense and emotional situations. And I think there's something about that, that brings staff together. And means that they talk kind of it much more openly with each other and contribute to these meetings. differently because they spend much more time together, and much more time kind of supporting one another, with specific students.’ (Jackie, 270)

‘I suppose the other thing can be helpful is if there's more than if there's kind of a backup person as well, I think because I think it was mindful for with that young person, it was quite chaotic at times. And sometimes the adult felt they didn't have enough skills, or it felt quite overwhelming. So yeah, I think that can be really helpful’ (Rebecca, 536)

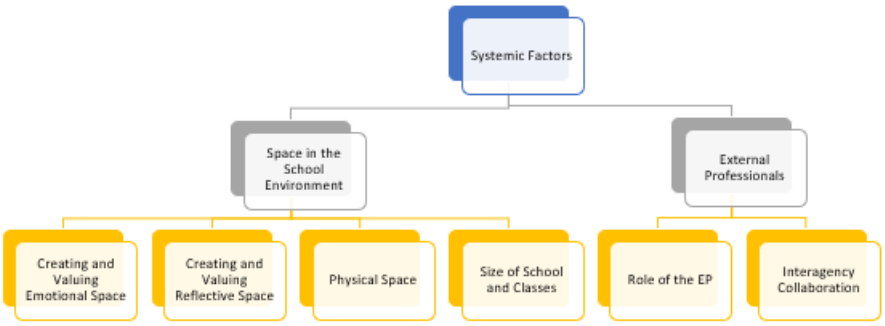
‘I was aware of that SENCo kind of acting in isolation, but I…I haven't asked her before… for… I have asked her before who her support system is, but it does make me think about asking that more frequently or drawing her attention to that a little bit in school.’ (Jackie, 643)

These quotations made reference to the impact it can have on a member of staff if they may feel they are supporting a child in isolation and not having their own peer resources or support around them. This suggests that staff may become emotionally drained, and this could impact their own emotional wellbeing, which in turn can lead to difficulties in supporting others.

4.3 Overarching Theme Two: Systemic Factors

This overarching theme captures the influence of systemic factors on supporting inclusive practice for pupils most risk of inclusion, particularly when thinking about organizational processes and external factors. It contains two themes: '*Space in the School Environment'*, and *'External Professionals'.* This will be explained in further detail as each theme is discussed.

Figure 7. *Overarching Theme Two: Systemic Factors*



4.3.1 Theme: Space in the School Environment

Participants spoke about the importance of creating an inclusive space for staff and students, which was thought about on multiple different levels and named as the following subthemes: ***'Creating and Valuing Emotional Space'***, '***Creating and Valuing Reflective Space'***, ***'Physical Space'*** and ***'Size of School and Classes'***. These will be described in more detail below.

4.3.1.1 Subtheme: Creating and Valuing Emotional Space

There was a sense amongst all participants that creating a space for emotional wellbeing and related processes is an important part of a supportive and inclusive school environment, for both staff and students. For example, by creating that space for the emotional 'offload', participants referenced how staff could 'free up' some additional thinking space to work creatively and systemically to support at risk pupils, which links to successfully supporting inclusive practices.

'And like I said, just almost letting them listen to them and letting them come almost offload' (Rebecca, 491)

'But also, it felt as though everyone was putting a lot of like emotional effort into looking after him during the day because he was very distressed. So it was also a chance for people to offload that a little bit and share how difficult things have been. And yet, think about the organizational factors and the factors in the system that will maybe making this situation harder for him or making the situation a bit easier. And I think gave the adults just a bit of a step by step plan as to what they could do' (Jackie, 107)

The quotations highlight how creating spaces for staff to 'offload' (Rebecca,) and 'share how difficult things have been' (Jackie) underly 'successful' inclusion practices.

4.3.1.2 Subtheme: Creating and Valuing Reflective Space

There was a sense amongst four of the participants that the use of reflective spaces and activities were an important part of a supportive and inclusive school environment, for both staff and students. By creating space and resources for this

(such as the use of reflection sheets), participants gave examples of how it can benefit identifying and creating additional support for students in areas that they find difficult.

‘But you need that space. To explore the complex things to plan for, like, the situations they're all struggling with, and then ended up firefighting is like, how can you build more… more structures in so I guess, each of those stages’ (Lukas, 539)

‘And I know that they have the behaviour lead there uses a lot of reflection workbooks, and CBT approaches that students have to fill out things basically, because some of those have been brought along to consultations, students reflections when things haven't …haven't worked out, well’ (Laura, 474)

4.3.1.3 Subtheme: Physical Space

Two of the participants made reference to the use of different types of physical spaces for students, that are linked to ‘inclusion’ and ‘SEN’. There was a sense from participants that schools need to provide a physical space for students, particularly vulnerable children, where they can receive individualized attention and support as well as a space to de-escalate any concerns or behaviours staff may be seeing. There was acknowledgement, however that, some ‘inclusive’ spaces may be viewed differently by other students and staff members, therefore reflecting on the importance of capturing different perspectives when thinking about whether a space within the school is deemed ‘inclusive’.

‘And children with additional needs are welcome at any time, be...before school lunchtime and after school to go and sit in the learning area that the learning zone, which is where the TAs gather, and the SENCo is based, so there is a space for

them. And there will be board games, card games, Lunch Club, just sit and eat your packed lunch there. So it's kind of a space for whatever, help with homework. And that's children seem to use it not all the time, but they like being able to dip in and out. And I think it's kind of a ….. quite restorative for lots of the students to be able to dip out of playtime sometimes.' (Laura, 328)

4.3.1.4 Subtheme: Size of School and Classes

This subtheme encapsulates the impact that the size of the school and class groups can have on the ability of staff to support students, particularly those who are vulnerable and may require additional time and resources. Four of the participants acknowledged the associated difficulties that larger groups can bring, particularly as class and school size can often be directed by external influences such as government level directives or if a school sits within an academy chain or trust..

'You know, when I was teaching, I had 150 different kids, and you can't know them all that well.' (Zara, 191)

'...what are we there to give the students so there's a lot more time for things like Tutor Time. And they do it in a lot smaller groups. So I think there's just like 13 to 15. And they have 45 minutes every day, where they explore issues. And I think when you're getting down to the smaller numbers, you can start to create that space where people feel safe enough to explore things in a depth that you it's really hard if you've got 30 people in a class, and you're trying to create a space where people can actually open up about anything.' (Lukas, 421)

Lukas spoke about where this space can be created and the possible positive impact this can have, both on a systemic level within the school, but also for students. For

example, by having smaller class sizes, staff can create a ‘safe space’ for students to explore complex issues which may impact a child’s sense of belonging and wellbeing. This may highlight the influence that the size of classes and schools can have on successfully including vulnerable students which underly ‘successful’ inclusion practices.

4.3.2 Theme: External Professionals

This theme encapsulates the role of external professionals within the school system and the importance of identifying the roles they play in supporting that system, including through the dissemination of information. This was named as the following subthemes: **‘*Role of the EP***, and ‘***Interagency Collaboration***. These will be described in more detail below.

4.3.2.1 Subtheme: Role of the EP

As all participants within this study were EPs, this was an area that was referenced to significantly within the transcripts***.*** There was variation in how the role of the EP was viewed and valued within the school system, from the perspectives of the participating EPs. Outside of the ‘traditional’ roles of EPs, including assessment, training and consultation which was raised by participants, there was also discussions on, what could be considered, the ‘hidden’ layers of support. Three of the participants made reference to EPs taking on the ‘emotional load’ for staff. This can be achieved by creating a supportive space for staff and students, which can facilitate change and hope as well providing containment for when things become overwhelming. Two participants referenced to the physical and organisational load they take on for staff by supporting their thinking and planning for change.

‘And I think EPs can create space in schools, for hopefulness by asking questions that allow people to get a glimmer of hope for these young people that they can make a difference.’ (Laura, 651)

‘And I think, I think that's where the EP role comes in quite well. Because I think in terms of, like containment for that member of staff, and speaking to someone who might view the system, or young people in similar ways, can be really helpful.’ (Jackie, 491)

‘And I suppose thinking about where we can come in to try and add a little bit more nuance and try and get alongside people in making these decisions….I have been trying to hold in mind a bit more this year, in terms of when you enter a system that feels stressed or chaotic, and you are mindful of children that are in that system is almost you're spending that that kind of initial bit of time just kind of rolling with the punches a little bit, and building trust with the school system’ (Rebecca, 449)

4.3.2.2 Subtheme: Interagency Collaboration

Interagency Collaboration was raised as supportive for addressing the complex needs of students, particularly if different professionals can provide additional resources to support thinking about the child in a holistic way to one another. Three of the participants also raised the benefits of becoming involved with or known to other services, for example, it can also help provide opportunities for EPs to become involved in projects in supporting school systems and the children who sit within it.

‘…there's somebody who's involved with one of my children who is at risk of upset but possibly exclusion. And saying to her, oh, I think I know who you are. Can we…

can we share? Can we exchange emails, let's link up and I suppose just trying to link up with other people in the system?' (Rebecca, 424)

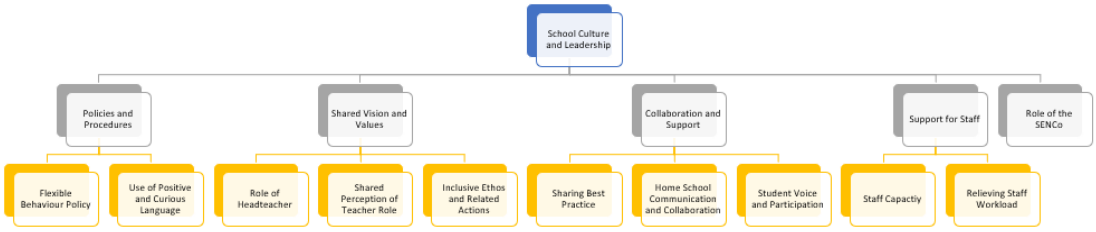
'..it came from someone else in the local authority, I guess who had all the data on this stuff. And he was just got in contact with me, which again, I guess, is quite good within the local authority to and I think it was before my time, like, I didn't know the guy, but he linked with the EPs. So I guess having that position within children's services and things is going to be important for people to come and speak to you' (Lukas, 498)

The quotations above suggest that reactive collaboration (e.g., seeking help when a student issue arises) can help create a holistic understanding of the child and their needs thus contributing to 'successful inclusion practices'.

4.4 Overarching Theme Three: School Culture and Leadership

This overarching theme captures the shared values, goals, attitudes and practices that make an organization's character, which in this case are secondary schools. It contains five themes: '*Policies and Procedures'*, '*Shared-Vision and Values,* '*Collaboration and Support', 'Support for Staff' and 'Role of SENCo'.* This will be explained in further detail as each theme is discussed.

Figure 8. *Overarching Theme Three: School Culture and Leadership*



4.4.1 Theme: Policies and Procedures

Participants spoke about the impact of a school's policies and procedures on how they can successfully support a student at risk of exclusion, which were named as the following subthemes: **'*Flexible Behaviour Policy***, and '***Use of Positive and Curious Language*** These will be described in more detail below.

4.4.1.1 Subtheme: Flexible Behaviour Policy

The impact of a behaviour policy within a school system was highlighted by participants as an area that school's often get wrong. All of the participants' spoke about the rigidity that a behaviour policy can hold and how staff may not always feel confident when differentiating responses to vulnerable pupils due to the lack of flexibility of the policy. One participant also criticized the lack of evidence-based research within a behaviour policy. Two of the participants acknowledged, however, that when schools become more flexible with how they respond to negative behaviours within the school context, they can help support deescalate a child's behaviour rather than falling into a cycle of 'consequences' and 'punitive responses', which may result in a child becoming at risk of exclusion. Two other participants, however, acknowledged that the difficulty in taking a flexible approach to a behaviour policy, is that some staff may adhere to it, while other may not, which can be an inconsistent approach for a vulnerable child. This also raised the difficulty of having not having a clear and consistent fixed approach to topics such as responding to incidents of sexism and racism, as staff may not feel as confident in addressing these areas.

‘So I find that really find that always useful to have a conversation about… about what flexibility might there be, you know, if…if a lot of the detentions or a lot of the sanctions are linked to homework? That's quick fix, isn't it?’ (Laura, 601)

‘I suppose some what I've seen in terms of flexibility around some of the behaviour policies is children leaving lessons when they're not feeling good, or when things are escalating, or teachers aren't happy with their actions, and then having a space to go’ (Jackie, 398)

‘But when there's things like racism and sexist comments going on in the class, the teachers won't say anything, because they're not confident addressing. And I guess it again, it's like those things that are measurable and not measurable. Like if you're enforcing a behaviour policy, uniform, if you want it to be is really easy. loads of other rules, like times you should be speaking or not, it's like easy rules to enforce. But then you get into these blurry areas, that you have like?’ (Lukas, 355)

‘But if we've got quite like a strict behaviour policy, what agencies of teachers feel that they have to differentiate that aid that policy?’ (Jackie, 529)

4.4.1.2 Subtheme: Use of Positive and Curious Language

Supporting staff to be able to create a flexible approach to behaviour policies was raised by some participants, as this can often be an area that staff may not feel as confident in. One of the participants also acknowledged the importance of capturing the voice of the student within this process as often they found behaviour policies did not account for this.

‘We had this consultation with students about the behaviour policy, and now we call it the reset room instead of isolation. And I kind of thought like, it's, it's good that you try to do that, and hear what they were saying and use different language, which I think is important, but also like, what was the scale in which you who involved them? Did you like ask them whether you actually thought it was an effective thing to do as punishment or not.’ (Lukas, 316)

‘And then I tried to say to them, kind of like ask them the questions. How did you come up with this? Were any students involved in it led to a little bit of work’ (Lukas, 326)

Through the quotations above, Lukas shared his experience of using positive and curious language to think about where the behaviour policy originated from as well using scaling questions to open up the opportunity to improve on an existing policy (e.g. ‘What could be better if….’). By taking on this exploratory role, Lukas able to begin to adapt parts of the behaviour policy that may have negatively impacted some of the ‘at risk’ students within the school system while also providing staff with a space to think about adapting it, without feeling ‘defensive’ or criticized for it.

4.4.2 Theme: Shared Vision and Values

Participants spoke about the importance of having a shared vision and values which can be disseminated across the different groups within a school community. This will be discussed under the following subthemes: ***‘Role of Headteacher’*, *Shared Perception of Teacher Role***, ‘and ***‘Inclusive Ethos and Related Actions’***. These will be described in more detail below.

4.4.2.1 Subtheme: Role of Headteacher

Five of the participants spoke about the important role a headteacher can play in shaping and communicating the school's vision. There was a sense that a headteacher can hold a significant sway on a school's position, particularly when it comes to inclusive practices. Participants believe that when a headteacher is committed to inclusion, this will be reflected in their policies, practices and messages they share with staff and students, resulting in a 'trickle-down' effect'.

'I do think, a head's vision and a head's values and how they talk. It really does affect the whole staff body, maybe not immediately, but you know, it really does.' (Zara, 310)

'I guess it kind of comes from the top, when I've seen it being done best' (Lukas,247)

'The schools where the head teacher bought into that made such a difference.' (Rebecca, 287)

The above quotations emphasize the power of a headteacher's vision and commitment to inclusion, highlighting a 'trickle-down effect' impacting policies, practices, and communication throughout the school These highlight the importance of examining how headteacher leadership interacts with the organisational structure of the school as part of their 'inclusive practice'.

4.4.2.2 Subtheme: Shared Perception of Teacher Role

There was a sense that the role of a teacher in a secondary school can be thought of differently, depending on the context and the person. Five of the participants shared the difficulties with this, acknowledging how a different approach to the role of a

teacher could lead to different approaches and commitment to inclusion. This could be influenced by a number of different factors including the shared vision and values communicated within the school, an individual's experience of teaching and learning and staff capacity to take on other roles and responsibilities, including taking on inclusive practices and approaches. When it is done well, however, there is a sense from participants, that there is a whole school commitment to inclusion.

'You're grounded in different people's kind of epistemological positions, different people's views about teaching the people's constructs, lots of secondary school teachers see themselves as a teacher of insert subject name, not teacher of children.' (Niamh, 675)

'…what teachers perceive their role to be around inclusion. And I think, from my experience, people think about inclusion in terms of learning. So how do we differentiate this learning? How do we change our questioning, but then thinking about inclusion around emotional wellbeing? I think sometimes that that can feel like quite a lot for I mean, I'm sure teachers think about it all the time.' (Jackie, 524)

'When I was teaching, we used to say that we've got two different jobs. One is to do what the senior leadership team require us to do. And the other is to actually teach the children. And it was like, it didn't feel like the two were aligned' (Zara, 553)

4.4.2.3 Subtheme: Inclusive Ethos and Related Actions

There was a sense from all participants, that a clear inclusive ethos and stance can support all students to feel welcome and valued. Participants shared that by taking a stance on different aspects of inclusion, for example, a school advertising

themselves as non-selective and willing to take in previously excluded children, this can create a culture of commitment to all students.

'So I think there is buy in from staff, the head is superb. And her vision is crystal clear. Right, the way down to the fact that is marketed across the school incredibly well. You know, the two mottos and school I want to learn and do the right thing. And .. I want to learn, which is kind of one could argue, that's academic, and do the right thing… there is about holistic view. Obviously, there are people here, who maybe don't get it in the way that we might like to get it. But I think a clear vision is the way and that vision is communicated very well. And very consistently. And we have a whole host of systems that allow us to live within that vision, basically' (Niamh, 420)

'… just because you weren't successful in this school setting, doesn't mean you're not going to be successful with us. And we've got a history of successes of including children that have been previously excluded from other schools that might be more selective, might be a little bit more academic. So that's definitely one of their one of their values' (Laura, 280).

4.4.1 Theme: Collaboration and Support

Participants spoke about the importance of creating a culture of collaboration and support within the school environment which will be discussed under the following subthemes: **'*Sharing Best Practice***, '***Home-School Communication and Collaboration***, and **'*Student Voice and Participation'***. These will be described in more detail below.

4.4.1.1 Subtheme: Sharing Best Practice

There was a sense from five of the participants that creating a culture of collaboration could help improve the quality of inclusive education and support for children. One way this could be achieved was through sharing best practice. This could be between external professionals and staff, such as EPs, to inter-staff collaboration. By sharing ideas and resources, staff could help create a sense of community and develop their own practice, which ultimately benefits the students.

‘Firstly, the staff that were in the sessions, obviously, they weren't in for every session, but I was really conscious about giving them they got a bit of a nugget that lives in their pocket. That's why I always used to say to them, this is your takeaway for this, this is what you can be saying, and I'd get them to rehearse it and say it back to me, whatever, you know, even if it's like hand brain model, or something like that, something was quite easy. And I've heard them and seen them using that with the children, all sorts of children as well, not just those from that intervention’. (Niamh, 214)

‘I think what I've noticed is like, just by getting people together to share what they're already doing, can be very powerful. And I think it can sometimes give people permission to do similar things or try similar things. Because teachers are often like working independently throughout the day’ (Jackie, 558)

4.4.1.2 Subtheme: Home-School Communication and Collaboration

There was a sense of importance around involving families in supporting students who may be vulnerable or at-risk of exclusion. When families become involved, there

are more opportunities created to understand the context of the child's needs as well as jointly supporting the needs of the child.

'And what are the things that I found to be helpful? I think inviting the family in as well. And I think sometimes I'm thinking of Yeah, I suppose like allowing the family and setting up a safe space for the family to share some of what might be going on. Because sometimes that's not always shared at school, or the family's interactions at school are naturally always negative. They're ringing them every other day about this, that the oh that's gone on. And so I suppose being able to use our role to kind of set up a situation where the family feels safe enough to share that information, and in the hope that maybe if you know people know something else that's going on for the child that might explain some of how they're behaving, then maybe that will make a difference as well' (Rebecca, 408)

This quotation emphasizes the importance of family involvement in supporting vulnerable or at-risk students. Rebecca highlighted the necessity of including families in order to contribute to the understanding of the child's context and facilitate joint support for their needs.

4.4.1.3 Subtheme: Student Voice and Participation

This subtheme highlights the way three of the participants perceive the importance of children feeling a sense of belonging and feeling understood and listened to within the school system. There is a sense from participants that by having a say in the policies and procedures within the school, children may become more engaged and empowered within their setting as they feel included and respected.

‘And I spoke with students from either that were like, regularly sanctioned, sanctioned a bit, or very rarely sanctioned. And I think it's quite, it's quite interesting, actually, what came out of it, because there was a lot of consistency from all groups that there are a lot of school rules that are sort of ridiculous’ (Lukas, 336)

‘I once worked in a school where the student voice group was superb. And they came up with a list of kind of do's and don'ts for teachers their parents evening and one of the kids graphic to it and it was mandatory. ….. And there's something really kind of empowering about that, that actually, we do have a voice. And it can make a real difference’ (Niamh, 547)

4.4.3 Theme: Support for Staff

Participants spoke about the importance of staff receiving support in order for them to have the capacity to support students who may be at-risk. This will be discussed under the following subthemes: ***‘Staff Capacity,’*** ‘and ***‘Relieving Staff Workload’***. These will be described in more detail below.

4.4.3.1 Subtheme: Staff Capacity

There was an acknowledgement from four of the participants that in order for staff to be able to best support vulnerable students, their own capacity must be supported. This could be through cover release to attend important meetings, understanding their workload and expertise and making accommodations for this and given space to reflect on how they can support a student.

‘...a really positive in this school is that the form tutors will often be released for consultation, the SENCo will be present, and often the pastoral academic leader’ (Laura, 135)

‘You're suggesting stuff, at least as long as your arm and you have no idea what it's like, because I we can't do it. We can't do half the stuff that you're asking us to do …..I 'm not going to give you 10 Things that you need to go out and do because you're not going to do it. Can we get two or three things that feel really manageable? Can we really drill down on what exactly is it about those two or three things that we're going to do? What will it look like? How will we know it's been done?’ (Niamh, 317)

Niamh particularly highlighted the importance of understanding and support staff workload and management as well as other underlying factors such as expertise recognition, and reflection time for staff to effectively support vulnerable students.

4.4.3.2 Subtheme: Relieving Staff Workload

Four of the participants expressed the importance of offering relief to staff in order to expand their capacity to support vulnerable students. This was referenced through a number of different practical and organisational based ideas such as EPs taking on some of the planning and organising tasks, as well as a clear system within the school that provides staff with time, space and resources to think about their inclusive practices (e.g. cover time so staff can attend consultations or plan for differentiation in lessons).

‘And it partly comes down to the adults in that school. But also, sort of healthy systems in general, them not being completely overwhelmed with the amount of work that they've got to do and things like that’ (Lukas, 254)

‘..how are we building in time to think about reviewing or building staff capacity to then take that on themselves?’ (Jackie, 641)

‘So we were able to kind of construct it together. Of course, a lot of the time, it was me saying, right, let's send that email right now. We just do it now, shall we? Because then it's done. What kids or kids do we think just get a little list now, shall we... not... Could you get me a list is I think we did that together now. Because they're so busy.’ (Niamh, 135)

4.4.4 Theme: Role of SENCo

Five of participants spoke about the importance of the role of the SENCo in relation to supporting vulnerable children within the school. There were some variations with regards to where the role of the SENCo should sit within a school system, whether they are part of senior management or not. There was acknowledgment that while being part of senior management means that SEN can become a priority and the SENCo is better placed to advocate for students, they may also have other responsibilities that could take away from their time supporting inclusion.

‘And the assistant SENCo, at that school is very skilled at building relationships with these children, so makes time to listen to them, is very knowledgeable about Sen and how needs might present and is quite strong advocate for children within the rest of the school so really thinks about these children's views and is kind of looks at the school system through quite a critical lens. And is very direct about what she thinks these children need within the school. And whenever I go into this school, and I asked children about who is that key person or who they would go to, it's always this member of staff. She's very nurturing with them, nurturing but firm. And really goes above and beyond to, like, get to know families, build relationships with children, like adapt things for them, so that they feel much more comfortable’ (Jackie, 452)

‘I felt like for the last five years in children with special educational needs has been put further up the agenda because there's somebody linked to the senior leader management team, whereas previously the SENCo didn't have a role on the senior leadership team’. (Laura, 307)

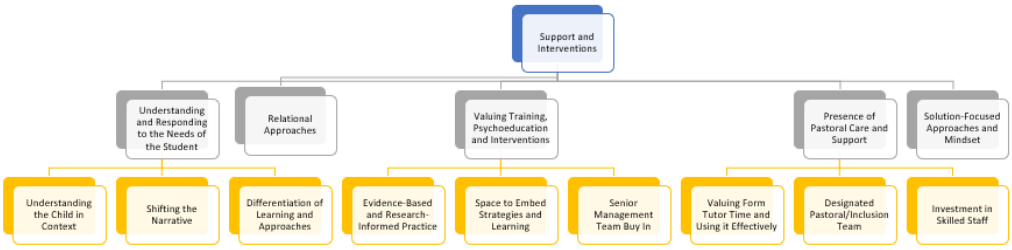
‘And I think if she was on the leadership team, she would be covering lunch duties and break duties left, right and centre and have to cover lessons much more than she does. And then there would be less opportunity for her to do the work that that that we know we need her to be doing. So but then, because she's not on the leadership team, she doesn't have the same influence’ (Niamh, 123)

The contrasting quotations both acknowledge the role of the SENCo in supporting vulnerable students however there are differing views on their placement within the school system. Some of the benefits of senior management inclusion include highlighting SEN as a priority which in turns facilitates advocacy for students. Some of the potential drawbacks of senior management inclusion include increased responsibilities and reduced time for core SENCo duties.

4.5 Overarching Theme Four: Support and Interventions

This overarching theme captures what contributes to support within a school system for at-risk students. It contains five themes: ‘*Understanding and Responding to the Needs of the Student’, ‘Relational Approaches’, Valuing Training, Psychoeducation and Interventions’ ‘Presence of Pastoral Care and Support’* and *Solution-Focused Approaches and Mindset.* This will be explained in further detail as each theme is discussed.

Figure 9. *Overarching Theme Four: Support and Interventions*



4.5.1 Theme: Understanding and Responding to the Needs of the Student

Participants spoke about the importance of developing an empathic approach to working and interacting with students which will be discussed under the following subthemes: ***'Understanding the Child in Context***, '***Shifting the Narrative***, and ***'Differentiation of Learning and Approaches'***. These will be described in more detail below.

4.5.1.1 Subtheme: Understanding the Child in Context

Four of the participants acknowledged the difficulty of teachers in secondary school often working in isolation and may not have the opportunities to become aware of the context of a child's needs and how they may present differently in different settings or lessons. Linking back to other themes regarding sharing information and best practice, participants highlighted the importance of staff collaboration when developing an overview of what a vulnerable student's strengths and needs are, and how they may present differently across the school day. There was a sense that it can also allow staff to develop an empathetic approach towards the student when they can begin to understand where some difficulties may be stemming from.

‘People felt that they had shared things with each other, they had a bit of a better understanding about what was happening for the young person’ (Jackie, 121)

‘Because teachers are often like working independently throughout the day. And so they don't really know if you know, other people are allowing something or so I think that can be helpful in terms of like the power of sharing’ (Jackie, 560)

‘And sometimes other professionals don't always think about that side of things, particularly when we've got kids that are risk of exclusion, that you have to think about the whole picture. And understand we need to put the child in the middle of it, but sometimes other professionals, I feel like they, they forget that there is a whole picture, whereas us as EPs were quite good at hanging on to the whole picture’ (Niamh, 351)

4.5.1.2 Subtheme: Shifting the Narrative

Linking with the previous subtheme, there was also a sense from four of the participants that with a better understanding of a child and their associated needs, it may provide opportunities for staff to view the child with a different lens or perspective.

‘Sometimes that has just been, like me, the SENCo, and one other teacher, and that feels valuable, because even if there are like little shifts in understanding, or people are thinking about something slightly differently, then that feels valuable’ (Jackie, 211)

‘…they're just a child. So we've started using child more here. And a few of us, I wasn't I heard someone else do it one of my.. one of my secondary school SENCos, she was using child. And she explained to me why she was like, it’s to remind the

staff that they're their children. They look like six foot six, you know, big men, but they're not. They're just children. And I really liked it. So we I've started using it here, and I was upfront, and now more people are saying children, and it's just that tiny switch of mindset, isn't it that they are just children, their brains are not fully formed' (Niamh, 631)

'...where it's gone really positively, is when you've been able to shift that narrative. And that can be in a way to show I suppose the things that they're capable of like that. But in other circumstances, I think it's been a lot more of trying to explain, like, the reasons why they're presenting with those behaviours. And one of the things I've sort of noticed, and maybe this will feed into your other questions later. But I think within schools that can be these narratives about some children being almost like deserving of additional support and accepting that their behaviour is coming from a certain reason within school stuff, and then there are others that it's like, they've got this that at home, like their home life isn't bad. They get lots of attention at school. So why are they behaving like this? And it's a lot more sort of cutthroat approach with them' (Lukas, 128)

The quotations above highlight that a change in staff perspective of the needs of a child could lead to more offers of support from staff for that child. Lukas in particular, raised concerns about this, however, sharing that without this commitment to understanding a child and their needs, staff may not be as invested in offering support as they may not be deemed 'deserving' of it which may impact 'successful inclusion practices'.

4.5.1.3 Subtheme: Differentiation of Learning and Approaches

Differentiation was thought of by two participants as the ‘first step’ of inclusive practices in a school setting, with references using associated with learning. One participant highlighted the importance of differentiating and adapting the curriculum and the learning approaches used in order to create an environment where a child can succeed, regardless of their underlying needs. Differentiation was also thought about in terms of the interactions that staff can have with students, including the relational approaches that adopt when support the social and emotional wellbeing of a student.

‘But really what can be what can make all the difference is the teacher or the adult, that's trying to talk to an aggravated teenager, just kind of recognizing that they're not yet able to self-regulate and reflect on why they might be feeling a certain way. But taking that emotion coaching style approach’ (Lukas, 463)

‘And I guess that's at a student level, but also the teachers and the people that set that up, you're creating an environment where everyone can succeed at something.’ (Zara, 221)

4.5.2 Theme: Relational Approaches

All participants expressed the importance of relational approaches being a core part of inclusive practice. All participants believed that the ‘small acts’ such as greetings in the corridor, can have significant impact on a child’s sense of belonging and acceptance within a school. Some participants believed that when students feel that their teachers are willing to understand them and listen to their needs and concerns, they are more likely to respond better, which can de-escalate a difficult situation.

‘And I think the other thing that really springs to mind, again, comparing two secondary schools where there was a marked contrast is the stuff on greetings, and the way that teachers welcome students into their classroom. And in one school were silenced in the corridors and on the on the door...’ (Laura, 385)

‘Having a conversation rather than jumping straight to penalizing or sanctioning children or sending them out’ (Zara, 407)

‘I mean, I know we hammer on about it all the time, in terms of it all comes down to relationships’ (Rebecca, 456)

4.5.3 Theme: Valuing Training, Psychoeducation and Interventions

Participants spoke about a variety of different trainings, psychoeducation support and interventions that can support vulnerable students and the factors that contribute to this success. This was named as the following subthemes: **‘*Evidence-Based and Research-Informed Practice’***, ‘***Space to Embed Strategies and Learning’***, and **‘*Senior Management Team Buy In*’**. These will be described in more detail below.

4.5.3.1 Subtheme: Evidence-Based and Research-Informed Practice

Three of the participants referred to the importance of using evidence-based and research-informed practice in a number of different ways when working with a school system and those who sit within it.

‘...what I've seen what well, in some of my other secondary schools is some schools making really good use of circle of friends. And involving me in setting up a circle of friends, in one year seven class with all the other year seven form tutors observing and then the school prioritizing PSHE time for the other form tutors to do it with their

year sevens. And that probably happened three years in a row. And it was just something they put in place for year sevens at the, you know, right at the start of their first term. And I think that was a really supportive, inclusive approach' (Laura, 367)

'Oh, this is I can see where this is going to end up and getting in early doors and saying to schools, you know, putting it on the table saying, what will it take for you to keep this child and being I suppose, using research as well saying, you know, research tells us that, you know, this about a child who's excluded, and research tells us that they're more at risk of this and this and this, and just putting it on the table that I suppose at the point where schools are maybe making that decision' (Rebecca, 341)

In the quotation above, Rebeca referenced the research that can be used to support the proposals and recommendations when supporting across the three levels of the school (i.e. individual, group and systemic). By using an evidenced research base, Rebecca suggested they can highlight the value of investing in an intervention or approach, which in turn can positively influence what a school can do to support vulnerable groups of children.

4.5.3.2 Subtheme: Space to Embed Strategies and Learning

By creating space to reflect on and embed strategies that have been introduced to a school, staff are provided with opportunities to integrate inclusive practices within their everyday life. This can become part of a school culture and approach. One participant acknowledged that by providing opportunities for staff to reflect on what has gone well and areas they need to develop in specific areas, it can create a peer support network, where staff can learn to collaborate and share best practice.

‘Our team meeting, we did 15 minutes on attunement, they set themselves a target, they had to go and do something that was about attunement with a child in the next week, come back and review it in the next session, what went well, why did it go? Well, people shared best practice. And it's a bit of a standing item on our weekly meeting list in our department’ (Niamh, 233)

4.5.3.3 Subtheme: Senior Management Team Buy In

Five of the participants raised the significance of having senior management present when supporting inclusive practices for vulnerable pupils and accompanying staff members. There was a sense that, by being visible and present, senior management are prioritizing the importance of pastoral care and inclusion within the school environment and culture. This message of inclusion can then trickle down to staff and students.

‘So I think, kind of buy in from the deputy head and I think had, I don't know what the email chain was, but if I imagine if she said, Well, I'm gonna go along, I'll make sure to be there on the phone, that might have meant that more people were interested in coming along’ (Jackie, 176)

‘I think the schools that I've seen, do it like best have been ones where that is like, it's really emphasized from the top’ (Lukas, 234)

These quotes highlight the perceived importance of senior management presence in supporting inclusive practices for vulnerable students. Jackie and Lukas both suggest that visible involvement by senior leadership conveys a commitment to pastoral care and inclusion.

4.5.4 Theme: Presence of Pastoral Care and Support

Participants spoke about the importance of having a present pastoral/inclusion team which can provide care and support for at risk pupils on a number of different levels. This is made reference through the following subthemes: ***'Valuing Form Tutor Time and Using it Effectively'***, ***'Designated Pastoral/Inclusion Team'***, and '***Investment in Skilled Staff'.*** These will be described in more detail below.

4.5.4.1 Subtheme: Valuing Form Tutor Time and Using it Effectively

Two participants referenced the importance of carving out time within the school timetable to develop a child's social and emotional wellbeing (e.g. teaching coping strategies and building resilience, psychoeducation) as well as engaging them in non-curriculum based discussions and projects. One area where this is possible and can be done, according to participants, is through form tutor time. There was also a sense, from participants, of the importance of valuing the form tutor who can play a significant role in becoming a key adult figure for a vulnerable student. By having a designated weekly space, there is time for students and staff to build a trusting relationship and for staff to monitor vulnerable student's progress and areas of need, before it escalates.

'*But I also think, you know, in form time, absolutely. There's space for you to be doing psychoeducation there's absolutely space for you to be teaching the kids about principles of attunement and attuned relationships. There's absolutely space for us to be teaching and scaffolding thoughts, feelings, body sensations, emotions, behaviour, you know, we can absolutely tie that together. It's a real space for us to provide some of that stuff that helps us understand how we tick, we can absolutely teach flipping a lid, like that should just be mandatory. So I think that that is, schools*

where that's done. You can see that it when it's done, well, you can see the impact for you.' (Niamh, 472)

4.5.4.2 Subtheme: Designated Pastoral/Inclusion Team

Three participants referred to the importance of having a designated pastoral/inclusion team as a fundamental part of an inclusive school environment, particularly when this team is clearly valued and invested in by senior management. There was a sense amongst these participants that by investing in a pastoral approach, it can create a more balanced learning environment, where staff are committed to supporting academic goals as well a student social and emotional development and wellbeing. From this, students how may struggle to access the curriculum for a number of reasons, can access more specialized and holistic support.

'They value pastoral care. And I think that's the fact that they employ, you know, not academic… pastoral leaders, that pastoral academic leaders so that their main role is a pastoral role. But they also want to be involved in monitoring progress with learning too. So if any children seem to be not getting on, as well as they could be doing, educationally or socially, the pastoral academic leaders take on more of a role' (Laura, 284)

'They are a school that pushes hard on their pastoral side, we have a SEMH hub, that we fund out the school's budget. That is not a provision. It's just a space within our school. In there is highly skilled and trained members of staff to provide kind of wellbeing and coaching and mentoring support for children that are dysregulated have emotional social needs' (Niamh, 397)

4.5.4.3 Subtheme: Investment in Skilled Staff

Continuing on from the previous subtheme, while acknowledging the presence of inclusion team, there was a particular emphasis from participants on the skill and training that these pastoral staff members acquired. There was a sense that the role that these staff members take on is valued within the school setting due to the positive impact they can have supporting vulnerable students. As a result, there is a sense of investment and commitment by senior management to upskill individuals in these roles, leading to a positive cycle of support.

'Within those spaces, you do get some very skilled staff that are great at connecting with the children. And I guess, when you do have the skilled staff in those spaces, you can form positive relationships. (Zara, 437)

'Now another point that I really value about the school setting is that the heads of years are not called head of years. They're called... I mean, not sure the title is brilliant pastoral academic leader, but it's been short, it's PAL. And so you've got a year seven P A L, and I think that is significant. And the pals are not necessarily teachers. They're not. They're not trained in teaching. So they're offering coming from a welfare background or a social, social care background or a youth mentoring' (Laura, 137)

'I guess it just makes me think of a lot of the secondary schools I've worked in, they'll have a really amazing like behaviour, mentor figure. And the skill that those guys because they are often guys, not always, but the skill that they really bring is that ability to connect on a level with the kids. And for the kids to feel like they're understood. And there's someone on their side. And I think those people are super skilled' (Zara, 255)

These participant quotes highlight the importance of skilled staff and positive relationships in fostering inclusion within educational settings. In Laura's quote, she identifies that backgrounds and training in welfare, social care, or youth mentoring can equip individuals with the necessary skill to promote successful inclusion.

4.5.5 Theme: Solution-Focused Approaches and Mindset

Three of the participants referenced using 'Solution-Focused' based approaches and interventions within the school system as part of their own practice as well as school systems investing in the use of this approach across the school. There was an emphasis on the use of these approaches as a way of encouraging student engagement and empowering students. This was referenced to when discussing using solution focused frameworks when representing the views and the needs of students, perhaps when there are many key adults speaking about them. In other aspects, using these approaches seemed like a way of containing and supporting staff, by facilitating and guiding their thinking through an organised structure, with space to set actions and goals to work towards to best support a student at risk of exclusion. It seemed to help move staff from feeling 'stuck' and disempowered to a space where they could engage more in supporting the inclusion of vulnerable children.

'So, the pastoral academic leader will always carry out a solution focused interview with the pupil before a consultation. And that's something that we worked with over the years. So he would sit in with me in solution focused narrative interviews with students, and then we worked on a framework. And he developed himself so that he would always come with a printout of this as the interviewer and he would be

representing the pupils views in that early stages of the school consultation' (Laura, 158)

'I think things like solution circles or like PATHS where you can get a lot of adults around at the same time. So one of the schools I had last year training, it was actually during COVID. But we were just able to do a few of those online where it would be like, quite a lot of staff did attend' (Lukas, 159)

'And I think gave the adults just a bit of a step by step plan as to what they could do' (Jackie, 112)

Summary

This chapter has detailed an analytical summary of the research findings and attempted to answer the research question: '*What are the contexts and mechanisms that are behind successful inclusion practices for students at risk of exclusion in a secondary school context?*' The next chapter will explore these findings in further detail and consider implications for the EP profession and future practice within secondary school contexts.

5. Discussion

This chapter aims to address the research question using the findings described in the previous chapter. This will begin with a summary of the overall findings and then further detailed exploration of the research findings and how it relates to previous research. The implications of these findings will be shared and their dissemination. The methodological limitations will also be discussed alongside possibilities for future research. Finally, the chapter ends with self-reflection on my positioning as the researcher and how this may have impacted the undertaking of this research.

5.1 Summary of Research Findings

This research has sought to answer the question, *'What are the contexts and mechanisms that are behind successful inclusion practices for students at risk of exclusion in a secondary school context?'.*

As a result of the analysis, four overarching themes were generated and have been included in the table below (please see Table 6).

Overarching Theme	Theme	Subtheme
Relationships	Student-Staff Relationships	• Relating to One Another • Advocacy for Students • Importance of Restorative Conversations
	Inter-Staff Relationships	• Sharing Information • Sharing the Emotional Load and Support for One Another

Systemic Factors	Space in the School Environment	• Creating and Valuing Emotional Space • Creating and Valuing Reflective Space • Physical Space • Size of School and Classes
	External Professionals	• Role of the EP • Interagency Collaboration
School Culture and Leadership	Policies and Procedures	• Flexible Behaviour Policy • Use of Positive and Curious Language
	Shared-Vision and Values	• Role of Headteacher • Shared Perception of Teacher Role • Inclusive Ethos and Related Actions
	Collaboration and Support	• Sharing Best Practice • Home-School Communication and Collaboration • Student Voice and Participation
	Support for Staff	• Staff Capacity • Relieving Staff Workload
	Role of the SENCo	
Support and Interventions	Understanding and Responding to the Needs of the Student	• Understanding the Child in Context • Shifting the Narrative • Differentiation of Learning and Approaches
	Relational Approaches	

Valuing Training, Psychoeducation and Interventions	• Evidence-Based and Research-Informed Practice • Space to Embed Strategies and Learning • Senior Management Team Buy In
Presence of Pastoral Care and Support	• Valuing Form Tutor Time and Using it Effectively • Designated Pastoral/Inclusion Team • Investment in Skilled Staff
Solution-Focused Approaches and Mindset	

Table 6. *Overarching Themes and Corresponding Themes and Subthemes*

Many findings in the current research support previous literature exploring factors that impact the inclusive practice for pupils at risk of exclusion in secondary schools. These include the importance of relationships, student involvement, staff commitment, school ethos and home-school relationships. This study can also contribute factors to the already existing research base. The implications of these findings suggest that the present group of participants in this study generally do not express a need for novel or impractical recommendations and factors to support . This may suggest that recommendations from prior research have not been put into practice for a number of reasons, including having deeper insight into what supports these practices and recommendations. As a result, this research adds to the existing literature by exploring what underlies the contexts and mechanisms behind ‘successful’ inclusion practices.

5.1.1 Relationships

The importance of positive and supportive relationships between staff and students was emphasized as a significant factor when thinking about what underlies successful inclusion practices. Participant highlighted two different types of relationships that play a key role in this concept. This includes *'Student-Staff Relationships'* and *'Inter-Staff Relationships'*. While other relationships exist within the school system that may also be fundamental to successful inclusion practices, these were two that were prioritised within this current study. For example, although peer relationships between students was briefly touched upon, it was often referenced when speaking about other topics such as '*Differentiation of Learning'* and *'Student Voice and Participation'* rather than a direct focus. '*Home-School'* Relationships were also referenced however this was in relation to this importance of communication and collaboration, which I felt fit better within a different theme.

Student-Staff Relationships

The importance of teacher-student relationships and it's predicted outcomes for positive and successful learning experiences, is not a new concept. It has been emphasized through a number of different large scale studies and frameworks developed for schools (Hattie, 2012). Within this study, participants shared this perspective and further explored what underlies and contributes to positive student-staff relationships and how this relationship can play a vital role in supporting successful inclusion practices. To begin, one important underlying factor that participants raised was that staff should appear as relatable to students as possible. This can be done by allowing students to see staff as human-like rather than a removed professional figure. Participants felt this could help students to develop trust

towards others, particularly adults in a professional capacity. Some vulnerable students may have difficult relationships with key adult figures in their life, particularly if they have been previously excluded or involved with other services. One way that this type of relationship can develop is thinking about how students and staff can relate and what connects them. This could be a variety of factors such as shared culture, community, ethnicity, and gender. From a staff's perceptive, it can allow them to develop empathy and understanding towards a student's needs, as there may be a shared understanding, awareness, or similar experience. Some participants shared that staff who held pastoral roles may be hired from the local community or have similar backgrounds, for this purpose. While there has been a lot of research into the beneficial outcomes of taking relational approaches such as Rose and colleagues (2018) highlighting the significant benefits for behaviour and learning, the current literature did not provide any consensus on how this trusting relationship can develop nor its maintenance.

While these factors explored how the relationship may develop, participants also raised the importance of how it is maintained. Participants expressed how it important it was to repair relationships between staff and students if they break down. Restorative conversations can be used to address conflict and can be particularly beneficial for students at risk of exclusion who may be experiencing conflict in other areas of their life. Restorative conversations allow both staff and students to feel heard about an incident, and the student can feel comfortable returning to the adult's lesson and continue to engage within the learning context. This is consistent with the research found. For example, Stanforth and Rose (2018) identified 'resolving tensions' as a key factor in inclusion practices, acknowledging

the difficulties of engaging a child in a classroom from both perspectives, if that relationship is lost or does not have the opportunity to develop.

In addition, the importance of having an identified key adult(s) in a child's life, particularly within the school system was raised by participants. These adults can act as a 'champion' or 'advocate' for them, particularly when they become at risk of exclusion. This could be a teaching assistant, a SENCo, teaching staff, or mentor. These individuals can play a vital role in supporting students to stay connected, engaged, and feel listened to within the school system. Research on attachment theory, for example, highlights the importance of close relationships, especially between a child and a key adult (usually a caregiver). Children who form and maintain secure attachments are more likely to be confident, resilient, and successful in school. Using an attachment framework can help one to understand the importance of relationships for a child, and how these relationships can impact their behaviour, engagement with learning and overall well-being (Bowlby, 1969).

Inter-Staff Relationships

The concept of inter-staff relationships was also found to contribute to successful inclusion practice in a number of different ways. This included the importance of using each other as peer resource to develop their inclusive practice, share information about a child’s needs to develop contextual information but also developing a shared emotional connection, particularly if working with children displaying challenging behaviours. These factors can contribute to staff developing and embedding successful inclusion practices for vulnerable students. When thinking about the current demands that are being placed on teaching staff members to deliver high quality teaching and inclusion practices (e.g. DfE SEND and AP green

paper), while facing external curriculum pressures, there is a risk that teachers may experience burn-out or leaving the profession. Utilising the resources that are available to them by connecting with their peers could play an important role.

Sharing information is important for supporting inclusive practices in a number of ways. It allows staff to identify what approaches to teaching and learning are working well and not so well for some pupils, and to create a holistic image of the pupils' strengths, needs, and views. By working together, staff can also begin to 'shift the narrative' that has been created about the student, based on their own previous perceptions. This also links in with the theme *of 'Understanding and Responding to the Needs of the Child'.* This draws on findings presented by Thompson and colleagues (2021), where the researchers argue that effective inclusive practice is built on mutual understanding and reciprocal support between all parties involved with the young person.

A factor that some participants felt that can be overlooked in a school environment, particularly in a secondary school where you may be working in isolation, is having a space to share the emotional load with one another. Working with vulnerable children can be challenging, and staff need to have their own peer support to cope with the emotional demands of the job. When staff feel isolated and unsupported, they are more likely to become emotionally drained, which can impact on their own wellbeing and their ability to support students. This links in with the theme of 'Space in a School Environment' where there was an emphasis on the need to create and hold space for staff and students to feel comfortable to share the emotional impact of what they are feeling. While some studies acknowledged the emotional toll that can take place on staff who may be involved in the support of a vulnerable pupil

(Stanforth & Rose, 2020) , there was no research directly identifying how staff can best support one another.

5.1.2 Systemic Factors

Space in the School Environment

The concept of ‘space’ in a school system was spoken about by participants on a number of different levels. This ranged from the physical space within schools that are designated to SEN and inclusion, to the emotional and reflective space created for staff and students when thinking about support and differentiation. The concept of an ‘inclusive’ physical space was viewed as a designated area designed for de-escalation purposes as well as a space children can access additional resources, adaption of learning and teaching, and supporting social and emotional wellbeing. The Dfe (2014) have previously issued guidelines for mainstream schools indicating that a SEN resource learning zone is required for all children who may require additional support. How this may look however varies and this inconsistency in approach could lead to difficulties in how best the provision is used and offered. This particular issue of what is an ‘inclusive’ space and from whose perspective, was highlighted in previous research. There were various forms of physical provisions and spaces that were categorised as ‘inclusive’ or ‘inclusion’ rooms while serving different purposes. For example, Gilmore (2012;2013) explored the use of a disciplinary type of inclusion room. While this space offered additional pastoral support that may not be as accessible in mainstream, as well as reducing the need for ‘exclusions’, there was still many barriers that impact a student’s feeling of inclusion and belonging within the school. The research also acknowledges the importance of drawing in pupil voice and perspectives as they are the ones who

access the spaces. This was also highlighted within the current research study, particularly when inviting pupils to become involved with behaviour policies and procedures, which can influence how the rooms are created and used.

External Professionals

Given the nature of the study and the profession of the participants, the role of the EP was weaved in through all of the participants thinking and perspectives, often linking in with how they can best support schools with inclusive practices. Thinking about the role of the EP in this context, there are different ‘key functions’ in which the EP can offer their services. This includes consultation, assessment, training, research and intervention. These skills can be transferable and generalisable across many different contexts and settings that they are requested to support in, including across different levels of support such as individual, group and across a whole school context (BPS, 2018; Fallon et al., 2010; Scottish Executive, 2002). With these in mind, participants also explored the adaptability of the role of the EP and how else they can be best placed to offer their services to schools based on the presenting needs. Participants spoke about the flexibility they take when entering a school, sometimes acting as a facilitator for shifting the narrative of a child, sometimes supporting a SENCos mental load by taking on some organisational tasks and planning and sometimes providing a ‘glimmer of hope’ for a tricky situation. Interestingly, none of the studies specifically spoke about the role of the EP when supporting vulnerable and at risk students as well as developing inclusion practices. This raises the question of how EPs are viewed within the school system and other services involved in education and wellbeing of a child.

Although the EPS sits within a multi-disciplinary service, there can be variations in interagency collaboration works. Participants however highlighted the benefits of working with other systems who also know and become involved with the school. This is consistent with the research, for example Thompson and colleagues (2021) highlighted the important of inter-agency relationships around the child, to ensure that there is consistent and collaborative information being shared to develop and maintain support over periods of time. Without these relationships, individuals within the system can feel isolated and unsupported when managing the complex challenges of supporting children with varying needs. Some participants acknowledged that this was helpful when taking a holistic approach to supporting a child, as they were provided more contextual information and resources to best support their learning and engagement.

5.1.3 School Culture and Leadership

Policies and Procedures

The government, through the Department of Education, can often set the general tone for behaviour policies and guidelines in a number of ways. This could be through position papers, guidance and legal frameworks that schools must generally adhere to, with some flexibility about how some procedures are implemented. For example, the interchanging terminology to describe children's social and emotional needs has been adapted and referred to as many things such as 'challenging behaviour', 'behavioural, emotional and social difficulties', 'emotional and behavioural difficulties' or 'social and emotional behavioural difficulties' (Stanforth and Rose, 2020). This can often set the prerequisite for how staff and schools may view a child's needs and set the tone of response to them. This rigidity with thinking

can often lead little room for variation and flexibility, including empowering staff to become more confident in adapting their responses and understanding the boundaries and consequences of bullying.

Martin-Denham (2021) also acknowledged the impact of statutory guidance on the ability to foster and promote inclusive practice. They draw attention to the fact that statutory guidance, at the time of the study, for special educational needs and disability does not define inclusion despite stating that schools have a duty to prevent discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and foster good relations. The lack of clarification and legal statutory guidance may explain the difficulty in understanding and promoting inclusive practice. Participants raised concerns about the rigidity that a behaviour policy can hold and how staff may not always feel confident when differentiating responses to vulnerable pupils due to the lack of flexibility of the policy. However, some participants acknowledged that when schools become more flexible with how they respond to negative behaviours within the school context, they can help deescalate a child's behaviour rather than falling into a cycle of 'consequences' and 'punitive responses', which may result in a child becoming at risk of exclusion.

Shared Vision and Values

There are number of key factors that can impact how a shared vision is created and supported within schools, particularly the importance of having a shared inclusive vision and values which can be disseminated across the different groups within a school community. For example, when a headteacher is committed to inclusion, this will be reflected in their policies, practices and messages they share with staff and students, resulting in a 'trickle-down' effect'. This can include the roles and

responsibilities of a teacher, including their approach to inclusion. When headteachers are in a position to take a ‘no-exclusions’ view and create related guidance and policies around this, this can influence how much staff are able to look at a child in context and took a holistic approach to understanding their underlying needs. When the headteacher, however, adopts more ‘exclusionary practices’ such as the use of isolation booths (Denham, 2021). Although the study was predominately focused on the strengths and positive examples of successful inclusion, there was an acknowledgement of the challenges of working in a school system that doesn’t always include or may have a different vision of education to the EP.

Collaboration and Support & Support for Staff

As mentioned earlier, one of the underlying factors that can support successful inter-staff agency is by having a culture of collaboration and support within the school environment. One way this could be achieved was through sharing best practice. This could be also between external professionals and staff, such as EPs. By sharing ideas and resources, staff could help create a sense of community and develop their own practice, which ultimately benefits the students. There was also a sense of importance around involving families in supporting students who may be vulnerable or at-risk. When families become involved, there are more opportunities created to understand the context of the child’s needs as well as jointly supporting the needs of the child. There was variation in the research regarding how staff within schools view and value the role of home-school relationships and collaboration.
For example, Martin-Denham (2021) acknowledges the importance of home-school partnerships, but often headteachers find them difficult to build and maintain,

resulting in inconsistent communication, despite good intentions. This is contradictory to Stanforth and Rose (2018) and Gillies and Robinson (2012), who found that school staff can attribute negative behaviour to parental fault, which can bias inclusive approaches as they may view a child with a different perspective.

Another factor that was raised, was regarding staff capacity. For example, in order for staff to feel they have the capacity to take on the role of inclusion and support for vulnerable studies, there are several factors that participants believe need to be acknowledged and put into place. This includes senior management acknowledging their teams capacity and identifying areas that they can support, through relieving their workload (e.g. providing cover to support planning an adapted lesson and attending a consultation for a vulnerable student). By providing staff space to reflect on how they can support a student, this will enviably be able to support the inclusion practices on offer for this child. This was not directly referenced within the literature.

Role of SENCo

The SENCO was initially established in the 1994 SEN Code of Practice. The code of practice states that all mainstream schools must have a SENCO responsible for coordinating services around children with SEN and helping teachers develop and implement appropriate provision for these children. A SENCo holds responsibility for the learning and in school welfare for all children with SEN, to ensure that they receive the support they need to succeed in school. This includes advocating on their behalf with internal and external professionals and coordinating support for them (Qureshi, 2012). The SENCO role is important because it helps to ensure that children with SEN have access to the same educational opportunities as their peers,

which is a fundamental part of inclusive practice. To be in the best position to advocate and support successful inclusion practices, there was mixed responses in where the SENCo should sit within the school system. Participants held a juxtaposition by acknowledging difficulty in balancing the influence that a senior leadership position could hold in how SEN is prioritised within the school, which could positively impact a shared vision for inclusion across the school. The consequences of this, however, is that the senior leadership position comes with the added responsibilities of management across the school, not always relating to SEN and inclusion. This was also drawn from the research in which Done and Knowler (2021) urge that the SENCos require additional capability (such as the influence of sitting on a senior management team) in order to handle student anxiety, mental health, and well-being issues in order to promote inclusive practice. Without this, they argue, undertaking further support in this area will be impacted, resulting in inconsistent inclusive practice.

5.1.4 Support and Interventions

Understanding and Responding to the Needs of the Student

Understanding the child in context means understanding the child's strengths and needs, as well as the factors that may be impacting their behaviour and learning. Participants spoke about the importance of developing an empathic approach to working and interacting with students. This involves understanding the child in context, shifting the narrative, and differentiating learning and approaches. Holding a negative construction of a child, such as referencing them as ‘cheeky’ or ‘challenging’ can cause difficulties with individualising behaviour, rather than the consideration of systemic issues. This may result in staff less willing to support and

adapt to the child's needs, and the impact of staff less willing to engage in inclusive practices. One participant even acknowledged how staff may change their view of how 'deserving' a child is of support, based on the level of contextual information they have. This is consistent with the research found. For example, Stanforth and Rose (2018) also highlighted that were more likely to respond in a less punitive way when they understood the contextual factors of the child's needs. When thinking about the reality of this in a secondary school context, this can often prove to become difficult given the number of students one teacher may have on their roll across the year groups. It is, however, possible to achieve through the use of different strategies and frameworks highlighted by participants such as sharing information through a round robin after a consultation, if not all staff could attend. By offering opportunities for staff to learn more about the child's needs but also become aware of the importance of moving towards a 'child in context' mindset, staff may engage more in inclusive practices for vulnerable students. This also links in with other themes such as *'Collaboration and Support'* and *'Sharing Information'* as without these factors in place, it would increase the level of difficulty and workload for staff to access this information about students, becoming isolated in their role of inclusion.

Similarly to participants, Dimitrellou and Male (2022) highlighted the importance of differentiating response to behaviour based on the child's needs, from a student's perspective. They often found that teachers who had the ability to create accessible and engaging lessons, also had flexible approaches to behavioural responses. They found that they would become less 'strict' and created a 'fun' environment where children could access help and support, resulting in children wanting to engage more

with their learning. This could be through interactive lessons or valuing '*Student Voice*,' which also links with the theme of *'Student Voice and Participation'*.

Relational Approaches

Relational approaches to inclusive practice focus on building strong relationships so students feel valued and respected, regardless of their abilities or needs. It also involves developing staff skills in areas such as communication, active listening, and empathy. Participants in the study expressed the importance of relational approaches being a core part of inclusive practice. They believed that 'small acts' such as greetings in the corridor can have a significant impact on a child's sense of belonging and acceptance within a school. They also felt that when students feel that their teachers are willing to understand them and listen to their needs and concerns, they are more likely to respond better, which can de-escalate a difficult situation. From theories such as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs' (Pichère, & Cadiat, 2015), we know that a child requires many of their other needs met first before they are in a space in which they can learn. These include their needs relating to physiology, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. By implementing relational approaches, there are opportunities to create space for a child so that they are better able to engage and progress with the learning. This was evidenced in the research. For example Rose and colleagues (2019) highlighted the importance of relational-based strategies in supporting students, particularly those in vulnerable groups and the significant outcomes this can have on pupil behaviour, well-being, academic attainment, attendance, and reduction of exclusionary practices. The adoption of an 'attachment-aware' approach also reportedly boosted confidence among staff in discussing emotions with children, enhancing their ability to support students' emotional well-being and fostering a more empathetic and inclusive school

environment. The model's focus on fostering attachment and promoting trauma-informed practices empowers educators, enabling them to respond more effectively to behavioural challenges without resorting to more punitive responses.

Valuing Training, Psychoeducation and Interventions

The importance of training, psychoeducation, and interventions was highlighted as an important factor when supporting vulnerable students. Different key factors that contribute to the success of these approaches include drawing from an evidence base and research-informed practice when working with vulnerable students across the different layers of the organisation as well as providing staff with time and space to reflect on and embed new strategies and learning. Similarly to themes of shared vision and values, there was also an emphasis on the importance of senior management becoming invested in and present during sessions or additional training, highlighting that they value these approaches. Within this current research, several participants spoke about a number of schemes that schools had invested in, such as the ‘Attachment Aware’ award and becoming a ‘Trauma Informed School’. From these discussions, they highlighted key factors that supported the buy and embedding of these approaches which include headteacher commitment and staff presence at trainings. This was also highlighted by Rose and colleagues (2018) which they referenced to also. Without this whole school approach and commitment, they felt there would be less stay buy in and uptake to using the strategies across the different classrooms. They also highlighted that there is an emphasis placed on the importance of creating space to reflect on and embed learning from training or workshops, which was also raised within this current study. Without this, these new strategies and skills will be difficult to implement, and staff may become less willing to uptake the new approaches.

Presence of Pastoral Care and Support

The presence of pastoral care and support was highlighted as a key contributor underlying successful inclusion. This could be implemented or thought about in a number of different ways. Participants in the study spoke about the importance of having present and highly skilled pastoral/inclusion team which can provide care and support for at-risk pupils on a number of different levels as well as investing and valuing space during the day for supporting students such as through form tutor time.

As mentioned earlier, the use of form tutor time was highlighted as a valued space where staff could carve out time within the school timetable to develop a child's social and emotional wellbeing (e.g. teaching coping strategies and building resilience, psychoeducation) as well as engaging them in non-curriculum based discussions and projects. Linking in with the theme of relationships, there was also a sense, from participants, of the importance of valuing the form tutor who can play a significant role in becoming a key adult figure for a vulnerable student. By having a designated weekly space, there is time for students and staff to build a trusting relationship and for staff to monitor vulnerable student’s progress and areas of need, before it escalates. The size of the school and class groups can also impact the ability of staff to support students, particularly those who are vulnerable and may require additional time and resources. Smaller class sizes can allow staff to get to know students better and to create a more supportive environment. This is not always possible within a school environment, particularly if they receive directives from external agencies. To think about adapting to this, participants spoke about the value of finding smaller spaces such as form tutor time, to explore complex issues, develop social and emotional wellbeing and deliver psychoeducation. Staff may also

use this space as a way to monitor students and become aware if any needs or concerns are raised, using a preventative approach when working with vulnerable students. Although form tutor time was not directly referenced within the research, the idea of implementing small spaces to support learning was noted in Gilmore (2012;2013) when thinking about disciplinary inclusion rooms. Although the nature of the room was punitive, as the children were there as a result of displaying challenging behaviour, there was noted benefits, including some children having more resources accessible to them to support their learning including key adults available and a quieter learning space.

Solution-Focused Approaches and Mindset

Many of the participants in the study referenced the use of solution-focused approaches and interventions in their work with vulnerable students. They emphasized that these approaches can be used to encourage student engagement and empowerment, as well as to contain and support staff. They acknowledged the importance of commitment from staff to implement this as it needed to be ‘Solution-Focused, not Solution-Forced’. Solution-focused approaches focus on helping people to identify and work towards their desired goals, rather than dwelling on problems. This can be a particularly helpful approach for working with vulnerable students, who may have experienced a lot of adversity in their lives. One way that solution-focused approaches can be used in schools is to represent the views and needs of students in a constructive way. This is especially important in situations where there are many key adults involved in a student's support. It can help us think about when something ‘does not happen’ and explore what is already helpful

(Watzlawick & Weakland, 1977). The use of a solution-focused model was not directly referenced within the literature.

In summary, there were a number of different and intertwining contexts and mechanisms identified by participants in this research that can contribute to the successful inclusion practices of pupils at risk of exclusion in secondary schools. In the next section, I will discuss how this information can be further thought about, disseminated and put into practice by EPs and school systems.

5.2 Dissemination and Implications for the EP profession and beyond

5.2.1 Dissemination

The key findings outlined in section 5.1 can be used by the EP profession and school staff in thinking about how to promote successful inclusion practices for vulnerable students, particularly when acknowledging what schools are already doing well and building on good practice. These findings will be disseminated to the EP profession, schools and some services within the local authority that work with educational support and would benefit from having access to the key takeaways of this research.

These include:

1. **Relationships:** The importance of relationships when supporting successful inclusion practices within different subgroups of a school system and how these are built and maintained.

2. **Systemic Factors:** The systemic contributors to successful inclusion practices in secondary schools such as the school environment and the involvement of external professionals.

3. School Culture and Leadership: The underlying organisational contributors to successful inclusion practices such as flexible approaches, collaboration, shared visions and values and clear roles for staff.

4. Support and Interventions: The importance of interventions when support vulnerable students and the mechanisms that contribute to successful implantation of these in order to create an inclusive environment.

I currently have plans to communicate these findings across a number of different platforms. I will communicate my findings via presentation to the EPS where the research was conducted as part of my monthly team meetings and service development. The findings will also be communicated within smaller interest groups within the team such as the 'Secondary School' peer supervision sessions that take place termly.

I may additionally submit the findings for publication in an Educational Psychology Journal, such as the Education and Child Psychology Journal, the Educational Psychology in Practice or the DECP Debate Journal. I am also aware that other appropriate professions such as secondary school staff (e.g. headteachers teachers and SENCos) may also find this research beneficial. I will also consider other appropriate journal publications that can be accessed by these professions on advice of peers and colleagues.

I also intend to create a short summary of the research with the key messages that could be helpful for EPs to disseminate to schools. This could be particularly helpful during termly planning meetings when thinking about supporting schools to develop their inclusive practices.

5.2.2 Implications for Educational Psychologists

With the current study's findings in mind, I believe that EPs are well placed to support secondary schools in continuing to build on their successful inclusion practices, while understanding the context and mechanisms behind this. As part of EP practice, there is a focus on inclusive and preventative work as well as early intervention, which is in line with a number of different legal guidelines and policies. For example, the Equalities Act (2010) sets the legal boundaries of where individuals are protected from discrimination. Thinking about this in a school context, this includes vulnerable pupils who may be at risk of exclusion based on gender, SEN, ethnicity and other factors. The EP is well placed within the educational system to advocate and uphold these legal frameworks. Another DfE initiative is the new SEND and AP green paper (DfE, 2022). The SEND Review summary document outlines that navigating the SEND system and alternative provision is often a challenging and negative experience for many children and their families. This emphasises the importance and need for schools to be supporting in identifying and embedding successful inclusion practices, particularly for their most vulnerable students. This is where the EP role can support.

The ways in which EPs can support and work across the different organisational layers of an educational setting was outlined in the Currie Report (Scottish Executive, 2002) and they identified five key functions of the EP role. This includes Consultation, Assessment, Intervention, Training and Research. This framework will be held in mind as I make recommendations and discusses implications for EPs.

Some implications and recommendations for further research and actions are listed below . I would like to acknowledge that this list is not exhaustive and is subject to

expand and change as I continue to reflect on this area with my colleagues and peers.

- EPs in the UK have long considered psychological consultation to be a key and comprehensive approach to delivering effective services (DfE, 2000; Farrell & Woods, 2015; Wagner, 2000). This is one way in which the findings can be disseminated and used in EP practice. EPs have the opportunity to draw on the different findings within consultation, for example during a planning meeting or when involved in individual work with a child who may be 'at-risk' of becoming excluded. They may be able to highlight areas that could support successful inclusion such as curious questioning around 'advocacy' for the child, how approaches are differentiated for them, including emotional interactions or what support the staff have when thinking about their own capacity and emotional load.
- EPs can also create a space for staff within a school system to pause and reflect on their own successful inclusion practices, using the findings as discussion prompts or areas to consider supporting staff thinking.
- Considering future research, EPs could use these current findings to draw upon and explore the perspectives of others within the secondary school system, particularly the voice of children, their families and staff.
- EPs could support the systems around the school setting (e.g. other education services in the LA) to think about how interagency collaboration could best be utilised when supporting successful inclusion practices of secondary schools. For example, when schools are working with multiple professionals who may all share a list of recommendations and strategies,

how do we support professionals to work together to prioritise what can be put into place and support staff capacity to implement these.

- When EPs deliver training and workshops to school settings, they could consider what space staff have to implement these new strategies and learning and schedule in regular check ins or follow up sessions.
- EPs could support staff with thinking about the ‘Small Acts’ of support that are meaningful and effective when working with vulnerable groups of children, such as relational approaches.
- As part of the research, I asked each participant to reflect on their experiences of taking part in the research (please see Appendix L – Q for responses, except Laura where the recording stopped before capturing the response). Each participant reflected that they found the space helpful for themselves as part of their own professional development. Participants spoke about having the benefits of having a space to pause, reflect and begin to make connections between the different types of successful practices that they see or support within secondary schools.
- EPs could engage in curious and open conversations around exploring the school’s current behaviour policy. Through the use of solution-focused approaches and scaling methods, they could open up the possibility of engaging student voice to improve policies, particularly where they are too punitive. There may also be space to explore staff confidence in differentiating approaches to using the policy when working with vulnerable pupils.

5.2.3 Implications for Schools

- Schools valuing the power of relational approaches and developing positive and supportive relationships with their students. This could include noticing how they greet students in the corridors to how they differentiate their interactions (both within a learning context and when supporting student's emotional wellbeing). Schools should also consider the importance of restorative conversations when repairing broken down trust and relationships between students and staff. Restorative conversations can help to build trust and understanding between students and staff.
- Schools could be supported in adopting solution-focused approaches in schools (with the support from EPs). This means focusing on what students can do, rather than what they can't do. This could be achieved through a number of different strategies and approaches such as 'Circle of Adults'.
- Valuing and creating space for small groups such as form tutor time. Small groups can provide students with a safe and supportive environment explore non-curriculum based topics as well as engaging in psychoeducation. They can also help students to develop relationships with their teachers. Teachers can also use this space to monitor student's academic and emotional wellbeing and progress, supporting early intervention processes.
- Encourage staff networking. Staff networking can help staff to share best practice and resources. Staff can also support each other with the emotional load of working with students who may display challenging behaviour. They can also share information and strategies that may work well when working with vulnerable students. This can also support staff to view a child and their

needs with a different perspective as they may receive more contextual information.

- Have senior management identify staff capacity and workload. This is important so that schools can ensure that staff have the time and resources they need to support students who may vulnerable and at risk of exclusion.
- Support the SENCo to balance the priorities of their role. This may involve the EP supporting the organisation and planning of their involvement within the school setting. It may also include other members of senior management thinking about how they are allocating additional responsibilities and what this may take away from the SENCos roles and responsibilities with SEN.
- Be clear and consistent with expectations for behaviour, such as bullying, racism and sexism in schools. Developing staff confidence to know how behaviour policies can be differentiated to support student's with any additional needs. It is important for students to know what is expected of them, but it is also important to be understanding when students make mistakes. Including evidence-based research and student voice in developing and adapting behaviour policies could also support this.
- Advocate for students who need extra support. This may involve working with parents, other teachers, and professionals to ensure that students receive the support they need.
- Setting up and collaborating with student voice and participation groups. This can help students to feel involved in the school community and to have a say in decisions that affect them. It could help develop student's sense of belonging and empower them to become engaged with the school and their

learning environment. It also shows students that they are valued and listened to by adults.

- Work collaboratively with external professionals, such as EPs, to support the needs of students at risk of exclusion. EPs can provide schools with different support such as training and consultation.
- Investing in the pastoral/inclusion team. Thinking about what skills and resources these staff members hold and how they can best be supported to work effectively within the school system. This may include additional training, space for supervision and spaces within the school to support students.
- Open communication with families to, not only discuss their child's but also successes and times that have gone well. This helps to build relationships with families and to ensure that they are involved in the steps needed to support their child, particularly if they are considered at risk of exclusion. It also can help provide context for a child's needs and develop a holistic view of the child.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research

I recognise that there are a number of limitations within this research. Firstly, I acknowledge that due to the purpose of this research being part of a doctoral thesis, there were aspects of this study that I could not explore due to time constraints. Despite this limitation, this leaves room for future research to build upon these findings and explore other aspects of this area.

I also acknowledge that the participant sample size is small, and the data was gathered from my EPS in my LA. I recognise this limitation and how it may limit the

transferability of the findings. It is important to note, the while a small sample size was used, there were a number of challenges in recruitment that I faced.

Another limitation that could be additionally argued that due to the opportunistic sampling that I carried out, this may mean that the sample is subject to bias. For example, participants were informed of the aims of the study and were involved in supporting me from the very beginning. Therefore, I cannot be sure of the particular beliefs or perspectives that some participants may have held about the topic, which may have influenced their choice to volunteer.

I acknowledge that the focus of the study could appear narrow given that participants were recruited from one LA and only from a singular profession. With regards to this, I acknowledge the limitations however argues that there are also benefits to this. For example, given that each LA differs in terms of how their community is made up of (.g. culture, ethnicity and needs of the community), it can be important to explore in depth the perspectives of EPs that serve this particular community. It is also important to note that each EPS works differently across the LA, therefore, it could be more helpful to compare and contrast with a research base to draw from in the future. With this in mind, I am confident that these findings, while they may be limited with regards to transferability to other settings, the findings could be used to inform future research. The findings may also be of interest to other EPS or school settings outside of the LA.

Whilst I initially sought to recruit the views of school staff, in addition to EPs, there was a number of difficulties that they faced. Although, it would have been helpful to add the voice of staff, I do acknowledge that, while staff were keen, they faced a number of different pressures on their system and did not have the capacity to join

the research. Therefore the views of staff within the school system are not directly captured, only reflected upon from the perspectives of EPs. Although, given the constraints of the research, it was appropriate at this time to seek the views from EPs, with scope for future research to incorporate the perspectives of others involved within secondary schools and supporting vulnerable pupils. This is not limited to teaching staff directly working in schools, but also those who support from other education services as well as secondary school students themselves and their parents/carers. Exploring and combining multiple perspectives in this area may be considered a worthwhile area of future research.

The current research could be used as a foundation for future research to be built upon. For example, future research could explore specific participant samples such as collaborating with various local authorities EP services or including a wider range of participant groups (e.g. parents, students, teaching staff). This could capture additional voices and understanding of this research and enhance the transferability of the findings. Future research could also specifically focus on one participant group and compare and contrast the findings with this current research. As acknowledged, the research conducted was limited by time constraints. By becoming aware of this, future researchers could consider extending their time frames for recruitment, consider when they are recruiting participants (e.g. identifying busy periods in school and avoiding this where possible) or conduct this research outside of a doctoral programme.

5.4 Researcher's Reflections

As discussed *in Chapter 3,* as someone who would be classed as an individual with SEN and therefore would have been once a 'vulnerable' student, I recognise my

close relationship to the topic. In addition to this, I also work closely with many young secondary school students who are at risk of exclusion or have already experienced exclusion from their school setting. With these factors in mind, it was important for myself as the researcher to take a reflexive approach to this research due to the role that I play and the impact this may have on the different stages of research (e.g. gathering data, analysis and reporting).

My stance on inclusion practices, both from a personal and professional perspective, have, without doubt, had an impact on how this research was shaped and conducted. For example, the topic was selected based on personal interest in the area and has shaped the process of questioning and data analysis that I followed. Given my professional position and my personal experience of SEN, I believe this has strengthened my data gathering, analysis and reporting as I was able to relate and draw from different experiences and reflections.

It is also important to note the drawbacks in relation to how this study could have been impacted if I did not acknowledge my own reflexive position. Therefore, it was important for the research that I was aware of my own perspectives and opinions, especially if they differed from the experiences and reflections of the participants. As the data gathering was completed using opened ended questions in a semi-structured interview format, I was also aware of how my own interests and experiences could shape what parts of the participant's responses that I picked up on and continued to pursue and what parts of their responses that I did not. To support researcher neutrality, where possible, I tried to keep follow-up questions as open ended as possible. I tried to hold this in mind during the data collection process, however it is important to acknowledge that I may not have always been conscious of my own bias and perceptions. This draws upon 'Johari's Window'

model which is a tool that can be used for exploring one's own self-awareness with other individuals or in a group setting. With this approach, the individual would seek feedback from others in order to identify aspects of themselves that may not have been previously known to them. The individual may also explore what aspects of ourselves are known but hidden to others or known and visible to others between individuals in a group. Holding this approach in mind has been helpful for me as the researcher to acknowledge aspects of my experience and the way it has shaped my perceptions and interests and also acknowledge there are still parts of myself that is unknown to me. Therefore, I will not always be aware of what I may be 'blind' or biased towards or against (Oliver & Duncan, 2019).

As I reflected on the impact that my own personal experiences can influence my positionality and perspectives of the research, I wished to draw upon this during the interview with participants. Each participant was asked if they were comfortable to share their own journey to becoming an EP. By doing so, I hoped that participants would hold this in mind as they explored the concept of successful inclusion practices, drawing from both their professional and personal experiences and perspectives.

When reflecting on the loss of individual experiences within this data set, I felt that the benefit of gaining an overall understanding of the patterns that relate to successful inclusion processes outweighed this. This also compliments the professional position the research holds as this information can be translated into frameworks, guidance's and strategies that could benefit the researcher's practice and how they support others. As such, I believe this methodological approach is more practical and provides EPs and schools a clearer foundation to draw from in comparison if I used a different methodical approach such as IPA.

Initially, my research aimed to explore the contexts and mechanisms behind successful inclusion practices for students at risk of exclusion in a secondary school context from secondary school staff perspectives. However, difficulties in accessing these participants due to a range of factors highlighted in *Section 3.5.1.2*, prompted a shift in focus to recruiting EPs alongside staff members. This change led to an evolvement of the original research question from examining school staff perspectives working in a secondary school context to capturing EPs' perspectives who work differently in a secondary school context. EPs can offer a unique and different perspective on what underlies successful inclusion practices through their five key functions which they apply across various contexts and levels of support such as individual, group and organisational levels (BPS, 2018; Fallon et al., 2010; Scottish Executive, 2002). By adopting psychological perspectives and systemic frameworks, EPs provide valuable insights into the implementation of inclusive practices.

The shift in the research focus allowed for a different exploration of the theoretical underpinnings and practical applications of inclusion from the perspective of EPs. Although the original research question, “What are the contexts and mechanisms that are behind successful inclusion practices for students at risk of exclusion in a secondary school context?” was not answered directly by staff positioned within the secondary school system itself, the EPs' reflections contributed to an understanding of these practices from an external, and a differing theoretical perspective. EPs bring a distinct vantage point, sitting externally to schools, which can offer both advantages and limitations. Unlike school staff, who work with children daily and are responsible for implementing inclusion practices through policies and procedures, EPs are external visitors with a set number of visits to the school setting which could

range from fortnightly to monthly to termly. This external position allows EPs to provide an objective view but may also limit the extent of their daily interactions and immediate challenges faced by school staff. In addition to this, some EPs have not been teachers themselves, which might influence their perspectives on practical implementation of inclusion practices. Following this, EPs also may only be able to reflect the perspectives of staff members from an external position.

In exploring contexts (as previously defined as the situation or circumstances in which an event occur) and mechanisms (as previously defined as the causal explanations for why a particular action or intervention has an observed outcome), EPs provide insights into the environmental and strategic factors that contribute to successful inclusion. By examining the strategies and interventions that work, EPs help schools understand the mechanisms behind effective practices. EPs also bring their knowledge of child development related theories and frameworks, systemic approaches, and the interpretation of behaviour as a function of the person and the situation, to help to make sense of the factors underlying successful inclusion practices. As EPs often understand behaviour to be a function of various factors, it can be argued that successful inclusion practices are seen as behaviours influenced by underlying causes, needs, and drives.

While this research differs from the original intent of capturing the perspectives of school staff and differs from the related literature identified, it addresses a gap by bringing in the voices of EPs. This shift highlights the importance of considering external perspectives in understanding successful inclusion practices. The findings highlight the need for shared perspectives between school staff and EPs, integrating both internal and external viewpoints to better understand successful inclusion practices and support it in practice. Thus, the research, although deviating from its

original path, offers a valuable contribution by providing a new and important dimension to the discourse on inclusion in educational settings.

The study's evolution brings a certain perspective, emphasizing that multiple viewpoints are essential for a comprehensive understanding of successful inclusion practices. This research, contextualized from the EP perspective, offers a complimentary contrast to existing information, highlighting the need for further exploration and the integration of various perspectives. EPs' perspectives can contribute to one part of the bigger picture of identifying the contexts and mechanisms underlying successful inclusion practices however one participant group cannot fully answer such a broad question. By examining inclusion from their unique standpoint, the psychological perspectives that EPs bring can support an understanding of this concept from a differing perspective that can be shared with schools and other stakeholders working with this cohort of pupils. It is important to further highlight, however, that EP’s insights need to be complemented with those other stakeholders such as staff members. By taking a more comprehensive approach, as outlined in the previous section for further research, we may be able to develop a broader and more detailed understanding of this research question and be able to provide further insight when answering this question.

6. Conclusion

This research aimed to identify what contexts and mechanisms are behind successful inclusion practices for students at risk of exclusion in a secondary school context. Through a systematic literature search and review, it was acknowledged that the voice and perspective of the EP is limited, as well as a specific focus on the 'successful' inclusion practices in a secondary school context. Other research in this area has focused on the voice of staff and students, with a large area of research dedicated to what can impact inclusion, often with a focus on negative outcomes.

Several themes emerged from the research and were grouped into the following overarching themes: Relationships, Systemic Factors, School Culture and Leadership, and Support and Interventions. These themes intertwine to represent the underlying contexts and mechanisms that support successful inclusion practices in secondary schools for pupils who may be at risk of exclusion from the perspectives of EPs. While EP's may not sit directly within a school system on daily basis, the differing perspective that they can provide can work comparatively with other stakeholders involved with this cohort of pupils and those working in secondary education contexts, while acknowledging the importance of further exploring the views of further stakeholders such as school staff. From understanding what 'helps' in this situation, Educational Psychologists could use this information as a framework when supporting schools in developing their inclusion practices. This may allow schools to draw on strengths and think of exclusion from different perspectives, taking a more 'early intervention' approach and promoting an 'inclusive' ethos.

(Word Count: 39, 998 excluding abstract, tables, figures, references and appendices)

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Appendices

Appendix A: Excluded Papers from Systematic Literature Review

Article Title	Example of reason why article was excluded
1. **A Rapid Review and Narrative Synthesis of the Consequences of Non-Inclusive Sex Education in UK Schools on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Young People**	Curriculum Examination
2. **Challenging the Exclusion of Immigrant Peers**	Unrelated directly to research area (i.e. exclusions within peer groups)
3. **Lessons Learned from a Gender-Specific Educational Programme Supporting Young Women with Experience of Domestic Abuse**	Non educational context
4. **'We Just Think of Her as One of the Girls': Applying a Trans Inclusion Staged Model to the Experiences of Trans Children and Youth in UK Primary and Secondary Schools**	Social Inclusion/Exclusion
5. **Achieving Pluralism? A Critical Analysis of the Inclusion of Non-Religious Worldviews in RE Policy in England and Wales after R (Fox) v Secretary of State for Education**	Curriculum Examination
6. **Predicting Student Mental Wellbeing and Loneliness and the Importance of Digital Skills**	Unrelated to research area (i.e. unrelated intervention)
7. **Student Perceptions and Proposals for Promoting Wellbeing through Social Relationships at University**	Non-secondary school context
8. **Experiences of Belonging: A Comparative Case Study between China-Domiciled and UK-Domiciled Students**	Non-secondary school context
9. **Experiences of Young Adults with Autism without Co-Occurring Intellectual**	Non-secondary school context

Disability: A Review of the Literature	
10. Autism, Intense Interests and Support in School: From Wasted Efforts to Shared Understandings	Non-secondary school context
11. Understanding Aspiration and Education towards Desistance from Offending: The Role of Higher Education in Wales	Non-secondary school context
12. Psychological Applications and Trends 2021	Conference Review
13. The Insider View: Tackling Disabling Practices in Higher Education Institutions	Non-secondary school context
14. (Re)Centring Students in Learning Analytics: In Conversation with Paulo Freire	Non-secondary school context
15. Liberating the 'Oppressed' and the 'Oppressor': A Model for a New TEF Metric, Internationalisation and Democracy	Non-secondary school context
16. The Wrong Kind of Noise: Understanding and Valuing the Communication of Autistic Children in Schools	Non- secondary school context
17. A Systematic Review on Mathematical Language Learning Using PRISMA in Scopus Database	Unrelated to research area (investigating mathematical language)
18. Curriculum Design for Diversity: Layering Assessment and Teaching for Learners with Different Worldviews	Non-secondary school context
19. Reflections on a Participatory Research Project Exploring Bullying and School Self-Exclusion: Power Dynamics, Practicalities and Partnership Working	Self-exclusion
20. Contested Perspectives on the Social Impacts of a Residential Field Trip	Unrelated to research area (i.e. outdoor learning)
21. Student Withdrawal, Retention and Their Sense of Belonging; Their Experience in Their Words	Non-secondary school context

22. The Impact of a School-Based Musical Contact Intervention on Prosocial Attitudes, Emotions and Behaviours: A Pilot Trial with Autistic and Neurotypical Children	Unrelated directly to research area (i.e. evaluation intervention relating to peer exclusion and improving prosocial attitudes amongst students)
23. Educational Advantage and Employability of UK University Graduates	Non-secondary school context
24. Abyssal Lines and Cartographies of Exclusion in Migration and Education: Towards a Reimagining	Unrelated to research area (i.e. immigration and migration)
25. Creating Open Online Courses with Learner Representative Partners to Widen Participation in Higher Education	Non-secondary school context
26. Undergraduate Experiences of the Research/Teaching Nexus across the Whole Student Lifecycle	Non-secondary school context
27. The Power of 'Unrecognizable Habitus': Inclusion and Exclusion among 10 British Low-Socio-Economic Status Students Abroad	Non-secondary school context
28. Spaces of Inclusion: Investigating Place, Positioning and Perspective in Educational Settings through Photo-Elicitation	Repeated
29. 'Bastard' Daughters in the Ivory Tower: Illegitimacy and the Higher Education Experiences of the Daughters of Single Mothers in the UK	Non-secondary school context
30. Patients 'Embodied' and 'As-a-Body' within Bedside Teaching Encounters: A Video Ethnographic Study	Unrelated to research area (i.e. medical study)
31. Teaching Environmental Management Competencies Online: Towards 'Authentic' Collaboration?	Non-secondary school context
32. Effect of Internet-Based Learning in Public Health Training: An Exploratory Meta-Analysis	Unrelated to research area (i.e. medical education)

33. 'I Feel Integrated When I Help Myself: ESOL Learners' Views and Experiences of Language Learning and Integration	Non-secondary school context
34. Boundary-Work in Science Education: A Case Study of GM Food	Unrelated to research area (i.e. food science)
35. Dis(en)abled: Legitimating Discriminatory Practice in the Name of Inclusion?	Non-secondary school context
36. Education Provision to Every One: Comparing Perspectives from around the World.	Conference Review
37. The Force of Habit: Channelling Young Bodies at Alternative Education Spaces	Unrelated to research area (i.e. focusing on
38. The Force of Habit: Channelling Young Bodies at Alternative Education Spaces	Non-secondary school context
39. Interactive and Socially Inclusive Pedagogy: A Comparison of Practitioner- and Child-Oriented Cognitive/Learning Activities Involving Four-Year-Old Children in Preschools in England	Non-secondary school context
40. A Funds of Knowledge Approach to Examining Play Interests: Listening to Children's and Parents' Perspectives	Non-secondary school context
41. Loyal Tongue, Liberal Mind: International Students' Experiences on Dietary Acculturation in England	Unrelated to research topic area (i.e. eating habits)
42. Adolescent's Unambiguous Knowledge of Overcoming Bullying and Developing Resilience	Unrelated to research topic area (i.e. interventions relating to peer bullying)
43. Strategies for Digital Inclusion: Towards a Pedagogy for Embracing and Sustaining Student Diversity and Engagement with Online Learning	PhD progress report
44. The Preparation and Practice of Disabled Health Care	Non-secondary school context

Practitioners: Exploring the Issues	
45. Exploring Foreign Undergraduate Students' Experiences of University	Non-secondary school context
46. Troubling 'Understanding Mathematics in-Depth': Its Role in the Identity Work of Student-Teachers in England	Unrelated to research topic area (i.e. mathematics)
47. Interrogating Discourses of Intercultural Education: From Indigenous Amazon Community to Global Policy Forum	Non-UK context
48. Pupil and Teacher Perceptions of Community Action: An English Context	Unrelated to research topic area (i.e. community action)
49. Borderline Space for Voice	Non-secondary school context
50. Pictorial Essay: Exploring Strategies to Develop More Inclusive Approaches to Actor-Training	Unrelated to research topic area (i.e. actor training)
51. Young Children's Research Behaviour? Children Aged Four to Eight Years Finding Solutions at Home and at School	Non-secondary school context
52. Self-Concept, Social Position and Social Participation of Pupils with SEN in Mainstream Primary Schools	Non-secondary school context
53. The Educational Experiences of Pupils with a Statement for Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Primary Schools: Results from a Systematic Observation Study	Non-secondary school context
54. Attitudes towards People with Intellectual Disabilities: A Comparison of Young People from British South Asian and White British Backgrounds	Non-secondary school context
55. Willingness to Communicate and Cross-Cultural Adaptation: L2 Communication and Acculturative Stress as Transaction	Non-secondary school context
56. Supporting the Learning of Nomadic Communities across Transnational Contexts:	Non-UK context

Exploring Parallels in the Education of UK Roma Gypsies and Indigenous Australians	

Appendix B: Excluded Papers from Systematic Literature Review

Article Title	Example of reason why article was excluded
1. **Long-Term Labour Market and Economic Consequences of School Exclusions in England: Evidence from Two Counterfactual Approaches**	On the impact of school exclusions
2. **Contextualising Inequalities in Rates of School Exclusion in English Schools: Beneath the 'Tip of the Ice-Berg'**	Exploring links between inequalities and processes with English school systems
3. **To What Extent Have Learners with Severe, Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties Been Excluded from the Policy and Practice of Inclusive Education?**	Exploring groups of learners who have been excluded
4. **The Social Experiences and Sense of Belonging in Adolescent Females with Autism in Mainstream School**	Social inclusion and acceptance amongst peers
5. **Person Centred Planning 'In Action': Exploring the Use of Person Centred Planning in Supporting Young People's Transition and Re-integration to Mainstream Education**	Focus on supporting reintegration back to secondary school
6. **'You Have to Do Something beyond Containing': Developing Inclusive Systems in a Partnership of Primary Schools**	Non secondary school context
7. **Painful Invisibilities: Roll Management or 'Off-Rolling' and Professional Identity**	Exploring different forms of exclusion
8. **Not in the Classroom, but Still on the Register: Hidden Forms of School Exclusion**	Exploring different forms of exclusion
9. **EHCPs: A Help or a Hinderance to the Inclusion of Young People Who Have Offended? An Exploration of EP's Perceptions of the Facilitating Factors and Barriers of EHCPs and the SEN**	Direct focus on EHCP process

Processes Involved in Youth Justice	
10. The influence of socio-economic background and gender on school attainment in the United Kingdom: A systematic review	Factors that impact school attainment
11. Up or Down and Out? A Systemic Analysis of Young People's Educational Pathways in the Youth Justice System in England and Wales	Focus on youth justice system
12. Inclusion across Borders: Young Immigrants in France and England	Exploring discourse of 'inclusion'
13. School Exclusion and Educational Inclusion of Pregnant Young Women	Focus on young mother's re-engagement with education in AP
14. School Exclusion in Children with Psychiatric Disorder or Impairing Psychopathology: A Systematic Review	Exploring disproportionate exclusion rates in children with psychiatric disorder
15. Sustaining Post-16 Destinations from Alternative Provision: A Review of the Data and the Perspectives of Heads from Low, Mid and High Performing Schools	Focus on alternative provisions
16. A Critical Analysis of the Under-Achievement of Afro-Caribbean Boys within a 16-19 Education Setting	Exploring why young Afro-Caribbean boys are under-achieving in education
17. Participatory Internet Radio (RadioActive101) as a Social Innovation and Co-Production Methodology for Engagement and Non-Formal Learning amongst Socially Excluded Young People	Outside of school intervention – focus on social exclusion
18. Intended Consequences, Significant Moments and New Directions: A Reflection on Pastoral Care since 1972	Generally exploring the history of pastoral care
19. Sport, disability and (inclusive) education: critical insights and understandings from the Playdagogy programme.	Focus on peer inclusion

20. An Exploration of the Influences on Work with Minority Cultural and Linguistic Communities within the Practice of Educational Psychology in the United Kingdom	Focus on improving EP practice
21. Parental experiences of support for pupils with dyslexia: ignoring the effect on parents	Parental impact of children's diagnosis of dyslexia
22. Reculturing Schools in England: How 'Cult' Values in Education Policy Discourse Influence the Construction of Practitioner Identities and Work Orientations	Non secondary school context
23. 'Grey' Exclusions Matter: Mapping Illegal Exclusionary Practices and the Implications for Children with Disabilities in England and Australia	General focus on international exclusion procedures
24. Self-Interest and Altruism: How English School Leaders Navigate Moral Imperatives in a High Stakes Culture	Study on school leadership styles
25. A Systematic Literature Review Exploring the Facilitators and Barriers of Reintegration to Secondary Mainstream Schools through 'Alternative Provision'	Focus on transition from AP to secondary
26. Changing the Exclusionary Practices of Mainstream Secondary Schools: The Experience of Girls with SEND. 'I Have Some Quirky Bits about Me That I Mostly Hide from the World'	Self-exclusion and sense of belonging in young girls
27. The Reliability and Validity of the Pupil Behaviour Questionnaire: A Child Classroom Behaviour Assessment Tool	Non secondary context
28. Parents of excluded pupils: customers, partners, problems?	Focus on language in exclusion process in relation to parents
29. Special Education and Minority Ethnic Young People in England: Continuing Issues	Representation of minority ethnic young people in special education

30.	**An Ethnography of Permanent Exclusion from School: Revealing and Untangling the Threads of Institutionalised Racism**	Exploring racism in relation to exclusion
31.	**Could a focus on ethics of care within teacher education have the potential to reduce the exclusion of autistic learners?**	Suggestion of study
32.	**Children in Care or in Need: Educational Progress at Home and in Care**	Exploring impact of children in care in relation to education
33.	**Creating Spaces to Belong: Listening to the Voice of Girls with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties through Digital Visual and Narrative Methods**	Peer inclusion intervention
34.	**Schools as Damaging Organisations: Instigating a Dialogue Concerning Alternative Models of Schooling**	Violence in schools
35.	**Beyond the Culture of Exclusion: Using Critical Race Theory to Examine the Perceptions of British 'Minority Ethnic' and Eastern European 'Immigrant' Young People in English Schools**	Social exclusion in relation to ethnicity and identity
36.	**Conducting Photo Methodologies with Children: Framing Ethical Concerns Relating to Representation, Voice and Data Analysis When Exploring Educational Inclusion with Children**	Social inclusion/exclusion project
37.	**Including Pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders in the Classroom: The Role of Teaching Assistants**	Access to lessons and the curriculum and the impact of having a TA
38.	**School-to-work transition services: marginalising 'disposable' youth in a state of exception?**	Exploring socio-political impact (e.g. policies and micro-practices) on exclusion of young people from education and employment
39.	**Viewing Restorative Approaches to Addressing Challenging Behaviour of Minority Ethnic Students**	Exploring restorative practices in non UK context

through a Community of Practice Lens	
40. Riding the Rollercoaster of School Exclusion Coupled with Drug Misuse: The Lived Experience of Caregivers	Exploring barriers to mainstream schooling and exclusion for children who misuse drugs
41. Mental well-being and school exclusion: changing the discourse from vulnerability to acceptance	Exploring link between young person's mental health and school exclusions – what schools are doing wrong
42. Vulnerable Children's Right to Education, School Exclusion, and Pandemic Law-Making	Exploring legality behind children's right to education
43. Higher Education Students: Barriers to Engagement; Psychological Alienation Theory, Trauma and Trust: A Systematic Review	Focus on SEMH
44. Creative Pedagogies: A Systematic Review	Review of creative curriculum
45. Mental Health beyond the School Gate: Young People's Perspectives of Mental Health Support Online, and in Home, School and Community Contexts	Thesis on mental health support for 16-25 year olds
46. Initial Teacher Training: Understanding 'Race,' Diversity and Inclusion	Focus on anti-racist training and practice in teacher training
47. Exclusions and Alternative Provision: Piecing Together the Picture	Exploring who ends up in AP
48. We Know Off-Rolling Happens. Why Are We Still Doing Nothing?	Exploring specifically off-rolling
49. Pakistani and Bangladeshi Young Men: Re-Racialization, Class and Masculinity within the Neo-Liberal School	Non secondary school context
50. Inclusion in Higher Education: An Exploration of the Subjective Experiences of Students	Non secondary school context
51. The Experience of Black Caribbean Pupils in School Exclusion in England	Factors relating to exclusion
52. Developing a Democratic Classroom and a Democracy Stance: Cooperative Learning	Non secondary school context

	Case Studies from England and Sweden	
53.	**Inclusive education and intellectual disability: a sociological engagement with Martha Nussbaum**	Non-empirical study/opinion piece
54.	**Addressing the wicked problem of behaviour in**	Literature Review
55.	**Future secondary schools for diversity: Where are we now and were could we be**	Literature Review
56.	**Exclusion from School and Recognition of Difference**	Literature Review
57.	**How Inclusion Became Exclusion: Policy, Teachers and Inclusive Education**	Review of previous study (secondary data)
58.	**The 3P Model for Creating Sustainable Educational Reform: An Epilogue to the Special Issue**	Review of a model
59.	**'A Little Whisper in the Ear': How Developing Relationships between Pupils with Attachment Difficulties and Key Adults Can Improve the Former's Social, Emotional and Behavioural Skills and Support Inclusion**	Primary School
60.	**Disciplinary Exclusion: The Influence of School Ethos**	Primary School

Appendix C: Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) for Qualitative Research

1. Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?

2. Is a qualitative methodology appropriate?

3. Was the research design appropriate to the aims of the research?

4. Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?

5. Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?

6. Has the relationship been researcher and participants been adequately considered?

7. Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?

8. Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?

9. Is there a clear statement of findings?

10. How valuable is the research?

Appendix D: Tavistock Research and Ethics Committee Application

Tavistock and Portman Trust Research Ethics Committee (TREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL REVIEW OF STUDENT RESEARCH PROJECTS

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)

FOR ALL APPLICANTS

If you already have ethical approval from another body (including HRA/IRAS) please submit the application form and outcome letters. You need only complete sections of the TREC form which are NOT covered in your existing approval

Is your project considered as 'research' according to the HRA tool? (http://www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk/research/index.html)	Yes
Will your project involve participants who are under 18 or who are classed as vulnerable? (see section 7)	No
Will your project include data collection outside of the UK?	No

SECTION A: PROJECT DETAILS

Project title	Contexts and Mechanisms Behind Successful Inclusion Practices in Secondary Schools for Pupils At-Risk of Exclusion: Staff Perspectives		
Proposed project start date	March 2022	**Anticipated project end date**	May 2023
Principle Investigator (normally your Research Supervisor): Dr. Christopher Arnold			

Please note: TREC approval will only be given for the length of the project as stated above up to a maximum of 6 years. Projects exceeding these timeframes will need additional ethical approval	
Has NHS or other approval been sought for this research including through submission via Research Application System (IRAS) or to the Health Research Authority (HRA)?	**YES (NRES approval)** ☐ **YES (HRA approval)** ☐ **Other** ☐ **NO** ☒
If you already have ethical approval from another body (including HRA/IRAS) please submit the application form and outcome letters.	

SECTION B: APPLICANT DETAILS

Name of Researcher	Ellen Lane-Downey
Programme of Study and Target Award	Professional doctorate for child, community and educational psychology
Email address	EDowney@Tavi-Port.nhs.uk
Contact telephone number	07704155300

SECTION C: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

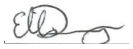
Will any of the researchers or their institutions receive any other benefits or incentives for taking part in this research over and above their normal salary package or the costs of undertaking the research? **YES** ☐ **NO** ☒ If **YES**, please detail below:
Is there any further possibility for conflict of interest? YES ☐ **NO** ☒

Are you proposing to conduct this work in a location where you work or have a placement? **YES** ☒ **NO** ☐ If **YES**, please detail below outline how you will avoid issues arising around colleagues being involved in this project:
This work will be conducted members of staff from two participating secondary schools in the local authority that I work in. This work will be completed by the researcher with no direct involvement of other colleagues from my placement. As I have no allocated schools on my placement, I am not the direct link for schools to the EP service.

Is your project 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** ☒
If **YES**, please add details here:	
Will you be required to get further ethical approval after receiving TREC approval? If **YES**, please supply details of the ethical approval bodies below AND include any letters of approval from the ethical approval bodies (letters received after receiving TREC approval should be submitted to complete your record):	**YES** ☐ **NO** ☒
If your project is being undertaken with one or more clinical services or organisations external to the Trust, please provide details of these:	
If you still need to agree these arrangements or if you can only approach organisations after you have ethical approval, please identify the types of organisations (e.g. schools or clinical services) you wish to approach:	

Do you have approval from the organisations detailed above? (this includes R&D approval where relevant) Please attach approval letters to this application. Any approval letters received after TREC approval has been granted MUST be submitted to be appended to your record	**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 ethical principles and to keep my supervisor updated with the progress of my research • I am aware that for cases of proven misconduct, it may result in formal disciplinary proceedings and/or the cancellation of the proposed research. • I understand that if my project design, methodology or method of data collection changes I must seek an amendment to my ethical approvals as failure to do so, may result in a report of academic and/or research misconduct.	
Applicant (print name)	Ellen Lane-Downey
Signed	
Date	04/04/22

FOR RESEARCH DEGREE STUDENT APPLICANTS ONLY

Name of Supervisor/Principal Investigator	Dr Christopher Arnold

Supervisor – • Does the student have the necessary skills to carry out the research? **YES x☐ NO ☐** ▪ Is the participant information sheet, consent form and any other documentation appropriate? **YES x☐ NO ☐** ▪ Are the procedures for recruitment of participants and obtaining informed consent suitable and sufficient? **YES x☐ NO ☐** ▪ Where required, does the researcher have current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance? **YES x☐ NO ☐**	
Signed	
Date	06/04/22

COURSE LEAD/RESEARCH LEAD Does the proposed research as detailed herein have your support to proceed? YES ☒ NO ☐	
Signed	A Styles
Date	14.04.22

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 is looking to identify what contexts and mechanisms are behind successful inclusion practices for students at risk of exclusion in a secondary school from a staff's perspective. This is specifically looking at what schools are implementing to support inclusion and reduce the likelihood or need to exclude. Context can be defined as 'the situation or circumstances in which an event occurs'. The event in this instance would be successful inclusion practices. In the context of this research, mechanism can be defined 'a causal explanation for why a particular action or intervention had an observed outcome'. I will be collecting this information through interviewing secondary school staff members, including senior management, teachers and teaching assistants. Participants will be recruited through two secondary schools in the local authority that I am doing my placement in. Schools will be identified based on their exclusions rates and whether they are above or below national average as well as considering whether they are above and below the

local authority average across the Bi-Borough. The participants will be invited to take part in this study and selected through random sampling. If this is unsuccessful, I shall use opportunistic sampling.

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)

According to the National Statistics (2021b), there were almost three thousand fewer permanent exclusions in 2019/20, a total of 5,057, in comparison to the previous year. However, due to a global pandemic, which resulted in millions of children learning from home, this figure should be thought about with caution. In fact, before the pandemic hit, permanent exclusion rates were 5% higher than the same term from the year before. Temporary exclusions were 14% higher showing that exclusion of students is an increasing issue. Therefore, it is important to also look at the National Statistics (2021a) for temporary and permanent exclusions for 2018/2019 to think about which groups were particularly vulnerable, pre-lockdown. In total for that year, permanent exclusion rates were at 7,894 and fixed term exclusions were at 438,265. These statistics showed pupils of Gypsy/Roma and Irish Traveller heritage had the highest temporary exclusion rates (21.26%, compared to their peers). Reasons for exclusion included persistent disruptive behaviour (being the most common reason at around 31%) as well as physical assault towards a pupil (13%) and against an adult (10%).

The local authority, which the researcher is on placement, is a biborough, therefore the exclusion rates slightly differ. For example, in both local authorities, the latest figures from 2018/19 (Office National Statistics, 2021a) show that the number of fixed term exclusions in secondary schools has increased and are currently above the national average (6.5% & 10.1%) and the inner London average of 4.43%. The permanent exclusion rates for young people with SEND was lower than the national rate for both primary and secondary. The fixed term exclusion rate for pupils with SEND was greater than the national average in secondary schools. This highlights that there is a significant need for Educational Psychologists (EPs) to support schools within the local authority and this is continuing to become problematic.

Within the local authority, there are several pupils who would also be considered ‘vulnerable’ and therefore at-risk of exclusion. For example, between 21 - 29% of children are living in poverty, 24 – 27% of child are eligible for free school meals and between 2.1% - 3.2% of pupils have social, emotional, mental health needs. Within the local authority, only 20% of financial investment goes towards interventions to reduce the risk of exclusion, whereas 80% of the total invested in this area goes towards full time education provision for pupils placed in AP. This shows promoting ‘inclusion’ to reduce the risk of ‘exclusion’, is not as well invested in.

There are many studies that explore the factors that lead to exclusion such as a school’s location (typically more exclusions in areas of high deprivation), challenging behaviour displayed by pupils (Hatton, 2013), unconscious bias and the ethnicity of the pupil (Gillborn & Demack, 2018), staff communication and leadership, competing pressures for schools to achieve academically (Rustique-Forrester, 2005), government policy (McCluskey et al., 2019) and support from parents (Embeita, 2019).There is, however, less of a focus on ‘inclusion’ practices to target a reduction in exclusion as it can be quite a difficult and large area to tackle.

The overall aim is to highlight the different contexts and mechanisms that support successful inclusion practices for pupils at risk of exclusion, from a whole-school approach. This is specifically in the context of a secondary school in a diverse located in inner London. From understanding what 'helps' in this situation, EPs can use this information as a framework when supporting schools in developing their inclusion practices. This allows schools to draw on their strengths and think of exclusion from a different perspective, taking a more 'early intervention' approach and 'inclusive' ethos. Having a framework to draw from allows EPs to work across schools in a consistent manner, exploring new ideas of what works well and being able to share and support other schools to develop this.

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)

Based on the researcher's orientation and research question, a qualitative methods design will be used, specially Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2008). This is because it seeks to capture rich and detailed accounts of people's experiences and perspectives (Willig, 2008). The purpose of this research is explanatory. It seeks to understand and explain the contexts and mechanisms underlying the successful inclusion of pupils at risk of exclusion from the perspective of the staff members that work with them. This research will also take on a critical realist ontological and epistemological stance. The purpose of this research, based on critical realist approaches, is also to produce findings that can be generalised to other similar contexts (Fox et al, 2007). In the case of this research, the findings are equated to overarching themes. These findings will be applicable to other schools when thinking about their inclusion practices for pupils at risk of exclusion and it is hoped that the outcomes of this research can help inform EP practice in this area. It is also hoped that this research can offer a supportive contribution to the growing discussion and concern around the increasing number of exclusions this country is facing. The researcher would also like this research to contribute to the discussion from a positive angle by focusing on what schools are already doing well and continuing to build upon their strengths.

Participating secondary school staff members who take part in this study will be asked to attend a semi-structured interview guided by open ended questions.

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 these criteria are in place. (Do not exceed 500 words)

When thinking about which population to work with, secondary schools were considered appropriate as exclusions are continuing to occur more often in Key Stage 3 compared to the other school years and it would be appropriate to target for this reason. Other factors that contributed to this decision was the impact that exclusion can have on a pupil's GSCE preparation as well as it being their final stage of compulsory education.

When thinking about who the most appropriate participants would be to work with, the idea of who holds the power in this context was considered. When thinking about who contributes to the decisions on inclusion and exclusion policies and procedures, it was decided that staff members would be appropriate to interview on what helps successful inclusion practices for at-risk pupils.

Participants will be recruited on a voluntary basis from secondary schools that the researcher is already connected with from the local authority they are completing their placement in. Two schools will be identified based on their exclusion rates (one school above average and one school below average). The themes identified from both the schools will be compared and contrasted to think about what practices are systemically embedded and exploring the ethos and culture of the school regarding inclusion practices. Other factors will also be reflected and considered upon including the number of students registered for 'Free School Meals' as well as the socio-economic context of the school location. Schools will not be informed whether they have been selected based on their exclusion rates (above or below) but rather to explore inclusion practices to support at risk pupils.

With regards to sample size, overall 8 – 12 participants will be selected across both schools, ideally 6 from each (with a minimum of 4 from each). A mixture of genders, positions within the school context and subject topics will be selected, where possible, in order to balance out the study.

Further permission will be sought from the schools Head Teacher through email or in person. An information sheet will be initially provided to the identified secondary schools and an option to meet the researcher to discuss this in further detail will be provided. Participating headteachers will be provided information sheets to distribute to staff members with a sign-up link and consent form provided for those interested in participating. The researcher will be available to come in to speak with staff prior to this and to answer any additional questions regarding the study. Staff members will be selected at random and invited to interview. Those who are not invited to participate in this research will be sent a letter/email to thank them for considering participation

5. Please state the location(s) of the proposed research including the location of any interviews. Please provide a Risk Assessment if required. Consideration should be given to lone working, visiting private residences, conducting research outside working hours or any other non-standard arrangements.

If any data collection is to be done online, please identify the platforms to be used.

In the event of COVID-19, schools and individual participants will have the option to select whether they would like to participate online or face-to-face, considering the current context of cases and COVID outbreaks. In the case of face-to-face interviews, COVID-related health and safety protocols will be adhered to including but not limited to social distancing, the option of face masks visors, ventilated rooms etc. The researcher will adhere to the local authority and school policy on this.

If interviews are taking place online, participating schools have the option of selecting the platform they use within their school context (e.g., Zoom). Participants will be provided a link created by the researcher and a unique password to access the meeting. A waiting room feature will also be enabled (where possible) to ensure extra security and confidentiality.

In the case of face-to-face interviews, these will be conducted in the participant's school setting so that they are in an environment that is familiar to them

6. Will the participants be from any of the following groups? *(Tick as appropriate)*

- ☐ Students or Staff of the Trust or Partner delivering your programme.
- ☒ 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.

7. 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)
- 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
- children are automatically presumed to be vulnerable.

7.1. If YES, what special arrangements are in place to protect vulnerable participants' interests?

If YES, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check **within the last three years** is required.
Please provide details of the 'clear disclosure':

Date of disclosure:
Type of disclosure:
Organisation that requested disclosure:
DBS certificate number:

*(NOTE: information concerning activities which require DBS checks can be found via https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-check-eligible-positions-guidance). Please **do not** include a copy of your DBS certificate with your application*

8. 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.

9. 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)
Taking into consideration that some school staff members may any of the needs outlined above (excluding the last point), special arrangements will be considered. School staff will receive a copy of the information sheet and this will be sent virtually via email. School staff can also have the opportunity to speak in person and/or over the phone with the researcher, where they will also be there to answer any questions or explain in further detail the purpose of the study. Interested participants will be given a clear outline of what their role would be should they agree to participate, their right to decide whether they would like to take part in the study and that they can withdraw at any point. Participants will also be informed of the study and their right to withdraw in person prior to interviews. They will also be encouraged to ask any questions as well as acknowledging that they may be fearful or unsure of what to ask. Participants can also have the option to request someone they trust to being in the room with them during this informative stage and if needed, the interview itself.

SECTION F: RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

10. 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

☐ Themes around extremism or radicalisation

☐ 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 (risk assessment attached)

☐ research overseas (please ensure Section G is complete)

11. 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.

12. 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.

For my master's degree in psychology and education, I undertook research project investigating joint attention in young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Part of this research project was conducting interviews with staff members around the topic where I took careful consideration in how to hold a space for staff who may be feeling overwhelmed by the work that they were doing.

As part of my placement last year, I undertook a project that focused on developing 'Race and Equality' aware practice in schools. Part of this project was to consult with staff members on this topic and prepare a question structure to focus on the strengths of their practice, while taking into consideration that staff members may have their own experiences of difficulties in school due to racism.

As a trainee educational psychologist (TEP), I receive monthly separate research and personal supervision at the Tavistock and weekly supervision on placement. This is supportive in considering

potential ethical and practical components of conducting this type of research as well as managing my other work as an TEP

13. 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, 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 overall contribution that this proposed study hopes to provide an insight into what successful inclusion practices are taking place in order to support vulnerable students who may be at risk of exclusion. The interview process itself may provide participants with a space where they can reflect on what they think is working well.

Participants will be contributing to a growing research and literature base with an aim to contribute towards a positive change and possible interventions of support. The themes highlighted could be developed into a working framework that could be further developed by the researcher and the service. Taking this framework and using a strengths-based approach, future participating schools will be able to identify their areas of strengths around inclusive practice and an area of development, through a questionnaire. This questionnaire will be designed based on the themes that have been identified through this study. Through the support of consultation and using the categories as a framework, schools will be able to build on approaches of inclusive practice that is working well for pupils at risk of exclusion as well as work on an area to develop.

14. 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)

It is unlikely that participation in this research will lead to any discomfort, risk or distress for the participants. This piece of research is focused on inclusion in a positive light and 'strengths-based' approach. It allows participants to share views about what they are doing well in terms of inclusion for at risk pupils, which is underpinned by positive psychology. The interview schedules are also semi-structured and are open, meaning the participant's do not have to volunteer any information that they may be uncomfortable with. It is acknowledged, however, that there may be voluntarily raised conversations associated with exclusion, which may have a personal impact on the participant and elicit some emotive feelings. In this case, participants will be signposted to a key person in their school (line manager or senior management liaison). The researcher will contract this with the head teacher and/or link staff member prior to conducting interviews. Participants will also be offered a follow-up information sheet with links to external support as well as an optional feedback/comment sheet.

If a participant experiences distress during the interview where it needs to be terminated, the researcher will follow up with the participant to check in. The participant will also be provided with the contact details of their school's link EP and the researchers placement supervisor with the option to speak to them about their experience of distress. A named member of staff will also be identified to support the participant (such as the school counsellor) and the participant will have the option to speak to them if they prefer. The researcher will leave her contact details (email address) with the staff members so contact can be made regarding any adverse outcomes from this research

In the event of COVID-19, schools and individual participants will have the option to select whether they would like to participate online or face-to-face, considering the current context of cases and

COVID outbreaks. In the case of face-to-face interviews, COVID-related health and safety protocols will be adhered to including but not limited to social distancing, the option of face masks visors, ventilated rooms etc. The researcher will adhere to the local authority and school policy on this. In the case of face-to-face interviews, these will be conducted in the participant's school setting so that they are in an environment that is familiar to them.
15. 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.
After their participation, participants will be debriefed by the researcher and provided with a debrief sheet and thanked for their contribution to the research. Participants will be invited to leave any comments or feedback for the researcher as well as an opportunity to ask questions or express concerns. Participants will also be provided information regarding an identified link member of staff (previously contracted with the headteacher) such as the school counsellor to discuss any thoughts or feelings brought about following their participation as well as the contact details for external services such as their school's link EP. Participants will also be reminded that they can contact the researcher post-interview to discuss any further questions, concerns or procedures.
16. Please provide the names and nature of any external support or counselling organisations that will be suggested to participants if participation in the research has potential to raise specific issues for participants.
Participants will be provided the contact details of their school's link EP where they can discuss any specific issues that may have risen for them during their participation. Participants will also be provided the contact details of the researcher's placement supervisor which they can contact also. Participants will also be provided the details of the following external agencies: • British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy • British Psychoanalytic Council • Samaritans
17. 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)
N/A

FOR RESEARCH UNDERTAKEN OUTSIDE THE UK

18. Does the proposed research involve travel outside of the UK? ☐
YES ☒ NO

If YES, please confirm:

☐ I have consulted the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website for guidance/travel advice? http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/

☐ I have completed ta RISK Assessment covering all aspects of the project including consideration of the location of the data collection and risks to participants.

All overseas project data collection will need approval from the Deputy Director of Education and Training or their nominee. Normally this will be done based on the information provided in this form. All projects approved through the TREC process will be indemnified by the Trust against claims made by third parties.

If you have any queries regarding research outside the UK, please contact academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk:

Students are required to arrange their own travel and medical insurance to cover project work outside of the UK. Please indicate what insurance cover you have or will have in place.

19. 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. Please also clarify how the requirements will be met:

SECTION G: PARTICIPANT CONSENT AND WITHDRAWAL

20. 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:

21. 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:

22. 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 and Principal Investigator (your Research Supervisor) 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 or other ethics body.

☒ 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 Trusts 's Data Protection and handling Policies.: https://tavistockandportman.nhs.uk/about-us/governance/policies-and-procedures/

☒ 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.

23. 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 research project is part of a degree

☒ 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

24. 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 no 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 are 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.

25. 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

26. 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:

27. 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: In line with Research Councils UK (RCUK) guidance, doctoral project data should normally be stored for 10 years and Masters level data for up to 2 years

28. 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.

☒ Research data will only be stored in the University of Essex OneDrive system and no other cloud storage location.

☐ 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 UK.

☐ Research data will be encrypted and transferred electronically outside of the UK.

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).

Essex students also have access the 'Box' service for file transfer:
https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/it-services/box

☐ Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, e-mails or telephone numbers.

☐ Collection and storage of personal sensitive data (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political or religious beliefs or physical or mental health or condition).

☒ 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 University of Essex OneDrive 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.
29. Please provide details of individuals outside the research team who will be given password protected access to encrypted data for the proposed research.
N/A
30. Please provide details on the regions and territories where research data will be electronically transferred that are external to the UK:
N/A

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)?

N/A

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)

☒ Letters of approval from locations for data collection

☐ 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.

Appendix E: Tavistock Research and Ethics Committee (TREC) Letter of Approval

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
Fax: 020 7447 3837

Ellen Lane - Downey
By Email

21 April 2022

Dear Ellen,

Re: Trust Research Ethics Application
Title: Contexts and Mechanisms Behind Successful Inclusion Practices in Secondary Schools for Pupils At-Risk of Exclusion: Staff Perspectives

Thank you for sending your response to the conditions set by the Assessor with regards to your TREC application. 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 note 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, Course Administrator

Appendix F: Tavistock Research and Ethics Committee (TREC) Request for Minor Amendments

RE: M4 Requesting TREC amendments

Paru Jeram
Mon 30/01/2023 12:20
To:Ellen Downey <EDowney@Tavi-Port.nhs.uk>
Cc:Christopher Arnold <CArnold@Tavi-Port.ac.uk>;Adam Styles <AStyles@Tavi-Port.ac.uk>

3 attachments (885 KB)
Additional Forms_Amended.docx; ELD TREC Amendment Request Letter.docx; TREC Application for Ethical Approval Form_ELD_M4 - AMENDED.docx;

Dear Ellen

I can confirm that I have received your updated TREC documentation in light of the challenges you have experienced with recruiting participants and I can confirm that the changes have been approved. The amendment pertains to a change to the method of participant recruitment.

Your updated TREC form is attached.

You may proceed with your research.

Please note 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.

Kind regards,

Paru
Mrs Paru Jeram
Senior Quality Assurance Officer
Academic Governance and Quality Assurance
https://tavistockandportman.nhs.uk/research-and-innovation/doing-research/student-research/

Spelling mistakes are possible – apologies in advance

Appendix G: Amended Tavistock Research and Ethics Committee (TREC)

Application Form

Tavistock and Portman Trust Research Ethics Committee (TREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL REVIEW OF STUDENT RESEARCH PROJECTS

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)

FOR ALL APPLICANTS

If you already have ethical approval from another body (including HRA/IRAS) please submit the application form and outcome letters. You need only complete sections of the TREC form which are NOT covered in your existing approval

Is your project considered as 'research' according to the HRA tool? (http://www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk/research/index.html)	Yes
Will your project involve participants who are under 18 or who are classed as vulnerable? (see section 7)	No
Will your project include data collection outside of the UK?	No

SECTION A: PROJECT DETAILS

Project title	Contexts and Mechanisms Behind Successful Inclusion Practices in Secondary Schools for Pupils At-Risk of Exclusion		
Proposed project start date	March 2022	**Anticipated project end date**	May 2023

Principle Investigator (normally your Research Supervisor): Dr. Christopher Arnold	
Please note: TREC approval will only be given for the length of the project as stated above up to a maximum of 6 years. Projects exceeding these timeframes will need additional ethical approval	
Has NHS or other approval been sought for this research including through submission via Research Application System (IRAS) or to the Health Research Authority (HRA)?	**YES (NRES approval)** ☐ **YES (HRA approval)** ☐ **Other** ☐ **NO** ☒
If you already have ethical approval from another body (including HRA/IRAS) please submit the application form and outcome letters.	

SECTION B: APPLICANT DETAILS

Name of Researcher	Ellen Lane-Downey
Programme of Study and Target Award	Professional doctorate for child, community and educational psychology
Email address	EDowney@Tavi-Port.nhs.uk
Contact telephone number	07704155300

SECTION C: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

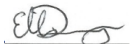
Will any of the researchers or their institutions receive any other benefits or incentives for taking part in this research over and above their normal salary package or the costs of undertaking the research? **YES** ☐ **NO** ☒ If **YES**, please detail below:
Is there any further possibility for conflict of interest? YES ☐ **NO** ☒

Are you proposing to conduct this work in a location where you work or have a placement? **YES** ☒ **NO** ☐ If **YES**, please detail below outline how you will avoid issues arising around colleagues being involved in this project:
This work will be conducted members of staff from two participating secondary schools in the local authority that I work in. This work will be completed by the researcher with no direct involvement of other colleagues from my placement. As I have no allocated schools on my placement, I am not the direct link for schools to the EP service.

Is your project 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** ☒
If **YES**, please add details here:	
Will you be required to get further ethical approval after receiving TREC approval? If **YES**, please supply details of the ethical approval bodies below AND include any letters of approval from the ethical approval bodies (letters received after receiving TREC approval should be submitted to complete your record):	**YES** ☐ **NO** ☒
If your project is being undertaken with one or more clinical services or organisations external to the Trust, please provide details of these:	
If you still need to agree these arrangements or if you can only approach organisations after you have ethical approval, please identify the types of organisations (e.g. schools or clinical services) you wish to approach:	

Do you have approval from the organisations detailed above? (this includes R&D approval where relevant) Please attach approval letters to this application. Any approval letters received after TREC approval has been granted MUST be submitted to be appended to your record	**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 ethical principles and to keep my supervisor updated with the progress of my research • I am aware that for cases of proven misconduct, it may result in formal disciplinary proceedings and/or the cancellation of the proposed research. • I understand that if my project design, methodology or method of data collection changes I must seek an amendment to my ethical approvals as failure to do so, may result in a report of academic and/or research misconduct.	
Applicant (print name)	Ellen Lane-Downey
Signed	
Date	06/01/22

FOR RESEARCH DEGREE STUDENT APPLICANTS ONLY

Name of Supervisor/Principal Investigator	Dr Christopher Arnold

Supervisor –	
• Does the student have the necessary skills to carry out the research? **YES x☐ NO ☐** ▪ Is the participant information sheet, consent form and any other documentation appropriate? **YES x☐ NO ☐** ▪ Are the procedures for recruitment of participants and obtaining informed consent suitable and sufficient? **YES x☐ NO ☐** ▪ Where required, does the researcher have current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) clearance? **YES x☐ NO ☐**	
Signed	
Date	17/01/23

COURSE LEAD/RESEARCH LEAD	
Does the proposed research as detailed herein have your support to proceed? YES ☒ NO ☐	
Signed	A Styles
Date	14.04.22

SECTION E: DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH

31. 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 is looking to identify what contexts and mechanisms are behind successful inclusion practices for students at risk of exclusion in a secondary school from the perspectives of teachers and educational psychologists involved with secondary school pupils. This is specifically looking at what schools are implementing to support inclusion and reduce the likelihood or need to exclude. Context can be defined as 'the situation or circumstances in which an event occurs'. The event in this instance would be successful inclusion practices. In the context of this research, mechanism can be defined 'a causal explanation for why a particular action or intervention had an observed outcome'. I will be collecting this information through interviewing secondary school staff members, including senior management, teachers and teaching assistants and educational psychologists working within the local authority that the research is taking place in. Teaching staff participants will be recruited through two secondary schools in the local authority that I am doing

my placement in. Schools will be identified based on their exclusions rates and whether they are above or below national average as well as considering whether they are above and below the local authority average across the Bi-Borough. The participants will be invited to take part in this study and selected through random sampling. If this is unsuccessful, I shall use opportunistic sampling.

32. 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)

According to the National Statistics (2021b), there were almost three thousand fewer permanent exclusions in 2019/20, a total of 5,057, in comparison to the previous year. However, due to a global pandemic, which resulted in millions of children learning from home, this figure should be thought about with caution. In fact, before the pandemic hit, permanent exclusion rates were 5% higher than the same term from the year before. Temporary exclusions were 14% higher showing that exclusion of students is an increasing issue. Therefore, it is important to also look at the National Statistics (2021a) for temporary and permanent exclusions for 2018/2019 to think about which groups were particularly vulnerable, pre-lockdown. In total for that year, permanent exclusion rates were at 7,894 and fixed term exclusions were at 438,265. These statistics showed pupils of Gypsy/Roma and Irish Traveller heritage had the highest temporary exclusion rates (21.26%, compared to their peers). Reasons for exclusion included persistent disruptive behaviour (being the most common reason at around 31%) as well as physical assault towards a pupil (13%) and against an adult (10%).

The local authority, which the researcher is on placement, is a bi-borough, therefore the exclusion rates slightly differ. For example, in both local authorities, the latest figures from 2018/19 (Office National Statistics, 2021a) show that the number of fixed term exclusions in secondary schools has increased and are currently above the national average (6.5% & 10.1%) and the inner London average of 4.43%. The permanent exclusion rates for young people with SEND was lower than the national rate for both primary and secondary. The fixed term exclusion rate for pupils with SEND was greater than the national average in secondary schools. This highlights that there is a significant need for Educational Psychologists (EPs) to support schools within the local authority and this is continuing to become problematic.

Within the local authority, there are several pupils who would also be considered ‘vulnerable’ and therefore at-risk of exclusion. For example, between 21 - 29% of children are living in poverty, 24 – 27% of child are eligible for free school meals and between 2.1% - 3.2% of pupils have social, emotional, mental health needs. Within the local authority, only 20% of financial investment goes towards interventions to reduce the risk of exclusion, whereas 80% of the total invested in this area goes towards full time education provision for pupils placed in AP. This shows promoting ‘inclusion’ to reduce the risk of ‘exclusion’, is not as well invested in.

There are many studies that explore the factors that lead to exclusion such as a school’s location (typically more exclusions in areas of high deprivation), challenging behaviour displayed by pupils (Hatton, 2013), unconscious bias and the ethnicity of the pupil (Gillborn & Demack, 2018), staff communication and leadership, competing pressures for schools to achieve academically (Rustique-Forrester, 2005), government policy (McCluskey et al., 2019) and support from parents

(Embeita, 2019).There is, however, less of a focus on 'inclusion' practices to target a reduction in exclusion as it can be quite a difficult and large area to tackle.

The overall aim is to highlight the different contexts and mechanisms that support successful inclusion practices for pupils at risk of exclusion, from a whole-school approach. This is specifically in the context of a secondary school in a diverse located in inner London. From understanding what 'helps' in this situation, EPs can use this information as a framework when supporting schools in developing their inclusion practices. This allows schools to draw on their strengths and think of exclusion from a different perspective, taking a more 'early intervention' approach and 'inclusive' ethos. Having a framework to draw from allows EPs to work across schools in a consistent manner, exploring new ideas of what works well and being able to share and support other schools to develop this.

33. 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)

Based on the researcher's orientation and research question, a qualitative methods design will be used, specially Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2008). This is because it seeks to capture rich and detailed accounts of people's experiences and perspectives (Willig, 2008). The purpose of this research is explanatory. It seeks to understand and explain the contexts and mechanisms underlying the successful inclusion of pupils at risk of exclusion from the perspective of the adults that work with and support them. This research will also take on a critical realist ontological and epistemological stance. The purpose of this research, based on critical realist approaches, is also to produce findings that can be generalised to other similar contexts (Fox et al, 2007). In the case of this research, the findings are equated to overarching themes. These findings will be applicable to other schools when thinking about their inclusion practices for pupils at risk of exclusion and it is hoped that the outcomes of this research can help inform EP practice in this area. It is also hoped that this research can offer a supportive contribution to the growing discussion and concern around the increasing number of exclusions this country is facing. The researcher would also like this research to contribute to the discussion from a positive angle by focusing on what schools are already doing well and continuing to build upon their strengths.

Participating adults who take part in this study will be asked to attend a semi-structured interview guided by open ended questions.

SECTION F: PARTICIPANT DETAILS

34. 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 these criteria are in place. (Do not exceed 500 words)

When thinking about which population to work with, secondary schools were considered appropriate as exclusions are continuing to occur more often in Key Stage 3 compared to the other school years and it would be appropriate to target for this reason. Other factors that contributed to this decision was the impact that exclusion can have on a pupil's GSCE preparation as well as it being their final stage of compulsory education.

When thinking about who the most appropriate participants would be to work with, the idea of who holds the power in this context was considered. When thinking about who contributes to the decisions on inclusion and exclusion policies and procedures, it was decided that staff members would be appropriate to interview on what helps successful inclusion practices for at-risk pupils. Educational psychologists were also considered given their role in supporting schools with implementing inclusion practices and working with staff to support at-risk pupils.

Teaching staff participants will be recruited on a voluntary basis from secondary schools that the researcher is already connected with from the local authority they are completing their placement in. Two schools will be identified based on their exclusion rates (one school above average and one school below average) or through opportunistic sampling as mentioned in section E1. Educational Psychologists will be recruited through the researcher's local authority where they are on placement. The themes identified from both the schools will be compared and contrasted to think about what practices are systemically embedded and exploring the ethos and culture of the school regarding inclusion practices. Other factors, within the participating school's context, will also be reflected and considered upon including the number of students registered for 'Free School Meals' as well as the socio-economic context of the school location. Schools will not be informed whether they have been selected based on their exclusion rates (above or below) but rather to explore inclusion practices to support at risk pupils.

With regards to sample size, overall 8 – 12 participants will be selected across both schools, and educational psychologists, ideally 4 from each (with a minimum of 2-3 from each). A mixture of genders, positions within the school context and subject topics will be selected, where possible, in order to balance out the study.

Further permission will be sought from the schools Head Teacher through email or in person. An information sheet will be initially provided to the identified secondary schools and an option to meet the researcher to discuss this in further detail will be provided. Participating headteachers will be provided information sheets to distribute to staff members with a sign-up link and consent form provided for those interested in participating. The researcher will be available to come in to speak with staff prior to this and to answer any additional questions regarding the study. Staff members will be selected at random and invited to interview. Those who are not invited to participate in this research will be sent a letter/email to thank them for considering participation. Educational Psychologists will be recruited through email within the researcher's local authority and will be provided with information sheets, a sign up link and consent form for those interested in participating.

35. Please state the location(s) of the proposed research including the location of any interviews. Please provide a Risk Assessment if required. Consideration should be given to lone working, visiting private residences, conducting research outside working hours or any other non-standard arrangements.

If any data collection is to be done online, please identify the platforms to be used.

In the event of COVID-19, schools and individual participants will have the option to select whether they would like to participate online or face-to-face, considering the current context of cases and COVID outbreaks. In the case of face-to-face interviews, COVID-related health and safety protocols will be adhered to including but not limited to social distancing, the option of face masks visors, ventilated rooms etc. The researcher will adhere to the local authority and school policy on this.

If interviews are taking place online, participants have the option of selecting the platform they use within their school/work context (e.g., Zoom). Participants will be provided a link created by the researcher and a unique password to access the meeting. A waiting room feature will also be enabled (where possible) to ensure extra security and confidentiality.

In the case of face-to-face interviews, these will be conducted in the participant's workplace setting, where appropriate so that they are in an environment that is familiar to them.

36. Will the participants be from any of the following groups? *(Tick as appropriate)*

- ☐ Students or Staff of the Trust or Partner delivering your programme.
- ☒ 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.*

37. 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)
- 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
- children are automatically presumed to be vulnerable.

7.1. If YES, what special arrangements are in place to protect vulnerable participants' interests?

If YES, a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check **within the last three years** is required.
Please provide details of the 'clear disclosure':

Date of disclosure:
Type of disclosure:
Organisation that requested disclosure:
DBS certificate number:

*(NOTE: information concerning activities which require DBS checks can be found via https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dbs-check-eligible-positions-guidance). Please **do not** include a copy of your DBS certificate with your application*

38. 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.
39. 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)
Taking into consideration that some potential participants may any of the needs outlined above (excluding the last point), special arrangements will be considered. Potential participants will receive a copy of the information sheet and this will be sent virtually via email. Potential participants can also have the opportunity to speak in person and/or over the phone with the researcher, where they will also be there to answer any questions or explain in further detail the purpose of the study. Interested participants will be given a clear outline of what their role would be should they agree to participate, their right to decide whether they would like to take part in the study and that they can withdraw at any point. Participants will also be informed of the study and their right to withdraw in person prior to interviews. They will also be encouraged to ask any questions as well as acknowledging that they may be fearful or unsure of what to ask. Participants can also have the option to request someone they trust to being in the room with them during this informative stage and if needed, the interview itself.

SECTION F: RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

40. 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

☐ Themes around extremism or radicalisation

☐ 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 (risk assessment attached)

☐ research overseas (please ensure Section G is complete)

41. 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.

42. 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.
For my masters degree in psychology and education, I undertook research project investigating joint attention in young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Part of this research project was conducting interviews with staff members around the topic where I took careful consideration in how to hold a space for staff who may be feeling overwhelmed by the work that they were doing. As part of my placement last year, I undertook a project that focused on developing 'Race and Equality' aware practice in schools. Part of this project was to consult with staff members on this topic and prepare a question structure to focus on the strengths of their practice, while taking into consideration that staff members may have their own experiences of difficulties in school due to racism. As a trainee educational psychologist (TEP), I receive monthly separate research and personal supervision at the Tavistock and weekly supervision on placement. This is supportive in considering potential ethical and practical components of conducting this type of research as well as managing my other work as an TEP
43. 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, 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 overall contribution that this proposed study hopes to provide an insight into what successful inclusion practices are taking place in order to support vulnerable students who may be at risk of exclusion. The interview process itself may provide participants with a space where they can reflect on what they think is working well. Participants will be contributing to a growing research and literature base with an aim to contribute towards a positive change and possible interventions of support. The themes highlighted could be developed into a working framework that could be further developed by the researcher and the service. Taking this framework and using a strengths-based approach, future participating schools will be able to identify their areas of strengths around inclusive practice and an area of development, through a questionnaire. This questionnaire will be designed based on the themes that have been identified through this study. Through the support of consultation and using the categories as a framework, schools will be able to build on approaches of inclusive practice that is working well for pupils at risk of exclusion as well as work on an area to develop.
44. 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)
It is unlikely that participation in this research will lead to any discomfort, risk or distress for the participants. This piece of research is focused on inclusion in a positive light and 'strengths-based' approach. It allows participants to share views about what they are doing well in terms of inclusion for at risk pupils, which is underpinned by positive psychology. The interview schedules are also semi-structured and are open, meaning the participant's do not have to volunteer any information

that they may be uncomfortable with. It is acknowledged, however, that there may be voluntarily raised conversations associated with exclusion, which may have a personal impact on the participant and elicit some emotive feelings. In this case, participants will be signposted to a key person in their school (line manager or senior management liaison). The researcher will contract this with the head teacher and/or link staff member prior to conducting interviews. Participants will also be offered a follow up information sheet with links to external support as well as an optional feedback/comment sheet.

If a participant experiences distress during the interview where it needs to be terminated, the researcher will follow up with the participant to check in. Teaching staff participants will also be provided with the contact details of their school's link EP and all participants will be provided with the researchers placement supervisor with the option to speak to them about their experience of distress. A named member of staff will also be identified to support the teaching staff participants (such as the school counsellor) and the participant will have the option to speak to them if they prefer. The researcher will leave her contact details (email address) with the staff members so contact can be made regarding any adverse outcomes from this research. Participants will also be offered the details of external agencies as seen in section F16.

In the event of COVID-19, schools and individual participants will have the option to select whether they would like to participate online or face-to-face, considering the current context of cases and COVID outbreaks. In the case of face-to-face interviews, COVID-related health and safety protocols will be adhered to including but not limited to social distancing, the option of face masks visors, ventilated rooms etc. The researcher will adhere to the local authority and school policy on this.

In the case of face-to-face interviews, these will be conducted in the participant's school setting so that they are in an environment that is familiar to them.

45. 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.

After their participation, participants will be debriefed by the researcher and provided with a debrief sheet and thanked for their contribution to the research. Participants will be invited to leave any comments or feedback for the researcher as well as an opportunity to ask questions or express concerns. Participants will also be provided information regarding an identified link member of staff (previously contracted with the headteacher and Principal Educational Psychologist) such as the school counsellor or their supervisor to discuss any thoughts or feelings brought about following their participation as well as the contact details for external services such as their school's link EP or research supervisor. Participants will also be reminded that they can contact the researcher post-interview to discuss any further questions, concerns or procedures.

46. Please provide the names and nature of any external support or counselling organisations that will be suggested to participants if participation in the research has potential to raise specific issues for participants.

Participants will be provided the contact details of their school's link EP where they can discuss any specific issues that may have risen for them during their participation. Participants will also be provided the contact details of the researcher's placement supervisor which they can contact also.

Participants will also be provided the details of the following external agencies:

- British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy
- British Psychoanalytic Council
- Samaritans

47. 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)
N/A

FOR RESEARCH UNDERTAKEN OUTSIDE THE UK

48. Does the proposed research involve travel outside of the UK? ☐
YES ☒ **NO**

If YES, please confirm:

☐ I have consulted the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website for guidance/travel advice? http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/

☐ I have completed ta RISK Assessment covering all aspects of the project including consideration of the location of the data collection and risks to participants.

All overseas project data collection will need approval from the Deputy Director of Education and Training or their nominee. Normally this will be done based on the information provided in this form. All projects approved through the TREC process will be indemnified by the Trust against claims made by third parties.

If you have any queries regarding research outside the UK, please contact academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk:

Students are required to arrange their own travel and medical insurance to cover project work outside of the UK. Please indicate what insurance cover you have or will have in place.

49. 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. Please also clarify how the requirements will be met:

SECTION G: PARTICIPANT CONSENT AND WITHDRAWAL

50. 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:

51. 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:

52. The following is a participant information sheet 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 and Principal Investigator (your Research Supervisor) 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 or other ethics body.

☒ 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 Trusts 's Data Protection and handling Policies.: https://tavistockandportman.nhs.uk/about-us/governance/policies-and-procedures/

☒ 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.

53. The following is a consent form 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 research project is part of a degree

☒ 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

54. 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 no 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 are 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.

55. 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

56. 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:

57. 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: In line with Research Councils UK (RCUK) guidance, doctoral project data should normally be stored for 10 years and Masters level data for up to 2 years

58. 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.

☒ Research data will only be stored in the University of Essex OneDrive system and no other cloud storage location.

☐ 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 UK.

☐ Research data will be encrypted and transferred electronically outside of the UK.

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).

Essex students also have access the 'Box' service for file transfer:
https://www.essex.ac.uk/student/it-services/box

☐ Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, e-mails or telephone numbers.

☐ Collection and storage of personal sensitive data (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political or religious beliefs or physical or mental health or condition).

☒ 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 University of Essex OneDrive 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.
59. Please provide details of individuals outside the research team who will be given password protected access to encrypted data for the proposed research.
N/A
60. Please provide details on the regions and territories where research data will be electronically transferred that are external to the UK:
N/A

SECTION J: PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

35. 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

36. 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)?
N/A

SECTION L: CHECKLIST FOR ATTACHED DOCUMENTS

37. 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)

☒ Letters of approval from locations for data collection

☐ Questionnaire

☒ Interview Schedule or topic guide ☐ Risk Assessment (where applicable) ☐ Overseas travel approval (where applicable)
39. Where it is not possible to attach the above materials, please provide an explanation below.

Appendix H: Participant Information Sheet

The Tavistock and Portman
NHS Foundation Trust

Participant Information Sheet

Title: Contexts and Mechanisms Behind Successful Inclusion Practices in Secondary Schools for Pupils At-Risk of Exclusion

Who is doing this research?

My name is Ellen Lane-Downey and I am an Educational and Child Psychologist in training. I am in my second year of studying for the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology at The Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust and I am on placement at the xxx Educational Psychology Consultation Service. I am carrying out this research as part of my course.

What is this study about?

This research aims to explore 'successful' inclusion practices in secondary schools and to identify and explain the context, mechanisms and factors that can facilitate this. Context can be defined as the situation or circumstances in which 'successful' inclusion occurs. Mechanisms can be thought of the 'cause' or 'explanation' of how 'successful 'inclusion practices happen. This research will be from the perspective of staff members, thinking about pupils who are most at-risk of exclusion.

Who has given permission for this research?

The Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust has given ethical approval to carry out this research. The Principal Educational Psychologist from the xxx Educational Psychology Consultation Service has also given permission for the research to take place.

Who will be invited to take part?

I am looking to interview staff members/educational psychologists who work in/with secondary schools specifically those who may have experienced working with pupils at risk of exclusion. All participants who volunteer after reading this sheet and completing a consent form, will be given the opportunity to take part. If more than the required number of participants volunteer to take part, participants will be randomly selected from different groups such as position held in school (including subject taught) to ensure a balanced sample size.

What does participation involve?

Participants will be asked to take part in individual interviews, lasting approximately one hour. Experiences and your perspectives of 'successful' inclusion practice will be explored through the use of open-ended questions. In light of UK government guidance surrounding COVID-19, participants have the option to attend the interview in person (in their workplace) or online via a video conferencing platform (e.g. Zoom). Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. During the interview, you will be asked to use pseudonyms and not to disclose any identifying details of children, families or other staff members.

What happens if I don't want to carry on with this research?

That is completely okay. Your participation in the study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the research at any time before analysis, without giving a reason. Analysis point is typically a couple of weeks after interview so data at this point might not be possible to remove as it has been anonymised.

What are the potential benefits and risks?

Whilst there is a large body of research looking at what factors lead to school exclusions, there is less of a focus on what 'successful' inclusion practices have been put into place to reduce exclusions. This is particularly relevant for secondary schools, given the high levels of exclusions in this age

group and the negative impact this can have on life outcomes as students transition to adulthood. Therefore, it is particularly beneficial to both secondary school staff members and Educational Psychologists to explore what successful practices are put into place to help create a framework which can be used to further facilitate this. There also may be personal benefits as you will have a space to reflect on your own successful practice which may enhance future working.

The researcher does acknowledge that working in secondary schools can be a highly emotive and complex work environment, especially if trying to support challenging behaviours. This interview may therefore lead you to think and talk about experiences that are distressing or frustrating. However, by taking a strengths-based approach this research aims to help you focus on what is working and gives you freedom to choose what difficulties you would like to share. There will also be options to access a debrief if this is required. Signposting to further relevant support will also be offered if necessary. The work is not commissioned by the EP service and will not be used to evaluate the success of your school provision.

Will my information be kept confidential?

Yes, all records related to your participation in this research study will be handled and stored securely on an encrypted drive using password protection. Your identity on these records will be indicated by a pseudonym rather than by your name. All personal data will be kept for a minimum of 1 – 2 years. As this study is part of the requirements of my degree, the results will be presented as part of my thesis. The results may also be presented at national/international conferences and/or submitted to a peer-reviewed journal for publication. The data collected, including any recordings, will be disposed of after a minimum of one year. Data collected during the study will be stored and used in compliance with the UK Data Protection Act (2018), General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the University's Data Protection Policy. A confidentiality agreement will also be made between participants at the beginning of the interview

Are there times when my data cannot be kept confidential?

Confidentiality is subject to legal limitations or if a disclosure is made that suggests that imminent harm to self and/or others may occur. The small sample size (4 - 6 participants per school) may also mean that you recognise some examples and experiences you have shared in interviews. However, to protect your identity, pseudonyms will be used, and any identifiable details changed.

Contact for Further Information

If you are interested in this study and would like to give informed consent to take part, please sign and return the attached consent form to the researcher (please see contact details below) or follow this link (insert link) to sign the consent form electronically.

Please do not hesitate to contact the researcher, Ellen Lane-Downey, Educational and Child Psychologist in Training, for more information.

If you have any concerns about the research then you can contact Simon Carrington, Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance who works for the Tavistock and Portman research department. His contact details are:

Email: academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk

Kind regards,
Ellen Lane-Downey
Educational and Child Psychologist in Training
Date: xxxx

EPS Email: ellen.lane-downey@xxx

University Email: edowney@tavi-port.nhs.uk

Contact number: xxx

Research Supervisor: Dr. Chris Arnold

Appendix I: Participant Consent Form

NHS
The Tavistock and Portman
NHS Foundation Trust

Participant Consent Forms

Participating Staff/Educational Psychologist Consent Form

Research Title: Contexts and Mechanisms Behind Successful Inclusion Practices in Secondary Schools for Pupils At-Risk of Exclusion

Please initial the statements below to indicate your agreement with them:

1. I have read and understood the 'Participant Information Sheet' relating to the above research project and have been given a copy to keep. The nature and purposes of the research have been explained to me, and I have had the opportunity to discuss the details and ask questions about this information.	
2. I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary, and I am free at any time before the analysis stage to withdraw consent or any unprocessed data without given a reason.	
3. I agree to take part in an approximately 1 hour-long individual interview with the researcher either in person in the participants school, workplace or via video conferencing platform and understand that my interviews will be recorded.	
4. I understand that my data will be anonymised with any direct or indirect identifiers of myself or those I speak about being removed. I will use pseudonyms to replace any names and will not reveal any identifying features of children, families or staff I speak about during the interview.	
5. I am aware that due to the small sample size of the study, there may be limitations in the level of anonymity that can be afforded. I also understand that there are limitations to confidentiality relating to legal duties and threat of harm to self or others.	
6. I understand that my interviews will be used for this research and cannot be accessed for any other purposes.	
7. I understand that the findings from this research project, including anonymised quotes, will be published in a thesis and may also be disseminated in peer-reviewed journals, at conference presentations and through feedback to the Educational Psychology Consultation Service. All participants will also be given the option to receive a written summary of the anonymised findings.	
8. I am willing to participate in this research.	

Participant Name (BLOCK CAPITALS): ……

Participant Signature: …… Date: ……

Position in School (including subject you may teach)/Job Role: ……

Researcher Name: Ellen Lane-Downey

Researcher Signature: …… Date: ……

Appendix J: Debrief Sheet

The Tavistock and Portman
NHS Foundation Trust

Debrief Sheet

Research Title: Contexts and Mechanisms Behind Successful Inclusion Practices in Secondary Schools for Pupils At-Risk of Exclusion

Thank you for your time and contributions to this research. This sheet contains information about what will happen next and what support is available if you have been affected by your participation in this research.

What happens if I do not want my data to be included anymore?

Please contact the researcher no later than (insert date). Your data will be withdrawn from the study and will not be included in the subsequent analysis and write up. After the proposed date, you will not be able to withdraw your data.

I feel uncomfortable by some of the issues discussed in the interview, what support is available for me?

- There will be a key person established by the school/workplace who you speak to following the interview.
- The researcher will check in with this key person and with you one month and 3 months after participation. If uncomfortableness persists, the researcher will signpost to relevant agencies of support.
- If you wish to speak to someone externally, you have the option to also speak with your school's link Educational Psychologist/supervisor following the interview. You will also be provided with their details and the details of the researcher's placement supervisors if you wish to speak to them either.
- Alternatively, you may wish to seek support yourself and may feel more comfortable discussing this with someone impartial to the researcher.

You may wish to contact the following organisations for further support:

- **British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy** –*Professional association for counsellors and therapies.* Visit www.bacp.co.ukBritish
- **Psychoanalytic Council** –*Professional association for therapists using psychoanalytic thinking and psychotherapy.* Visit www.bpc.org.uk
- **Samaritans**–*Telephone consultation line, run by volunteers.* Call 116 123 (available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year) or visit www.samaritans.org

What will happen to the results of the research study?

- You can request to meet the researcher themselves or request a written summary of the findings.
- The results will be written in a doctoral thesis with the potential for future publication. You will not be identified in any report or publication
- Results will be shared with the school and the Educational Psychology Service. You will not be identified in the delivery of this information.

Further information and contact details

If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of the research, please contact me or my supervisor:

EPS Email: ellen.lane-downey@xxxxx **University Email:** edowney@tavi-port.nhs.uk

Contact number: xxxxx

Research Supervisor: Dr. Chris Arnold **Email:** carnold@tavi-port.ac.uk

If you have any queries regarding the conduct of the programme in which you have participated, please contact: Simon Carrington, Head of Academic Governance and Quality Assurance (academicquality@tavi-port.nhs.uk)

Appendix K: Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule

- Introduction of my role, my background and purpose of the study
- Explain the interview process, gaining informed consent again for permission to record the interview.
- Discuss and clarify confidentiality and its limitations
- Share the definition of 'at-risk' pupils outlined by the national data for exclusions
    - Groups of pupils most at-risk of exclusion include secondary-aged pupils, males, those who qualify for pupil premium, students with identified special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with an Education, Health and Care Plans, pupils of Black Caribbean and of Gypsy/Roma and Irish Traveller heritage, children in care or 'Looked After Children', those from lower socio-economic backgrounds and those who have experienced significant trauma, bereavement, family breakdown or illness, compared to their peers. Pupils who fall into one or more categories are at risk of 'layered disadvantage', meaning they are more likely to become excluded than their peers. Reasons for exclusion included persistent disruptive behaviour (being the most common reason at around 31%) as well as physical assault towards a pupil (13%) and against an adult (10%).
- Ask if they have any further questions about this definition?

Question 1:

To begin, can I ask about your job role and what responsibilities you hold in relation to inclusion?

Question 2:

I would like to open up our conversation by asking you to take a moment to reflect on what drew or inspired you to take on your role as (insert job role). Would you be open to sharing these reflections with me?

Question 3:

I would like you to think about a time where you supported a young person who may have been at risk of exclusion (see possible prompts below).

Possible prompts

Take some time to reflect on what may have led them to become 'at risk' of exclusion. How did you come to know this student?

Did you have any previous information about this student?

What you did to support them?

Who else was involved with supporting this student within the school? Outside of the school? Were you supported?

In your opinion, what worked well? What did you learn from this experience? What would you do again? Is there anything you would change?

Question 4:

Was there anything else that you experienced to be helpful when working with pupils at risk of exclusion?

Question 5:

Thinking more generally about inclusion practices within your school, what do you think the school (schools in general if Educational Psychologist) as a whole does well to support pupils 'at risk' of exclusions?

Possible prompts:

Is there a clear policy outlining inclusive practice?

Do you receive support from senior management team?

Question 6 (if not answered previously):

Thinking specifically about preventative practices, either implemented by yourself or on a whole school level (if Educational Psychologist – supporting a school systemically), was there anything that you experienced that you find to be helpful when working with pupils at risk of exclusion?

Possible prompts:

Can you say anymore...

Can you give me an example...

What do you mean by...

What was that like for you...

What impact did you notice this having on you...

What did that look like...

How did that feel...

What did you do...

Closing question:

Is there anything else that we haven’t spoken about in relation to this that you would like to add? Or expand upon?

Debrief:

- Thank participant for their time
- Talk through the participant debrief sheet which signposts where to seek additional support if they found this interview distressing or would like to seek further information
- Ask if they have any questions

Appendix L: TranscFript of Jackie

Including Timestamps

Interviewer 00:07

Thank you. So, um, obviously I do know you but just I suppose for the purpose of, you know, the recording and transcription as well, would it be okay if you kind of just briefly outline what your role is, and if you have any other roles in the service as well or even outside of the service that are linked to this area, if that's okay.

Jackie 00:29

Response removed to protect confidentiality

Interviewer 05:16

Thank you, thank you for sharing that. And I think it's, it's interesting to hear, I suppose the journey of it, and the kind of the multiple different factors at play that sort of all pushed you to this role. And no, but thank you for sharing that. And, and I suppose, you know, there's quite a lot of things that you mentioned there that probably may come up in terms of what you continue to see now, when working with secondary schools, but I suppose we'll touch on that a little bit later. And so I suppose, if, you know, kind of just started off really thinking about your role and your involvement, I'm wondering if there is a particular kind of child or young person that you have in mind, you know, in a secondary school, or a group of children or an experience that you have in a secondary school, who may have been at risk of exclusion. And, you know, there was, I suppose, quite a positive involvement, or there was quite a, you know, the,

yeah, I suppose the outcome was, was positive at the time. And I was wondering if you could maybe share a little bit about that, you know, kind of some contextual information, obviously, without giving away too much in terms of confidentiality, and maybe how you came to know them and how you came to become involved.

Jackie 06:30

I'm thinking about a young person who I've just had some involvement with, that I'm trying to think about. And the outcome hasn't been as positive as we would hope, trying to think, perhaps of somebody else. Although the involvement at the time felt positive. He's perhaps no longer staying at the school. And I guess it depends on what we mean, when we say like having a positive outcome, because it might be that for him, the most positive outcome for him is to be somewhere else. So I don't know if I could talk about that.

Interviewer 07:16

And yeah, I suppose I left the positive outcome quite loosely. Because, yeah, very different experiences. Yes, it might mean, yeah. So I suppose it's what your experience of positive is and what their experience of it is. Yes. Well, no, I suppose because I don't want to put my perceptions on...

Jackie07:36

I completely get that. And I will choose him because I had quite a lot of involvement. And a previous EP, he had involvement with him. And I suppose

the involvement had meant that there was a better understanding of perhaps some of the things that might support him, even though the school are finding things still tricky to manage. So how much would you like me to say,

Interviewer 08:04

I suppose maybe just a little bit about, you know, that young person, you know, thinking about or maybe the factors that have that made them, I suppose, to consider that risk of exclusion. And then also, what maybe led you to become involved, I suppose what was happening maybe just before that, that involved that ended up involving you as well.

Jackie 08:24

Okay. That's okay. So the young person is, in year seven, or eight? No, he's in year eight currently, he had had previous EP involvement when he was in year seven, because school were worried about his learning needs and his speech and language needs. And he's a young person who experiences absences. So kind of seizures, I suppose. And the school were wondering about how to manage because he... these…see these absences were affecting his learning. So there was some previous E P involvement. And at this point school weren't really worried about the young person's like actions or behaviours at school. They just wanted to know a little bit more about his learning last year. And then they asked me as a school EP, to become involved this year, because they had seen a real shift and change in behaviour. And they weren't really sure why. So we ended up having kind of a joint family and school meeting. And during that meeting, we found out that

there had been like a significant bereavement for the young person, so his grandmother had died and his grandmother lives in a different country. And his mum had very quickly and unexpectedly had to leave the country and he was living with em then I think an uncle for a time for a number of weeks, two or three weeks. And, um, so that was really helpful in terms of thinking about the significant bereavement and the fact that we kind of explored with his mum, what this young person's understanding had been of the bereavement, but also of mum not being there anymore, and going away suddenly, and how that might have felt difficult for him. So that was really helpful in terms of kind of having that joint meeting straightaway. I suppose, sometimes, I noticed in secondary schools, that can be a little bit more tricky than in primary. So the ability to have that joint meeting and just find out a little bit more about what was going on, in the wider context for this young person was really helpful. And for the SENCO, that was a bit of a lightbulb moment. She was like, oh, right, okay. Well, he's had a significant bereavement, we're not sure of his understanding, does he have anyone to talk to about this, what's the explanation been, and nobody from school knew, they had just noticed that he was kind of getting very upset very quickly, in the classroom seeming quite angry, and leaving the classroom quite frequently and not being able to come back, which was quite new behaviour for them. We then did, decided to bring the adults together who know him quite well, to think about understanding what was happening for him a little bit better. And we used a circle of adults approach. And the attendance was really good at that meeting. And I sometimes I guess, my experience has been when people are very .....sorry, I've got frog in my throat now..... when people are very worried about a young

person, and there will often be like quite high attendance at a meeting like that. And I guess it showed to me that the school were really invested and really wanted to do something about it. So I think we had eight or nine members of staff at the meeting, and the deputy head teacher couldn't be there, but she was on the phone listening in. And we ran that for about that circle of adults meeting for about an hour and a half. And that meant that we were able to kind of think through wider contextual factors. So thinking about what about what happened in his personal life? What questions did we have, who was going to go away and find out that information. But also, it felt as though everyone was putting a lot of like emotional effort into looking after him during the day because he was very distressed. So it was also a chance for people to offload that a little bit and share how difficult things have been. And yet, think about the organizational factors and the factors in the system that will maybe making this situation harder for him or making the situation a bit easier. And I think gave the adults just a bit of a step by step plan as to what they could do. Over the next couple of weeks, I left them with lots of questions about what they wanted to ask mum when she came back. And in terms of that homeschool communication, I think as well… I, in terms of kind of positive outcomes, I think, for me, it seemed as though staff felt a bit more uplifted after the after the session. They did, I can't remember, you know, sometimes you asked for one word at the end of a circle of adults. And I can't remember off the top of my head what they said. But the feeling in the room was that things were feeling a bit more hopeful. People felt that they had shared things with each other, they had a bit of a better understanding about what was happening for the young person. And because stuff that you can find it quite

emotionally draining, I think just that sense that other people were around and what's the… you know, what's the plan going to be if he comes in tomorrow, and he's really upset. So I think into in terms of positive outcomes, gave them that sense of community and coming together a little bit more and feeling a bit stronger to and gave them a space to think a bit more creatively about what they might do. Because the situation was getting quite stark and people were feeling you know, when we're stressed things close down. So that was quite tricky. When I last went into school, the young person was still in the school, but I think the team was still finding things quite tricky to manage with him. And I think there was talk of maybe a transfer to another setting. In terms of that being positive outcome, I think it can sometimes depend. I suppose my experience and sometimes is that schools feel really at the end of their tether with the young person. And I ..they're adults, so I don't necessarily think that that always feels fair. But equally, sometimes I used to be quite like hard on like we mustn't exclude a child, or a child mustn't leave a school. But I do think in sometimes there's some circumstances, it can work really well, for a child to have a fresh start with new adults who aren't kind of feeling exhausted or run down by things. Yeah. So I suppose in terms of positive outcomes, that immediate, like lift of people feeling that sense of community and support. And it does it gets made me think about follow up, and, and how to maybe support them to carry on with that sense.

Interviewer 15:55

Thank you for sharing that. And I suppose my initial kind of, you know, I suppose I'm really wondering, you know, it's quite a big piece of work that you

did, you know, managing to get a lot of adults, particularly secondary context, that's can be quite unusual to get all the adults involved in a space together to reflect and we know that with, there's a lot of barriers in place at the moment, particularly in the current kind of context that we're seeing teachers being burnt out and things like that. And I suppose, I'm wondering, I suppose on your reflections, what enable that to happen to have all those adults in the room? Or, you know, I suppose, yeah. Maybe what, what led to that and how was it supported on many different levels in a school context?

Jackie 16:41

I wonder. I don't kind of know what the practicalities were that went behind the organization of it. But the SENCo is very, or, or has been very good at organizing those after school meetings and finding out from staff when is the best time to have those. And they've been running in that school now, probably for about two years, on and off. So staff have been used to coming along to an after school meeting with me. And maybe they knew a little bit about what to expect, I suppose I sent information ahead of time explaining what the meeting was going to be like. And a lot of the wording around that was that the meeting wasn't being called because they weren't doing a good job. It was because when we work with young people who are in distress day in and day out, it can become really challenging. So I suppose the introduction to that was like, this meeting isn't going to be like a test of what you're doing or judgment on your practice, it's really a chance, because we're really busy and stressed day to day, just to have a chance to come together, it's going to be very structured, you don't need to prepare anything. So information was

sent ahead of time. I wonder if there was something about the deputy head also being there, who is also very supportive of... she line manages, the SENCo . So and they have a very good relationship. So I think, kind of buy in from the deputy head and I think had, I don't know what the email chain was, but if I imagine if she said, well, I'm gonna go along, I'll make sure to be there on the phone, that might have meant that more people were interested in coming along. I think the nature of this young person with relationships meant that he was interacting with lots of different people throughout the day. So we had his head of year there, who he was spending quite a lot of time with, he spent time with the deputy head who he had a good relationship with. When he was out of class, the SENCo, he had a less good relationship with but there were there were other people, you know, pockets of people who he was able to access when he was really distressed and not feeling good. So I, I wonder if that helped, it meant that we had lots of different people, we had teachers there who taught him just a couple of times, we had like his head of year, we had like the SENCo the inclusion lead, so there were lots of different people there. And I also think, because people finding it tricky or difficult, there was more buy in, and I suppose it, but it should probably showed that they really cared and wanted to make things different for this young person.

Interviewer 19:37

And I suppose, you know, I think you've mentioned quite a few different things there. I think, you know, the buy in at the different levels. And I think you know, I suppose that it was that modelling of the deputy head buying into something therefore, maybe it's showing the value of that buy and you know,

kind of trickling down and it's made me wonder, you know, you said you've been in that school for two yours now (Jackie: for four years now), four years. And I'm wondering, you know, is that an experience you've seen across the board within that school? Have you? Have you noticed that would be a similar approach they take, obviously, every situation is going to be slightly different. But is that a general approach or feeling you might get within that school?

Jackie 20:20

This in terms of in terms of people coming from different kind of walks of the school? Yes. So in past meetings, like teaching staff have come, form tutors the head of year, so like a mixture of pastoral and teaching staff. And, and the SENCo always comes, and I do think that makes a massive difference. So sometimes that has just been, like me, the SENCo, and one other teacher, and that feels valuable, because even if there are like little shifts in understanding, or people are thinking about something slightly differently, then that feels valuable. This was the first time that I'd…that the deputy head had joined. And I wonder if that was a bit of a product of her relationship with this young person. And it was kind of like people were sharing the emotional load of things, because this young person was so distressed and out of out of class so much. That, that maybe the deputy head had had more involvement. I would love to get like more senior leaders along to things. But in any other secondary school, I work in, often, like the safeguarding lead might come along to joint meetings with families, or heads of year will be there. So I do think, I guess that's important for me in terms of who makes decisions about exclusions within the school that I've described to you in terms of the young

person we're talking about now. It's ultimately the head, head of school and the head teacher. So like, wouldn't it be fantastic to get the head teacher along to listen to some of these things that people are saying? And rather than having to hear it secondhand, or....and I see a piece of paper afterwards? So yeah, I think that would be really valuable.

Interviewer 22:31

No, absolutely. And it makes me wonder, have you ever come across a situation in a secondary school across your experience where the head teacher has, has been attended? Or has, I suppose, bought into that, you know, rather than I suppose sitting as more distant or removed figure,

Jackie 22:49

I'd say, within the pupil referral unit. So the alternative provision, where there's primary and secondary and young people who we would have, and similarly, we would have kind of whole staff meetings about young people who were, I mean, perhaps at risk of exclusion as well, or the school really worried about, then the head would sit in and, and listen, and is really supportive of that sort of work, and can be an even if their head is just sitting in a listening, and I think that can be really valuable to just listening to other people's experiences and what people are saying and what might be happening for this young person.

Interviewer 23:44

Do you think there's a school like a, like a school cultural difference there? Or...or I suppose outlook on a head teachers role in in, I suppose the two different settings? Yeah, that contribute to it.

Jackie 23:56

Yeah. My experiences at the pupil referral unit, the heads, they've been two heads of the school whilst they've been there. They're much more involved. Well, and I don't know if I see them more, because it's a smaller school, and there are less children. And you know, I, this head comes to like our planning meetings, and we have much more involvement with her. But yet she's walking around the school. She's greeting students in the way that heads do in other secondary schools, but I suppose there by default, there are less children at the pupil referral unit. And so she is much more involved in speaking with those students. Knowing exactly what's going on with those students, whereas if we're at a secondary school, we've got 500 Children, the heads inevitably is going to know less. And I suppose the head at the PRU is probably going to be involved in more like intensive meetings about young people because they've got way more, lots of these children, got lots more professionals involved with them. And I think there's something about the school culture in the PRU which means that they've had to go through some really difficult things together. Not to say that teachers in mainstream haven't, they've probably been lots of different incidents, which mean that teachers have to come together. But I guess by nature, sometimes of what teaching staff and support staff are having to support students with every day, there can be like highly intense and emotional situations. And I think there's

something about that, that brings staff together. And means that they talk kind of it much more openly with each other and contribute to these meetings. differently because they spend much more time together, and much more time kind of supporting one another, with specific students. I think.

Interviewer 26:03

it makes me think of a few things there. And I suppose it's, a lot of it is sort of that Relational Approach, I think between the different staff members, but then also, I suppose the different layers of it, you'd like you said, it's how much time that head teacher has, and I suppose that pupil capacity as well. But then also, the setting, being smaller means that you have more opportunity to build relationships with different staff members, between staff members, and then also between students as well. And I'm also wondering a little bit about the school culture in terms of, I suppose their values and their priorities and the system, I suppose what? And it makes me wonder, yeah, you know, your experience of being in secondary schools. You know, there's obviously there could be quite an academic focus on things as there would be and it makes me wonder about your experience in comparison to the alternative provision, which maybe have different priorities or focus in comparison to mainstream schools, or if you've had experience in mainstream secondary schools, where there is a more balanced approach, there's maybe a different ethos, maybe.

Jackie 27:10

Yeah, that's really interesting. Because I suppose in the alternative provision, there's much more thinking about, or much more focus on because there has

to be sometimes these children turn up to school in a really distressed, more focus on wellbeing, and thinking about, like supporting students to be in a place where they can access learning. And much more involvement in like the social and emotional aspects of these children's lives. And so perhaps there's more space for that at the alternative provision, although of expectations for learning is still very high. Yeah, perhaps as and the focus, ultimately should be on getting children. But you know, it's meant to be temporary, getting children back into a different a mainstream or different setting. So there's probably lots of thinking about well, how do we know that? How do we know when a young person is ready? What does that look like for this young person? Where I suppose in comparison, so there's going to be much more flexibility and approaches at an alternative provision. There are less children, and it's recognized that these children, you know, if they throw something across the room, they're not going to get asked to leave, there would be no other things would need to happen for that to happen at the alternative provision. But, yeah, and whether within the mainstream schools, there's a bit more of a focus on you know, I think I've I mean, there's a there's a balance and, of course, mainstream, the mainstream that I'm working in a really focused on, wellbeing and thinking about that alongside, but I suppose the very nature and the structure of a bigger secondary school means that lots of the focus is going to be on results.

Interviewer 29:13

Suppose less...Yeah, I think, like you said, you know, there's less flexibility, I think, when it's just, you know, it's not just within control of the school, it's

obviously coming down from much higher systems. But you mentioned something about kind of staff having more space, and in a in an alternative provision, and then also but also your experience of, you know, being able to work in one secondary school, for example, and having, you know, adults being able to come in and make space for that, and I suppose it makes me wonder what you think like contributes to that space you know, I suppose then having that emotional space, that mental space, also that it was that time, location space as well. You can't have that without the physical space too.

Jackie 30:02

I think, I think when we're thinking about space, I'm trying to think about the kind of emotional space that I would think that staff have at the alternative provision. And I think it can really vary. So sometimes I think, I think when I say space, I mean that there is probably more space created. So for example, Thursday afternoons, that the alternative provision our time for, like continuing professional development, so that's when I might go in on some Thursday afternoons to think with them about young people. I think space in the sense that there's probably lots more kind of external professionals coming in and giving space to think about the emotional needs of young people, but then also, by default, that's probably a lot of what staff are talking about and thinking about. Because that's like, a lot of the wellbeing these are very external, like, they're very visible. So if a child's very distressed, they're gonna be kicking something or shouting or screaming. So I suppose there's like way more awareness of thinking about those situations. But then I met Yeah, I'm not necessarily sure about like, the actual, like emotional space and physical

space for people. But I guess I'm seeing that lots more is kind of bought in because of like, the intense nature sometimes of working there, or of being a student there.

Interviewer 31:53

And I suppose it goes back again to that kind of the context of why there is the alternative provision in the first place. Yeah. In comparison to I suppose the what, I suppose people perceive to be the function of a secondary school, mainstream secondary school and the function of an alternative provision. And I suppose, you know, so you work in to you work in two secondary schools, did you say, and I suppose, is there. So just thinking about what the school I suppose the school's attitude to things like inclusion. So you know, there's things like behaviour policies you'd like because there's lots of different policies, lots of different rules, things like that. And I'm wondering what your experience of that has been, like, you know, I suppose have you thought of them to be helpful or a hindrance or? Yeah, I suppose your reflections on schools use of behavioural policies and approaches they might take.

Jackie 32:53

My experience is that things are quite rigid. In terms of behaviour policies, I suppose in one secondary school, I know that when I've spoken to young people, they can feel demotivated quite quickly, because they accrue a certain number of negative points. And if you're at 14 negative points or something, that's when you are getting kicked out of school. Don't quote me on that, because I'm not 100%. Sure. But yeah, a certain number of negative

points. And that means that you are in trouble or perhaps not staying. So I think if students, students can't work their way back from that, it's not so the negatives can be deleted. So say that you're a child who gets to like October, November, in the school year, and you already have 30, for example, negative points. It's not it does, they've explained that it doesn't feel particularly motivating to, you know, carry on trying, in a sense. I think, from speaking, my experience of speaking to teachers, as well as that is that they would like to be more flexible with things. But then teachers have got different levels of what they would like to be flexible with in terms of the behaviour policy. So yeah, generally, generally, it feels as though there's a sense when I go in to meet the SENCo that you know, the SENCo would really like things to be flexible. Some of the pastoral members of staff would like things to be flexible, but it feels a little bit stuck with inside this policy. And that can feel tricky. And then I guess it comes back to thinking about who's got the power to do that, and these schools who are part of the wider multi Academy chain and trust might find it A little bit more difficult to kind of rally people. And I suppose sometimes these policies for some children work well, you know, one or two detentions, and that is putting them off. But equally, there have been, yeah, lots of conversations about like alternatives to detention? Or how would we feel what would we feel satisfied with. And sometimes it comes down to like, what the adult would feel satisfied with. And trying to think about, what's actually going to be beneficial for the child in this situation, is that having in place a restorative conversation, that means that the young person and the adult both feel heard about an incident, and the young person feels then comfortable to go back into that adults lesson? I suppose some what I've seen

in terms of flexibility around some of the behaviour policies is children leaving lessons when they're not feeling good, or when things are escalating, or teachers aren't happy with their actions, and then having a space to go. In both of the secondary schools I work with that is the SENCo. So the SENCo ends up having quite good relationships with the people with the pupils who are coming out more frequently. And sometimes they're the ones who ended up having the restorative conversations with these young people, in my experience, or trying to support them. In one of the secondary schools they work in, they have something called the Learning Support Centre. So I would be curious about what the narrative is amongst young people about what that is. But it's yeah, it's where the children go, who are finding it difficult to kind of behave in the way that the school wants them to, and lessons. So there's probably like 10 to 12 students in the Learning Support Centre. And they're supported by, like, a member of teaching staff, and then LSAs, who are always in the Learning Support Centre, who certainly have like a different outlook on behaviour and ways of supporting. So sometimes I think in secondary schools, it feels as though there's these little like subcultures, almost. So like, within one secondary school that I work in, it's like, well, we've got the Learning Support Centre, and then we've got this assistant SENCo, who students go to when they when students are showing their distress in a different way. So if students are showing their distress by crying, and weeping and seeming really upsetting in that way, then they'll go to her. If students are kind of, traditionally people say, like, kicking off or whatever, then then they're gonna get detention, and they're gonna go to the Learning Support Centre. So, it definitely feels like the subgroups or like subcultures who have got their

own understandings. And, and yeah, so there are like pockets of different things. I think working within those secondary schools or, or things that I feel like, children will kind of like sniff out for themselves, and feel like, who can I go to? Where can I go, perhaps if something isn't suiting them. So this one young person that I was speaking about, in terms of that case study, he was quite upset with the SENCo, because the SENCo was the one calling his mum to say things haven't been great today. So he kind of found his own. He was wanting to go to the deputy head instead. So I think sometimes children will, yeah. find their own way of who they can, who they can get to support them.

Interviewer 39:05

Absolutely. And it makes me think about actually, I suppose, for that child, how difficult that is to have tried to navigate that, possibly by themselves or, you know, without much structure behind it. And I suppose, wondering, what would it, would look like if those sort of different support networks were more joined up together and more kind of consistent? And I suppose thinking just about them separately, you know, is there anything within those sorts of pockets that is working? Well, although it would be better if they were more made consistent and joined up? But is there anything actually within that that is helpful at the moment?

Jackie 39:42

I think the I mean, historically, this is kind of changing one of my secondary schools now but historically, there was this thing, the inclusion room, basically

where students who were struggling to be in Lesson and weren't like externalizing their behaviour a lot would go to. So you might classify those children more as like children who are not going into lessons for about to say emotional reasons, but the other ones are emotional, but more kind of internalizing. And so I'm coming across as anxious and worried. And the assistant SENCo, at that school is very skilled at building relationships with these children, so makes time to listen to them, is very knowledgeable about Sen and how needs might present and is quite strong advocate for children within the rest of the school so really thinks about these children's views and is kind of looks at the school system through quite a critical lens. And is very direct about what she thinks these children need within the school. And whenever I go into this school, and I asked children about who is that key person or who they would go to, it's always this member of staff. She's very nurturing with them, nurturing but firm. And really goes above and beyond to, like, get to know families, build relationships with children, like adapt things for them, so that they feel much more comfortable. I think in terms of the other pocket, they are, it's like a group of young teachers who are probably gonna get the ages wrong, definitely. But really, they're like, late 20s, early 30s, that all local to the area, so they know that area really well. And I think for lots of, especially, like the male students who ended up in the Learning Support Centre, they are members of staff who can understand perhaps, what things are like for them outside of school and in the community. Things don't feel as far removed. So I think these members of staff are much more relatable for young people. And they get much more like embedded within the community and know, their, like local community in the school community really well. And

I think have thought their own lived experiences of find, like finding school, a really challenging place. And have got like a very good understanding of these young people's, yeah, lives outside of school, as well. That, again, are quite probably firm in their approach, but have got that relationship, that really trusting relationship.

Interviewer 42:55

And I think it's something about that willingness to see, possibly, like you said, they've had their own lived experience. So actually, they're able to separate the two because perhaps they have that understanding of where it's coming from and why. And I suppose, you know, relationships being I think, you know, something that kind of foundation from what you described for both, you know, it's that relationship, it sort of makes me think about, there's, as you know, this was in both examples, there's a group of teachers, or group of staff members, but then for the SENCo, there's just one of them. And their capacity to be able to hold all of those different experiences and emotions as well as

Jackie 43:35

that's, that's really interesting. And I think, I think that's where the EP role comes in quite well. Because I think in terms of, like containment for that member of staff, and speaking to someone who might view the system, or young people in similar ways, can be really helpful. So often, when we're speaking, she'll be like, oh, this, you know, it can she obviously feels like she is always taking up a fighting element in terms of her work for you and people. And I think having someone outside of the system, who is able to support

some of her thinking and like next steps and actions within that school can be really helpful. But it does make me think about, like building her team, and who's her team within school, you know, who does she when she wants to motivate you know, everyone wants to learn about something at work, but when someone when she wants to learn about something, who does she go to? And I get the sense that it probably isn't anyone at school, whereas others I feel like they've got their own, like support teams or people who they are going through similar things or thinking in the same way. And sometimes they get the image of her kind of really trying to advocate for these young people. But she's described like feeling like she's banging her head against a brick wall sometimes. So where does she go? And I think I am one of the people that she would go to. But then, in the absence of that, like, who else does she have within the school system?

Interviewer 45:24

Absolutely. It's, it kind of goes back to that conversation about how roles are perceived, because I suppose for her, her designated role is in Sen. And that can often get lumped in with lots of other things, sometimes behaviour, sometimes inclusion, it really depends. But then it's because that's her role, perhaps makes me wonder how, you know, if teaching staff if they were feeling like that in a way, they could possibly just redirect to her because in a way that is her explicit role. But for a teacher, perhaps it's not always explicit, what their role may be an inclusion or things like that. So they almost have a fallback. But for her, she doesn't really have a fallback.

Jackie 46:06

Yeah. And I think that's interesting, what you say there about what teachers perceive their role to be around inclusion. And I think, from my experience, people think about inclusion in terms of learning. So how do we differentiate this learning? How do we change our questioning, but then thinking about inclusion around emotional wellbeing? I think sometimes that that can feel like quite a lot for I mean, I'm sure teachers think about it all the time. But if we've got quite like a strict behaviour policy, what agencies of teachers feel that they have to differentiate that aid that policy? If that's not coming from the top? And that's where I think that leads me back to thinking about the differences between that alternative provision and the mainstream schools that I work in is that teaching staff are always involved in like supporting the emotional wellbeing of the students as well. So yes, sometimes members of staff will be called as backup and support. But like, there isn't perhaps much more? Well, there's a bit more ownership of that. And I wonder if that's because the behaviour policy, there has to be much more flexible, and has to be differentiated for these young people, so it should be in a mainstream school. But yeah, that that's the policy, you know, that's what they're picking up and seeing is the policy, and especially, I think, newer members of staff, want to do things right, by the policy, and aren't quite enough phase of thinking, or like, what are the parameters that I can work with this behaviour policy around or, you know, I know, I can differentiate the work and including that way, or change the way that I'm delivering something or speaking, but when it comes to managing, like a big class of 30 children? Or, you know, how do I go about managing that? I think that can feel quite tricky sometimes for teachers.

Interviewer 48:16

Absolutely. And I'm wondering, is there anything in your experience that you know, either from what you can contribute, or the school or both, she gathered that enables teachers to have that, maybe whether it's confidence or kind of skills, or you know, multiple different things that can help them to can support them in that.

Jackie 48:37

I think what I've noticed is like, just by getting people together to share what they're already doing, can be very powerful. And I think it can sometimes give people permission to do similar things or try similar things. Because teachers are often like working independently throughout the day. And so they don't really know if you know, other people are allowing something or so I think that can be helpful in terms of like the power of sharing that I'm trying to think about other things around kind of like agency and, and freedom to be a bit more flexible with things I suppose space to have a different or better, like, perhaps not better, but just a different understanding of where children are coming from. But because I think that doesn't necessarily mean that we have to like overhaul a behaviour policy, although I believe that behaviour policy should be overhauled. But I think that sometimes then things can happen quite unconsciously. So a teacher might greet a child a bit differently in the morning or like ignore something thought that they would pick up before because they know a bit more about the context. So I think just by knowing a bit more about the context of what's happening for young person, and, you

know, having a bit of a better understanding of that means that people might act in different ways without having to really clearly think about, oh, I need to rewrite the behaviour policy for the same person, just thinking of, you know, it's human nature to be a bit more lenient, and understanding if we know that someone's having a tough time, or we understand things a bit better.

Interviewer 50:33

That's really interesting. I think it goes back to that, you know, that Relational Approach, really, I suppose that relationship also not just with the, with the students, but between each other as well. And actually, that connection building between staff members, like you said, is quite isolating. And it is, yeah, there's a lot on their plate at the moment. And but I suppose just thinking about time, because I don't want to keep you any longer. And I suppose is there anything else in terms of kind of preventative practices, I suppose just generally that you that we didn't mention, or kind of that you think actually would be quite helpful to think about or to just throw in there. From your experience of working in secondary schools that you think work quite well, even if you're not directly haven't directly been involved with them, but actually heard from other EPs or teachers.

Jackie 51:23

And so there's loads.

Interviewer 51:26

just if there was a thing that stood out to you that we didn't kind of mentioned. But you've already mentioned a lot throughout our conversation.

Jackie 51:32

I'm trying to think of anything else that I've seen in any other of my schools. I don't think so I suppose at that, yeah, the AP, we will, we will try and get everyone together. I think there's been some careful thinking about like language. And I know, we haven't mentioned things like managed moves or anything like that. But I'm thinking about, this is a bit sad as hate but think about things like endings. And if I suppose I've had conversations with SENCos, where they're really upset that young person who they've developed a really good relationship with, has then been excluded from school. We think then we thought together about endings and how we even though it's really a horrible thing that might be happening for this young person, or there are all sorts of feelings that they might have around it. How can we, so kind of like therapeutic letter or something that SENCos can write, to give to the young person? So I know that's less of a systemic thing, but I suppose if Yeah, if it does get to that point, how can we empower people who disagree with a decision to speak up and say something and appeal things, but then also what the small acts that people can do within that situation to like, keep the connection and keep the relationship and make things less unenjoyable free in person, perhaps, if they are to like, move on whatever reason?

Interviewer 53:25

It's something about you know, it's, I suppose it's not sort of that block off, you're done kind of thing. And I think perhaps that can have a domino effect as you move forward. You know, maybe and what you're doing with other children, or how you're viewing other things, or how you even review relationships almost like, you're out of the school. Now, that's me done. It's almost like that work never stops in a way. But thank you. And it was just kind of a final reflective question. I mean, just really how you find this space? Because you took up an hour of your time, but yeah, how you found it, there's no wrong answers if you didn't, you know, get anything from it or anything like that. But just your experience of it.

Jackie 54:05

I really enjoyed it. I didn't think I would be able to deal with all the space but I clearly. It's made me think about I guess I hadn't really thought about these little subcultures that are happening within schools, sometimes I think of them as like one homogenous place and like this, the culture of the whole school, but it was helpful for me to think about that. And think about practices in terms of like, my traded time, and if I'm offering something like a circle of adults or a meeting around a young person at risk of exclusion, how are we building in time to think about reviewing or building staff capacity to then take that on themselves? And I was aware of that SENCo kind of acting in isolation, but I haven't asked her before for I have asked her before who her support system is, but it does make me think about asking that more frequently or drawing her attention to that a little bit in school. So it's been a very interesting reflective space. Yeah.

Appendix M: Transcript of Lukas

Including Timestamp

Interviewer 00:31

Yeah. So but yes, okay, cool. Well, I suppose just kind of first and foremost, just kind of get a kind of a sense of the different roles of people that I'm interviewing, would you be able to kind of just share what your role is, at the moment in capacity to this team? What it looks like?

Lukas 00:48

Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant

Interviewer 01:23

Thank you. And if you don't mind sharing, and but just for a moment, kind of think about what actually drew you to this role as an EP. And if you don't mind sharing kind of what that was, or kind of why you ended up in this position.

Interviewer 03:54

Thank you for sharing that. And it's because I think it's always helpful thinking about what we're bringing into the role and where we kind of come from, because I think that can really influence the role that we take up. So it's kind of helpful establishing where people are coming from. And in the, I suppose, taking a lot of inspiration from Nancy Cline. Because I think yes, you know, that the way we start off kind of can really help. You know, well, the, I suppose, is thinking about the mindset that we're bringing into whatever we're doing. So what have you been very pleased in any work lately?

Lukas 04:29

I think one other thing is just so the secondary school I sort of mentioned that I've got at the moment is what, the SENCO is on long term sick leave. And it was really difficult to just get in to start with and do any what I considered to be like meaningful work, be hop in like a rush day and not do what you want to and then it was like writing up some sort of four pieces of records. But I think since Christmas, I've kind of just like, throw myself into it a bit. So I'm just being more flexible. So like, I've just been contacting people further around. So the children I've been working with, so like the head of year I've been working with a lot more closely. And also, there's a social worker involved. So I've got in contact with them. And I'm almost just like, offering to do more things. So and I think that's kind of when it's worked successfully. In the past, what I've been able to do is like, just cut through a lot of the blockages in the systems that stop you doing good work. And a lot of it's like, in my from my perspective, like the more informal bits. So if I can just try and like, go into the school a little bit more, even if it's like a not a whole day, but you just meet new people, you start to build a few more relationships, and then you've got like the networks, which I think I kind of need at this point in order to do like more effective work is just like get within that system. So I've been sort of, yeah, glad that a few of those openings have come up. And I've been able to like just get in a bit more.

Interviewer 06:20

Yeah. And there's some, you know, a couple of things you said there actually, that probably definitely want to build on because if something about the overcoming some of the barriers for you to actually do meaningful work as you described it. And I think it was the relationships and kind of not just solely being relied on one person and the different relationships. And I suppose actually, I've kind of wanted to ask, what do you mean by meaningful work? Like, what does meaningful work look like? For you? Or how would you describe it? So that's a bit of a big question.

Lukas 06:52

No, it's a good question. And I guess like, if I'm reflecting on good pieces of EP work I've done in the past. It's particularly being like when you cannot have like a longer involvement. But if you're the per...., if you're able to have more regular check ins with the gatekeeper, whether it's the head of year, or the person that's working most closely with that child, it means that the work goes beyond like seeing them putting a record, even though in a consultation, you might talk about some strategies, it means you can almost like continually assess and reevaluate. And not all of that has to be in it completely documented form. It's like we've got that record there at some point. And then it's like, how is that working, and you can often find within like, a few weeks, something might have really shifted in a positive or negative way. And the picture is quite different. So then just allowing those conversations to and giving them a space to just reflect I think, just really briefly, and it means it just keeps on ticking. So obviously, the aims of different cases are going to look quite differently. But I think whether that's like getting a child to attend more

regularly, or if they're trying to reduce challenging behaviours, that they're displaying something like that. Thinking about it more, yeah, continuously is mine, like? Yeah, that makes sense.

Interviewer 08:29

No, it does. It does. Thank you. And I think that's something maybe I'm gonna hold in mind a little bit, because I'm going to move on to the next question. But actually, I feel like this might link in with some of the things I might be asking about later, if that's okay. Because I suppose I kind of wanted to go in and kind of narrow it down a little bit now and start to think about, actually a time you were involved. And actually, maybe it was something to do with some meaningful, you know, what you perceive as meaningful work with a young person in a secondary school and, and kind of thinking about, well, what did your support and involvement look like? And how did you get involved in the first place?

Lukas 09:07

That is as an EP?

Interviewer 09:09

And yeah, I suppose as an if you're in this role, because I suppose you've had, you've had capacity, I suppose. Sorry, kind of thinking about maybe trainee EP to EP, I suppose that kind of era. That's okay. But we might draw on some of your other roles later on, if that makes sense.

Lukas 09:26

Yeah. And I definitely so I think one of the times. There was one case initially that came up right at the start of my training, which, and the interesting, I suppose, point to pick out straightaway is that it wasn't a traded piece of work. So I could just go in a lot more regularly, but it was a year six boy who had sort of experienced lots of trauma, and there were concerns because his again, sort of inverted commas, challenging behaviour was increasing. And they were also concerned that he was going to be going to secondary school and didn't know what that would look like. And I got given I guess, the space to just see him quite regularly and do like a piece of it was sort of, I guess, based around loosely CBT methods, but it was mostly I think, in some ways, providing him with a space to do some different work and different thinking and just exploring things that he enjoyed. And so the work, the work went on for sort of three months or so. And we use like, yeah, we drew upon a few different sort of theories. But by the end, the picture was quite different. In like, the positive way, and I think it's one of those things, again, that I always struggle with our work is to assess what your own impact is, within that, it's kind of hard to separate the two. But I think, towards the end, a lot of it was the last few weeks, which was trying to join up the stuff that I was doing with him into the classroom and think about how we can embed all those things. So one of the things that we found is he was just using like this online comic book activity to almost explore his feelings almost through these characters. So that's how it seemed. And the work towards the end became like, can we build this into lessons, and we sort of thought with teachers, he was building these entire comic books in like creating them in a book form, because he

didn't experience of many successes in school. So they're trying to change that narrative, I think. And I think it was continually again, those like check ins after sessions with his teacher or TAs to say, or almost show them what he was able to do. And reverse that narrative, I guess, that they'd had of him. And I think that probably, more broadly, like talking about other cases of work, where it's gone really positively, is when you've been able to shift that narrative. And that can be in a way to show I suppose the things that they're capable of like that. But in other circumstances, I think it's been a lot more of trying to explain, like, the reasons why they're presenting with those behaviours. And one of the things I've sort of noticed, and maybe this will feed into your other questions later. But I think within schools that can be these narratives about some children being almost like deserving of additional support and accepting that their behaviour is coming from a certain reason within school stuff, and then there are others that it's like, they've got this that at home, like their home life isn't bad. They get lots of attention at school. So why are they behaving like this? And it's a lot more sort of cutthroat approach with them. So yeah, I think is when you sort of see that there were those narratives trying to shift them and how that can come about. And I think it is easier in primary school, because you've maybe got to shift two people's perception, and secondary's the biggest barriers changing everyone's I find?

Interviewer 13:44

And do you think, I suppose when you get to that secondary level, that, you know, would you I suppose what value would you hold for having that network of staff kind of built up or that kind of? Yeah. This was I'm just trying to think of

how I'm going to word my question. But it was something about kind of, you'd mentioned earlier, actually, that's the importance that you place on building relationships with different staff members, not just going through one person. And yeah, I kind of just wanted to maybe explore that a little bit more about the importance that maybe you hold or not hold on that kind of network of staff and secondary school.

Lukas 14:27

Yeah, so I think about almost like, what I've learned the last few years is that's exactly what needs to happen. And there have been schools where you have more time and you're able to do just physically be there more, I think makes quite a big difference. I think things like solution circles or like PATHS where you can get a lot of adults around at the same time. So one of the schools I had last year training, it was actually during COVID. But we were just able to do a few of those online where it would be like, quite a lot of staff did attend. And then I then realized as it kind of sort of came out or COVID, and went in, although, you know, some of them had their cameras off, I didn't actually know who they were, and like, their names, didn't properly come up on the screen during the sessions, but a lot of people knew who I was, and there was a lot. A lot of people that were just sort of introduced themselves to me if I was around the school. And I also think being able to do training, that was one of the big benefits is the, the impact it can have on just getting to know those staff. So the option to, for them to see you like after a training session, and someone come and speak to you. And then it's like, you've got a little in with them when a certain student comes up, and you can just ask them how

they're viewing the situation. And I think like, that's what I was also finding a lot of the last couple of years would be, when you have those bigger network sessions, whether it's an individual case, or like a whole class thing. Secondary, there would always be, it's really Ne for us, because there are always exceptions to the problem, because some staff just aren't seeing those behaviours at all. And if that's what the issue is, or something else. Alternatively, I've and I was speaking to the head of year recently about this, he was saying how there are a few staff that are quite sort of stuck in their ways, like quite experienced and don't accept that they need to learn anything new in relation to teaching or managing certain students. So he said, when he's tried to do some of those sessions and say, this is what somebody needs, there's some that aren't willing to do that. And that then acts as the continual barrier to any sustained change, because it might be better in other classes. But if it still leads to them, sort of getting in trouble, like going through the behaviour sanction system in two of those lessons, every week, it still goes the same way. So I think that's something that I'm, I suppose is like, the next stage of my thinking is like, targeting some staff with additional things. And there is an interesting like, experience at a secondary school last year where we did was called, like the attachment aware reward where you do some training, but you're also working with the designated teacher in terms of like, looked after children. Or you're giving them like regular coaching sessions in terms of like a whole school project. And one of the interesting conversations we started to have towards the end of that was she and we were saying, I don't know how generalizable this is. But I think it was there, like science department, and math department, were the hardest to reach with

any of these ideas. And she noticed that every year is in said, is it linked to the subject and like English and other things, you're regularly talking about emotions, or you might be looking at the context of humans and why they behave in certain ways. And he just said, a lot of those teachers were very much known, like, this is what we do, and we're not going to deviate and didn't want to take new things on board. So one of the things that we started talking about then is like, how can you then influence this group of people that within that department, or it might be the more experienced teachers? How can you start to shift something with them? And it was a small conversation, but I think it leads to something larger about those people within secondary schools that have that more fixed perception of like, school and behaviour and young people and they do have a large impact. So it's about, I guess, how you can reach them, and also how you can start to, like spot who they are as, as like an EP, and I think that's the other thing is like, can you get to that sort of half informal level with a head of year or SENCo? Where it's like, they can start to flag up maybe some of the barriers within the school. So you know, like, what is acting as a barrier to change? You know, where to target is your EP, because I guess we have quite a big scope. And we could just end up doing the same work over and over again. This is not meaningful work as opposed to the meaningful question, where you produce a..., you see a child, you produce something, it goes somewhere, no one really reads it, and nothing much changes. And I feel like I've been in those patterns at points as well.

Interviewer 20:15

So it's something really, I think, this was quite a facilitator to supporting young people at risk of exclusion is kind of that staff buy into, and that kind of stuff, perception. And yeah, I suppose that sort of cohesion of support. I think, um, makes me wonder, have you ever worked in a school or been involved in a school or a setting where that has, there has been that sort of whole staff? Kind of positive perception or kind of that buy in? Or? Yeah, I mean, you're never going to get a perfect school. But have you kind of been in a position where you've maybe seen more of it? And what factors might have helped that?

Lukas 20:57

Yeah, I think the schools that I've seen, do it like best have been ones where that is like, it's really emphasized from the top. So I guess, like, schools have so many, like measurable targets and outcomes. Yeah. And it's when from the top, they're emphasizing the things that aren't necessarily that measurable. And they've got a vision for that. And that is really outlined as the goal, whether that's like relationships, or the social side, or things, I guess, aren't related to exams or certain like behaviours, or conforming school rules. If there are things like that fit in that vision outside of it, then it can just shift everyone's mind slightly. And I guess it means that there's more space within the school system to do that stuff. So it leads to things like, I guess, meaningful, like have school councils or student voice, or PSHE lessons that aren't just tokenistic, that are actually valued by the teachers, because they're given the time to sort of learn about what they're going to be teaching, and there might be a lead on those things, rather than it's just like an afterthought.

So I guess it kind of comes from the top, when I've seen it being done best. And then I think it's almost like, also having the people on the ground. And I think like we said, this is always going to vary to some degree. But teachers or the teaching staff that's gonna be able to build those good relationships. And I do think that's a skill, as well as it, you sort of need that space as well. And that it being emphasized that a priority is building those relationships. But I think that's the scale. And it partly comes down to the adults in that school. But also, sort of healthy systems in general, them not being completely overwhelmed with the amount of work that they've got to do and things like that. And I think they there's like some places where you find and they can be more leadership roles, or they can just be in other places. But they're those people that are like really embedded in it in a system. And they've been there for a long time. And they just seem to hold quite a lot of influence. And a lot of the students, I suppose that we're talking about a risk of exclusion, gravitate to those, that person and they're also quite strong and like advocating them because they've got that experience or like status within the school. That means, I guess I'm thinking in other situations, there are those people that gravitate and they're really great with the students, but it's just like a TA. And for any meaningful decision. That's kind of where they've done some kind of behaviour that puts them at risk of exclusion. The TAs not even going to be in any of the like meetings or advocate for an advocate for them in that way. So yeah, having that person around them. That's also got influence,

Interviewer 24:31

I guess. I think it kind of makes me kind of think quite a bit about the school system. And I suppose what is put into place in that school system to allow kind of the individuals in it to Yeah, to kind of, I suppose to take on or to get kind of that involvement. And something you'd said about kind of the visions, the vision of the school and kind of the ethos and the principles what they're about alleyway and what they're prioritizing can impact then kind of going down. And as you said, sort of a trickledown effect. And it makes me wonder about kind of things like behavioural policies, for example, you know, this was in schools that maybe you've worked in that kind of, you've seen kind of some best, better practice, perhaps than some others. Have you? Was there kind of anything around the behaviour policy that you noticed or even wasn't even mentioned? Is that was… that kind of held as a priority? Or how? Yeah, kind of that angle?

Lukas 25:32

Yeah, I think so I've definitely I've definitely seen or been in schools more recently, where I've seen behaviour policies that have been I don't really want to hear this, but stood out in terms of the like, the really negative punitive side that I just think straight away, that is not acting in the interest of a lot of students, it's almost like, very small things they do, it ends up with...even at primary school, them having to go up some board and move their name onto some like list or the red zone or whatever it is. And it just kind of makes me worry about their mental health more widely, they're just kind of being shamed in front of all their peers. So then I think that's like one extreme end. And then you have these ones in the middle where they have some kind of leeway.

There's often that similar approach of it, gradually building depending on what they've done, and you're having a certain amount of chances, and this leads to that. And then when you have that you go to the head of yours office, and it just builds. And I find the conversations I have with staff, recently, with certain students at risk of exclusion, like head of yours, almost like talk to me, like, there's nothing they can do about this, as if it's like, it's just set in stone. And it's like, we can't do anything, because they're just reaching these. And they're going like so high up on this on a scale really quickly. And that's like partly why they've got me the EP involved, which is kind of a good thing. But it's like, we can't change this. It's like it's just there. And they're going so quickly. And before we know it, they're going to be excluded, because we have to. And I guess that throws this interesting, like, dilemma to me of like other schools where not everyone follows their behaviour policy, and there's inconsistency. And I think that brings with it its own problems. When you get, like, whether it's just like uniform, some staff enforce it, others don't. And I guess it's, it's why these, like behaviour policies are so contentious in the first place. And I think often just created by people high up, or whether it's big multi Academy trust these days that are just enforcing these things on other people, but the people enforcing it, and the ones experiencing it, have no say in it at all. Yeah. And one of the schools recently said to me, oh, we had this consultation with students about the behaviour policy, and now we call it the reset room instead of isolation. And I kind of thought like, it's, it's good that you try to do that, and hear what they were saying and use different language, which I think is important, but also like, what was the scale in which you who involved them? Did you like ask them whether you actually thought it was an effective thing to

do as punishment or not. And that was one of the pieces of work that I managed to do with the school. A couple of years ago, when I was training as part of a project where initially I wanted to talk to them about their exclusions, actually, because it got flagged to me that they were particularly high, they've risen. And I just found it was really like, they don't want to talk about exclusions, they got very defensive. And then when I use that as a way to get into the behaviour policy, there was a bit more scope, but a conversation. And then I tried to say to them, kind of like ask them the questions. How did you come up with this? Were any students involved in it led to a little bit of work because I think that's where you can almost meet the tokenistic things that some schools are made to do, like show you you've got student voice with actual meaningful work where we can fill in that gap and maybe use that as an opportunity to do something where we ask students about how they feel about some of these behaviour policies. And so in terms of that, that I suppose was a positive thing that the school allowed me to do that. And I spoke with students from either that were like, regularly sanctioned, sanctioned a bit, or very rarely sanctioned. And I think it's quite, it's quite interesting, actually, what came out of it, because there was… there was a lot of consistency from all groups that there are a lot of school rules that are sort of ridiculous. Like the very small stuff, whether it's like hair below a certain length or the uniform. And then what you also sometimes find is, is the students who are getting like, regularly sanctioned, almost like agree with the system, at some point, like I thought they would be the ones that are massively against if you do this, at least... And I think what the actual distinction was, sometimes they say, like, we don't do anything, and we get it

because they see us as the naughty ones. But if you do it, you deserve that. And I think that's maybe spoke to something like wider in society about like punishments for doing bad things. And it's a really ingrained view. If you do something wrong, you deserve to be punished. And then you saw, well, some of their like, the ones that were getting the least amount of sanction and said that the punishment was right, someone kind of questioning saying, but does it change their behaviour if they just put in there. And then there were some interesting, almost like, examples, going further, where the group at the top was saying, they're really picky about certain rules, certain really small rules. But when there's things like racism and sexist comments going on in the class, the teachers won't say anything, because they're not confident addressing. And I guess it again, it's like those things that are measurable and not measurable. Like if you're enforcing a behaviour policy, uniform, if you want it to be is really easy. loads of other rules, like times you should be speaking or not, it's like easy rules to enforce. But then you get into these blurry areas, that you have like? Comments, I suppose? And what social interactions and what is bullying and what's sort of like slightly mocking is useful, and it's a lot of responsibility for adults to then monitor all of that and decide what is allowed or not. And then I think you get to this point where some people just get, we're going to clamp down on any sign of anything. So I'm getting to the point where it's like, that's a really difficult comment. So how can I talk about that in front of the whole class? When some students want to discuss that others don't understand why was wrong? It's like, it's a lot of responsibility for a teacher to do that. And again, I guess that's where you'd need that almost like leadership from the top to be focusing on these things

beyond the rules of a school, I guess, it's like a really complex system, isn't it of like allowing young people to grow up? And there's no right way of doing it, nearly every school has the same system? And is, in general, very rigid rules. And I guess, like I was saying about those, those students that think they should be punished, it's almost one of those things that it reinforces itself. Because, because it's been going for so long, and everyone sees that it's, this is the way it's done. Everyone thinks that it needs to be done this way. And when I had some of those chats with the school, about exclusions, behaviour policy, and particularly exclusions, they were like, are there any places that just don't have exclusions, like, what are they doing? Because we will be interesting, interested in like, can you talk to us and I sort of did a bit of research and then there were examples of this, but I think it's like, you can't just shift your like, behaviour policy or tweak it's got to be a completely different idea of what your prioritising at your school. So there's no like quick fix. And I think then when you get into like, structural changes, or and then we had this, but you know, this classic thing is like there is just, there's so much they need to learn and have to be in the class all the time. So there's not the space to do any additional things. And then you just come up against those barriers quite quickly. But I think like, that's why we're, it's got to come something bigger than just like tweaking and behaviour policy. It's like the idea of what that policy is, therefore, is the bigger question. That was long and messy.

Interviewer 35:40

No, no, that was I was just jotting down all the things you were saying. So I think actually, you know, some of those, what you were saying there kind of lead back into things you'd said earlier about, I think, the kind of the vision of the school and the vision from the people at the top, and then how that's brought down. And I think something about staff skill and confidence in dealing with areas that maybe are uncomfortable or actually unfamiliar for them. And actually, where is that kind of, you know, is there? Have they been given that support from the people at the top to hold that responsibility or to kind of think about what their role is, and in terms of all of this as well, and who they may be placed the problem onto? Or the difficulty on to and how they respond to it was kind of things you'd said earlier? And I think, you know, it made me think a little bit about actually, like you said, it's a real, it's a structural, it's a school structure, really, that kind of impacts. Yeah, whether schools, I suppose can really have the capacity to support and include pupils who may be most at risk of exclusion. And you mentioned that there was some schools that you kind of looked into that were able to do that better. And I think you might have mentioned one of them outside of this conversation, but I can't remember the website. And were there any kind of factors in that, that you thought actually, this sort of? This is almost like the opposite of what I'm seeing at the moment in some of the schools that I'm working in? If that makes sense?

Lukas 37:22

Yeah, yeah. So like, uh, yeah, I think I was saying before I'd heard about schools, I suppose just trying to do things a little bit differently from the start.

And I think this is where it's like, it doesn't start with like, we're going to not exclude that's not like, the initial aim for everything else is like, what are we there to give the students so there's a lot more time for things like Tutor Time. And they do it in a lot smaller groups. So I think there's just like 13 to 15. And they have 45 minutes every day, where they explore issues. And I think when you're getting down to the smaller numbers, you can start to create that space where people feel safe enough to explore things in a depth that you it's really hard if you've got 30 people in a class, and you're trying to create a space where people can actually open up about anything. But they also do, the whole idea is like you're crew, and you do a lot of things together. And from the very start, they go on these like expeditions together. And they're all responsible for helping each other to complete this task. And I think it's like that idea where you can, if you can provide students with opportunities to do things in groups, where it's like, the whole group needs to do something. So they all succeed. It changes things from like how things normally are where there are winners and losers in all aspects. And even when the class it's like some, it's like even rewards for like doing things well. Some get rewards, like the ones that don't get it almost is like a punishment to them, because they haven't done enough to get this thing. So if you can create a whole group task, and bizarrely, I was just thinking about the other day, a primary school, we had this like PE teacher that came in it used to do it with all the other primary schools. And his whole thing I remember in Year 6 was all about by the end of the year, everyone's just gonna be able to run for 10 minutes. And it was like one of those things that you're slowly building, and you just started really slowly, and it didn't matter how far anyone was going. It was just about

the amount of time, and it was one of those things that like in hindsight created that like unity between everyone because you're all aiming for this same thing. And then you all succeed at the end. And I guess I was thinking like that vision that this other school I was talking about these expeditions where you will have to get to the top of the mountain or something, it means that they're now they're not seeing like learning as just an individual thing. There's something you're doing with other people. So you start to care about the other students in your class, because maybe some of those were the ones that helped you get to the top of the mountain, or you're doing these different things were different people's skills shine. So even when in a situation and they do like the national curriculum and stuff, they're so like, we know, there's going to be students that struggle more with aspects, but maybe others in the class actually feel a sense of responsibility to support that person, because that person supported them. And you're not just seeing it as like, there's groups in the class that are at the top that every single thing they do, and then just go on that journey by themselves the whole way. It's, it changes the narratives, I think, within those students, and they don't see themselves as being like, competitive against each other, but also like, they are just that one group. And I guess that that's at a student level, but also the teachers and the people that set that up, you're creating an environment where everyone can succeed at something. And I guess if we're talking about exclusions, a big part of is the reasons why I think it leads to is a lot of people aren't given opportunities to succeed or do anything they enjoy or learn effectively, at school. It's like, there's nothing there for them, to encourage them to sort of use that situation, and it's not really set up for them.

Interviewer 41:54

Yeah, that yeah, that's a really interesting point. I think about you know, I think whether, even in our own role, actually, when we come in, we come in, because there's something going wrong. And I think, you know, there's something that's not there's needs there, there's something, you know, I think the whole system possibly is set up to, to think about what's not going right. And actually, it's I suppose the saying that this school, it sounds like they've set it up to sort of focus on what is going right, and what is working well, and building on that rather than what isn't, if that makes sense.

Lukas 42:32

Yeah, yes. Like you're not going to you. You're just avoiding the likelihood of getting in those situations in the first place. Which is always going to be way more effective than someone when we get called in, and it's their last chance.

Interviewer 42:51

It's something about that preventative work rather than the sort of firefighting work. And I think sometimes as EPs trying to, you know, we come in as the firefighters rather than the preventative work, and is, do you think possibly? Have you had any experiences of working in that preventative manner? You know, have? Have you been in a school like a secondary school, for example, to have fault that have valued preventative work? Yeah, I suppose that was my first question. Really?

Lukas 43:19

Yeah. So I guess, the place I've had is that example, where I ran those little groups with students about their behaviour policy. And that was, like, I guess started from a point of, and it was like, it came from someone else in the local authority, I guess you had all the data on this stuff. And he was just got in contact with me, which again, I guess, is quite good within the local authority to and I think it was before my time, like, I didn't know the guy, but he linked with the EPs. So I guess having that position within children's services and things is going to be important for people to come and speak to you. But it was yeah, the opportunity to have that conversation with the school and I spoke to the SENCo, and she said, like I don't really have that much involvement when I arrange for you to speak to the deputy assistant heads, we couldn't get the head in there, which I think was frustrating because I think he was part of the problem. But they miss.. when you start like with that broader point. We're just gonna think about this. And although they were defensive, I was able to squeeze in some work well, we thought like, what can we do to improve that? I think I just did the classic scaling like where would you say your behaviour policy is at the moment? They all did it surprisingly high for the like an 8, you can but you can always say what would make it a nine and they're a bit stuck and then I like I suppose I.... with the students had any involvement, in that then lead some of those comments which I've had back and then they spoke to the whole school about that, like an inset. But we all say they want, they agreed with a lot of the things that the students were saying. And they agreed on the aspect thing, the racism that was sort of going on and the sexist comments. And they asked me, if there was any training I

knew of, and I sort of, I was working with somebody else in the service about on this kind of thing at the time. And I said, well, I could do something. So it led to Yes, so training around that. In which, I guess, was basically, and this is where I tried to tie it all round is then within that, bring up the exclusions, again. As part of that, and I didn't have to say anything directly to them, but it was just like, you can just raise the statistics. And then it's like, videos of students excluded talking about that. And then I tried to use a big part of that session to just do some like, examples. And a few of those situations, I worked with the other person in my team who said, it was like a selection of examples that were coming up in the area, we were working in at some different schools, and how they would approach that, and I guess it's like that space to think about that in groups. And how they would approach it, and I think they let from that they had a few things like that, we're going to have a head of EDI type thing that we're gonna, you know, there had some things to follow up on, and there was going to be someone who was like, the lead on it in the school. So when difficult situation, situations arise, other staff could go to them. And as well as like trying to interact more with parents and speak more with students about those things. And I guess that's the kind of like, and it was just a one off training, it would have been nice to keep following up more with it. But you need that space. To explore the complex things to plan for, like, the situations they're all struggling with, and then ended up firefighting is like, how can you build more structures in, so I guess, each of those stages, and this is something I haven't really ever replicated since then. Because it requires time on everyone's front like us to start with, you then need to find the time of those people high up in the school, to have a big

broad conversation. And then do some more work effectively on whatever comes out of it. So I guess time is one of the big barriers. But that's like the kind of work I think that we can be doing that is preventative. But it is like I guess how we see our own role to start with, and also just finding the time to do it. And it positions us in a slightly different position. If we're trying to speak with people in the school that I guess aren't the SENCO can be difficult.

Interviewer 48:11

Yeah. And I think it's something about who is kind of holding responsibility in the system from our perspectives? And I think it's but then who do we end up in the most contact with? Because I think obviously, we have SENCo in contact SENCos, because they are obviously the head of Sen or whatever. But actually, sometimes the rigidity of a role means that there's not much space to kind of link in with other areas as much perhaps, huh. Yeah, interesting. So go on.

Lukas 48:28

No, I was just gonna say, I think that goes back to the point right at the start about networking in the school, and if you can have some others in high up positions. And I think sometimes we also have this benefit of much of us also, I don't know this, like, what exactly do we do, it can be really broad, I guess, going back to like, why I wanted to do it to start with. So you can say there's so many things we've learned about that we never apply. But you can talk about those things, and it will interest certain people and then you can get into conversations. Oh, like we're trying to do this as part of our like school

improvement project, and you can start to then link in with them with some of those other things. I think, like it's really hard to do, I think to have those but it's like just finding like, small opportunities and then just trying to make the most of it if you get it Yeah.

Interviewer 49:51

Yeah, that's a really good point. It makes me wonder Have you ever been in a system like a secondary school system? Where you had, I suppose? Do you? Do you have any kind of reflections? Or maybe what has helped you network to people in those higher up positions or those positions where they have more influence? That's worked quite well.

Lukas 50:21

Yeah, I think I, one of the things that helped, the school that I did most of this work in was that it was quite small, it was quite a small new secondary school. They'd only begun to think for about like, seven years. And it just meant that they basically weren't as many staff. And there were people that were, you know, holding, I guess, like more responsibility, and had also been there for a while. So I had a really clear idea about like, why this behaviour policy came up. So once, you can't, once you got in contact with like, the best person, or a few of them. And often they will in like, bigger spaces. So they didn't, and there were two sides, but they didn't all have like their own office. So you could sort of pop into this room sometimes. And there will be like, two or three of them, covering a few like big roles of, one of them were being inclusion, one would be like the deputy head, then there'd be an assistant, one who like

wrote the behaviour policy. And it was like, that meant we could continue having these like smaller chats as well as this meeting. And you would just bump into them in the school. But em, in other situations, I think it was like, it was tricky, because I guess it was like when I was training, but so last year at a different school, it was like trying to ask the head to do the research I did. And she agreed to that. And then it meant that, from there, I kind of had just the link to her, and she was really interested in, um, would ask more things. And there were a few opportunities, I think, come up when you're a trainee. But now I'm realizing wouldn't naturally come up. And I think I need to make a more of an effort to like, drop into like, the head office and just try and introduce myself. But it is harder, because it's Ne to have, like a reason. And book in that's not just like, so you know, you're not just like wasting their time, and they're in the middle of loads of things. Yeah. So that's something I guess I'm finding like, more difficult now. But some schools, it just seems like the environment, and at primary level allows for it more. So you just come into contact with the head or deputy or there may be a bit more welcoming and value you a bit more. So I think it does come from them as well of like, how they treat visitors in a way as a starting point. And some people really make an effort to say hello to you. And then you've got some little odd opportunities. But yeah, I think one of the things I'm just thinking about now is just trying to like, offer things or myself like, these are the things we can offer and just maybe think about what I want to do what I think might be useful for the school, but also to mean I'm not positioned in that. Like a rigid way. So it can be quite creative stuff, just so they know that option is there. And I think it's probably like, I haven't been able to do much this year, but it's different when

it's like your first year. And the timing of conversations is something I'm really bad at. So I think I always wait until like a new term to try and like plan visits and office stuff. And they're just too busy at that point, because I'm doing so much. So I'm really trying to think about like all those really small things that I think allow for some of the bigger stuff, but it's I've always got no chance, is the year trying to figure out when you can find them at the right time to offer something when they might be more engaged.

Interviewer 54:32

Hmm. Yeah, that's a really, that's a really good point, actually. Because I think it's again, it goes back to their capacity at different times and when things are being introduced to them how much yeah, the kind of the pre planning that goes into that and time of the year as well. But it's something you said about kind of it made me think it kind of links back to earlier what we said but that kind of rigidity of role and I think that example of working in a smaller school. Where actually one person may be had multiple different hats, which can have its downs..., like, you know, there could be a lot of responsibility, but actually, you know, there's more flexibility in terms of how they see different things, rather than just seeing it through one lens. Like this is my behaviour lens. This is my whatever lens, actually, I have to look at it from three lenses because I cover three different roles. And actually, there's quite a lot of flexibility in that. Yeah. I'm just conscious of time, because we've gone over kind of the hour. And I suppose we kind of had covered everything that I'm just looking at my questions not ignoring you that I kind of had had thought about. And but I suppose was there anything else in relation to this, that we

haven't spoken about actually, that you think would be quite helpful? Or that you wanted to kind of expand upon? Um,

Lukas 55:57

I don't think so I think like, like we've sort of covered there are those layers to it of the wider school system, the divisions of the schools and how they enforce a behaviour policy. And if we can I suppose get in at that middle level, that will be a Ne place to do some work. As it is, we're often at the very last stage, when we do get called in. And I've had a few of those recently that haven't gone well. And, and I think it seems very rushed and time pressured. Yeah, some of the points that I've been involved. And then I think the best hope of us at that point is like, trying to, so after one of the ones I recently had, it was like after they'd had this big meeting about being his last chance after a placement. And I think, trying to say to them now, it'd be good if I could get involved in that stage, just like trying to work your way back a bit. To see if you can just intervene as early as possible. And then I guess the work is like trying to change the narrative, like create space within the school.

Interviewer 57:20

And when you said kind of, you know, like you said, we kind of end up coming in at that last level when it's sort of last chance. And then you said, but actually, maybe coming in at the middle level of that sort of wider school system might be helpful. What did you mean, exactly by middle level?

Lukas 57:34

I think was like, actually trying to have an input into like, a behaviour policy. And just explore with some schools when you can like, why is the way it's and how that's communicated, because I think a lot of staff, that's the thing about inconsistency don't know what it is, and I'm not sure a lot of the time whether they could even fully explain it. Because I think we'd also say a lot of it's not based upon psychological principles or like, evidence. But I did find this like attachment aware project was quite good. Because in the training, it talks about, I suppose trauma informed approaches, and then you can have quite an open conversation saying, like, how do you feel about these in relation to your behaviour policy? And it might just get some of the people at the top thinking, like, we're faced with a bit of a clash here. To rethink so. I guess that's all I think, just being involved at that level of conversation.

Interviewer 58:49

Thank you. Um, but yeah, I think that was Did you have any kind of questions after this?

Lukas 58:58

I don't think so. I'm looking forward to that. I don't know if I read it all. But I am interested in the findings, though, because it is. Yeah.

Interviewer 59:09

Yeah, I mean, me too. I guess I suppose. I suppose kind of my last question is not necessarily related to this. But how did you find actually doing this?

Lukas 59:22

Good. Yeah, I think you sort of, sometimes speaking, you make connections that you haven't previously made. And it's also it's useful to just help me remember things that I've done or, like witnessed in the past. Yeah, like, good for reflection.

Interviewer 59:44

Your own space.

Lukas 59:45

Yeah, it really was. It's like supervision

Appendix N: Transcript of Laura

Including Timestamp

Interviewer 00:03

So I suppose it would just be really helpful, although I do know you and it just would be helpful for me. Or actually, if you could clarify, you know, what your role is? And in the service, just so I can kind of keep it all together? Yes. Okay.

Laura 00:57

Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant

Interviewer 02:05

It does. And it sounds like you're wearing a lot of different hats in your one job actually, which sounds really interesting, thinking about how it might lend itself to each of the different roles, but thank you....

Laura 02:18

Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant

Interviewer 02:39

Lately, and actually, that's quite helpful and thinking about kind of taking little bits of pieces of what you're learning from the different interest groups and bringing it back to your role as well. That's a lovely, lovely position to be in. Well, thank you, I suppose actually taking a bit of a leaf out of your book, this question was actually I think it's inspiring a little bit about your training. But I

would like to kind of I like to start it off by thinking a little bit but from Nancy Klein, and, and thinking about, you know, well in two aspects, what drew you to this role initially, you know, what, why this role? And I suppose what made you want to become an EP and make you continue to work in this role. But then also, what are you most pleased and proud to notice recently in this role?

Laura 03:31

Nice questions. Thank you for asking. There's a kind of two pronged response to what drew me to this role. **Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant**

Interviewer 05:48

So it's very much vocational. I think. I think so yes.

Laura 05:52

And in terms of what I pleased and proud about, I mean, it won't be any surprise to you, but being able to continue Xs legacy, you know, her work had had a massive impact on me. And the way I was able to practice and learn from her and the team of experienced EPs when I joined the team, X and I were practitioners in the team, so I got to learn from them and shadow them. And it, it was a very small team. So we were, we were just really able to live, breathe, sleep, just really develop the model. And then when X left the profession, that was kind of a really sort of daunting period for us. Because when we joined three teams where consultation wasn't valued and wouldn't be able to implement it. But we were able to demonstrate that schools liked it,

and that it was highly valued. And schools bought it in. And I thought I really wanted to be able to share it with other services. So I guess getting the BPS accreditation for the materials and being able to advertise properly. And, and seeing the seeing the kind of interest in that, you know, I mean, it's just, I love the idea that I can hold it, pass it on and, and get some of the ideas out there. So yes, that's what I'm really pleased and proud about, and that's been over the last that was in COVID. Really, during COVID, I had the time to pull all the materials that X given me together and apply to the BPS. So yes. That's what I'm pleased on.

Interviewer 07:31

Yeah, I think it's quite a lot of hard work and effort. And I think it's I get to see it firsthand, as well, how much has been put into that. So definitely, well, thank you for sharing. And also thank you for sharing, I suppose because quite a personal reason why you ended up in the role as well. And I think it's always Ne to think about what values we bring, or what draws us to the role because there is I often find, there's always something that personal that brings us to this role. So it's quite Ne to hear. Thank you. And so I suppose just kind of thinking a little bit going into the, I suppose the purpose of this study and this thesis and thinking about, you know, pupils who are at risk of exclusion, as we kind of the definition we kind of thought about earlier. And I would just like you to take just, you know, a moment to have a think about, you know, maybe one or two pupils that you have supported, you know, at any point in your EP career, you've most recently or even looked for further back. And I was wondering if you could tell me about tell me, I suppose give me a little bit of

context about them, you know, who they are obviously, within confidentiality, you know, not sharing too much. But I suppose giving a little bit of context about them and how you actually got involved in the first place, if that's okay.

Laura 08:46

Yes. And so we're talking about secondary aren't doing although, secondary. Yes, please. Yeah. So what one that springs to mind is it was actually the support started at the transition to secondary phase because he, he was identified as at risk in the primary school, and I think the primary school had, as primary schools do, being able to bend over backwards to support inclusion, and then had all the usual anxieties about what secondary, what challenges secondary might present and the transition period. So this is the young boy, black, African, single parent family, diagnosis of autism and question mark ADHD, with a plan and supported by the same teaching assistant throughout primary school, and a significant concern was the secondary school system. which is to have teaching assistants linked to subjects rather than a teaching assistant, that would be the one consistent mentor or TA. So if I was thinking, so I was involved very early on, because the EP from the primary school got in touch to say that the two SENCos had had a conversation. And the primary SENCo was horrified at the secondary SENCos apparent attitude, which came across over teams as being quite clinical, quite cold, quite make or break. And what was helpful at that stage is that I, I knew the SENCo very well in the secondary school and knew that that would absolutely have been the way that this person would have come across. But I'd seen in practice, the relationships that this person develops

with young people and other teachers and families. So I was able to just from knowledge of the school be able to support the not support the EP but pass that on to the EP who worked with the primary school that helped alleviate some of those tensions that could have got in the way of a positive transition. So I think right from the start being able to connect, first of all, the EP taking the initiative to reach out to me for the conversation to share what had happened. And for me to be able to link back with the EP and for us both to be able to link with our respective SENCos about that. So with knowledge of that that had happened, and being able to raise that with the SENCo, I was involved, quite early on, raised the consultation. And I think, potentially that was helped by us having a system of knowing at risk pupils, pupils at the point of transition, and that's been a long been an established practice in Kensington and LA that EPS with year six pupils would be involved in completing with schools diagnostic transfer frameworks. And this would be a meeting with the SENCo and the teacher that would include pupils and parents views. That is a what we thought was a really useful framework that included a summary of needs, strategies and interventions that worked well and the primary information that the secondary school might need to know before the child started and what might be useful for them to put in place in the first term. And back in the day, we would the local authority would arrange forums for though the SENCo is to meet in person and discuss that diagnostic transfer framework. Now, I think it's there's less of a system, but SENCos are definitely encouraged to have teams meetings or link up in some way. I'm not sure anything happens at the local authority level at the moment unless that's organized by the by bi-borough inclusion service. So that might be something

quite interesting to look in, look into. And I know that X at the moment is looking into what's around to support transition. I don't know whether your thesis is looking at transition, but I think it's a key thing, isn't it that how that first term goes for at risk pupils can be make or break content and a transition booklets or information that's passed on from one setting to another can be really helpful. So having had a little bit of this information that we were then able to sort of set up a meeting fairly early on. Is this helpful? Shall I carry on telling you about my involvement? Okay. So my involvement at following the Wagner model of consultation, it was very much observing, observing in the school setting and then meeting with the teachers or the adults most concerned. And again, a really positive in this school is that the form tutors will often be released for consultation, the SENCo will be present, and often the pastoral academic leader. Now another point that I really value about the school setting is that the heads of years are not called head of years. They're called.. I mean, not sure the title is brilliant pastoral academic leader, but it's been short, it's PAL. And so you've got a year seven P A L, and I think that is significant. And the pals are not necessarily teachers. They're not. They're not trained in teaching. So they're offering coming from a welfare background or a social, social care background or a youth mentoring During background, and in this school setting, the pastoral academic leader is a really supportive, positive black male, adult, who I've worked with for a number of years, who you'll be delighted to know, X, from working for..., X was working with me at this particular school setting as well. But this year seven, PAL has now left the school to do some other work in x and is going to apply for the EP doctorate. Oh, amazing.

Interviewer 15:38

So it's full cycle. Really, actually, that's really nice.

Laura 15:43

So I've worked with him for about five years. Yeah. And he will always attend the consultations. And their role is very much as like a parent family liaison. So all the communication will be via the form tutor and the pastoral academic leader. And really helpful to have them in the consultations. So the pastoral academic leader will always carry out a solution focused interview with the pupil before a consultation. And that's something that we worked with over the years. So he would sit in with me in solution focused narrative interviews with students, and then we worked on a framework. And he developed himself so that he would always come with a printout of this as the interviewer and he would be representing the pupils views in that early stages of the school consultation. Sometimes I would go on to meet individually with the young person, but it wasn't always… wasn't always needed. And the pastoral academic leader would also be very good at getting round robin information. So he would come to the school consultation with information from at least and for this young person, I think we got 10 out of 12 subject teachers had filled in information about patterns of learning. So what was working well, what's not working so well. And rating in relate... And this was linked to the school monitoring, they would rate approach to learning efforts and progress. So that would always be on a scale, but that was part of what the school would do already. But having an organized pastoral academic leader who

would come with pupil voice, subject, teacher voice, and school data, what's not to love. So that was really helpful. And then the form tutors will come with their knowledge of the young person in a social setting just from form time and PSHE. So again, another unique perspective. And then the SENCo being able to bring a particular role, a view on having gathered ta perspectives on particular subjects where the young person is supported and a view of how the support was working. So I think that it's very joined up and having three people who were all having different roles and bringing information to the consultations just means that meant that everyone felt we had a broad overview of a broad picture of what's going on. And rather than just feeling that the concerns were overwhelming, we will be able to say, well, look, eight out of 12 subject teachers actually say that X is focusing reasonably well, attaining reasonably well. completing homework, etc. One of the things that we have realized it's important to keep the round robin information coming is for a summary of the round robin information that I take responsibility to include as an appendix to the consultation record. So it's kind of like 10 out of 12. Teachers notice this, three were feeling this was a particular concern, six have tried these strategies. So I'll do a little half page summary, if you like. And I think I get there's no there was an example of that, that I gave out to the day two of the consultation refresher workshop. But if it's helpful to see an example of that, then I'm happy to provide that. The other thing that I found really helpful is the character strengths. So I'm sharing character strengths of young people with ADHD and autism in particular and adding that to the round robin information so that the round robin feedback is a balance of have strengths and concerns. So and ways of adding to it about well, what we know

from the research about young people is autism. And the way we're seeing this in this young person is through their skills in the design and technology project that the DMT teacher commented on, etc. So it's those sorts of ideas. And I think because teachers feel something, teachers who aren't involved in the consultation, feel that something gets back to them, rather than we're providing endless streams of information, but we don't ever get anything back, what would be even better, would be able to have a meeting with all of them. But and that has happened in the past hasn't happened for this young person. But you know, when you get the teachers at lunchtime around the table to look at the round robin information, or the diagnostic behaviour questionnaire, and all be thinking together about those sorts of things. So the next steps, then, for the joint with the Joint School family consultation to happen. In this instance, one of the factors that didn't work so well was that mum didn't attend in person, but online, so we were all in the room. But Mum was on a screen, and we hadn't known that was going to happen. So there were four of us, trying to all fit into one screen, to talk to mum. And I think that that really affected the flow of the conversation. And, and meant that it didn't feel as though we were all in person, together with the conversation. But still, we're able to share some of the positives, which I think really helps to. So again, what I love about the model, where you have a school consultation, followed by Joint School family was that you're able to start the Joint School family, by teachers, talking about things that they're pleased to have noticed, or change and developments since we last met. And the other thing that I really like is when we as part of the Joint School family consultation to be able to say, and before we start to think about priorities or concerns, can we hear a story from

everybody about when he is at their best as a learner or when he is at their best socially. And that fits with what you've said about Nancy Klein, but we're starting off with strengths and then able to keep linking back to those throughout the meeting about so how can we get more of the maths? How can we get more of the way that H is a maths into RE? For example? How can we how can we see more of the sorts of skills and resources they bring into that context into this other context? And I think that helps from having an overview from the teachers to draw on, but also hearing what's going well at the start. And I should have said at the joint school family, the same three adults who were at the school consultation, were able to attend. So there's, there's continuity there. So the fact that the school provide cover, they prioritize attending the consultations. Yeah, that that really makes it doesn't always work as smoothly. But in this instance, I think helped contribute.

Interviewer 23:51

So you can say something else?

Laura 23:52

No, I was kind of thinking I've run out of steam.

Interviewer 23:56

I mean, thank you so much. I mean, I was I was definitely very appreciative because that was a lot of really, really rich information. And it was something that you said that I was kind of, you know, would like to know a little bit more about, if you don't mind. And it was something about, I suppose, the school,

what the school are prioritizing that is really contributing to this. And it just made me think a little bit about wanting to know more about the kind of the school ethos and the values because you said something about, for example, the PALS, they're not teachers, they're, they're from welfare backgrounds, or kind of pastoral backgrounds. And I'm just wondering if you could tell me a little bit more about, you know, in this particular context, the school values and ethos and even policies and how you think that might contribute to what you know, the strengths of supporting students at risk of exclusion, if that's okay.

Laura 24:49

Yes, yes. So the context of the school well look, well, the first thing that's probably important to mention this this is a Catholic comprehensive, non-selective and it's in, in the LA, and it's a, it's a feeder school for the primary school next door, which is a Catholic Primary School, but they take children from lots of different local authority boroughs just because of where they are geographically in X. So they have children from all over. I remember very early on the school positioning itself in relation to a and this is obviously confidential, isn't it in terms of schools and names and all the rest? Yeah. So another Catholic Secondary School in in the local authority, which is selective, very high achieving. And very early on the one of the assistant heads talking to me about that, this, the school context that I work in pride themselves on, being able to give fresh starts to students that were excluded from the selective, Catholic comprehensive, so they pride themselves on being inclusive and making schoolwork for young people that had been excluded from another setting. So this was around managed moves. And there was

there's a system within the borough where, you know, another school that's part of the consortium, will take a child from your school, if it's not working, and with the agreement that they'll take one of yours at some point. So I remember thinking, that was a lovely thing to be really proud of that kind of like, okay, just because you weren't successful in this school setting, doesn't mean you're not going to be successful with us. And we've got a history of successes of including children that have been previously excluded from other schools that might be more selective, might be a little bit more academic. So that's definitely one of their one of their values. They value pastoral care. And I think that's the fact that they employ, you know, not academic, pastoral leaders, that pastoral academic leaders so that their main role is a pastoral role. But they also want to be involved in monitoring progress with learning too. So if any children seem to be not getting on, as well as they could be doing, educationally or socially, the pastoral academic leaders take on more of a role. And they will be the ones that have got set up a tiered system of target cards, report cards, colour coded depending on you know, if they succeed at the green, then they're off, but if they don't succeed at the green, they move to the amber etc, etc. And the pastoral academic leaders have a key role in that. But the mentor to support with those processes, they've also a school that would regularly expect and include cohort of children with plans. So I'd say it's not a huge school, but they would have least six or seven, so maybe one per form group. And in the past, they're a school where they invited me and X to do whole school session on including a young person with Down Syndrome who was moving from year six to seven. And as a school, they were feeling less confident in meeting the needs children with

Down syndrome. So they, a whole staff were invited to a session on getting to know X, before he started and what might be important for differentiation and inclusion across all of the different subject areas. So again, that was another message that inclusion involves everyone in the school and not just the Sen department. One of the things that really made a difference was when the SENCo, the original SENCo left, and the assistant head, who was overarching inclusion manager had to take on the inclusion role, and I felt like for the last five years in children with special educational needs has been put further up the agenda because there's somebody linked to the senior leader management team, whereas previously the SENCo didn't have a role on the senior leadership team. And so conversations about good with practice and inclusion and interventions, there was a lot more inset at a whole school level was suddenly prioritized around differentiation, ways to wellbeing. So I guess it became something that was kind of seen as that belongs to this department maybe a little bit sidelined from the mainstream, to becoming much more part of the mainstream, which was a really positive shift. And something the previous thinker would have really welcomed but didn't have the same voice or access to. And I guess, they've also got the sort of separated behaviour, and Sen. Which kind of that hasn't worked as well, because teachers would kind of think, am I referring for special needs, or for the anger management program, which is led by what a teacher who's the head of behaviour management. And so something that would definitely work better would be if that was one department, rather than two separate departments, because there's so much overlap. The other thing I love about the school is that their clubs are inclusive. And I think in every consultation we have, that they they're

in the ways of encouraging young people with special needs to join, to join the enrichment clubs with support. And children with additional needs are welcome at any time, be...before school lunchtime and after school to go and sit in the learning area that the learning zone, which is where the TAs gather, and the SENCo is based, so there is a space for them. And there will be board games, card games, Lunch Club, just sit and eat your packed lunch there. So it's kind of a space for whatever, help with homework. And that's children seem to use it not all the time, but they like being able to dip in and out. And I think it's kind of a res.. quite restorative for lots of the students to be able to dip out of playtime sometimes. Yeah. So I think I may have missed out lots of things. But again, I've run out of steam with that one.

Interviewer 32:47

And actually, it made me think a little bit about, you know, I suppose, when you were talking about the school values, I suppose, where it's prioritized and how that's kind of filtered down from the top down. And, you know, the senior leadership team taking that role, and actually, then how that's filtered down, and how that looks them across all the different tiers. And actually, it just made me think about the message, that there's always a space, there's always an inclusive space. And actually, it's for everyone, I liked the Down Syndrome training example that you gave. Because, you know, it's everyone is a teacher of Sen, where everyone is involved with Sen. But those are those really helpful, and it just makes me think about, you know, is it has this been a similar experience for you in other secondary schools? Or are there other kinds of aspects or values or experience positive experiences you had in

other secondary schools that mirror this? Or is there anything else that you're like, oh, actually, another school does this quite well, in terms of supporting pupils at risk of exclusion?

Laura 33:50

I want to say yes, but I had a recent very negative experience in the secondary school that I used to be the EP for and then revisited where X and I were doing a map path for a young person at risk of exclusion, which we had all agreed would be a really useful tool. But we got still got it in my room all curled up. I map drawn out the whole thing X got as far as scribing the names before there were fireworks between one of the assistant heads and the parent and the whole thing. It just didn't happen. But and that was me returning to the school, but that was a particular incident, but I'd be really interested in your research where the paths and maps come up as because I do think they would be a really useful framework for so supporting at risk students and I think if things weren't working well in the school that I was in, it would definitely be a next phase, you know, review process would be let's do a map and how many more people can we involve in this if things weren't progressing in the way we wanted. And what I've seen what well, in some of my other secondary schools is some schools making really good use of circle of friends. And involving me in setting up a circle of friends, in one year seven class with all the other year seven form tutors observing and then the school prioritizing PSHE time for the other form tutors to do it with their year sevens. And that probably happened three years in a row. And it was just something they put in place for year sevens at the, you know, right at the start of their

first term. And I think that was a really supportive, inclusive approach. And it wasn't a target, it wasn't a circle of friends targeting any particular child, although there were children that they would actively invite to be part of the circle if they knew if they volunteered. So there was always the risk that when you do it as an inclusive circle of friends model, rather than the target students circle of friends model, there's a risk that the children that you who are vulnerable, that you would want to be involved might not volunteer to be involved. So that was, I found, I thought that was a really interesting and helpful intervention. And I think the other thing that really springs to mind, again, comparing two secondary schools where there was a marked contrast is the stuff on greetings, and the way that teachers welcome students into their classroom. And in one school were silenced in the corridors and on the on the door, it would say silence as you enter this classroom, and in the school setting where the teacher is in the corridor greeting the children, as they come in with a personal comment, you know, a world of difference. And I know, it's not about an individual at risk, but it's about an inclusive environment, isn't it? And, and emotional, emotional differentiation, that X talks a lot about that we're all kind of, and the research backs it up, doesn't it? So

Interviewer 37:38

I think it's, it's that it's the inclusive culture that that children then experience, and I think it's the children that are at risk of inclusion or exclusion, you know, I suppose, statistically, but being that they might just feel part of that inclusive culture, and actually the impact that can have and that relational approach as

wellbeing really important, from what I'm hearing, there was just something else you said that kind of came up earlier as well. But I think it's the value of that sort of early, early intervention, or that kind of preventative work, you know, a lot from that transition period being a very difficult period for a lot of pupils, you know, from year six to seven, but actually, you know, the things about the transition plans, and then the circle of friends in year seven, actually starting from the very beginning, and almost thinking about it, you know, preventive work rather than the firefighting later on down the line when maybe these difficulties might come up in other ways in your eight 9, 10, etc. Yes, yes,

Laura 38:39

I agree. In some of my secondary schools, they would go and visit at the primary school. They would, in the school that I'm talking about the one that I've been focusing on for the student, X, I know that the SENCO and one of the LS, one of the LSAs, would try to attend the annual review, and then include an observation in the classroom, just to kind of see this student in a context where they might be at their best and see them in a familiar setting. So they've got a sense of, you know, if some of the things that they might see the challenges, they might face it, they can always hold on to the fact that okay, well, we know that they can be calm, and we know that they can engage in learning because we've seen it. And it's not just primary school, trying to sell all the strengths and not take into account the concerns. And that's let me use you mentioned the relational approach. And I think the PAL model enables a senior figure in the school to have more of a mentor coach

role, rather than head of year which can often carry with it a construct of discipline and, you know, phoning parents with bad news. So having making the difference between the PAL, who this particular PAL goes out of their way to phone, the parents when they want to share something positive, as well, and parents commenting in that in the joint school families, you know that they're not looking at their mobile phone and thinking, Oh, my God, it's the school because it might actually be the PAL saying just wanted to let you know that he remembered the PE kit this morning had a really good basketball session, it makes the world of difference. So holding on to that relation Relational Approach.

Interviewer 39:39

That's really lovely. And actually, it's something you'd said there as well, I was quite interested in, because I suppose it relates to sort of behavioural policies, which we know can have an impact on a lot of children, and, you know, particularly those at risk of exclusion, depending on the behavioural policy and the rigid rigidity of it. Yeah, and I suppose just your kind of experience of, you know, those, for example, the school that you've spoken about, you know, and all the work that they're putting it, and, and I suppose thinking about, well, what their behaviour policy looks like. And I suppose how differentiated it is, how inclusive It is, yeah, and how that might impact the pupils. And even thinking about things like discipline and concept, like, what did they even look like in a school as well?

Laura 41:34

I don't know what the behaviour policy looks like. I haven't seen that for a couple of years. And that's really interesting for me to reflect on. I feel that I understand their systems. And I guess that's just come about through consultations, where, you know, they might say, oh, they've had five on calls. And I'm like, oh, what's an on call? You know, so there are a series of sanctions that I see that that students have, and I think I mentioned the target cards that progressed up to the red target card, which would involve reporting to somebody in the senior leadership team. So there's obviously a kind of staged approach. And I think it's interesting because the children, the young people, some of them like to show their red card, almost like as a badge of honour. I'm on red. And so you know, we've had conversations about how helpful or unhelpful that is that they are actually coloured, because they don't need to be coloured, could just indicate red or have something on it that would say this is the third level or whatever that wasn't so instantly visible, when they take it up for the teacher to sign at the end of the lesson. That makes sense. Yeah, yeah. And so they've got their on calls, which, which involves being asked somebody from the whoever's on call duty can be any member of staff is asked to go and collect the child from outside because the series of in within class sanctions haven't worked to the child is now out in the corridor, and then has to go with the senior person for to the room. That's not I don't know what they call that room. It used to be the reflection room. It's not the exclusion room, or the sanctions room, and it's not in the SEN. But it is located in the behaviour, behaviour team area. And I know that they have the behaviour lead there uses a lot of reflection workbooks, and CB CBT approaches that students have to fill out things basically, because some of

those have been brought along to consultations, students reflections when things haven't worked out, well. They also have a student counsellor who is in house two or three days a week and linked to the behaviour team. And the behaviour lead, again, runs run social groups and anger, anger management groups, again, that that wording I don't find particularly helpful. But you know, they'll say things like, well, they've been through the anger management training, and it didn't make any difference. And I'm kind of like, oh, okay, so, so what next? And there's also a mental health support team practitioner who links in with the behavioural team as well. Yes, and I think they definitely they definitely use the X n centre. And the other sites when they need respite students will go for a four five week period. And in fact, one example from the schools where the pastoral academic leader, and myself, went to the X Centre for a consultation with the key worker, prior to the student's reintegration to school. And that was brilliant, because the school were prepared to use their EP traded time and allow their pastoral academic leader to go off site. Because we were talking, they were talking, the X Centre was saying, he's having a brilliant time here, it's really successful. But how do we get him back? Because might not want to go back? And so it was about how do we keep the connection with the school setting in a positive way with a significant adult that they would want to share that success with? So it's a bit like going back to the year six annual review or seeing the child and year six going to visit to the time when things are working? Well hearing more about that and working out? So what do we need to do to help the transition back? And what can we learn from your time at the X Centre? Because often it can be seen as a sort of respite but no new learnings? And I thought that was fabulous. It's

only happened once. But and I guess it depends whether I'm involved with the child, whether they would prioritize the time or not. But I thought that was a really good model.

Interviewer 46:36

Absolutely. And I think it's something is, you know, I think it's about you, your time being prioritized for that in a way because it shows that actually, they're prioritizing that child (because they want them back) and we're going to use our the money that we've paid for your time to actually because we value that over something else. And I suppose what's the message then that sinks down? Where that child actually you would hope?

Laura 47:03

Yes, yeah. What we really wanted was for, you know, for the same to be happening with the key worker to offer a visit within the first month of the child returning to the school, almost like I'm keeping you in mind, and I'm going to come and see how you're getting on. I mean, that would have been brilliant. Didn't happen, unfortunately, because of time constraints, etc. But in an ideal world. Yeah.

Interviewer 47:32

And I think it's that for them being held in mind and that connection as well, because actually, again, they've had a very different experience. And that experience is still valuable. And are you valuing their experiences? Well, and yeah, I really liked that. Thank you for sharing that. And I just conscious of the

time cells that don't want to keep you for too long, either. I can imagine, you probably want to have a bit of a rest...or less until you have to do some work. But then I just wanted to kind of think as well, you know, if there was, you know, I think we kind of spoke a little bit about eat, I think you had to kind of two schools in mind. And you were kind of using them in a way to kind of comparison, you know, things that were helpful in one school and unhelpful on the other. And I said that although I want to keep this very sort of strengths based approach, is there anything actually there in your experience, and it could have even be in the context of the school that is highly inclusive, but actually has been a little bit unhelpful, and things that you try to steer away from, or actually kind of know that? When you kind of hear it, you might be like, oh, this actually, yeah, isn't very helpful for a pupil at risk of exclusion. Yes. Does that make sense? Sorry,

Laura 48:54

no, no, it No, it does absolutely make sense. Things what I think can't think of specific examples, I know that. I think for me, often comes down to teaching, noticing differences in teaching styles, and individual teachers approaches, and I guess you get much more of a flavour of that. And when you've been in a school for a number of years, and certain names of staff keep coming up. And you get a real in a positive way, you know, like parents wouldn't say, oh, you know, my child loves Mr. So and so, and then you kind of hear that, you know, things are terrible. French, again for another pupil and teachers that have got a very who teachers who might think that silence means children are learning or feel that. So it's that classic isn't it were in our RE where it's a

discussion based subject where students are expressing opinions and working collaboratively is valued. And then in maths, you know, if you were talking about a problem that's, that's seen as getting in the way of learning. So and I guess it's harder to reach out to support teachers or not, you know, you might pick up something in a round robin, but the chances of me ever actually working with the French teacher or the maths teacher that seems to always have difficult relationships with vulnerable or at risk pupils. I suppose it's harder to know how to make a difference, even when the adults in the room are kind of saying, Yeah, we can see that that style is not an inclusive teaching style for children with these who children who are at risk. And I think one of the one of the ways of mitigating against that has often been when you're working with the young person to help them reflect on relationships that work well, between students and teachers and relationships that don't work well. And rather than think, thinking that that's something they can change, it's almost about supporting the young person to not have their button pressed. So it's kind of saying, so if you're in this sort of learning situation with a teacher that that teaches in this sort of way, how do you not get provoked by that? What would you need to be doing differently, so that you win, and that the teacher doesn't win, so it becomes more of a kind of, don't let it wear you down? You know, just find a coping strategy. Rather than expect the teacher to think you're the best student or to notice you or to praise you are all the things that we'd ideally like to see. So it's, it's kind of without putting down a particular teacher, getting the students to become aware of flags, red flags for them, and what they might need to do in those situations, just to be able to get by and get through the math lesson, knowing they've got PE with Mr. X next,

and they're going to have be able to get rid of a whole lot of negative emotion. So I guess it's about coping strategies, because you're not going to change some teachers teaching styles.

Interviewer 52:42

Absolutely. And I think it's about well, what teaching styles, you know, are unhelpful, but then what are helpful, you know, because I think actually, that student relationship and teacher relationship is so important, as you mentioned earlier, to, to supporting pupils who are finding school a bit tricky for lots of different reasons. And, you know, that kind of thing about that, you know, where they feel valued in a classroom, it seems, is, is quite helpful. And also whether there's room for, you know, discussion and interaction, and actually knowing that there's very different learning the classroom looks very different in lots of different aspects. And, but then also, I quite liked what you said about the resilience as well, you know, building that resilience within that child with it within the child as well, because actually, there is things that they do have an element of control over. But it's about identifying what it is, as well. So really liked that example, as well. I think,

Laura 53:39

yeah, that's, then the other thing that sprung to mind is rigid homework policies, so detentions for homework that isn't good enough, and not taking into account what might be going on at home for some of these young people, especially if they're young carers or they've got parents that they're worried about. So I find that really find that always useful to have a conversation about

what flexibility might there be, you know, if a lot of the detentions or a lot of the sanctions are linked to homework? That's quick fix, isn't it? Surely, surely.

Interviewer 54:22

Absolutely. And it's back to that homeschool liaison as well. You know, really understanding that a child exists within multiple contexts. And actually, it's not just that the job and responsibility ends up the school door, actually, it's considering what else is going on and pass that school door for them as well. Yes, yes. And I just wanted to kind of just kind of tie it all together. You know, is there anything else that you think that would be helpful for me to kind of consider an add as well, that that might have come up? And through our discussions that actually I haven't asked or yeah,

Laura 55:01

Um I guess what, what I'm what I'd like more of would be the opportunities for more teachers to come together to have the time to be like a peer resource for each other. So when I've seen diagnostic behaviour questionnaire meetings work well, where every teacher has contributed something, and then is able to look at the range of responses, see what other teachers are trying what other teachers find difficult what other teachers see the young person's strengths as I think those meetings have been illuminating. But again, it comes down to time about quite curious about how teams and online opportunities could open that up again, so often it used to be the EP saying, well, I can come in before school or I can come in at lunchtime. Whereas now I'm kind of thinking, well, could it be that half an hour online after school and some teachers could be

home by then? And some could be in the staff room? Or? Yeah, that's what I definitely like to see more often in secondary schools. I mean, the things I've talked to you about the PAL, being able to bring written information is great, and it's kind of its, it's kind of making something fits, you know, then they'll get some feedback back. But it still, I think it still be more efficient and more creative if people could be in the room together, even for even for half an hour using something like solution focus reflecting teams on the students. And I think that the case that I described in secondary supervision, where I was suddenly thrown in the room with the parents going through the divorce, the child who hadn't spoken to his dad since Christmas, and suddenly the three of them are in the room, what on earth can we do? And just that simple framework of letting the child's lead and letting them know that I'm going to ask them about their best hopes of being in the school what they want the work and it links to EBSA doesn't it about the purpose of school is not just to be at school, it's much broader and bigger, it's about do you want to learn? Do you want to be part of this community? Do you want to affiliate? How affiliated Are you are you invested in this school? And just being able to ask the young person, that in a room full of people who are invested in the child being at school, and then hearing a story from everyone in the room, about them at their best, just can be hugely powerful. And people can be freed up by that sort of thinking. So I guess, for me, you won't be surprised it's about the solution focused approach, is not solution forced. And that's that bias that we can have towards hope. And I think EPs can create space in schools, for hopefulness by asking questions that allow people to get a glimmer of hope for these young people that they can make a difference.

Interviewer 58:26

That's really lovely. I think it's a really nice note to end on. Actually, I think it's, it's just yeah, I think it's that giving space for hope and glimmers of hope as well. I think sometimes in a, in a secondary school capacity. It's, there's so many pressures, you know, admin wise, you know, containment wise and actually, where is that space? You know, who's holding that space? And how are how is space created? So, thank you. I'm just going to stop recording if that's okay.

Appendix O: Transcript of Zara

Including Timestamps

Interviewer 00:02

You know, the confidentiality of this, you know, everything I will be using, like pseudonyms or kind of, you know, making things anonymous, but obviously, it's quite a small sample group….

Zara 00:31

Do you want me to not mention names? Or does it not matter?

Interviewer 00:35

And I suppose like, if it's probably, you know, if you could not mention names, probably it's probably easier, but the transcript will be like, you know, everything will be anonymized. So, you know, I suppose, yeah.

Zara 00:49

As in school name or two might slip out.

Interviewer 00:52

Yeah. I mean, and that's fine. And, you know, it's quite a small, you know, I suppose on the team, we know all the different schools. And I probably know what schools you involved in. So you know what I mean, it won't be mentioned anywhere, in the research or anything like that. Well, I suppose just kind of just for clarification purposes, could I just kind of ask about what

your job role is, and what responsibilities you hold within the current team and within the EPs?

Zara 01:21

Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant .

Interviewer 01:49

Well, perfect, thank you. And I just, I suppose I find it quite helpful to, to kind of, you know, I suppose go a little bit further back, and think about why people ended up in the role that, you know, I suppose, what drew them to this particular role, because I think we bring a lot of ourselves into this role, and are different values. And that obviously can impact the work that we do. So if you don't mind sharing, and, you know, it was what really drew you to the role of the EP or kind of this area?

Zara

Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant .

Interviewer 03:29

Okay. So I suppose I suppose you kind of were maybe placed in the position of that person who holds responsibility for those children, whether it was directly or indirectly. And through that I suppose that was kind of helped by building relationships. So suppose.

Zara 03:46

you found Yeah; I couldn't teach them unless the relationships were there. So in order to do my job, but I kind of had to. Yeah, I had to try and connect with some of these more, disaffected kids. And it was interesting, because it really works like that. I just remember this one boy, who, I guess he was quite a sort of key figure in the peer group. When he was in the classroom. None of the other kids could learn. They were all just like, what’s this guy doing? And he who's very bright, but again, he couldn’t really engage in the learning either, but I just it didn't take much I just went in. I went down to the Learning Support Unit and hung out with him and helped him with his science project, one on one for like, a couple of hours. He actually got an A on it because he was bright. And that was it. Just investing that time with him. One on one, kind of turned him around and he like used to come into my lessons and he was like this middle student and all the other kids were like what's going on? But it was so beautiful to see how just actually a little bit of belief in a kid and a little bit of time investment can sort of change their engagement and attitude. So there's sort of experiences like that, that just kind of made me want to do more of that through our role.

Interviewer 05:18

Absolutely. No, thank you for sharing that. And actually, it makes me wonder about that. You know, that. Did you say it was a boy, young boy? Yeah. Yeah. And I suppose the, you know, did you notice, I suppose differences in how, I suppose you know, you wouldn't have a real insight into all the other lessons. But did you kind of notice differences of how he presented in your lesson after that relationship was built, then versus other lessons?

Zara 05:44

Only from chatting to other people in the staff room. And I know that he, yeah, he wasn't doing it in other lessons I don't claim to have had an effect. On his other lessons. It's just somehow, he, by me investing the time and seeing his potential, he kind of saw me as like a good teacher. So no, I don't know really what happened in the other lessons. Now, when I say one, yeah, it's just all about relationships, I think for this kid anyway. Yeah.

Interviewer 06:25

And I suppose this kind of leads me into thinking about kind of your current role as an EP. And, you know, supporting, I suppose lots of different children, lots of different schools, particularly in secondary schools. And I'm wondering, you know, if you could tell me about a time when you might have supported a young person in secondary school in the role that you're in now, who might have been at risk of exclusion and kind of how you got involved and what that involvement might look like? Might have looked like, yeah.

Zara 06:51

I guess there are a couple of examples in my head, prior to coming into today. One was, maybe this isn't as relevant actually, it's for a boy that was coming back from exclusion. But the school, he was coming back, and they wanted him to have a sort of good reintegration. So in a sense, it was the kind of work that should have been done before he got excluded, but they were doing it after the event. But yeah, they really gave me half a day with him to kind of

find out, you know, what makes him tick, and how he wants to learn and all that sort of person centered stuff. We did that. And then we had a multi, I guess, we had a sort of family meeting with all the other professionals or together and just sort of put stuff in place. So that kind of things should be done beforehand but happened after. But the other example that happened twice, was CBT style groups. So I got asked to do one CBT group for this, for a bunch of kids at a mainstream secondary, it was in their GCSE year. And I think the school are really worried about the children all I guess, because around GCSE time, there was a lot of a lot of the more academically able kids were buckling down and focusing on learning. And these children were sort of acting up a bit more, I guess, because that difference was highlighted, I don't know. But they got me to do some weekly CBT sessions with them. And it was ostensibly around exam anxiety. But really, we just use the time to just give them time and space to think about their own lives and where they want to be going and who they are, what they're good at what makes them tick. Just kind of giving them a bit of space and attention. And it was lovely. It was really sort of Ne. I enjoyed doing that. I did something similar, some special secondary, a specialist language setting. I'm trying not to say the names of it. But both of these have been in our service. And yeah, this the language college, it was just two boys. They both had a diagnosis of autism. And yeah, I did a sort of CBT session with them around anxiety because they're both actually that was commissioned by the Sen. department, because the school was trying to exclude them. And the Sen department rather than do that they sort of commissioned our service or me to do that. Just to kind of help them get through to the end of year 11 Really. So yeah, That's the two examples I

had in my head. But other than that, in some ways every time we get involved with any child in secondary age, normally that, you know, if there is a degree of question around them having exclusions, everything we do really is focused on.

Interviewer 10:18

I suppose it, you know, kind of what you mentioned about the previous example of that kind of the reintegration work. I suppose all that preventative work was done afterwards rather beforehand, actually, you're fine. You're saying yes, as your role is coming in, sort of towards that tail end, where things have already kind of been happening and things are kind of spiralling a little bit. And actually, you're trying to come in, I suppose to maintain the latter half of what's happening.

Zara 10:51

Yeah, it was like he had been excluded and had a period of time at an alternative provision. But they wanted in a sense, it was inclusive, because they're trying to prevent that from happening again. Yeah. And it was like a sort of lessons attitude. Yeah.

Interviewer 11:06

Let's... with the, I suppose with the two CBT groups that you were kind of style groups that you were involved with? And, you know, obviously, I think you, so you mentioned that you really was just giving them a space to kind of think about, you know, I suppose take a real sort of person centered approach and

seeking the young people the attention. And yeah, I suppose just a time away from maybe academic driven work or things like that, I suppose thinking about your role, then, I suppose working with the schools during this time, and kind of after this time, I suppose. What did you find out that the school were doing anything helpful to, I suppose, facilitate that facilitate, you know, taking on that role? Or kind of taking on that work with the young people?

Zara 12:06

Mixed bag, I'd say in the mainstream school, it was it felt more like a, can you just deal with it? It was more of a passing over of responsibility. So yeah, there was less collaborative joint work, or indeed follow up work. In that school, and you know, that, that school before, and since is always, you know, this sort of height, everyone's super stressed all the time, and people just don't have time for it half the time, which sounds awful, but, you know, so much pressure. And so it was that in the especially with language college, they were far more collaborative. And, you know, I'd check in with them, and the parents after each session, sort of sending a little update, and it was all very carefully planned beforehand, so that I'd, you know, I had spoken to the parents and the, I guess the behaviour lead at the school beforehand and knew, you know, what might push these kids buttons or how best to engage them and they were far more complex children as well. Yeah. So yeah, mixed, mixed picture, I'd say,

Interviewer 13:37

with the with the specialist language college. And, you know, I think so you mentioned it was a far more collaborative, and actually, you had that home and link homeschool link as well established as well. And I suppose, you know, kind of thinking about the setting or suppose the, the session that that, you know, that was in? Is there a kind of any says how I word this is there? Yeah, I suppose thinking about it from a systemic point of view. I say, what was the school like, you know, what was their priorities? Yeah. Kind of how they were, how they ran, you know, what I mean?

Zara 14:19

So, it wasn't my link school. But from my time there, I did understand that they are, I mean, obviously, they are super inclusive, they are a special school and, you know, they kind of their ethos, I guess was far more understanding and trauma informed and, you know, neuro diversity wise than the mainstream school. And they can afford to be because they have more time and resources and fewer pupils. And, you know, I don't want to sort of speak ill of mainstream schools because it is it can be tricky. So to do that they knew their children a lot more personally. It just yeah, it felt very, that every single member of staff knew every single child very well. And you just, you just can't really do that in a mainstream school. You know, when I was teaching, I had 150 different kids, and you can't know them all that well. Does that. But in another thing that comes with that, knowing them very well. So like, in the specialist language college, after I finished the sessions, I sort of wrote to each one of them personally, just the two of them. In a sort of, you know, that narrative style of this is what we've talked about, this is what we learned

hopes for the future. And it just did feel a lot more personal and a lot more meaningful actually.

Interviewer 16:06

Thanks, you know, you know, I suppose you raised a quite good point about actually, you know, staff capacity to hold every pupil they had, they haven't, you know, they're teaching, or they have in mind, things like that. And actually, as EPs, you know, we can come in and we can hold, you know, we're only sometimes only really working with smaller groups or one person at a time. So actually, we can hold that a lot more and get to really know them. And I suppose, actually, yes, was thinking back to us was that combination of your role as a teacher as when you were a secondary school teacher? And that role of the EP Now is there anything from your secondary school experience as being a teacher that has influenced you to know how you support staff and, in that capacity, as well, kind of giving that you've had that sort of firsthand experience of knowing what it's like to their role? And their shoes? Yeah.

Zara 17:05

Yeah, I suppose. Yeah, one of the things I find myself frequently suggesting almost every time suggesting to staff in this is a different secondary school now that is kind of like the idea of emotion coaching. Or it's more of like a, an attachment understanding of relating to pupils. And I guess it sort of links with some of the work I've been doing at X as well. So I do the adolescent seminar there. And, you know, we look at brain development and how actually, a lot of teenagers might present as adults, and then they get treated as adults. But

really what can be what can make all the difference is the teacher or the adult, that's trying to talk to an aggravated teenager, just kind of recognizing that they're not yet able to self-regulate and reflect on why they might be feeling a certain way. But taking that emotion coaching style approach of like I can see you feeling this, because you see, you see that upset right now, I wonder if it's because so and so said, whatever, you know, I get that that's really, I'd feel the same if someone did that to me, or just kind of, you know, providing that nurturing space. And then you move on to the art, you know, Trouble is, we can't call our teacher a bitch or whatever it is, and then then guide them going through how to act differently. And I think a lot of secondary school teachers just jumped straight to the, no, you can't do that, and then sanction. Without that. Without that nurturing space without that sort of sense of attunement. Let's face it, a lot of these kids maybe didn't get when they were little. I honestly think that a lot of the behaviour difficulties, you know, down to that deficit in showing how to self-regulate, being attuned to Yeah, so for me, that's, that's a big piece. I wish all secondary teachers could get emotion coaching training. And, yes,

Interviewer 19:25

so do you think I suppose it's that kind of, have you I suppose, have you been in a setting or, you know, a school that actually staff have been given that sort of training or that support it to have space to be very attuned or nurturing?

Zara 19:43

I have. I've certainly recommended it a lot. I've explained it. I think I've done I've done I've delivered the training quite a bit. I'm struggling to think now. If I've done it, I must have done it to a secondary school. I can't remember how I've I do it wherever I can the training. But what's going on? So in a lot of the secondary schools I have worked in. They might be doing like zones of regulation. Some of them might be Elsa qualified. And that's all great. But I've never come across a school that's off its own back said to me, oh, yeah, we're doing an emotion coaching approach. Although that said, the school I'm in currently has had trauma training, I think through the arc. method as it were. And that's cool. I don't know, I guess it just makes me think of a lot of the secondary schools I've worked in, they'll have a really amazing like behaviour, mentor figure. And the skill that those guys because they are often guys, not always, but the skill that they really bring is that ability to connect on a level with the kids. And for the kids to feel like they're understood. And there's someone on their side. And I think those people are super skilled. But they, I do feel that there is space for teachers to try and adopt that approach where they can a bit more, because so often, you know, it could be in a lesson, and there's just conflict, conflict between the students and the teachers. And then when I talk to these kids, one on one afterwards, those are the teachers who are rude teachers who are so strict, and it is just there's like this sort of us versus them. Attitude. Hmm. So going off on one, but I just Yes, that's for me, it would be the thing.

Interviewer 21:57

No, no, that's no, that's helpful to think about, because it's something about, you know, thinking about how I suppose so I suppose going back to the kind of the behaviour of mentors, you know, having the that skill, and I suppose, of being their role, and that responsibility is almost like that expectation, you know, this will this is how you, you know, this is how you go about your job, and this is what works well. And it makes me sometimes think about what, what the, how the teachers role, or the staff or the other staff were all, you know, like teaching assistants, things like that, how their role is explained to them, not necessarily explicitly, but I suppose how I suppose that culture in the school and what that, how that might influence what they, their, how they perceive their role, and what responsibilities it holds.

Zara 22:47

Absolutely, in the school I'm in at the moment. I mean, there's a whole new staff now. But it reached crisis point before that. And before that, there was a culture of, well, you know, SEN is not our job. And that was very much supported by the senior leadership team, who would be so focused on academics and results that of course, the teachers are gonna get frustrated with the kids who are acting up a bit maybe the kids who are causing them problems as they see it, because the only way they were being judged was on the academics rather than in the sense of inclusion or value added I don’t know.

Interviewer 23:34

I suppose it makes it makes me think though, you know, how, you know, I suppose what from what you said, I suppose that kind of senior management, direction and support and I suppose their guidance, like you said, and I kind of what, how, what they prioritize on..., I was wondering, have you ever kind of worked in a school or been involved in a school or actually, yeah, I suppose.

Zara 24:04

Long cases? Yeah, I

Interviewer 24:07

suppose they say, I suppose they know that. No other academics isn't a priority, but it isn't the only priority.

Zara 24:16

Yeah. Have I ever been looking at my list? Yes, and no, I mean, it's, I've certainly had conversations with heads who are saying all the right things. And I do think there is a real trickle down, you know, that I do think, a heads vision and a head’s values and how they talk. It really does affect the whole staff body, maybe not immediately, but you know, it really does. And I've experienced it sort of from both sides. On my List. You know, I've been the staff and I've seen the effect on staff who, you know, the SENCo at my current school, the previous SENCo She could see it coming, she got completely burnt out because she wasn't remotely supported by the senior leadership team. They just thought Sen wasn't their problem. So she was just completely unable to be effective in her role. And she was all alone. And she was an

excellent SENCo. But you could see her sort of gradually get completely worn down. And she went off on long term sick leave at the end of last year and hasn't back and it's a real shame. It really is. And as I say, now they've replaced everybody, and the new head is a lot more. He says the right things in terms of inclusion and time will tell whether or not that actually sort of filters through to the, to the practice on the ground. Yeah. And I suppose, thinking about well,

Interviewer 25:58

I suppose How do you see our role as EPs? In this situation? I think it's, you know, I think if, for example, like you said, if the head teacher might be saying all the right things, and maybe there's also, I suppose, the good intentions, but actually, maybe the difficulty of actually implementing them for a number of different barriers, you know, time resources, I think you'd said before as well. How do you suppose yeah, how do you kind of see your role and kind of acting within that system? But also from an outside perspective as well, you know, that luxury of both positions?

Zara 26:34

Oh, yeah. I. So when I was training, someone did say to me, it's really hard to affect change in a secondary school. And I was like, Yeah, whatever. Because I've been a teacher that yeah, it'd be fine. But it is, it literally is so much harder even to get a meeting with a head teacher. Whenever I've had a meeting with the head teacher, they'll, you know, say, the planning meeting at the beginning of the year, they'll come along, like listen for about half an hour,

and then they'll have to dash off somewhere. So I still find it super hard to actually have any meaningful work with senior leaders in secondary schools. And maybe that's just me, maybe there are some other colleagues who are better at it. But I can't claim to actually have truly made any meaningful impact or have any influence on secondary senior leaders yet. When I've delivered like whole school training, and the head has been there, and we've had lovely discussions, and maybe that's something but yeah, I don't know.

Interviewer 27:49
When you say I suppose meaningful changes was what does that look like for you?

Zara 27:58
Well, I know that some of some of the EP colleagues some people in the past I can't even remember who might be mentioning things like they've had conversations with maybe just the SENCo is about, say their behaviour policy. And you know, whether or not I can't remember the specifics, and now it will come to me. So they've had some sort of input around that. And maybe it who knows, it's hard to actually know how far a conversation might influence what happens in a school, I guess. So maybe that is another thing is maybe there's more influence than I'm aware of. But yeah,

Interviewer 29:00
I suppose kind of having I suppose your input having an influence on something in the in the school system.

Zara 29:10

Maybe Yeah, and maybe I'm actually being a bit harsh on myself because thinking about it, I have had various SENCo conversations around things like nurture groups, or the need for a sort of one on one key person to be stable and consistent and chosen and chosen by the child and questioned that kind of things. Yeah.

Interviewer 29:40

Keep going back.

Zara 29:43

there No, I just try to..I don't have the best memory.

Interviewer 29:55

I suppose, you know, I think you know, you'd mentioned there actually have in conversations with, you know, SENCos about, you know, what a child might you know, what child or slash children might need in the session, you know, for example, that kind of stable figure or relationship nurture groups as well. And, you know, I think, thinking more generally about inclusion practices within the schools that you've worked in. This is what kind of what do you think the schools might do as a whole to support pupils that you think has worked well, or that's been have positive changes made, or positive influence doesn't have to be massive, but just even the small things that you've noticed,

actually, that has worked quite well, through either being....could be from your involvement, or actually other things you might have just noticed as well.

Zara 30:45
This, this is the part where I start to struggle with things that don't work well. But that's not how.

Interviewer 30:53
we go into the after, if, if that would be helpful, either.

Zara 30:58
Okay, so maybe actually stuff, like zones of regulation is a start, you know, that does start the conversation around emotional states and how we react and respond. And so maybe that's like a starting point, as some schools are getting better. Having a conversation rather than jumping straight to penalizing or sanctioning children or sending them out. So there's that zones regulation, I guess, the whole pastoral mentor role, that is helpful, for sure. Although I often feel that there could be better collaboration between any sort of mentor figure and the staff body. Some, yes, some schools do have a nurture group, but I, I can't speak for the quality of what they're doing, actually, because I, the current school doesn't, thinking back to the past runs it, I think it was running for a while, and then it stopped. So I'm not sure about that.

Interviewer 32:22

No, it's just made me think a little bit about actually, you know, building on some of the kind of the starts actually, and then, you know, for example, you mentioned like the pastoral role, and actually, they can be really helpful, but actually, possibly even better if there is more kind of cohesion, you know, cohesion and stuff, and other sort of collaborative involvement from other professional or other professionals or staff as well. And I suppose, you know, you know, makes you wonder about things like, you know, policies that I outlined inclusive practice or behaviour and things like that. And I suppose, have you, in your experience come across things like that, that have been very helpful or actually hindering that role, or that kind of involvement.

Zara 33:16

I've put it this way, I've never come across a policy that I thought was amazingly good. I've, if anything, I've come across policies, or practices that are more kind of old school punitive, you know, behaviour point systems. You know, the worst is the internal exclusion rooms, they're like bins, you know, there's literally bins for children. And they're in every single secondary school that I can ever think of having gone in. And it's, you know, it's just the equivalent of prison. Basically, it doesn't, doesn't help it just get some out of the way. And you Yeah, I mean, I guess within those spaces, you do get some very skilled staff that are great at connecting with the children. And I guess, when you do have the skilled staff in those spaces, you can form positive relationships. I suppose I'm not in there enough to be confident that that's happening on a regular enough basis to feel like yeah, if a kid went in there, that's gonna help and then they'll come back and reintegrate into school

with a feeling more supported. I'm sort of I don't know enough about it actually, to advocate that as a practice.

Interviewer 34:39

And I Yeah, and I suppose it's something about you know, I suppose you're the limitations of your role not being able to be as involved as well, because actually, it's something about the EP role, I think, you know, I suppose from my experience as well and possibly your experience It's just kind of dipping in and out, you know, couple of times a term depending on how much time they buy in. Yeah, and I Yeah. So it's kind of just coming in at maybe quite critical parts, rather than kind of watching it consistently happen.

Zara 35:17

Definitely try to.

Interviewer 35:21

And I suppose it makes me think about kind of other practices, you know, that may be very unhelpful. And I think you have alluded to some of those practices, you know, things but kind of the more punitive responses, the more responding to kind of the sanctions, you know, the kind of that sanction first response rather than that, understanding and empathizing, perhaps, what might be happening for that child or understanding what the behaviour might be telling them? And so is there any kind of other unhelpful practices that you might think are happening in the school and actually, that even to his two

parts, you know, unhelpful practices that might be happening? And maybe why you think they might be happening?

Zara 36:04

Yeah. I'm aware of some people's getting behaviour sanctions for stuff like not completing their homework. And that's fairly short sighted, you know, because there could be a whole number of reasons, including Sen, why child isn't doing the homework. Oh, my goodness in the school. I'm in currently the one with the whole staff change. I haven't ever seen any differentiation. None. Like, none. And maybe it's happening in some lessons, but I just haven't seen it. And to me, that's like step one of inclusion. It's like such a. Yeah, that really should be happening. But that school, to be fair, that that's an exception, that's a school that's had real, you know, like national news level difficulties. But yeah, differentiation could happen more. Consistently, but you know, what all of this, like, it's all very well, I've sort of come up with it, they should be doing this. And that, and that. I'm sure teachers would if they had the time, like this is, what we're seeing is the result of a resource squeeze. It's not a lack of willingness on the part of teachers, and I really don't mean to criticize them in that regard. unhelpful practices. So yeah, that's one. Another one is just sending kids out the room. That sort of rejection, as a form of punishment isn't going to help. That said, in the school I worked in, we weren't allowed to send kids out the room at all. Caused its own problems. Yeah, stuff like, you know, writing kids names on a board, if they're not listening. And anything that's kind of excluding shaming, rejecting that kind of practice, which is all very sort of Victorian, I guess. You still see a lot of that, because that's how most of us

were taught. But the kids who are struggling, you know, for the sort of trauma based emotional reasons is just going to exacerbate the difficulty.

Interviewer 38:45

It's something you said there actually, I think about our experiences and how they influence the way that we then practice, or we kind of implement things are willing to implement it or not even willing to implement things, but you know, perhaps kind of continuing the cycle and,

Zara 39:06

yes, okay, so yes, and maybe I don't know, if you're leading me to here, but the current Tory government policy on like, let's be more old school, in behaviour practices, and the curriculum is not helpful. at all, you know, let's bring back higher standards and all that sort of blindness to I can't remember what the latest announcement was, but what was it All kids should do maths until 18 or something? Just that sort of sense of because I did it in my public school. Everyone should do it. It just, I'm sure. Yeah, I don't know. Just that lack of understanding of different people. doesn't need some circumstances and wishes like? Yeah.

Interviewer 40:09

Yeah, and I suppose it's made me think about, you know, then I suppose the opposite of that, you know, I suppose when there is that space created on multiple different levels, you know, from societal level from like a school level, you know, across thing where that is prioritized, and I suppose that's possibly

where you're seeing. Yeah, this was different practice or kind of willingness to try different practices. I'm wondering if you've had that experience? Or? Yeah, your thoughts on that.

Zara 40:40

So you lost me a bit, there were what's prioritized.

Interviewer 40:43

So I suppose it makes me think about them the opposite, you know, because that's obviously coming from, you know, a government, you know, government level, a society level approach, you know, that kind of thinking about, you know, the highest, you know, they've prioritized higher standards, they prioritize maths, etc, etc. And I suppose then that perhaps leaves less room on a school level, or, you know, a federation of whatever the school sits in, to do the opposite. Or to think a little bit differently. I'm wondering what your thoughts are, or that.

Zara 41:20

Yeah, and I guess, yeah, I certainly think that is the case. And it's making me think back to that specialists language college, because they're a special school, some of that pressure wasn't on them. And so you did see the lovely practice of, you're going to treat you like people and actually listen to you and understand you and know you. Yeah, I don't know if that answers your question. But

Interviewer 41:46

no, no, it does, because I think actually makes you think about, you know, you'd said earlier, you know, it's not necessarily teacher's fault, that they're not doing all these wonderful things, or they can't be as inclusive in their practices we would like or even they would like, you know, it's thinking about what their capacity is, based on all these different pressures. And I think, you know, I suppose it's like, it's acknowledging the different pressures that they may be under, which can feel quite a lot, actually, when you think about it at this current time?

Zara 42:24

Absolutely. When I was teaching, we used to say that we've got two different jobs. One is to do what the senior leadership team require us to do. And the other is to actually teach the children. And it was like, it didn't feel like the two were aligned. And I suppose the more that, you know, education agendas are centralized, the less relevant they're going to be to a higher number of schools that are known. Hmm.

Interviewer 42:57

That's a good point. And I think about the different hats that teachers have to wear in that position. You know, I suppose the various sort of admin task focused or, you know, yeah, yeah, the kind of the different tasks set by SLT, and where they get come from, but then actually, I suppose the core values of the job that maybe they went into?

Zara 43:19

Yeah, yeah. Definitely.

Interviewer 43:24

No, thank you. That's really, that's really, really, it was really interesting to kind of reflect on, I suppose, because also, you're coming in with a, having previously won a different hat, although that hat still might be there, because it probably still influences the work that you do. Because I think, you know, as coming into this role, like I said, we bring a lot of our own experiences, and that can help us look at things in a different lens, you know, some of our colleagues and things like that.

Zara 43:54

So just this is slightly off on a tangent, but just thinking about that, this is hardly groundbreaking. But one thing I do in my practice nowadays, is, rather than at the end of it, sort of, if I write a report on a kid, I'll try and do like a one page digestible summary. And just be like, can you send it to all the teachers, because teachers don't have time to like, go and look up the kids file, and they should, but they don't like go and read all the reports on your kid. And I do try and like even if it's actually a paragraph, I do try and sort of give them a short takeaway of you know, this helps don't do this. This is their, this is where they're coming from kind of thing. Just trying to be a bit mindful of the fact that they've got so much on their plate.

Interviewer 44:48

And I think it's, I think it's, again, it's acknowledging staff capacity, you know, they obviously hold a role or role and responsibility, but I suppose how do we use our role to lighten that plate and lighten that load a little bit? Yeah. No, that's, that's actually a really nice thing to do. It's making me think about my own practice. That's a really nice… was a nice takeaway point, because I suppose you've had that experience where you possibly have worked with other professionals, maybe with some of the children you worked with as a teacher. But bringing that into your role now as well. Yeah. Thank you. And I say, just kind of kind of tying things together. You know, is there anything kind of else that you that you know, that we haven't spoken about in relation to this that you think would be helpful to add or actually, you want us to expand on or even any questions?

Zara 45:52

Just looking at the list of different schools? I've worked in eight?

Interviewer 46:00

Well, there's quite a few.

Zara 46:01

Yeah. I can't think of anything else. And actually

Interviewer 46:10

Quite a bit, I think actually in the….

Zara 46:13

Yeah, okay. Yeah, no, I'm, I'm done.

Interviewer 46:19

No, no, sorry. I did that didn't mean for you to be like, you're done.

Zara 46:23

No, it's all good. Okay. Anything else?

Interviewer 46:27

No. But that's been really helpful. I think, actually, it was it was, it was kind of it was quite helpful to think about, you know, the things that have worked well, but also things that haven't worked well. And why and actually what they might look like, yes, it's kind of flipping out on the other side, like how they could be helpful and what we could do to support that as well. So it was it was quite a helpful conversation. And lots of… lots to think about. Thank you.

Zara 46:53

Cool. Well, best of luck, transcribing it all.

Interviewer 46:56

That will be the next fun part. But I really appreciate it. And I also have like a debrief sheet as well. I just like email, as you know, you have to. So I'll just email that to you as well. But thank you so much for this. I really appreciate it. So pleasure.

Zara 47:15

Yeah, good luck with it all.

Interviewer 47:17

Thank you. And actually, sorry, I had one last question. So sorry, you brought it up. And how did you find doing this?

Zara 47:24

What this conversation? Yep. Yeah, nice. Yeah, I suppose I didn't think I had many things to say at the start of the conversation. But as we got into it, yeah. You sort of brought out thoughts that were there already. But yeah, as I feel I suppose at times it is sometimes thinking about the state of secondary education is a bit sad and frustrating. So there's that feeling but I guess even sad that I'm sort of resigned to it. Yeah. Thank you.

Interviewer 48:11

Sorry to have made you feel like but no, it's always I just, I just, it's just kind of my curiosity, kind of just asking everyone at the end how they found that space. You know, just kind of getting different people's take on it. Yeah.

Zara 48:29

That's a good interview. Yes.

Interviewer 48:32

667 Oh, thank you. I'm not sure about that. Thank you anyway, and but I just stopped…

Appendix P: Transcript of Niamh

Including Timestamps

Interviewer 00:02

So is it okay, if you share what that role looks like?

Niamh 00:39

Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant

Interviewer 02:54

thank you. And so actually, you hold quite a different number of roles that kind of ball relate sort of to this, which is a, which is quite interesting, I'd say they probably lend their experiences, from each probably, lend to the other roles, and lots of different ways as well. Thank you. And if you don't mind, I'd quite like to start off, you know, thinking about what actually drew what draws people to the role of the EP, because I think there's a lot that we bring of ourselves and our values and our experiences to the work that we do. And actually that shapes, I suppose how we carry out that work. So if you if you don't mind sharing, for some people, it's very personal. You know, what drew you to the role, but if you also don't want to share, that's completely okay. So

Niamh 03:36

Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant

Interviewer 06:25

Oh, well, thank you. And I think it's, you know, so thank you for also sharing, this was your, the kind of the individual parts of the journey that's on all built up to where you are now. **Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant**

Niamh 06:59

I think most people come to being an EP, perhaps because they fell out of love with teaching. Or, quite frankly, they weren't that great it or found it tricky. **Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant**

I miss being part of the school community as well, I really enjoyed being part of the school community. And I missed the regular and consistent contacts and relationships that you can build with the kids. **Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant**

Interviewer 09:09

I really liked that. And actually, I kind of want to hold on to that answer, because I think I might sort of draw on it a bit later, when I have some questions that make me think about what we've just said. And I suppose kind of just moving on, and then we'll move backwards again. And would you I suppose Tell me about a time where, you know, if you I suppose you have a maybe a young person in mind that you might have, it might have been at risk of exclusion, you might have been involved, I suppose in your capacity as an EP or kind of as you were training. And, you know, if you have someone in mind, you know, could you kind of share maybe how you got involved in the first place and kind of a little bit of context about maybe why they're at risk of

exclusion, and then maybe we can then explore your role but then also, I suppose the school's role and maybe what you saw kind of in terms of good practice that actually supported there so sort of that dual coming together of Yeah, two different systems.

Niamh 10:02

So I don't have one particular child in mind, I have a group of children in mind. And when I was at the school up, I, because we had quite a lot of hours. **Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant**
So I had a really good context of the kind of children and the families and the kind of challenges and things and the strengths that we were facing. So largely, probably because of my personality, or I just sort of balls my way in. And whenever I was in on a visit, in the, in the beginning days, I was chatting people up, left, right and centre, and trying to build relationships with the staff as much as I could. And that meant that they, they kind of were like, oh, okay, we they grew to trust me quite quickly. And we grew to having quite lots of informal discussions very quickly. So that sort of paved the way for us to have some discussions about actually these kids are, are at risk of exclusion, because part of what you have to do to as an EP, is really market yourself, I believe, really strongly that we are as a profession, shit, at marketing ourselves, were not very good at all. And people don't know what we do. And even a lot of the time, we are not that clear about what we do sometimes. So I was very conscious about saying, yes, fine, you know, I can see individual children or whatever, and work in secondary school is messy anyway, isn't it? So, you know, we're pushing for consultations and roundtable meetings and

getting the right people in the room. But also, part of the other thing I can do is give you some supervision to think about what we can do about this, can we speak to the head of year, the children that were thinking might be a bit lively, might be a bit of risk of exclusion. And I was very deliberately clear about the fact that that's another thing that I can provide for the school. So we identified a group of kids that we felt would benefit from an intervention. And I designed and ran cognitive behavioural boxing, which was basically just think and feel good, that we had some boxing gloves and pads, that's literally all it is, honestly, it's not hard to do. And we ran that for some children that were at risk of exclusion, or kind of, we're a bit spicy. And I said, was stipulated that different members of staff and the school had to join us every week. And part of what I was doing was teaching psychoeducation tools, not just to the kids, but also to the adult that I made, be in the room and be involved. And that was quite helpful at kind of rewriting some of the narratives that the kids were holding about themselves, and that the staff were holding about them. And it really improved their relationships, and their ability to kind of notice when they were getting a bit pissed off and doing something about it, that all of those children are still here, a year and a half later. And they, you know, majority of them were at risk of exclusion for various different reasons. And I now teach some of them, which is quite Ne. That's really lucky to be able to do that. But that is kind of a real example, I think of some good inclusive practices that we had. And, but it's, it's all the other stuff that goes around the edges of it, it isn't just the intervention. It's stipulating that there's people from the school in the room, it is being really clear, to feedback things that happened to the right people in the building, so then you need to know who the right people in the

building are, to be able to feedback these things. And you need to be balanced about actually, I'm feeding back positives, and some things that they've said that a bit concerning are a bit worrying. But you're almost a bit... that dialogue. Yeah, I have another example in my head, but maybe we'll talk about that a bit more on some of your other questions.

Interviewer 14:05

No, but that that's, that's a really nice example, I think to start off with and actually, you know, kind of touching on the point of, you know, your involvement, I suppose, what you're bringing to the role, you know, obviously, that psycho education and those sorts of skills, but actually, I suppose, facilitating relationships within the school as well, which I think, you know, is massively important, you know, from what we know, from all of our psychology, you know, that kind of relational aspect. And I suppose, I'm really interested in what the school because obviously, you were bringing all that but I suppose, how did the school facilitate you bringing that and it was, you know, even things like allowing teachers or staff out of classes or spaces to actually come to do that, and I suppose was that conversation you had with specific people or yeah.

Niamh 14:54

Yeah, so I know people always say that in a secondary school, the SENCo should be on the leadership team. And I do understand that, and I agree, almost completely. **Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant**, I see my SENCo, I see what she's doing. And I think if she was

on the leadership team, she would be covering lunch duties and break duties left, right and centre and have to cover lessons much more than she does. And then there would be less opportunity for her to do the work that that that we know we need her to be doing. So but then, because she's not on the leadership team, she doesn't have the same influence, for example. So the school, the SENCo, she was just really open. Right from the start. She really, she took on board kind of my stance on things. **Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant** And that allowed us to build rapport and trust and respect quite quickly. And she, she was really open to the conversations and ideas that we had. And just as I was saying, this is a collaborative process. We're working together, she held that same idea of values about what we were doing together. So we were able to kind of construct it together. Of course, a lot of the time, it was me saying, right, let's send that email right now. We just do it now, shall we? Because then it's done. What kids or kids do we think just get a little list now, shall we... not... Could you get me a list is I think we did that together now. Because they're so busy. And I believe that so strongly now I'm teaching again, and I will say this to the cows come home. EPs do not understand how fast paced life is in a school. And I thought I did and honestly, up until September, I thought, of course I know. I have a secondary school teacher. I'm going back to it. I know what it's like, I was fucking wrong. It is such a fast pace of life. That it's so hard to kind of get stuff done in a weird way. That it was a lot of me saying why don't we just email the head of year now? Where are they? Let me get let me get you to stay here. Don't do anything ..make tea. I'll go and get them. Right. You're coming with me? Because we're going to spend five minutes talking about which kids are

coming to come here boxing. Okay, cool. Fine. Nice. John, who's contacting home? No, we're not going to ring. That's ridiculous. Ringing is taking ages. We're gonna do a letter. We'll do the letter. Now. Let's do the letter together. Okay, great. Who's going to send the letter out? Right? The admin is going to send the letter, we send that to a straightaway, you're going to send it out to date. Okay, cool. So all got done in the moment. And that was really good. And then, in terms of staff that came to the intervention, we thought very carefully, so we knew we wanted the head of year to come we wanted the learning mentor to come, member of SLT to come. And then we wanted some LSAS that were typically working with those children. I would love to have had the teachers but I'm never gonna get them. So we had to be pragmatic about what we were doing. And we timetabled it right? Who's coming where of those six people across the successions whose diaries least flexible? We'll go to them first. Ring them now? What date it is, can you do it this time? Okay. You're booked in for this? Put it in your diary now. Okay. Thanks, then who? Who needs to be next? Because they're a little bit less flexible? Okay, those two, where are they you there come here? What date of this can you do? So it was a lot of that much more so than I would need to do. And that's quite different to the work that we might do in a primary school, because kind of our nice primary school visits. So when the school organizes it will for us. And then we don't have to do anything. So it was more of that, that needed to happen to be able to make that happen. Even right, the way down to where's the boxing stuff. I was like, I'll go and speak to PE department. PE. Have you got some boxing stuff? How much have you got? Where is it? Okay, great. Where am I going to make it live in the school. I organized the room and stuff.

And you know, there were problems with that sometimes the room was busy with demand somewhere else, whatever. But I think it was taking a bit more control of it. But then letting me do that. And pinning people down to be like, right, this is we're going to do this now. That was the thing that made it work.

Interviewer 19:17

That's really helpful, because it's kind of makes me from what I'm hearing. It's sort of make me think about I suppose your role in two capacities, I suppose to be I mean, to get to know that system very well. Because obviously, then you need to know Who holds responsibility for what and where, but then also actually acting as that, you know, I suppose lightening their mental load quite a bit actually. Because I think that's from what we do know about secondary schools actually, that mental load that they have, you know, they're just bogged down all day, every day, come home time, they actually have no energy to do any of the things maybe that they thought they were going to do. And obviously then we see burnout and lots of things like that. So I suppose you know, from what I'm hearing for you, you know, that was quite a massive part of your role was actually just to lift that mental load from them,

Niamh 20:03

it never would have got done otherwise. And we ran it twice, two lots of eight weeks, with different sets of kids, different heads of years, obviously aging with. And, and it was different. But also, we learned a lot from the first time we were like, okay, these are the kinds of kids that this is going to benefit from. And they were we were all open to having those kind of reflective discussions

afterwards about what do we see? What did we notice? Who got the most out of it? And why, and then replicated that the next time we run in?

Interviewer 20:39

And so I suppose so when, when your involvement was finished, I suppose for that specific intervention. What was what did the school take from it? And, you know, apart? You know, obviously, you'd mentioned about staff being there, and, and kind of understanding the techniques and maybe what, you know, getting to know the children a little bit better. And that relationship, I suppose, you know, kind of obviously, you're only limited and how much time that you can spend with the staff. So, yeah, really just interested in what then they took from it. And then how did they sort of carry that forward, because obviously, those children are still there, which is amazing.

Niamh 21:12

I think there's, there's two things. Firstly, the staff that were in the sessions, obviously, they weren't in for every session, but I was really conscious about giving them they got a bit of a nugget that lives in their pocket. That's why I always used to say to them, this is your takeaway for this, this is what you can be saying, and I'd get them to rehearse it and say it back to me, whatever, you know, even if it's like hand brain model, or something like that, something was quite easy. And I've heard them and seen them using that with the children, all sorts of children as well, not just those from that intervention. Yeah, so that's been very good. **Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant** I feel they need unit one- cognitive behavioural boxing. And then, so we're kind

of providing that psychoeducation, more holistically across the school. *Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant* But what I have done is training, lots of training for staff and some of those ideas, the things that I and that the SENCo picked up, people would taken from the sessions, the things that people were using a lot. So things about kind of building attuned relationships, and naming and noticing sincere praise, and some of those psychoeducation tools. That's what we had picked up that people had taken from those sessions, the staff and the kids. So then, this year, we are provided training for that staff. And that's looked quite different depending on what staff is. So for LSAs, I went to them. Our team meeting, we did 15 minutes on attunement, they set themselves a target, they had to go and do something that was about attunement with a child in the next week, come back and review it in the next session, what went well, why did it go? Well, people shared best practice. And it's a bit of a standing item on our weekly meeting list in our department. *Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant* Or I did training for all of the staff in January, on similar. *Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant*. So that's kind of what we've done with, we have tried to take the bits from the intervention that people have naturally taken, and then going okay, how can we dish that? That seems to be the easy bits that people have understood well, or if people have taken it, it means that it makes sense. So how can we get that out to more people across our school community? *Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant*

Interviewer 23:55

Hmm, that's really interesting. And it's sort of making me I suppose, I'm quite curious to, you know, who I suppose Who do you sort of negotiate that with, I suppose, that makes me think about the system, allowing for this to happen really, and actually seemed very encouraging of, you know, this seems to be a priority. You know, this is what we want. You know, we want LSAS think about attunement, but you know, we're allowing for this to happen and it's going to be standing items on our on our you know, our meetings things like that. And I suppose yeah, what sense do you make of the system allowing for that, you know, I suppose who have you had conversations with that have helped encourage that and I suppose develop it.

Niamh 24:39

The SENCo really, the saying goes… a really experienced teacher she's been so it's for like, years, years and years. And that means, that kind of, she's not a new SENCo that might be a bit nervous of saying things on SLT…would it be okay if we do some training. She said, leadership team have asked us to do some training in January about ehcps. And I said, well, we'll be doing it about attuned relationships. And she said, yeah, fine. So kind of we do have quite a lot of free rein here. In that sense, partly because I suspect, I delivered some insert training when I was the school up a couple of years ago, and teaching and learning. And I spent a lot of time and effort on that training. And it was very well received. And because it's to the entire school, that, then you're because, yes, I'm delivering training about teaching and learning. But I'm also saying to people, work with me, I'll help you. You can collaborate with me, absolutely, I can make a difference to you. I can make things easy for

you. I can make I can make things better for you and the kids. So you're sort of selling yourself when you're delivering that training to the whole school the first time. And I think I've done that. All right. So then people are much more likely then to say, you know, when the SENCo says, X wants to do come to do cognitive behavioural boxing, like, yeah, fine, because they've kind of already got that kind of trust and faith. And I suppose a bit of respect and understanding about what we do. So I think that's a that is a big part of it, that people very much are like, Yeah, we know her she's alright, she kind of knows what she's talking about. We've seen that things have helped. So we've done things like, named and noticed. And the same goes, you know, if she says to me, oh, so and so's done really? Well, you know, they were at boxing, and I'm like, okay, cool, can you make sure that you say that and briefing to everybody, because then we're getting that message out, that things have changed for that kid. But then also the people that are higher up in the in the system are hearing the impact of the work that we're doing. And then they're more likely to kind of agree when I say, we're going to put a picture of X, in front of all the teachers and talk about kind of negative narratives, even though the training is on ehcps. So it's, I think it's all of that it's largely it's the SENCo, though, being really opened up for taking on board the ideas and the advice. And I think there are lots of reasons why she is open and on board.

Interviewer 27:12

And I think, you know, I think it's… I suppose, like you said at the beginning, obviously you put work into build that trust and that kind of rapport. And actually, I suppose that facilitates, I suppose, have been quite open minded

and trusting that, you know, an outside I suppose you know, you're at that point, an outside agency or an outside professional, and I suppose that willingness to trust professionals, and it makes me wonder about kind of other professionals involved. And, you know, obviously now being in the school, is there, I suppose, is there that same kind of relationship with other professionals? Or do you kind of have that sort of collaborative role with other professionals as an EP, **Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant**?

Niamh 27:58

is interesting, because I just was thinking about, actually, it was in the I'd already been in the school up for a year before cognitive behavioural boxing, maybe a year and a bit before I said, what about this, and it's something I've been thinking about for a while, but I knew I needed to get more by and people needed to trust me. And before I was able to do that, I think as a school, we're very open to professionals, and other people coming in. Look, I would be lying if I said that there isn't an undercurrent of all of us going, you know what it's like, you don't actually know what it's like. You're suggesting stuff, at least as long as your arm and you have no idea what it's like, because I we can't do it. We can't do half the stuff that you're asking us to do. And I didn't take that stance as an EP very clear. **Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant** Sometimes I'm a bit too sympathetic. And sometimes I don't always push people to do the best children do a little bit should go that extra bit, because I'm quite sympathetic about how busy things are. And there's light and dark to that. But I'm very clear about okay, what are

actually the three things that we can actually do, I'm not going to give you 10 things that you need to go out and do because you're not going to do it. Can we get two or three things that feel really manageable? Can we really drill down on what exactly is it about those two or three things that we're going to do? What will it look like? How will we know it's been done? What when we will review it, what will we hope to see when we do those things, and I'm quite specific about that. And people had seen a year of me doing that, you know, with a huge amount of EP time doing that. So I think people were more up for being open and working with me as a school up. Maybe compared to some of the other professionals that we have come in who don't practice like that. for lots of reasons, you know, care really, really deeply about the children and feel that you know if we could just get these eight things going If this kid then things could be really better for them. And I don't disagree with that. But pragmatically, I can't do those eight things. **Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant**Like, the kid doesn't get what they need, the teacher doesn't feel great about it. And nothing moves forward. So that's a bit of a barrier. In terms of working with other professionals, the great professionals that that I see people working with other people that are a bit more pragmatic about what they're saying and stuff. And the people that kind of appreciate the complexities of what's going on. We've had lots of discussions about kind of people saying, like, have to be careful, because it needs to be anonymous, but kind of professionals saying things to us, that I completely agree with. But don't fit in the context of us being in a small community. So 100%, if I could just cocoon this young person, and make it all right for them and do all of these beautiful, lovely things, I would, but they're

going to have to then face quite a lot of conflict from their peers, because we're treating them very differently. And that in itself causes problems. And sometimes other professionals don't always think about that side of things, particularly when we've got kids that are risk of exclusion, that you have to think about the whole picture. And understand we need to put the child in the middle of it, but sometimes other professionals, I feel like they, they forget that there is a whole picture, whereas us as EPs were quite good at hanging on to the whole picture. And in all the levels of the system.

Interviewer 31:48

And that's, that's really, I think that's a really interesting point I think, I think even in my myself my own role, you know, you do go in because you don't have that day to day experience of what the school is look like on although you didn't know, you know, you'd like this is best practice. Is it feasible practice. And always, and I suppose it makes me think about staff capacity to carry out, you know, some of this best practice, because obviously, you know, quite a lot of staff, we obviously, you know, always have that perception that they're doing good enough. And a lot of, you know, a lot of cases sometimes, maybe not. And there's lots of reasons for that. And I suppose it makes me wonder about the school, I suppose the school's ethos, or kind of their vision or their priorities around things like academics or pastoral care. And yeah, I just would be interested in your experience of, you know, I suppose the school, for example, the school that you were giving all this exam, or all these examples of, you know, what was their vision? What is their party? And how is

that reflected to staff? And how does that maybe help with, you know, yeah, supporting inclusion? If that makes sense.

Niamh 33:01

I think I would have found it much harder to answer that question. I would have had an answer, but I would find it harder before I was working. So when you sit in the September inset, the vision is communicated very clearly. And sometimes when I sat in September inset this year, I thought, gosh, you know, we should be sat here, as EPs, you know, that would be something that I would want to do in my secondary schools, I would want to sit in September inset and hear what the what the heads vision is for this school. Because you were part of that as the school EP. And particularly when you've got a lot of time, and I was sort of kicking myself a bit sat there this year, like one fuck have I not sat in this shouldn't be sat here before. And we're just it's like half an hour session an hour session. And that should have been something that I would have done because I would have understood the system a bit better. And being able to work within it, I think a bit better as the EP, the school. The school's vision is aiming for a balance between it is academic. We can't hide or shy away from the fact that it's academic. So I'm having lots of conversations about curriculum choices for children, but we're directed from the DfE they have to take a set amount. It's all to do with the workplace. We can't have an empty bucket blah, blah, blah, like it pulls a score that is really tricky, and doesn't come just from us. It comes from the DfE. So it is academic**Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant**And they are a school that pushes hard on their pastoral side we have a SEMH hub,

that we fund out the school's budget. That is not a provision. It's just a space within our school. In there is highly skilled and trained members of staff to provide kind of wellbeing and coaching and mentoring support for children that are dysregulated have emotional social needs. So there is definitely a focus on the whole child. And that's part of the ethos and vision of the school. And that's made it easier for us to be doing some of the good practice work that we know works.

Interviewer 35:15

Do you think there's a lot of staff buy into that vision? And if you think there is, I suppose what maybe facilitates that kind of stuff by and kind of hold up that vision of the child and kind of that responsibility for, you know, that kind of idea that every teacher is a teacher of Sen, and every teacher kind of has responsibility for this. And, yeah, if it's there…

Niamh 35:37

…because that's something that we're really trying in our department is something the inset that we'd gave in January was every teacher is teacher of Sen, I stood up in front of the staff, but I told them all that basically, it's their legal fucking responsibility. So you have to do it. But I think, again, now being in the school, I thought I knew the answer to some of these questions. But now that I'm here, I'm... I understand much better. So I think there is buy in from staff, the head is superb. And her vision is crystal clear. Right, the way down to the fact that is marketed across the school incredibly well. You know, the two mottos and school I want to learn and do the right thing. And they are

the use of the school they are I want to learn, which is kind of one could argue that's academic, and do the right thing. One could argue that that's kind of not, there is about holistic view. Obviously, there are people here, who maybe don't get it in the way that we might like to get it. But I think a clear vision is the way and that vision is communicated very well. And very consistently. And we have a whole host of systems that allow us to live within that vision, basically. So one thing, I had a couple of conversations with the head of year, that resulted in literally a couple of corridor conversations that resulted in her changing and updating our internal exclusion centre practices. So we now have the kids fill in a reflective script, when reflective sheet when they come, that's really good, the kids helped make it brilliant, it is absolutely fantastic. And a huge example of excellent good inclusive practices that really support reflection, that can stay until four to give staff the time to go and repair their relationship and have a restorative conversations mandatory if you send a child to the internal exclusion centre, you must go and have a reflective conversation same day to repair your relationship because we don't want children going home carrying that. And we don't want staff going out and carrying that. So that's an example of a system that is absolutely promoting inclusion, like something so simple as well, let's just keep the children to four, yes, it's crap, yes, they're there longer. But you're giving staff time to get down there and have that restorative conversation and repair relationships. And we've provided scripts for that for people who need it. And the reflective sheet that the kids do is part of that. And then that, you know, their voices heard, there's a space for them to write kind of how they think, what they thought at the time, what they think now how they felt at the time how they felt now. And

we have to kind of use that sheet to scaffold the discussions because we know that people want to feel listened to and heard. And like they feel connected and belonging. So that's a huge example of some really great practice that is promoting inclusion. Because typically, if you don't have that you could get out of your lesson. You've lost them that. Yeah. And then that, then that's it. So that's a really good. And that just came to the back of a conversation had in the corridor a couple of times.

Interviewer 38:59

Yeah, they're going interested. Now, that's, you know, that's, I suppose that's really interesting thinking about the systems that facilitate that as well. And it makes me wonder, is there any other systems that you have come across in the school or actually in other schools as well in other secondary schools that you think actually that can really facilitate? You know that stuff by into visions and inclusive practice and, yeah, that are helpful in your opinion?

Niamh 39:24

I think**Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant**. Yeah. I feel very strongly that they're an under resourced, yet readily available means to Communicate your vision 100% You can be Communicate your vision in school, I'm doing that you know what I'm talking to my tutor group. Communicating very clearly, because also in Communicating to the kid, you're, you're telling yourself again, you're reminding yourself what is the vision for this? Why am I here? But I also think, you know, in form time, absolutely. There's space for you to be doing psychoeducation there's

absolutely space for you to be teaching the kids about principles of attunement and attuned relationships. There's absolutely space for us to be teaching and scaffolding thoughts, feelings, body sensations, emotions, behaviour, you know, we can absolutely tie that together. It's a real space for us to provide some of that stuff that helps us understand how we tick, we can absolutely teach flipping a lid, like that should just be mandatory. So I think that that is, schools where that's done. You can see that it when it's done, well, you can see the impact for you. **Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant**there's whole fucking host of things that helpful in hindrance in terms of forms and practices. So you'd have to get those things, right. Like you'd have to get the right balance on the slides of there's enough information if you're unsure as a teacher delivering it. But you've got a bit of scope about kind of bit of freedom and creativity and the delivery. I think that's a really good example of inclusive practices. **Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant** and I was in charge of the kids attendance, so I'd get a spreadsheet every half term, and it would someone in admin would make this spreadsheet and it would give me the kids data attainment, behaviour, I could see their behaviour all the time, I got a notification every day with my tutor groups behaviour, and attendance. And then I had a little bit of time built in my week, to go and chase that stuff up. And that was a really, because then you're catching kids really early. And that's a really good example I think of, of kind of promoting exclude inclusion and lessening exclusion. **Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant** form tutors wanting to have time in their week to have one to one conversations with the kids and build that relationship, that key adult that stood in front of the

kids owning the fact that they're the kids form tutor, and anchoring that kid giving advocating for that kid within the system can be really powerful. I think in terms of stopping a kid being excluded. Often you'll see that kids who are on the risk of exclusion are kids who kind of don't have anyone championing them in the system.

Interviewer 42:11

So I suppose that was so that was really built in, you know, you are going to be that champion, you are going to be the advocate. And this is your responsibility, actually, in a way. And do you think, I suppose, is that practice that you, you know, it's probably all in your thesis that you come across, often in secondary schools?

Niamh 42:33

Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant, people were characterizing the kind of ideal form, tutor. And as close to that as you could get, that's what people were saying that they were doing, kind of really advocating for the children, it was relational, new is a slightly different relationship to the teaching role. But then I'm thinking about, I did some work when I was the EP here with a lad who we thought we might have to exclude. We did kind of eight sessions, sort of therapeutic style containing cells for walk around the grounds. And it became him sort of giving me things that he wanted me to feed back to the wider system, various different things, so things at the time, he was being escorted to his lessons, and actually got to a

point where he didn't need it anymore. But he didn't feel like he could share that with anybody.

Niamh 43:25

So he kind of told me, and then we talked about what would you like to share? Who would you like to share it with, and I went and did that. And then came back to him as like, I've done that, because that was about rebuilding his trust in adults as well. But I think I have the time as the EP to be able to do that. I wouldn't do that now with my secondary school. Because I don't have the same amount of EP hours in my secondary school now on the EP, and so it's all like dark, isn't it? Yeah, but that was being that kind of advocate was really important for him. And he still it, you know, year and a half later.

Interviewer 44:00

That's amazing. And it makes me kind of think about I suppose the child's position that and all this and where their voices and all this and I think you'd mentioned earlier that you know, there was a reflective sheet developed with the input of the children that are actually going to fill it out. And it makes me think about some of the practices that maybe have involved that voice of the children that you have, if you've ever come across other things as well that you find very helpful or actually have facilitated the school's ability to be very inclusive and promoting that inclusion.

Niamh 44:36

I did I once worked in a school where the student voice group was superb. And they came up with a list of kind of do's and don'ts for teachers their parents evening and one of the kids graphics it and it was mandatory. All staff had it on their desk, parents evening. It was stuff like you know, don't ask me how do you think I'm doing? **Response redacted to protect confidentiality of participant**

Niamh 45:12

.....okay, yeah, so every member of staff had to have that on their desk when they were doing parents evening. It was really good, like really helpful. And, and the kids felt even the kids who didn't make it. They saw it when they went to parents evening, and they saw that it'd be made by their peers. And there's something really kind of empowering about that, that actually, we do have a voice. And it can make a real difference. Because look, we're not being asked how well are you doing? Because they're not allowed, but the sheet says. So that was a really good example of some absolutely.

Interviewer 45:50

And it makes me think, actually, I guess was who put together that voice of or that kind of student voice group. And, yeah, it…

Niamh 45:56

It was someone that had time for it. And I took it seriously. I mean, I'll be honest, I'm perhaps a little bit more traditional, in my view. So I don't believe

that we should be doing everything that the children say their kids, and we're adults. And it's important that we remember that. And sometimes people will forget that sometimes. But that doesn't change the fact that everyone wants to feel listened to and heard. So like here at the moment, we've got a one way system that the kids move through on the building, the kids hate it. Student Voices saying, cand we try it a week without it? And I suspect the head will say yes, even though it will be a shambles. But because there's something about the kids, this, we're really pissed off about this, we hope this one way system. They don't have a construct of, well, how should we get 1500 people to move around the building without one, it's going to be car crash, it's for safety, but a little trial of it, then they feel like they've been listened to they feel like they've been heard we feel like we're kind of belong here that we've got a bit of purpose if people do value me here...that... And then oh, this is a shambles. Okay, we're going to go back to the longest system that I suspect that will be why head might say yes, we'll give it a try. I'm saying we've just implemented that a bit of a trial over lunch queuing system, different people, different groups, queuing at different times that came from student voice. Some kids loved it, most year groups really hated it. So it's gone. So there is kind of quite a fluid, fluid perspective. And we have time and directions to talk about those things in form time. Because it's not just your kids that are in the student voice group, it's all your other kids. And you're able to kind of highlight, or this is what you love said. So we've done this.

Interviewer 47:43

And I think it kind of really sort of feeds into that sense of belonging in the school. And that being really important for a child to want to stay in the school really is.

Niamh 47:52

People need to feel empowered, don't they, with their surroundings and connected and that provides them a space for them to do that. Your kids the risk of exclusion, and the kids who perhaps are not feeling that sense of empowerment, connection, belonging.

Interviewer 48:07

Now, I really liked that I'm just conscious of time. So just want to make sure I've kind of covered everything, but I think we can have through a lot of the sort of the way that the conversation has gone. So thank you. But it just kind of makes me think about, you know, there's a lot of things that you mentioned, you know, I suppose things that the schools and yourself have put in, you know, that sort of preventive practice that has been quite helpful. And I suppose although this is sort of coming from a strength based approach, is there anything you know, that kind of sort of even top three things that you think that you've come across from your experience working in secondary schools that have been unhelpful? Because in a way we can then almost think about? Well, the flip side of that,

Niamh 48:44

I think my top three things that are helpful, is when you've got a kid that's at risk of exclusion, someone has to take the reins. Someone has to be the person for that kid. And it's unhelpful when people don't do that, and that kid, just then get lost and feels lost and doesn't feel connected. And then I always get the kid the kids are like I'm doing better the last two weeks, and no one's noticed. Like, yeah, you know, it's up to a key adult to take the reins on a kid that's at risk of exclusion, and to advocate that across the system now am I to kind of top tips that help someone's got to take the rope, and someone else's got all even the same person has to advocate for that kid within that system? I think the third thing, I think in terms of promoting inclusion is not having a fixed mindset about the kids. So not having the idea. This kid is a pain in the ass. Or they might be but they're just a child. So we've started using child more here. And a few of us, I wasn't I heard someone else do it one of my, one of my secondary school SENCos, she was using child. And she explained to me why she was like, it's to remind the staff that they're their children. They look like six foot six, you know, big men, but they're not. They're just children. And I really liked it. So we I've started using it here, and I was upfront, and now more people are saying children, and it's just that tiny switch of mindset, isn't it that they are just children, their brains are not fully formed. And it's hanging on to the idea. So I guess, yeah, my top three helpful things are somebody taking the reins, advocating for the child, and remembering that they're just a kid. And that things aren't fixed for them, you know, things can change, they can have a better day, a better week, a better hour, better 10 minutes. And it's important that we notice that. And the converse of that is unhelpful when people don't do those fucking things.

Interviewer 50:58

No, definitely. And it kind of makes me think about actually, that, I suppose just simple scripts or language, actually, you know, and that being kind of spread across the school system can really maybe, I suppose you probably can see that sort of systemic shift that and into people's perspective of, of the of the children really.

Niamh 51:15

We're trying? Definitely, we're trying, and that's the stance that I've tried to take working in secondary schools as an EP, rather than kind of your individual cases, of course, is individual cases that we're doing, but really trying to promote em and hold in mind that it isn't just about this one kid. There are quite a few other kids that are at this exclusion. And actually, this is going to have loads of them if we can hold these things in mind.

Interviewer 51:40

Yeah, that's really Ne. Yeah, that's really quite nice, I suppose. Place to probably end. I think, actually, I think that ties quite neatly together all the things that you've said, that can help facilitate that. And but I just was wondering, is there anything else that maybe we covered or that you wanted to expand on, or actually we didn't cover that you think would be quite helpful to share or any questions either.

Niamh 52:07

I think in terms of EP work, you have to be quite energetic and up for it, you know, this work, supporting inclusion in secondary schools is not easy work.

Niamh 52:21

You know, everything we've talked about is, is murky, is layered, is nuanced. You're grounded in different people's kind of epistemological positions, different people's views about teaching the people's constructs, lots of secondary school teachers see themselves as a teacher of insert subject name, not teacher of children. So you're kind of flattening out all those narratives, I think EPS really need to be quite energetic, dynamic, creative, resilient, to be able to promote inclusion, they're like, really core skills. And you've got to be ballsy, I think, you've got to be quite confident to be able to, you know, go and find the people in the system and make relationships to be able to make stuff happen. I think they're…they're the things that we are skilled already as EP lend themselves to that.

Interviewer 53:08

Thank you. I think that's quite, it was quite nice food for thought as well, for me anyway. But, ya know, thank you for that. And actually, I just, you know, just, I suppose my own curiosity, how did you find this space, I suppose this last almost hour really talking about this.

Niamh 53:27

It's nice to sort of stop and think about some of the things that happen. I mean, inclusion in secondary schools is something that I feel like I, I've spent

a lot of time thinking and reflecting about, because it's everything that I do, isn't it like I'm here doing it, you know, all day long, particularly in the last six months. So I have I have supervision with the school EP as well. And that's something that we talk about. But it's always nice to sort of have the space to stop and think that it is, you know, it's hard graft the work isn't like, you could just go into primary school and say, to the teacher, well, if you could just make this little work pack or whatever, then just do these couple of things, then it'll make a difference because you're trying to convince so many people within a system. And you're trying to convince really people you don't really have access to like the people that are teaching the kids. You don't want to have the same amount of access to that do so. I think it's interesting to use the space to think about how we can make that happen.

Appendix Q: Transcript of Rebecca

Including Timestamps

Interviewer 00:35

No, it's honestly, it's fine. I do it all the time. And I'm like, please stop doing but then I'm just like, oh, well, what can you do? And perfect. So I kind of have a some of the questions that I kind of sense, I sort of have a structure, but I tend to almost, obviously, it's quite open ended. So I kind of just tend to go on what you're saying. And we kind of build on that. And I might not get to all my questions specifically. But in a way, it almost sometimes covers itself, based on the direction of the conversations that we go through. But I suppose I normally quite like to start off with thinking about, you know, well, firstly, actually what your role is in the current service. And if you have sort of any other roles within that service, as well, like kind of any other specialist roles or link roles. Anything else?

Rebecca 01:21

Response redacted to protect the confidentiality of the participant

Interviewer 02:44

Okay, that's really interesting, I actually think that will probably lend itself to quite a bit of what we discuss as well. So I quite, I'm always really interested in the people who are participating and to kind of have a think about why they came into the role of the EP because I think there's a lot that we bring in in terms of our values and our experiences. And that really shapes I suppose

our role in the way that we sort of carry out our practice, whoever it for a lot of people, it's quite personal journey. But would you be open to kind of sharing why or what drew you to the role or how you went? Yeah, of course.

Rebecca 03:15

Response redacted to protect the confidentiality of the participant

Interviewer 06:04

Good. No, thank you. I think you and I think, yeah, I think a lot drawn from kind of previous experiences, and it's sort of remote it sounds, it's sort of how else can you add on to what you already love doing? Sort of, like building block kind of way.

Rebecca 06:16

Yeah. Yeah, thank you.

Interviewer 06:19

And so I suppose, you know, I don't know, if you sort of have one, particularly one particular sort of child in mind, you know, from secondary school that you might have helped, sort of when been involved, because they'd been at risk of exclusion and, or if you have multiple children in mind, or even just sort of general experiences, but it'd be really great to kind of just have a sort of a chat about what well, I suppose, what was your involvement? What did it look like? And how did you actually get to become involved in the first place?

Rebecca 06:47

If that's, yeah, yeah, of course. So I suppose as an EP, at the moment, my secondary school work is maybe still developing, but I guess I can draw on experience of a virtual school case. So for a child who was in care. And so at the time, this child had just started in new secondary school. So they were in year seven. And it was myself and a colleague, I was training at the time, and it was myself and a colleague who were involved. And the child was just having a really, I suppose, like the year seven transition is always difficult. And the child was just having a really, really difficult time. And the virtual school kind of wanted us involved to kind of assess his cognition and everything. But actually, as you dig deeper, there's, you know, there's a lot more and more going on. And at the time, our involvement halted because of COVID, which I guess is something more to consider in terms of whether that helped or to hinder things. And then when I picked back the work, when I picked up the work again, last year, the child had actually moved school, and they hadn't been excluded. But I think it was going down that way, there have been kind of lots of fixed term exclusions and suspension and all the rest of it. And I suppose the network as a whole were quite concerned. And, yeah, I guess when I met with this person, again, what I was struck by was actually, what they found helpful was just a fresh start. And I suppose it makes me think about sometimes, maybe when it in terms of exclusions when it gets beyond a certain point, how difficult it can be to repair those relationships. And for this young person, they just felt one. So they were a young black boy. And they felt they were very much a minority in their former secondary school, the previous secondary school, they felt very different. And I suppose just

speaking to them, they were kind of saying how they just really liked a fresh start and a fresh narrative. And I suppose they were mentioning that they were seeing more people like them in this new school. And when I unpicked that a little bit more it was to do with that, they've made friends with another child who also experienced kind of adverse experiences and had things going on in the background for them. But yeah, I guess sometimes there's something to be said about a fresh start. And I suppose I would have noticed that sometimes that the virtual schoolwork was after a certain point, it's really, really difficult to repair those relationships. What I guess, yeah, thinking about kind of other work, pre work prior to EP work. I think that in terms of what my involvement looked like it would have been sometimes the legalities of it. So for example, because we were the virtual school link. We knew the child's legal rights in terms of how many days you have to challenge an exclusion. And I think that's not information that's always shared with parents, schools can sometimes I think schools are doing their best, don't get me wrong, but I think school sometimes maybe can be a bit cheeky in the timescales that they use. So not maybe necessarily issuing the letter to the parent until a few days after the exclusion is started. And then there's not enough time to challenge it. And I suppose maybe, knowing that parents maybe won't have the bandwidth to do that. So I guess if the virtual school…we sometimes you know, we were the child's guardian as such, or corporate parent, so we sometimes stepped in all guns blazing. But I did wonder, I thought, this child is in a unique position, because there's so many professionals here ready to kind of batten down the hatches and everything at the school, but I used to wonder about all these things, kind of vulnerable children are at risk children, the being who's, who

was doing that for them? Yeah, sorry, I feel like I've gone off on a tangent there, and I'm trying to compare different stories for you.

Interviewer 11:06

No, I think, you know, its… there seems to be kind of some things coming up in terms of the advocacy for the child and who's holding responsibility for them. And I think, you know, you were in a system where actually there was multiple professionals that held responsibility for one child could be the advocate, and it makes me think about, you know, who holds that responsibility in secondary schools? And I suppose, have you ever, you know, I suppose, from your experience, have you ever seen, I suppose, good practice in that where there's kind of adults who will sort of hold, you know, hold responsibility, or become that champion for a child that has helped maybe in situations like this?

Rebecca 11:45

Yeah, I think. Yeah, I can definitely think of examples. And I think, I suppose I've got one in mind of a child who will use phone calls and emails, probably every other week about a fixed term exclusion. But actually, when you met with the network, and when you met with the people who knew the child best, they had a really, really good relationship with the child. But sometimes they might have been a member of support staff, or they might have been kind of a form tutor. But they weren't necessarily somebody that was always attending some of the kind of more formal meetings as such. But those were the people who if you, if you managed to figure out who they were in the system, and you

managed to get them to come to a meeting, they were able to share so much information about the child's experience at school and why everything was happening. And I think for the child, knowing that there is somebody who will and can speak up for them at certain meetings, and I guess, sometimes it was about, if you felt that that person had something positive to say about the child, or was able to champion the child, sometimes, I used to invite the child in to hear some of that, because I think they don't often know that that person exists within a system. So yeah, I suppose it's a kind of a mix of being able to identify, not necessarily who the kind named SENCo is or who the named designated teacher is, but trying to figure out who is it that knows the child best? And can that person be at the meeting? And if that person does have a good relationship with the child, and can advocate for them, you know, can the child hear some of that? And I think also, yeah, just, if you can figure out who that person is almost trying to sow the seed of hope, with that person, that little base and trying to appeal to hearts and minds in that way. I guess, in the hope that maybe if that person, you know, champions, the child that maybe others will see that too, to try and build a bit of a different narrative for the child, or the young person I should say. So yeah, I think trying to kind of figure out who that key person is, identifying what kind of role they have within the school. Um, I think what can be difficult sometimes is if that person doesn't necessarily have a senior role in the school. And I think so I… do you sometimes struggle when, like when you meet with schools, and you might have a really, really wonderful SENCo, who really cares and really knows the children best, but if they're not sometimes at senior leadership, that can have an impact. But if they are someone that does, or is somebody who has kind of

senior leadership capacity back and really make a difference, because they can be the person who attends some of those kind of bigger meetings around exclusion, who can say oh, well, actually, you know, the child's actually just recently moved or this is going on for the family or you know, can add to some of the picture for the kind of wider team who are making some of these decisions.

Interviewer 14:49
So something about kind of, that, that level of influence, I suppose, or I suppose the person with who's holding responsibility for this for example, the SENCo, yeah, situation like that.

Rebecca 15:02
Yes. Yeah, definitely. Yeah, definitely something about the influence that they that they can have. Yeah, yes.

Interviewer 15:16
And I suppose it makes me think about, you know, the school culture in a way that, you know, I suppose that sets it up for that.

Rebecca 15:27
Yeah. And I suppose that makes me think about schools where I suppose where when you go in even as the external, you know, as the EP, or maybe before, when I was the virtual school person, the kind of feeling that you get around the school and how that adult is interacting with the children, and I'm

thinking of it wasn't one of my secondary schools, but I was shadowing recently in a different secondary school. And the SENCo just had such a warm nature. And even just her interactions with children and young people and my thoughts.... that just change it, that just even changes the kind of relationships that you're gonna have with those young people. The kind of meetings that might be going on. So yeah, I do think so much of it, I think, when you go into a school, and you can see how the adults interact with children, um, you know, obviously, I know that there is it can depend on the ethos of the school and the culture of the school. But I think where you can see that teacher being where the children can see that that teacher that SENCo, whoever it is, being human almost, and that the child can see them as someone who's this human, and you can, you know, engage with them. And, you know, all of that kind of thing. Compared to…I was in a school recently, and the, I mean, I think there were a senior member of staff, I was observing an estimate, and the senior member of staff entered the secondary school classroom, and all of the children stood up. I just thought this feels so formal, like, what what's the need for this? So I suppose, yeah, that the kind of culture in the school and who sets that off, I guess, yeah.

Interviewer 17:04

Hmm. And it makes me think about, you know, you know, experiences maybe of secondary schools that you've been into actually where, you know, like you said, there's that warmth, and that kind of that relational aspect is very visible. And it makes me think about what the, it was, what the ethos or the vision of

the school is, you know, I suppose maybe what their priorities are, and how that might trickle down. Yeah, that day to day interactions.

Rebecca 17:33

Yeah. And I do often wonder sometimes. I guess, I hear this more in terms of I would say primary school I've got that have recently been Ofsteded. And their result was a good and they were actually more than happy to keep it as a good, because they were saying actually, the pressure of having it as outstanding, would have made it too difficult for them. And I guess it makes me think about maybe schools where maybe they have an outstanding reputation, or were there, there's a huge emphasis on academic attainment. And I guess, thinking about the pressures that puts on the system. And if you do have a child, then who is displaying behaviours that challenge in the classroom, because they don't understand because they need to avoid the lesson or for whatever reason, then if the focus is on attainment, and academics and results, then of course, that child it just ends up being seen as a barrier to that. And, yeah, so I suppose it's interesting to think about kind of, I guess, wider systems that we don't necessarily have control over, but the influence that they can have on schools as well. I suppose maybe sometimes the pressure of, of academics or the pressure of remaining outstanding, or the pressure, I suppose, of being I know, some academies can have certain reputations, and maybe the pressure of maintaining bath sometimes. Yeah.

Interviewer 19:03

And I suppose, you know, I suppose, who's leading on that as well. So, you know, think, for example, a head teacher coming in with that particular image, you know, it's making me think about the message that then gets trickled down to staff members about you know, what their job and their responsibility is meant to be in their environment as well. And I suppose, have you been into, you know, a setting as you know, I suppose, a secondary base setting where actually, you feel that you can kind of see that very visible message from the head teacher where it actually maybe is I suppose their focus is maybe on pastoral or sort of a balanced approach more so than an academic approach.

Rebecca 19:46

Um, think um, I mean, I would say that my current secondary school setting but it's you It's not mainstream. So it's, I guess, not very helpful. That's probably more pastoral and more free flow. And there's more. Yeah, emphasis on creative things and being active and all of that. Let me think about mainstream secondaries.

Interviewer 20:25

You know, it's where if you can't think about any, actually even the, the, your other setting, I see, yeah. You know, what enables it to be that sort of setting? Obviously, it's a specialist setting, but do you think there's anything else that enables it to be that kind of setting?

Rebecca 20:42

Um, yeah, it's funny, because as I said, I've only taken it on recently, so I'm still getting to know them. But the previous EP would always speak about even though they were an AP, that there was something quite calm about the school, and that they would always find when they were in there, that things felt calm, and it felt like, you know, young people were doing learning. And I mean, it's definitely quite a busy setting. But I suppose because it's an AP, and because of the, I suppose it's the children have all been excluded for various different reasons, I guess maybe there has already been some thinking done about what, what is needed to support them to be in school. And for so many people in that school, there is early adverse experiences, there is anxiety. I mean, I would say semh is there for everybody. But that's not necessarily done on paper. You know, there's, some of them are on special guardianship orders, some of them are care experience, some of them are, there's kind of loads of other complex things going on for them, I suppose. Because that's there, then there's a kind of a, just a given that these children are going to these young people are going to need something different. Going on, I suppose even in terms of what I would notice about the interactions between the adults and the young people in that setting is the kind of reaction of adults is different. And I guess I'm thinking about, you know, young people, maybe using humour to interact with adults, or, you know, maybe the way they might go about trying to avoid learning...The adults react, don't react, I should say, the adults engage so differently. And they kind of I suppose rather than seeing it as like a threat to the adults authority, it's, it feels different. And I suppose maybe that's just the experience of the staff, you know, they this is what they're used to, I guess, and there is less of, I

suppose maybe they don't have the same pressures as mainstream schools in terms of academic attainment, I guess. So, I suppose maybe that's a different position to hold.

Interviewer 23:14

You know, and I think it's something about what their responsibility is, and I think it's, you know, that kind of pastoral is, you know, is their responsibility? Or maybe it's more balanced responsibility. You know, it's, you know, like you said, it's kind of that pastoral care. And you know that that's the approach you're taking. But also, if learning does happen, it's…

Rebecca 23:35

Very, I might think ….I'm trying, I'm sorry, I'm trying to remember all their schools. But I, I do think I'm remembering that in a previous local authority, there was a real rollout of kind of attachment aware of schools and trauma informed schools. And I guess, this, the schools where the head teacher bought into that made such a difference. whereby it was like, well, of course, it makes perfect sense that if a child is not if a child doesn't feel safe, and if a child doesn't feel like they belong, and if a child doesn't feel like they have somebody they can speak to in school, then of course, they're going to, you know, act out, and of course, they're going to find ways of avoiding learning. And of course, we're going to end up with exclusions. So I feel like maybe schools that I want to say bought in because I do feel like not every school buys into that. But yeah, I guess schools may be where they were starting to think about that a little bit more. That seemed to make a difference, I guess in

terms of the head teacher setting the example then of this is how we need to see this and this is the approaches we need to have and I guess you'd see that in terms of them being visible around the school, you know, senior, the kind of scary senior leadership being visible around the school and saying hello to young people and knowing that Families and I suppose some of that as well as really important, they sound like really simple things. But I guess it's not necessarily something that's that we see in all secondaries anymore.

Interviewer 25:10

So I suppose that kind of that presents from, you know, I suppose the people that hold responsibility for the wider system? And like, I think you said earlier, actually quite human interactions. Yeah, hellos and the sort of the bridging of that relationship. And it made me think a little bit. So just going back to your position in the.. in the alternative provision, and actually, I suppose, you know, it makes me think about the work that happens between the alternative provision and the secondary schools. Because, you know, obviously, not all the, you know, I suppose, the idea is a lot of the students, they will end up going back or, you know, that kind of transition back to their, their, you know, they're original school, obviously, that doesn't always happen things, currently. But I suppose, you know, what's your understanding, actually, or your experience of, or even just, you know, from... experience of kind of preparing that transition, I suppose, and that what the secondary schools are doing to hopefully accommodate for that transition? If you've seen any good practice? If not, that's also you know, helpful.

Rebecca 26:23

I feel like they don't go back, I think, like from speaking ...Yeah. I can think of one primary school example where it happened. But even the child went back, and they were they eventually, I can't remember if they were excluded, or they left. And that's what I mean, about I think there's like a holding period, I feel like after it gets past a certain point, I don't actually know if, if a child ends up going back. I think that's what a lot of young people at the alternative provision would say is that they initially don't want to go there. They, you know, they hate being there. But actually, once they settle in, you know, they will say that that's where they prefer, but in this particular one, I can't account for all APs. Yeah, sorry, I can't think of any examples where they've returned. But I guess maybe it makes me think about what's needed. Yeah, what's almost needed before we get to the point of exclusion, and I do think that's where our role comes in so much in terms of being able to, I suppose getting to know, you know, building relationships with SENCOs, and building relationships with head teachers. So that when we get to the point of having those discussions, we're able to get in maybe a little bit earlier, or prompt the SENCo to you know, use your tier two time to, you know, we have more time that's available, you know, it's time that Sen pay for, and, you know, we can use that for a child at risk of exclusion. And I've done that before, where I thought, Oh, this is I can see where this is going to end up and getting in early doors and saying to schools, you know, putting it on the table saying, what will it take for you to keep this child and being I suppose, using research as well saying, you know, research tells us that, you know, this about a child who's excluded, and research tells us that they're more at risk of this and this and this, and just

putting it on the table that I suppose at the point where schools are maybe making that decision, I guess maybe they feel stressed as a system. And I guess it feels like quite a reductionist approach to take to potentially a really complex situation for a young person. But I suppose just being able to ask the school to prioritize that. And whether it's using, you know, a circle of adults, or whether it's attending a team around the family, but sometimes being that voice there to say, hmm, hold on, have we considered this? Or let's ask this. The I think sometimes trying to get in almost before the point of, of exclusions, I think is, is helpful. Yeah, and I think that's what's made me in now, almost making, I suppose your, your point of call is always the SENCO. But I'm always really mindful of where possible, trying to get to know the head teacher and dropping in to say hello, and it doesn't always happen. And I may only do it twice in the year. But I suppose just being mindful that sometimes they're the person who makes that call at the end of the day and trying to build a relationship with them in some shape or form. So that when you come to have these big meetings, or when you're asking the school to consider keeping a child who they're really struggling with, but there's already a relationship there with them as well, I guess. Hmm.

Interviewer 29:38

And it's, you know, it's making me…you mentioned actually, you know, I suppose, schools, you know, taking that preventative approach, and I think really supporting them to think about it because I think, you know, obviously in a stressed system, you tend to just firefight rather than, you know, think about things long term because actually maybe don't have that capacity to do it And

I think, you know, for example, you mentioned using that tier two time to maybe do some like staff work or training and things like that. And it makes me think about what sort of things have you done that's maybe helped facilitate that. And I think you were you already kind of spoke about kind of circle of adults, you know, that making links with the head teacher, and, you know, thinking about who holds the authority for things like exclusion and kind of building that that relationship, and also bringing in stats and research to really sort of backup this, is there anything else you can think of that actually can help facilitate sort of that preventative approach or kind of helping schools to have space to think about it?

Rebecca 30:43

Yeah. I think the circle of adults is a great one. And I think the bit in that, that's always really helpful is when you ask somebody to play the role of the child. And when it comes to that part, the adults in the room quite naturally get really, you can see, there's like, a difference in the energy level, people get quite nervous. And I find they're not even able to stay in character. And you have to say, you know, remember, you're, you're the voice of the child. So you're speaking from an I position, I think that can be a really powerful way of just asking people putting asking people to put themselves in the child's shoes. And I think sometimes even something as you know, it sounds quite simple. But if you can set that up and have the right people there at something like that, I think that can be I suppose really powerful, and in the hope that you're just trying to sow some of those seeds. I think sometimes I think other things I've done is being mindful of if I know that I've got if it's been flagged

with me maybe at the September planning meeting, that there is kind of some of these children that are at risk of exclusion, kind of saying to the SENCo, early on, I think it sounds like we're going to need to do some staff training on emotional regulation or supporting emotion, it will we get, should we, I think it sounds like that's something that we need to do. So I suppose trying to come at it from kind of a few different prongs and trying to embed some of those messages, I often play, I think you used it the other day, that Ian Wright video and just trying to share it with adults. I know it's difficult, I know that child is potentially driving you up the walls, but if you can just be that person to hold on that few minutes longer. Or that few weeks longer a day, you know, whatever it is, it's going to make such a difference. And that child will remember that. And what are the things that I found to be helpful? I think inviting the family in as well. And I think sometimes I'm thinking of Yeah, I suppose like allowing the family and setting up a safe space for the family to share some of what might be going on. Because sometimes that's not always shared at school, or the family's interactions at school are naturally always negative. They're ringing them every other day about this, that the oh that's gone on. And so I suppose being able to use our role to kind of set up a situation where the family feels safe enough to share that information, and in the hope that maybe if you know people know something else that's going on for the child that might explain some of how they're behaving, then maybe that will make a difference as well. And I guess the other thing that I've tried to do in the past is if I know there are other people in the backgrounds of I know there's early health involved or if I know their social care involved, I'll try and find a way of liaising with them in some shape or form. So for example, it's not

secondary or primary, but I was at something yesterday where there was a number of kind of social care colleagues. And I overheard a name that I've heard referenced at one of my primary schools, and there's somebody who's involved with one of my children who is at risk of upset but possibly exclusion. And saying to her, oh, I think I know who you are. Can we…can we share? Can we exchange emails, let's link up and I suppose just trying to link up with other people in the system? Yeah, I think that can be helpful as well. I'm trying to think of what else is useful. Yeah, as I said, sometimes just naming the kind of research and sometimes that can be done via training or just shared as part of consultation, but saying, you know, we know if we exclude Ellen, that her risk of XYZ, so I suppose naming that as well can be helpful. Yes, all that's coming to mind at the moment.

Interviewer 34:58

That's really helpful. Thank you, and it's making me, it's making me wonder a little bit about kind of what you said about kind of that staff empathy and buy in to it as well. And I think, you know, things like using like the Ian Wright video, one of my favourites. And you know that research and that kind of training as well. I think it's, you know, I'm trying to I'm trying to think of how to word this, but it's something about yeah, that staff buying or holding, I suppose taking a collective role and responsibility in it.

Rebecca 35:33

Yeah, definitely. And I think trying to, I think what's can sometimes happen when we get to things like exclusion is that everybody can almost end up in

their own silo. And it can end up in a like us versus them, situation, whether that's parents versus school, or child versus, or whatever. Like, guess almost in quite like binary thinking, kind of very black and white thinking. And I suppose thinking about where we can come in to try and add a little bit more nuance and try and get alongside people in making these decisions. Yeah, because I guess I feel like if, if a school feels like their back is up, then of course, they're only going to respond in a certain way. And the same with a family as well, you know, it can end up being that they don't want their child to go to that school anymore. But yeah, I suppose just trying to kind of get alongside people and build those relationships. I mean, I know we hammer on about it all the time, in terms of it all comes down to relationships, but easier said than done to build them or to get to get systems to build them or to try to build them with systems. And I guess something that I have been trying to hold in mind a bit more this year, in terms of when you enter a system that feels stressed or chaotic, and you are mindful of children that are in that system is almost you're spending that that kind of initial bit of time just kind of rolling with the punches a little bit and building trust with the school system. So that when, as I said, when it comes down to having those more difficult conversations, they're kind of along with you on the journey a little bit rather than coming, you know, coming in reading them the riot almost, almost so yeah, I suppose like rolling with the punches, and just trying to get alongside them a little bit and appealing to hearts and minds, I think. Yeah, that that can really help. Yeah, that's…

Interviewer 37:36

That's a really good point. And I think it's made me think about, I suppose, how you how you build that trust, because I think that's a massive part. Because I think like you said, you know, going in with the sort of, you know, going in guns blazing, you know, you shouldn't do this, you shouldn't do that, you know, it can raise that anxiety and that those defences, and it's making me think about how you use your role to build that trust, or how you…yeah.

Rebecca 38:03

Like, yeah. I guess. Yeah. How do you build that trust? I guess it's suppose it's, it's doing things like I suppose like, initially, I would always do try and do like in person visits with them. So they see a kind of a human on the other side of things, which is obviously much easier to do now, post COVID, or whatever version of post covid were in now. Communication, you know, being really clear with them. I suppose checking in on them as well, I'm always really mindful of the kind of situation that some of our schools are in at the moment. So kind of checking in with staff, you know, emailing them at the end of the term saying, you know, well done you, you've done excellently blah, blah. And I think listening to them, I think when they are coming to you, and they're saying, you know, we're really at the word thinking of exclusion. We've already spoken to parents about this, and blah, blah, blah. And like I said, just almost letting them listen to them and letting them come almost offload. And I guess sometimes with our SENCos, I find it funny, because I think if I was to say to one of my samples, let's plan in supervision time, they would say to me, like, no, that feels like such a luxury. So I almost have to use some of my life planning time or some of my check in time, to almost provide a bit of an

informal supervision space to build some of that relationship and to build some of that trust. Because I think for some SENCos that feels like a bit of a luxury to name it as their time, but almost inadvertently trying to do that to build a bit of a relationship with them. And I guess trying to point out the things that they are doing well as well. You know, there's so many things that our schools are doing really, really well in the systems that we're in And so I suppose going back to a little bit about what your research is, is trying to name what's already working well, and thinking about bringing that with us. And maybe it's that they know their schools really well, maybe it's something in other communities really well. Maybe it's that they've, you know, overcome critical incident, you know, whatever it is that they've done and trying to name some of that a little bit with them. Yeah.

Interviewer 40:32

Yeah, it's, I mean, it's loads, thank you. And, you know, I'm just kind of conscious of time, so I kind of want, you know, kind of start pulling everything together, so you don't have to waste your entire evening. You've other places to be, but I suppose, you know, I suppose thinking about, you know, we kind of spoke about that early intervention that preventative practice. And, you know, you mentioned things like, obviously, to kind of get into that preventive practices, a lot of things that you have to do, you know, to kind of build that trust, and really sort of name things and kind of put things into place for that to happen. And I suppose, in your experience, or kind of your, I suppose opinion of it as well, you know, when those things are facilitated, you know, you can sort of, you've built that trust, and as you know, you can start, you know,

naming those things, and bringing them into the awareness. You know, have you kind of seen any sort of best practice or sort of attempts at best practice of schools actually then implementing some preventative practices that you think actually would be quite helpful to build on or would like to see more of another places?

Rebecca 41:44

Yeah, I think one big one is figuring out who the child trusts in the system, and who that key person or key persons is going to be. And I think that's really important. And trying to I suppose, like, where schools have managed to, then that person is the person who maybe meets with that child during, you know, free lessons, or they do some mentoring work with that child or that young person. So I think the key person is, is a really critical one. And I think, I suppose I have a child in mind where that person really became the advocate for that.... adult, really advocate for that young person. I suppose the other thing can be helpful is if there's more than if there's kind of a backup person as well, I think because I think it was mindful for with that young person, it was quite chaotic at times. And sometimes the adult felt they didn't have enough skills, or it felt quite overwhelming. So yeah, I think that can be really helpful. I think where the school managed to link up with other services, so for example, things like future men's those kind of mentoring things, or mentoring schemes? And, or, yeah, I suppose like other things that are going on that they can that could support the child outside of school. Other things can be helpful. Or things that I've seen, I should say? I guess it's sometimes it can depend on if it feels appropriate to do so. But I suppose like times where the

young person can be involved in some of it, or they can be part of developing, you know, a, whatever it is like a pupil profile, or where they can have a say a little bit in what helps them because it's very easy for us to come in as the kind of external adults or whatever and say, this is what we think works. And I suppose sometimes I'm always interested in Yeah, I suppose my next point is getting in where schools have used their EP well, so sometimes we may not know of these children. And I was often really shocked. I remember when I did my research, a year one research project. And I was always struck by the amount of young people who ended up in or ended in YOT or up in APs. And it was really clear that there was underlying learning needs. That had obviously been evident for years, but because the child was only ever seen as the kind of the child who challenged then that was never picked up and you just think how did how did you get to 16? And have never been seen by an EP? Yes. So yeah, I suppose then maybe times where schools have used their EP to try and think about, are there any underlying kind of learning needs there or thinking a little bit more about kind of? Yeah, other things that could be going on or other ways that that they could use ourselves or, or other systems? Yeah, but yeah, I feel like the key person is the one that always stands out.

Interviewer 45:36

No, that's really, that's really helpful. Thank you. And it's, you know, I suppose also kind of bringing that voice of the child back in as well. And kind of bringing the child back into kind of the centre of it. I think, you know, what you've just said, there as well about using up time to think about the child

holistically. And not just one narrative, but potentially other narratives as well, I'm bringing that together. And, you know, it just, you know, I was just wondering, is there kind of anything else that you think, you know, maybe that we've spoken about that would be helpful to kind of add on to or anything that we didn't speak about, that you think would also be helpful to mention, as well?

Rebecca 46:18

Um, to have a think of....no, no, not at all? No, I think, like I said, I'm kind of drawing on a mixture of experience. So I feel like those are kind of the things that come to mind. Um. No, nothing is coming to mind, X. Sorry. No, no, I didn't in terms of helpful things. I feel like otherwise, I'll go off on a tangent on things that aren't helpful.

Interviewer 47:08

No, not. And I think I mean, you've covered a lot actually, that was, that's been really, really helpful. And but I kind of like to close this. And, you know, just thinking about how you actually found this space, as well.

Rebecca 47:23

Yeah, I think this is really interesting. And I think it was really helpful for me to think of like I said, I'm in the early stages of being EP for an AP. So we're all of these children who are excluded and up. So it's been really helpful for me to think about, maybe what, what has happened beforehand, or what hasn't happened beforehand? And I guess it makes me think about, I've got a young

person at the moment. Who is they're known to me because they're in care. And they're starting to so starting to act out. And this will just making me think about, oh, okay, let's think about what things we are these things in place. What things could we be suggesting? But I think it's been really helpful to kind of, yeah, think about that, that kind of middle bit and what needs to happen? Before the child gets exc... the person gets excluded. And I think I suppose, thinking about what are their at risk factors, but also what are their resiliency factors as well? What are the things that are in place for the child to? To help them? Yeah, so no, I find it really, really helpful. Thank you. It was a pleasure to be involved.

Appendix R: Additional Quotations Examples

Theme/Subtheme	Additional Quotation Examples
Theme: Student-Staff Relationships **Subtheme: Relating to One Another**	'It's like a group of young teachers who are, probably gonna get the ages wrong, definitely but really, they're like, late 20s, early 30s, that all local to the area, so they know that area really well. And I think for lots of, especially, like the male students who ended up in the Learning Support Centre, they are members of staff who can understand perhaps, what things are like for them outside of school and in the community. Things don't feel as far removed. So, I think these members of staff are much more relatable for young people. And they get much more like embedded within the community and know, their, like local community in the school community really well. And I think have thought their own lived experiences of find, like finding school, a really challenging place. And have got like a very good understanding of these young people's, yeah, lives outside of school, as well' (Jackie, 464)
Theme: Student-Staff Relationships **Subtheme: Advocacy for Students**	'Someone has to be the person for that kid. And it's unhelpful when people don't do that, and that kid, just then get lost and feels lost and doesn't feel connected' (Niamh, 621)
Theme: Student-Staff Relationships **Subtheme: Advocacy for Students**	'...when people are very worried about a young person, and there will often be like quite high attendance at a meeting like that. And I guess it showed to me that the school were really

	invested and really wanted to do something about it.' (Jackie, 97)
Theme: Space in the School Environment **Subtheme: Physical Space**	'In one of the secondary schools they work in, they have something called the Learning Support Centre. So, I would be curious about what the narrative is amongst young people about what that is. But it's yeah, it's where the children go, who are finding it difficult to kind of behave in the way that the school wants them to, and lessons. So, there's probably like 10 to 12 students in the Learning Support Centre. And they're supported by, like, a member of teaching staff, and then LSAs, who are always in the Learning Support Centre, who certainly have like a different outlook on behaviour and ways of supporting.' (Laura, 406)
Theme: Space in the School Environment **Subtheme: Size of School and Classes**	'Knowing exactly what's going on with those students, whereas if we're at a secondary school, we've got 500 Children, the heads inevitably is going to know less' (Jackie, 261) 'The school that I did most of this work in was that it was quite small, it was quite a small new secondary school. They'd only begun to think for about like, seven years. And it just meant that they basically weren't as many staff. And there were people that were, you know, holding, I guess, like more responsibility' (Lukas, 583)
Theme: Shared Vision and Values **Subtheme: Shared Perception of Teacher Role**	'So, they, a whole staff were invited to a session on getting to know X, before he started and what might be important for differentiation and

	inclusion across all of the different subject areas. So again, that was another message that inclusion involves everyone in the school and not just the Sen department' (Laura, 301)
Theme: Collaboration and Support **Subtheme: Sharing Best Practice**	'What I'd like more of would be the opportunities for more teachers to come together to have the time to be like a peer resource for each other. So, when I've seen diagnostic behaviour questionnaire meetings work well, where every teacher has contributed something, and then is able to look at the range of responses, see what other teachers are trying what other teachers find difficult what other teachers see the young person's strengths as I think those meetings have been illuminating' (Laura, 617)
Theme: Understanding and Responding to the Needs of the Student **Subtheme: Shifting the Narrative**	'And that things aren't fixed for them, you know, things can change, they can have a better day, a better week, a better hour, a better 10 minutes. And it's important that we notice that' (Niamh, 641)
Theme: Relational Approaches	'I find myself frequently suggesting almost every time suggesting to staff in this is a different secondary school now that is kind of like the idea of emotion coaching…..But really what can be what can make all the difference is the teacher or the adult, that's trying to talk to an aggravated teenager, just kind of recognizing that they're not yet able to self-regulate and reflect on why they might be feeling a certain way. But taking that emotion coaching style approach of like I can see you feeling this, because you see, you see that upset right now, I wonder if it's because so and so said, whatever, you know, I get that that's

	really, I'd feel the same if someone did that to me, or just kind of, you know, providing that nurturing space' (Zara, 215) 'And the SENCo just had such a warm nature. And even just her interactions with children and young people and my thoughts.... that just change it, that just even changes the kind of relationships that you're gonna have with those young people.' (Rebecca, 175)
Theme: Valuing Training, Psychoeducation and Interventions **Subtheme: Senior Management Team Buy In**	'Wouldn't it be fantastic to get the head teacher along to listen to some of these things that people are saying? And rather than having to hear it second-hand, or....and I see a piece of paper afterwards? So yeah, I think that would be really valuable' (Jackie, 225)

Appendix S: Example of codes and extracts that were used to generate themes

It is important to note that the codes and themes represented here are not the full version of analysis but a working document of the analysis process. The final analysis was completed using a combination of MaxQDA and by hand. In the table below, I have demonstrated an example of how I generated the subtheme, 'Shifting the Narrative' which falls under theme, 'Understanding and Responding to the Needs of the Student' which sits in the overarching theme of 'Support and Interventions'. I have added the relevant extracts, my code and the codes that make up the sub theme/theme. In the examples, I used latent and semantic meaning of the extract to create the codes.

Overarching Theme – *Support and Interventions*

Theme - *Understanding and Responding to the Needs of the Student*		
Subtheme	**Codes**	**Extracts**
Shifting The Narrative	There are always opportunities for a change in their day	*'And that things aren't fixed for them, you know, things can change, they can have a better day, a better week, a better hour, better10 minutes. And it's important that we notice that' (Niamh, 641)*

	Bringing together a team around the child with different lenses	*‘Sometimes that has just been, like me, the SENCo, and one other teacher, and that feels valuable, because even if there are like little shifts in understanding, or people are thinking about something slightly differently, then that feels valuable’ (Jackie, 211)*
	Using the term ‘child’ instead of ‘young person’	*‘…they're just a child. So we've started using child more here. And a few of us, I wasn't I heard someone else do it one of my... one of my secondary school SENCos, she was using child. And she explained to me why she was like, it’s to remind the staff that*

		they're their children. They look like six foot six, you know, big men, but they're not. They're just children. And I really liked it. So we... I've started using it here, and I was upfront, and now more people are saying children, and it's just that tiny switch of mindset, isn't it that they are just children, their brains are not fully formed' (Niamh, 631)
	When adults understand what is happening for a child, then they become deserving of support	*'...where it's gone really positively, is when you've been able to shift that narrative. And that can be in a way to show I suppose the things that they're capable of like that. But in other circumstances, I think it's*

		been a lot more of trying to explain, like, the reasons why they're presenting with those behaviours. And one of the things I've sort of noticed, and maybe this will feed into your other questions later. But I think within schools that can be these narratives about some children being almost like deserving of additional support and accepting that their behaviour is coming from a certain reason within school stuff, and then there are others that it's like, they've got this that at home, like their home life isn't bad. They get lots of attention at school. So why are they behaving like this? And it's a lot

		more sort of cutthroat approach with them' (Lukas, 128)