‘Outsiders in Urban Society’? An exploration into the off-site experiences and encounters of young Irish Travellers living in South London

Presented for the degree of PhD 2020

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In memory of my Grandmother and favourite geographer,
Marlene Howarth

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Abstract

Research on Gypsies and Travellers is longstanding within the social sciences, particularly in the fields of housing, healthcare and education. The majority of research in these fields focusses on the relationship between Gypsies and Travellers and policies or on their on-site experiences. Very few researchers have explored the off-site encounters of Travellers in the UK. This research fills a gap in the literature surrounding Gypsies and Travellers through drawing on research surrounding encounters, emotional geographies and education. This research explores these off-site encounters and experiences of young Irish Travellers living in London. Drawing on data gathered from eighteen months of ethnographic field work with a youth club for Irish Travellers in Southwark, interviews and focus groups.

Sibley's 'Outsiders in Urban Society' (1981) is central to many of the discussions in geographical research which explores the lives of Gypsies and Travellers in the UK. Therefore, this research will answer the overarching question: '**In what sense, if at all, are young Gypsies and Travellers still 'outsiders in urban society'?'**

This research explores the ways in which the lives of Irish Travellers might be changing in the UK context. It also explores the role education has on the lives (and aspirations) of young Travellers. In answering this question this research focuses on two main areas of the lives of young Travellers living in London. These are: 1) off-site spaces including public transport and 2) schools.

This thesis argues that young Travellers are developing strategies to cope with encounters with non-Travellers and the mobilisation of their emotions within this. Furthermore, it argues that young Irish Travellers have substantial agency in responding to their encounters with non-Travellers. It also argues that argues that despite increasingly interacting with non-Travellers in a variety of setting in their every-day lives, young Travellers largely share the views of older family members and translate these into their own lives and aspirations accordingly.

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1. Introduction

This thesis will focus on answering the overarching question:

ORQ: '**In what sense, if at all, are young Gypsies and Travellers still 'outsiders in urban society'?'** In order to do this, it will answer the following research questions.

1. **How do young Travellers negotiate encounters in off-site spaces including those on public transport?**
2. **How do young Travellers experience their encounters with non-Travellers in schools?**

The overarching research question considers whether the young Travellers studied in this research matched Sibley's (1981) assertions about the outsider status of Gypsies and Travellers in the UK. From this we can begin to generalise about whether Travellers should still be considered outsiders in the present day and thus, whether Sibley's conclusions can still be considered to hold. As will be discussed briefly later in this chapter, and in more depth in later chapters, there is some evidence to suggest that Gypsies and Travellers are becoming less socially isolated, which might support the idea that they are not outsiders in the sense Sibley suggested. What, then, is an outsider?

Sibley argued that "groups…identified as outsiders…are peripheral in the sense that there is a considerable social distance between them and the majority – there is little or no social interaction – and this social gulf is usually, but not necessarily reinforced by spatial separation" (1981: 4). This definition, if unqualified, suggests that as social interaction (which we might also term 'encounter') increases so being an outsider slips away. This has an initial plausibility, and may explain why accounts of Traveller children attending school more regularly, or Traveller families living for a number of years in bricks and mortar housing are taken as evidence of better integration with 'settled' society (Norris and Winston, 2005; Smith and Greenfields, 2013). But as the literature on encounter points out (see chapter two), and everyday life can confirm, coming into contact and having to have some kind of social

interaction does not necessarily mean that there is any meaningful 'coming together' of groups or individuals.

Later, Sibley (1981:13) elaborates on the nature of the kind of outsider status that he thinks Travellers have, when he talks (following John Berger) of their having a different 'culture' from mainstream society in industrialised societies. By this he means that they have a different orientation towards and view of social change, in the widest sense, and the individual as part of that. He portrays Travellers as viewing their lives, and the goals of their lives, as protecting the essential elements of a way of life that they have been born into and will pass on in a world that always threatens to change or destroy it. These threats can be physical/natural or (as is overwhelmingly the case in contemporary Britain) socio-economic and politico-cultural. In this sense, being an outsider is a matter of having values, or more broadly a world-view, that diverge from the mainstream. In chapter two it will be pointed out that this understanding of the outsider draws in important respects on Becker's (1966) path-breaking discussion of the outsider. At this point it is simply pointed out that there is some research evidence and discussions in the literature that suggests that the values and world-views of Gypsies and Travellers may be beginning to converge with those of non-Gypsy-Travellers. This will be discussed more fully in chapter two, but examples are described by Greenfields when she discusses hybrid youth culture (2009) and inter-marriage between Travellers and non-Travellers (2010). She comments "one consequence of the long-established presence of Travellers in certain housing estates is that over time a considerable degree of social and cultural convergence between housed Travellers and their non-Traveller neighbours appears to be occurring. Despite the rhetoric of separateness (and indeed strong cultural preference amongst older people) for marriage between community members, there are signs of increasing rates of inter-marriage (or parenting relationships) with non-Travellers amongst both the current young adult generation and in some cases, their parents. Indeed, a number of young focus group participants were themselves in, or a born as the result of, 'mixed' relationships" (Greenfields, 2010: 67).

Sibley has been recognised as one of the leading academic authorities on Gypsies and Travellers, in both urban and rural settings, since the 1970s, as illustrated by his contributing pieces on Gypsies and Travellers to handbooks/handbook-style publications, notably Pile and

Thrift (2000) and Cloke et al (2006). Much of this influential work uses illustrations from, and analysis of, the Gypsies and Travellers lived experience to contribute to broad questions about the ways in which space becomes racialized and how this is maintained (through boundary formation and purification, for example), see, for example, Sibley, 1994 and 1998. It is striking that the notion of the outsider – central to his first book (Sibley, 1981), drops out of, or is certainly not developed in, his later work. Perhaps as a consequence, the number of citations of the first book as calculated by Google Scholar, 366 as of July 2020, is an order of magnitude less than that for his 1995 book that foregrounds the notion of spatial exclusion, which Google Scholar calculates as 4,266 as of July 2020. Philo (1986: 13) found the lack of attention among geographers for Sibley's (1981) work 'regrettable', and for his part explored a conception of the outsider in relation to socially marginalised groups that he was interested in. Yet his discussion does not draw on classic conceptions of the outsider such as Becker's (see chapter 2), and in any event, does not aim to take Sibley's ideas in relation to Gypsies and Travellers any further. The upshot is that a significant and potentially fruitful dimension of Sibley's conceptualisation of Gypsies and Travellers has remained unexplored for decades. This thesis aims to rectify this oversight.

This thesis addresses the overarching research question through investigating the nature of the face to face interactions of young Irish Travellers as they negotiate the potentially hostile urban environment outside of the Traveller sites. It looks at the lives of young Irish Travellers who attend a youth club in South London and focuses especially on their experiences of the city's streets and public transport, and also the experience of attending school. These are chosen because before Travellers begin working these are arguably the most significant day to day sites of encounters with non-Travellers, and the quality of these encounters should give some indication of whether Travellers are still outsiders, and/or wish to be outsiders.

Research has provided some insight into the lives Travellers on site and their engagement with the education system (for example, Bhopal, 2004; Lloyd and MckCluskey, 2008). However, there has been very little ethnographic research, where the researcher has engaged with a youth group of young Travellers over such an extensive period of time (eighteen months). This research contributes to a small body of literature on the lives of Irish Travellers

in the field of human geography. It broadens understanding of the lives of young Travellers living in a city, where they spend a significant amount of time off-site.

I first became interested in carrying out research with Gypsies and Travellers in the summer of 2014 whilst planning my undergraduate dissertation project. Through working with a large charity based in Cardiff which runs a Gypsy Traveller education project, I was able to gain insight into the barriers young Gypsies and Travellers face in schools in the UK. I was disappointed with their own limited understanding of Gypsy and Traveller culture and how often they had themselves seen and heard discrimination towards these communities in every-day life. With an interest in identity and ethnicity developing after completing my undergraduate dissertation in 2015, *(De)Racialised Places? A study of the interaction between Gypsy Traveller identity, policy and place in Wales*, I felt there were significant gaps in the literature which further research would develop.

This chapter will begin by considering the sometimes controversial issue of what constitutes a Gypsy or a Traveller. It then outlines, briefly, the history of hostility and prejudices Gypsies and Travellers have endured, before going on to delineate some key dimensions of Gypsy/Traveller life in Britain. It focuses on demography, accommodation and the nature and significance of the Traveller site. The chapter ends by reiterating the research questions and by outlining the structure of the thesis to demonstrate how these will be addressed.

1.1 Who are Gypsies and/or Travellers?

Ethnic categories are socially constructed, fluid, overlapping and overlaying, and are used in multiple ways in a variety of social contexts. This research project involves young people who self-identify as Irish Travellers, and would likely be so regarded by most if not all who have dealings with them. Irish Travellers are one grouping of many who fall under the 'Gypsy, Roma and Traveller' label. Cromarty (2019:9) comments that the term "'Gypsies and Travellers' is difficult to define as it does not constitute a single, homogenous group, but encompasses a range of groups with different histories, cultures and beliefs including: Romany Gypsies, Welsh Gypsies, Scottish Gypsy Travellers and Irish Travellers. There are also Traveller groups which are generally regarded as 'cultural' rather than 'ethnic' Travellers". Within the

literature, definitions for the groups vary substantially. However, there is general recognition that the terms are used with capital letters to denote their recognition as a Black and Minority Ethnic group. In a legal context, Gypsies have been recognised as an ethnic group since the Race Relations Act 1976, following the case of CRE v Dutton (19890 1 All ER 306) and Travellers since *O'Leary v Allied Domecq* in 2000 (Richardson, 2017).

There has been some discussion in the relevant literature within the social sciences regarding the grouping of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. Researchers have argued that this grouping creates difficulties and distinct tensions. Some researchers have discussed the problematic nature of homogenising these three, often very separate communities under the Gypsy, Roma, Traveller term (Bancroft, 2005; Brown and Scullion, 2010; Cudworth, 2015; Hamilton, 2016). Although Bancroft (2005) considers there to be two distinct groups that fall under the GRT acronym - Roma and Gypsy Travellers - this distinction is often not made within the literature and the groups are notably homogenised within policy initiatives. As Cudworth (2008: p.363) comments "in terms of educational policy, all such groups are identified under the generic title of Gypsy Travellers". Some researchers have commented on the conlicts between the groups, such as in Griffin's discussion where Irish Traveller do not identity with Romanies but "Romanies identified with Irish Travellers and reacted angrily to any non-Traveller suggestion that the two were somehow different or at odds with one another" (Griffin, 2002: 113). Although it cannot be ignored that there are particular cultural commonalities between these groups, this homogenisation creates concerns surrounding the needs of individuals from different groups across various settings. This is particularly so in the fields of health, accommodation, employment and education (Marcus, 2015), where it is vital to remember that Gypsies and Travellers are not a uniform group (Parekh, 2000). This thesis will remain aware of the diversity between the groups whilst using the term Irish Traveller to identify those who took part in the research. Although some researchers include 'New Age Travellers' (Kenrick and Clark, 2009) when discussing Travellers, this research does not include any New Age Travellers.

A commonly used legal definition from the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 s24 (as amended by the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 s80) states that Gypsies and Travellers are 'persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin'.

However, this definition raises debates that are significant to this thesis. The role and importance of nomadism has been central to arguments within this thesis and to some extent, in existing research. Instances of actual nomadism are declining (see Smith and Greenfields, 2013). This decline is very likely to have implications for the lives of young Travellers in modern Britain, and forms a context for this thesis. Recognising this decline, The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), as part of its consultation on updating Circular 1/94, adopted the following definition for Gypsies and Travellers:

"A person or persons who have a traditional cultural preference for living in caravans and who either pursue a nomadic habit of life or have pursued such a habit but have ceased travelling, whether permanently or temporarily, because of the education needs of their dependent children, or ill-health, old age or caring responsibilities (whether of themselves, their dependents living with them or the widows and widowers of such dependents) but does not include members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people, travelling together as such" (Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Sites, Consultation Paper, 2004: 11).

Although this definition is more inclusive of the current lives of Gypsies and Travellers living in the Britain today, perhaps most interestingly, it still acknowledges nomadism as the most central feature of Gypsy and Traveller life, albeit highlighted as somewhat of a historical feature. This definition confirms education as an increasingly important feature of Gypsy and Traveller life. This confirms the importance of spaces of education as off-site encounters for young Gypsy Travellers. Despite much of the research surrounding Gypsies and Travellers not making distinctions between the groups (as previously mentioned, often including Roma too), this thesis will focus on Irish Travellers in particular. The youth club that I worked with served young Irish Travellers who live on four sites near Peckham in South London. This allowed me to complete an in-depth study specific to those from Irish Traveller backgrounds. There will be further explanation into the decision to focus on the experiences of Irish Travellers in chapter three of this thesis.

1.2 The History of Gypsies and Travellers

It has long been recognised that there are significant gaps in mainstream society/the settled members of society's understanding and inclusion of the history of Gypsies and Travellers. As

Lucassen et al (2015: vii) comment, “only recently has the world become aware of the fact that hundreds of thousands of them [Gypsies] met the same horrendous fate as Jews and other Nazi victims between 1933 and 1945…we have tried to fill the gap in knowledge about the history of these groups”. They further these comments when they argue “for more than five centuries people have written about these groups as the ultimate aliens, who were supposedly a threat to society”.

Due to the gaps in the literature in the histories of Gypsies and Travellers, researchers are often left to rely on folklore and literature where they have been ‘lumped’ together with other vagrants (Lucassen et al, 2015). In light of this, it has generally been assumed that Gypsies come from a people originating from India (ibid). Drawing comparisons with this aforementioned history of Gypsies and Gypsy culture, it has been argued that there is very little “representation of the historically nomadic Irish Traveller minority in literature, a construct that has generally been referred to as the ‘tinker’” (Burke, 2009: 1). Burke (2009: 1) expands on this comment, when she states, “a chasm exists between any marginalised minority and its depiction in dominant culture, of course, but it is arguable that in the case of traditionally non-literate Travellers, the divergence between the image and the actual lives of members of the community has been particularly entrenched and particularly unexamined”. These researchers have argued, that similarly with other minority groups, Gypsy and Traveller histories have been left out and what remains is often critical and inaccurate.

There is a substantial history of persecution and victimisation for Gypsies and Travellers in both the UK and further afield in Europe. Zawadski (1948: 130) comments “in order to rationalise one’s hatred against a who group rather than against a single individual, the prejudiced person must resort to the use of stereotypes in his thinking”. For Travellers this is particularly pertinent where stereotypes and discrimination have been consistently used for many years. Mayall (1988: 3) comments “in the early decades of the century, the Travellers performed significant roles in the imperfect supply and demand conditions of the time, contributing goods and services to the economic and social life of the village. When the emphasis within the domestic economy shifted from the rural to the urban sector this role was exposed as an anachronisitic and unwanted vestige in economic development”. The lives and behaviours of Travellers has been seen as deviant and unwanted in the years since then

and many attempts have been made in recent years to 'settle' members of the communities and to encourage them to become members of 'ordered society' (Anderson, 2015). Griffin (2002: 114) furthers this discussion of the victimisation of Travellers and Traveller life when they comment "familism, opportunism and mobility combined have, in other words, charactersised Jewish and Gypsy adaption, and been a source of deep irritation to more sedentary peoples, and together with difference of culture and ritual have caused both to be made scapegoats time and time again. The same I would suggest, applies to Irish Travellers". Through opposing these attempts of assimilation, Gypsies and Travellers have faced spatial implications of their non-mainstream identities and in many cases have been pushed, or have chosen to reside, on the outskirts of towns and cities (MacLaughlin, 1998). Other members of society, particularly those who are not economically prosperous, also face this spatial rejection. As Nairn (2003) would suggest they are equally 'helpless' in relation to the nation-state, and have the majority of every day interactions with members of Gypsy and Traveller communities who also view them in particular kinds, of often negative ways. Many (for example Cole, 2009; McGarry, 2017) would accredit this to longstanding racism (often understood as anti-Gypsyism or Romaphobia) towards Gypsy and Travellers. As McGarry (2017) states, "Romaphobia is the last acceptable [form of] racism in Europe". Furthermore, this reinforces the euro-centric understanding of nationalism and the ways in which those who do not comply with traditional understandings of [British] national identity may not be supported in their own traditional ways of life.

There is a substantial body of literature surrounding the ways in which prominent aspects of Gypsy and Traveller identity, often defined as a focus on nomadism, hygiene, self-employment and clearly defined familial and gender relations and roles, continue to reinforce [historical] divides (Acton and Mundy, 2007). One of the most prominent areas in which Gypsies and Travellers have been discriminated, particularly historically, in is their nomadic lifestyle. Sibley (1997: 219) has argued, Gypsies and Travellers "have been discriminated against fairly consistently in rural areas for several centuries" and that they "explicitly reject mainstream values" (*ibid*).

Nomadism is considered central to the Gypsy and Traveller identity and those Gypsies and Travellers with varying degrees of nomadic lifestyles have strong connections with the

countryside which they consider an un(b)ordered and 'free' space. There have been considerable attempts to deliberately disallow Gypsies and Travellers from the countryside and significant site restrictions put in place in the last fifty years (Sibley, 1997; Thomas, 2000). However, some have disputed the rural tensions surrounding Gypsies and Travellers and the mainstream, instead suggesting that the long-established nature of Gypsy and Traveller life in the countryside has not threatened rural harmony until more recent years (Sibley, 1997). Instead, it has been suggested that the rural is the very place that Gypsies and Travellers belong and that there is no place for them in cities, which they view as places of constraint and immoral in the sense that they contradict values that are central to Gypsy and Traveller identity (Okely, 1983). This confirms the significance of Sibley's (1997: 220) argument which is slightly dismissive of this: "hostility towards Gypsies shows no particular spatial pattern…it has been just as strong in rural, suburban and inner-city areas, but they have been protected by the romantic myth". He agrees, however, that urban areas are definitely not comfortable locations for Gypsies and Travellers.

James (2007: 368) comments on the ways in which nomadism has increased tensions and hostility towards Gypsies and Travellers. She states "the relationship between Gypsies and Travellers and sedentary society has historically been difficult as the nomadism of Gypsies and Travellers contests the norms of sedentary living". Although their history of nomadism can be understood to have created a fundamental divide, there are many other features of the Gypsy and Traveller identity that continue to produce and reproduce further distinctions and substantial barriers to integration with mainstream society. In turn, this has led to greater policy focus on curbing traditional aspects of their lives, such as nomadism, to deal "with the 'problem' [as perceived by some] of Gypsies and Travellers" (James, 2007:368).

1.3 Demography of Gypsies and Travellers in the UK

Even with census data, it has been widely recognised that it is difficult to gain insight into the numbers of Gypsies and Travellers in the UK today due to nomadism and low levels of literacy in Gypsy Traveller communities which means that documents are not filled out correctly if at all (Cemlyn and Clark, 2005). In addition to this, census data does not make any distinctions between Gypsies and Travellers. However, current census data still allows some conclusions

to be drawn around the number of Gypsy and Travellers living in the UK. As Cromarty (2019: 9) comments "historically there has been a lack of robust data on Gypsy and Traveller communities. For the first time, the 2011 Census included an ethnic category to collect data on Gypsy, Traveller and Irish Traveller communities. In total, around 63,000 people in the UK identified themselves as members of these groups, of which 58,000 were living in England and Wales. The South-East region of England had both the largest number of Gypsies and Irish Travellers and the largest number per 10,000 people. However, other sources suggest the 2011 Census figures may be underestimates. Other researchers (for example, CRE, 2006; Smith and Greenfields (2013: 1) have estimated there are more likely to be 300,000 individuals living in the UK who fit into this category.

This thesis is focussed on the experiences and encounters that young people from Irish Traveller backgrounds face. One of the reasons behind this was to explore the changing attitudes of Travellers living in the UK, where it is acknowledged that the population has a young age profile. This is supported by census data. Cromarty (2019: 9) comments "in the 2011 Census the median age of Gypsies and Irish Travellers in England and Wales was 26 years compared to the national median of 39 years. Gypsies and Irish Travellers below 20 years of age accounted for 39% of the ethnic group compared to 24% in this age group for the overall population of England and Wales. 45% of Gypsy or Irish Traveller households had dependent children in 2011, well above the average for the whole of England and Wales (29%). This is consistent with the younger age profile of the ethnic group" (ibid).

Gender is also a central theme to this thesis. One of the primary reasons behind this is the role that gender and gender relations play within Traveller communities. This will be confirmed in the following chapters of this thesis. To gain some context for the numbers and importance of women within the community, the 2011 Census recorded equal numbers of men and women who identified themselves as Gypsy or Irish Traveller. This census recorded "20,500 households in England and Wales with a household reference person who identified as a Gypsy or Irish Traveller in the 2011 Census. The most common family household type was 'lone parent' at 24%, compared with 11% of all households in England and Wales. The second most common household type was 'married or same-sex civil partnership couple' at 23%, which was less than the 33% recorded for the population as a whole" (Cromarty, 2019:9). As this thesis will state in following chapter, many Irish Travellers are Catholic and traditional

gender roles are significant in the operation of the site and family life. This most recent census data records high numbers of single sex households which may suggest changing attitudes towards the role of women in family life and in the community. This thesis will explore these themes more thoroughly in later chapters.

1.4 Housing for Gypsies and Travellers

Traditionally in the UK, Gypsies and Travellers are found on caravan sites (both permanent and non-permanent). There is, historically, a stereotypical discourse amongst members of mainstream society which perceives Gypsy and Traveller communities to be illegal, dirty, sites consisting of caravans that are based in undesirable areas of towns and cities (as described in Richardson and Ryder, 2012). This draws on notions and stereotypes surrounding Gypsies who are sometimes viewed as 'coming and going as they please' with no regard for 'other' groups in society and the 'nuisance' that they are perceived to cause. In light of this, many Gypsy and Traveller communities have become more inward facing out of demonisation from the mainstream, evolving their own habitus to ensure their survival (Bourdieu, 1993b; Drakakis-Smith, 2007) where they are forced to inhabit marginal spaces, which can be understood as spatial defensive systems, which are safe from the 'menacing' outside world (Fraser, 1995; Levinson and Sparkes, 2004). Sibley (2000: 94) comments "Gypsy sites in Britain are rarely easy to find. One approach to a typical site in a northern city is by a footpath through a semi-derelict industrial estate" and such "the locale conveys in a tangible way the meaning of a 'residual space' and 'space of exclusion'" (Sibley, 2000: 95). This 'clash' in views and beliefs and the repercussions of this for the lives and lived identities of Travellers will become more evident throughout this thesis.

Due to the aforementioned decline in nomadism, there are increasingly more Travellers either choosing to, or being forced to live in 'mainstream' or 'settled' accommodation. Smith and Greenfields (2013: 1) comment "the majority of this population, as many as two thirds, are now believed to be living in 'bricks and mortar' housing". Some researchers have also argued that this move is a result of a series of structural and legislative changes which is making it increasingly difficult for Travellers to live on sites (Peach, 1975; Ratcliffe, 2009). As Greenfields and Smith (2010: 398) comment "despite the relentlessly pro-sedentary nature of policy towards Gypsies and Travellers (Cemlyn et al., 2009; McVeigh, 1997) recourse to a

repertoire of adaptive responses and coping mechanisms have allowed many to resist assimilation and reformulate an approximation of traditional communities within housing". Even for those Travellers who live on the site, Sibley illustrates the use of surveillance [by non-Travellers] on one Traveller site when he comments "at the entrance to the site…is a house trailer which provides a base for the gaje warden…it is positioned so that its large rear window looks out over 'Gypsy space' (Sibley, 2000: 95). He argues that this "surveillance by the warden and a book of rules tend to keep the adults indoors…or go to a pub where their Gypsyness is not a problem…only the children move freely from one space on the grid to another, oblivious to its disciplinary purpose" (*ibid*). This draws on themes surrounding the role of surveillance and control in public spaces that will arise more thoroughly in chapter two of this thesis.

Greenfields and Smith (2010: 398) have commented "while some [Gypsies and Travellers], especially the elderly and those with health problems, have willingly exchanged the hardship of roadside or site life for running water and heating, the pace of transfer from sites into public sector housing has also been driven by the shortage of official sites, difficulties gaining planning permission for private sites and the virtual outlawing of nomadism following the 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act". Several researchers have reported Gypsies and Travellers referring bitterly to the fact that 'it isn't possible to travel any longer' or 'they won't let us live how we want' (Niner, 2003: 57; see also Clark & Greenfields, 2006). "In some localities as many as 75 per cent of housed respondents reported having moved into 'bricks and mortar' due to site shortage and a lack of suitable alternative accommodation" (Greenfields and Smith, 2010: 398). It has also been acknowledged that some Gypsies and Travellers have been forced to enter bricks and mortar housing primarily to gain access to healthcare and education (Greenfields and Smith, 2010; 2013). This supports the earlier suggestion that structural factors are prohibiting Travellers from living a traditional way of life, as Greenfields and Smith (2010: 403) comment "decisions over accommodation are made in the context of significant barriers in accessing public services such as widespread reluctance to accept nomadic children by schools, and a refusal by many GPs to register Gypsies and Travellers without a permanent address".

For the purpose of this research, the nature of accommodation of Travellers is significant as it allows conclusions to be drawn surrounding encounters and experiences of Travellers off-site. Some (for example, Vanderback, 2003) have argued that this 'settling' has encouraged cultural disadvantage and confusion amongst Gypsies and Travellers, and especially the youngest members of Gypsy and Traveller communities, who are unsure of 'where they fit in'. Young Gypsies and Travellers continue to face disadvantage in various areas of their lives and in particular, in line with the focus of this study, in public spaces and schools. Although they are monitored by, and have their cultural needs considered by local education authorities, they continually underachieve in schools and face significant discrimination.

1.5 The Significance of the Traveller Site

The site is recognised as a highly significant space within Travellers communities. Many researchers (Acton, 1997; Sibley, 2009) have confirmed the importance of the spatiality and the social organisation of the site. Traveller sites are spaces where Travellers are allowed to generally live their lives in line with traditional Traveller values in both a social and an economic sense. Although sites are often monitored by the council, Travellers are often able to keep pets and sometimes horses; collect scrap metals and other forms of traditional jobs; adhere to rules surrounding dirt and cleanliness; and maintain traditional familial and gender roles. From adulthood (considered to be from age fourteen onwards) it is generally accepted that women from Gypsy and Traveller communities are expected to prepare for family life by spending their time cooking and cleaning in the caravan, in line with traditional Gypsy and Traveller values (Cudworth, 2008; Helleiner, 2007). At this age, boys are instead expected to begin working in traditional forms of employment such as bricklaying or collecting scrap metal (Okely, 1983). This confirms the significance of gender in the spatial organisation of Gypsy and Traveller sites and indeed, their wider lives. This spatial organisation is often not spoken about between family members, instead being a principle that is assumed based upon traditional values. Returning to Sibley's earlier comments on the increase in surveillance on Traveller sites, he comments that "on the site, the inside of the trailer is all that is left of Gypsy space, a space where Gypsies decide what is clean and what is polluting" (Sibley, 2000: 95).

This raises further internal tensions for some Gypsies and Travellers who as previously mentioned, are forced to live in permanent housing for reasons outside of their control. These "Travellers in houses and static mobile homes will not generally be able to have the structures adapted to follow traditional notions of where hygiene facilities are placed" (Greenfields and Home, 2007: p.141). This confirms the importance of the physical places and the associated rules and codes surrounding where food should be handled and prepared, animals should be kept and hands should be washed and waste should be disposed of. Even for those Gypsies and Travellers who are unable to adhere to specific traditional notions of this hygiene code, many will still follow aspects of it in line with their moral beliefs (Greenfields and Home, 2007).

For the purpose of this research, the site will be used as a comparative 'space' in which Travellers are often able to feel comfortable and express their 'Traveller identity'. In this sense, this research will discuss the ways in which public spaces, including schools are places that are not like the site and lead to particular kinds of encounters and with further implications arising from this. As Sibley (2000: 96) comments, for non-Travellers "the conflict between nomad and house-dweller has been won and the Gypsy settlement behind high walls signifies no more than a refuse tip, something arguably necessary but undesirable and best located elsewhere, in a place where it does not disturb the comfortable order of suburban life". The significance of the site, as raised in the literature, will be discussed in depth in chapter three of this thesis. This implications of this, and leaving the site, for the young Travellers involved in this research will be discussed in chapter four and chapter five.

1.6 Gypsies, Travellers and Academic Disciplines

Existing scholarly interest and research surrounding Gypsies and Travellers extends across many academic and policy-related disciplines, notably Romani Studies (e.g. Tremlett, 2009; Vajda, 2015), Anthropology (e.g. Okely, 1983; Griffin, 2002; Stewart, 2013), Ethnic and Racial Studies (e.g. Sigona, 2005; Smiths and Greenfields, 2006; Messing, 2014), Sociology (e.g. Levinson, 2015; Powell and Lever, 2017), Social Policy (McGarry, 2012; Gould, 2015), Housing Studies (e.g. Richardson, 2006; Dufty-Jones, 2012), Planning (e.g. Bancroft, 2000; Thomas, 2004; Ellis and McWhirter, 2008) and Law (e.g. James, 2007; Home, 2012). Stewart (2013:416)

confirms this cross-disciplinary interest in Gypsy, Roma and Travellers communities when he states “the field of Romany studies is now respectably represented within anthropology and empirical sociology, and indeed across the social science spectrum by full-time academics in most countries of Europe (as evidenced by the newly created network of Romany expertise assembling more than 200 scholars)”. This research draws selectively on existing literature as appropriate but sits within Human Geography, where there has also been a consistent research interest in Gypsies and Travellers (for example, Holloway, 2005; Shubin and Swanson, 2010; Kabachnik, 2009). In particular, this research focusses on and is framed in relation to encounter within cities, with particular reference to its emotional dimension. In particular, this research adds to the encounter literature, which Schuermans (2019: 350) illustrates as the ground between shared space and effect leading to ‘not necessarily positive’ outcomes. In doing this, the thesis also contributes to discussions about whether and how Travellers may be regarded as ‘outsiders in urban society’.

The original contribution of this research is that it addresses questioning of Sibley’s broad characterisation of Travellers and does this by exploring how young Travellers experience off-site [and therefore public] spaces in London. Furthermore, it explores what wider implications these experiences and the encounters that are embedded within them have on the lives of young Irish Travellers. Within the field of geography, there is existing research which explores the encounters that occur in public spaces for young people (see Kraftl, 2019). The existing research concerned with Irish Travellers looks at sites and the home, recognised as highly important places in the formation of Traveller identity and culture. There is very little research which explores life off-site, in public spaces. This literature available is often confined to schools. Furthermore, there is a significant gap in research surrounding the experiences of young Travellers who live on sites in London and who do not travel and, therefore, attend school regularly.

1.7 The History of the Research

As previously mentioned, the interest and planning of this research began a number of years ago. As I learnt more about the Traveller community, this interest grew and developed into the general aim to explore the experiences of education for Gypsies and Travellers and how this relates to notions of national identity and citizenship. It was decided that this study would

be carried out in secondary schools in London, partially due to my interest in how this would differ from previous research carried out in South and West Wales. One of the main reasons behind this was the interest in national identity and how this would be perceived by and whether these ideas would be adopted by young Gypsies and Travellers living in the multicultural capital city.

I understood the [potential] difficulties with accessing young Gypsies and Travellers to participate in this research due to previous experience with working with the groups. Therefore, I began making investigations into how these access issues would be overcome, within the first six months of starting the PhD. I began by contacting charities and organisations who are based in London and work with Gypsies and Travellers. A number of these stated they would be unable to help as they did not have the time or resources. However, one organisation was particularly keen to meet. The charity is based in Southwark and works with Irish Travellers of all ages in a number of key areas. This organisation will be discussed in more depth in chapter three of this thesis. It was agreed that I would volunteer for the organisation's youth club as they needed more adults to fulfil the ratio of those supervising children. In return for this, I would be able to talk to the children who regularly attend the youth club and obtain the contact details of key informants in the borough. It was agreed that I would also have the opportunity to provide assistance in rolling out a cultural awareness training scheme in schools. It became apparent that the charity was facing considerable pressures. These included financial pressures and the fact that members of staff were often only able to work at the organisation for short periods of time. Therefore, the cultural awareness training scheme did not progress. I contacted in excess of twenty local schools with virtually no responses; as this procress was unfolding I was considering ways of reframing a research focus for the PhD research. Fortunately, it was clear that I was accumulating a wealth of research data that could help address questions that related to a major Geographical intervention in the field (in the case of Sibley) and expand understanding of the lives of young Travellers by drawing on the research literature on the mobilisation of emotion in encounters.

Throughout volunteering with the organisation, for a period of eighteen months, I was able to build relationships with staff members and young people. I had been recording ethnographic notes from all of the youth club sessions they had attended and all of the trips

into London and the surrounding areas. I became increasingly interested in the kinds of encounters that the young Irish Travellers were faced with and their [often] obliviousness to these encounters. It was decided that this thesis would explore some of the ideas around the encounters that young Irish Travellers are facing in London today and what wider implications this might have in terms of belonging and feeling at home. This led to the development of the research questions with which the chapter opened.

1.8 The Structure of the Thesis and Chapter Outline

Chapter 2 will form a critical analysis of relevant existing literature. The literature has acknowledged the importance of the interactions and encounter that occur in public spaces. Within this, it has confirmed that these encounters, which can be both positive and negative, shape the space and the individuals within them (Wilson, 2014; 2016). Existing research has confirmed the unique, hostile and sometimes insular nature of Traveller identity which has an important spatial element. In line with this, the site is a key space for the production and reproduction of Traveller identity (Sibley, 2019). The literature has also suggested that Travellers are increasingly forced to negotiate a life more embedded with that of mainstream society, one which will include venturing into particular kinds of public spaces. The lacuna in this field has arisen as a result of the existing literature neglecting how the encounters that occur off-site, in public spaces, are experienced by and impact young Travellers. Research questions were formed with the purpose building on existing academic literature. In answering the research questions, this thesis will explore the off-site encounters of young Irish Travellers living, and going to school, in South London.

Chapter 3 will discuss the research design and methods used in this study. A case study approach was used for this research to explore the experiences of young Irish Travellers who attend a youth club in South London. The youth club is near to the sites where they live and where they go to school. A qualitative approach has been adopted. Eighteen months of ethnographic field-notes form the majority of this research but also focus groups and both unstructured and semi-structured interviews have also been conducted. These will be used to triangulate (Bryman, 2012) data collected which will then be coded for analysis. There is a substantial discussion of ethical considerations in this chapter as research was carried out with young people from a Traveller background. These focus on consent to participate in the

research and confidentiality and the particular sensitivies surrounding these when carrying out research with young people.

Chapter 4 will discuss the geographical context of this study. This chapter will firstly provide more information on the wider borough of Southwark. It will then discuss the sites in Southwark that the young Travellers and their families live on. In doing this, it will briefly discuss the community centre, where the youth club meet, and its proximity to the sites and other key sites such as public transport facilities. This will be further illustrated through the use of a map. It will then discuss the schools that the young Travellers attend and include some maps to illustrate the proximity of these schools to the sites. Lastly, this chapter will include a list and short biography for each of the young people and staff members who took part in this research, whose names have been anonymised.

Chapter 5 will answer the first of the research questions through an analysis of the data collected drawing on key themes that arose from ethnographic observation and the responses from participants that were recorded during interviews and focus groups. This chapter will primarily draw on evidence from the ethnographic field-notes that were recorded during eighteen months of working with the youth group. This observation included trips into central London and working in youth group sessions which took place in a community centre in South-East London. This chapter will focus on the trips into central London, including the use of public transport. This chapter will illustrate the hostile encounter that the young Travellers faced and explores their responses to these encounters. In doing this, this chapter draws conclusions on whether young Travellers can still be considered outsiders.

Chapter 6 will answer the second of the research questions through an analysis of the data collected drawing on key themes that arose from ethnographic observation and the responses from participants that were recorded during interviews and focus groups. This chapter will primarily focus on the data collected during focus groups and both unstructured and semi-structured interviews that took place in the community centre in which the youth club met. This chapter will explore the notion that the school is a public space, imbued with encounters, tensions, interactions and emotions. This chapter will evidence particular forms of hostility that the young Travellers face whilst in school and their responses to this. It also

explores the aspirations that young Travellers have in relation to education and the important role that gender has within this. In doing this, it explores whether there is any evidence that young Travellers are moving away from, or being alienated from, the values and aspirations of their families. Ultimately, it will explore whether there is any evidence that young Travellers are still outsiders.

Chapter 7 will conclude this thesis through summarising the findings and returning to the research questions. It is evident that the young Irish Travellers who participated in this research are confident and accustomed to many of the interactions and encounters that occur in the public spaces they regularly visit. Despite negative encounters occurring in some of these public spaces, such as public transport and public parks, the young people were largely unaware or unaffected. However, despite an arguable increased integration into the mainstream education, the school is largely recognised as a place of potential tensions and unwelcomed encounters. Furthermore, it is evident that the relationship between [young] Irish Travellers and places of education, including authority figures, is complex and has repercussions on their views of the purpose of education and how this relates to aspiration.

Summary

In answering the research questions, this thesis explores how young Travellers experience off-site [and therefore public] spaces in London. Furthermore, it explores what wider implications these experiences and the encounters that are embedded within them have on the lives of young Irish Travellers. In assessing whether young Travellers can still be considered outsiders, this thesis will explore whether these encounters and adhering (or not) to norms in public and semi-public spaces such as school have any wider implications on how the young Travellers see themselves. The following chapter will form a critical analysis of relevant existing literature.

2. A Review of the Literature: Irish Travellers, Encounter and Schools

2.1 Introduction

As discussed in chapter one, this thesis examines the way that young Travellers experience and negotiate their world beyond the Traveller site. This chapter develops a framework for beginning to understand the lives of young British Travellers in general and the nature of their encounters beyond the Travellers site. This will help in understanding what being an outsider in urban society might involve in terms of day to day encounters. It pays particular attention to the way that these encounters evoke and involve the mobilisation of emotion. In order to do this the chapter will be split into three main sections. These address: Travellers, hostility and being outsiders; encounter beyond the Travellers site; and the school system as a place of encounter. This chapter will begin by exploring the relationship that Travellers have had and continue to have with non-Travellers. Then it will explore 'sites' of encounter and how non-Traveller spaces create particular kinds of encounters and emotions. Lastly, the concept of the connection between education and the state will be explored. In doing this, the ways in which the school (a non-Traveller space) can be a site of particular kinds of encounters for non-Travellers will be investigated. This chapter will demonstrate that there are likely to be particular kinds of tensions for Travellers in spaces that are not considered Traveller spaces. This chapter concludes by suggesting that there is a lacuna in the literature as to how young Travellers experience off-site spaces and what wider implications that these experiences and the encounters that are embedded within them have on the lives of young Irish Travellers. This thesis will begin to address this gap in knowledge.

2.2 Travellers, Hostility and Being Outsiders

The first section of this chapter will discuss current literature surrounding the ways in which Travellers are seen as outsiders. This thesis argues that there is a gap in the literature

surrounding whether Travellers can still be considered outsiders. The following sections frame Travellers as at some social distance from non-Travellers in the way they perform their Traveller identities and are seen in both the policy and everyday sense by non-Travellers.

2.2.1 Travellers and Hostility

The previous chapter not only identified the ways in which Irish Travellers are defined and seen by others but also the key features of their culture and identities. This chapter will firstly identify the ways in which these features and values are sometimes at odds with those of non-Travellers and then the ways in which this may provoke hostility. Much of the existing research concerned with the lives of Travellers suggests they are hostile to non-Travellers and considered outsiders in many aspects of their lives. This hostility is often found to be reciprocated by non-Travellers, whom some have considered to be uncomfortable with the cultural values and boundaries (both cultural and spatial) that are in place in Traveller communities.

Outside of these safe and ontologically comfortable spaces, notably the trailer site, Travellers are forced to negotiate sometimes frightening, and often uncomfortable places, where there are longstanding tensions between Gypsies and Travellers and actors from these institutions and other members of society. These spaces might include, schools, parks, and public transport. This leads to many Gypsies and Travellers feeling 'out of place' (Cudworth, 2008; Sibley, 2009). Within the school setting for example, Lloyd and McCluskey (2008: 335) argue that this is a result of exclusion, which in schools occurs particularly at the secondary stages where there often is "low attainment, disproportionate disciplinary exclusion, racist harassment and bullying, a lack of continuity of work, interrupted learning, inconsistent/often inadequate support, problems with multiple registration and the failure of schools to pass on records/evidence of attainment".

Some have argued that there is an inherent spatiality to the lives of Travellers and in particular, the site. Thus, it has been suggested that hostility between Travellers and non-Travellers extends to the home and the communities within which Travellers live. It has been suggested that neighbourhoods may be generally 'porous' (Bissell, 2013) but Traveller sites

are not ones that invite non-residents to enter. Conversely, there are few if any material indications that suggest Travellers are welcome to roam freely in the city beyond the site. But of course, daily life requires precisely such boundary crossing (Anderson, 2012). The practice of mobility for Travellers in 21st Century Britain crucially involves having to negotiate the world beyond their segregated trailer sites for work, education, health care and entertainment. In doing this, public transport is important, particularly in large cities such as London, where it is essential for those Travellers who live on sites in central locations, not easily accessible by car. Public transport is a significant site for socio-spatial encounter (Mattioli, 2014) meaning that young Travellers face the challenge of coming up against the world of non-Travellers. This is a world that they will have been told by family and other Travellers is prejudiced against Travellers and also morally deficient in many respects (Acton and Mundy, 1997; Braid, 2002).

Sibley (1982) points out that some non-Travellers view Travellers as unproductive and dirty. When Travellers venture from their sites, they can be perceived as crossing a border and it may be that some they encounter will wish "to perpetuate the ordering of culture, and the bordering of place, keeping some behaviours and people in one place, and out of another" (Anderson, 2012: 58; Leitner, 2012). Boyer argues that if individuals who 'are not welcome' in these ordered and bordered places cross these boundaries they are met with 'tutting', 'funny looks' and 'filthy looks' (Boyer, 2012). This draws on Conradson's (2012: 16) argument that "to move between places is thus to transition between different ecologies of people, bodies and things". In this sense, those who can be seen to 'not belong' in a certain place are met with a physical reaction of discomfort or disagreement which is likely to result in awkwardness or uneasiness of the individual(s) in question (Urry, 2005). This physical reaction of discomfort is, I argue, part of a strategy of controlling and shaping behaviour that is regarded as deviant. However, how it might influence Travellers, particularly young Travellers, is not a question with an obvious answer. Although researchers have been exploring the lives of Gypsies and Travellers for many years, there has been little attention paid to their mobility in everyday public spaces. Still less has there been awareness of the importance of, and place for, embodiment and emotion in the ways Gypsies and Travellers can be seen to experience discomfort within their everyday lives and the places and spaces where this discomfort may occur. This is a significant omission for a group for whom outsider

status, a radical othering, has been – for different reasons on each side of the relationship - an accepted mode of existence. It is an especially significant omission at a time when there are suggestions that Travellers may be seeking to engage more fully, albeit selectively, with aspects of regulated modern urbanity.

One of the dominant features of Traveller identity emphasises the importance of the spatiality of the site. Contrary to the beliefs of some members of settled society and those of negative political and public discourse cleanliness is one of the dominant features of Gypsy Traveller identity. Some (for example, Foley, 2010) have commented on the ways in which this focus on hygiene (and the unhygienic notions surrounding the 'other') has both symbolic and spatial connotations that can sometimes be seen to overlap. In this sense, sites are particularly significant as places that have clearly defined areas for certain activities including the disposal of waste. There is a significant body of literature that draws on the two [morally] significant ideas of *'mochadi'* (pollution) and *'wuzho'* (clean) for Gypsies and Travellers (Acton et al, 1997; Greenfields and Home, 2000; Weyrauch and Bell, 2001). Women are considered the upholders of physical and moral hygiene in the 'homespace' (Kendall, 1997), whether that is a caravan or a more permanent structure (Greenfields and Home, 2007). This raises further internal tensions for some Gypsies and Travellers, who as previously mentioned, are forced to live in permanent housing for reasons outside of their control. These "Travellers in houses and static mobile homes will not generally be able to have the structures adapted to follow traditional notions of where hygiene facilities are placed" (Greenfields and Home, 2007: 141). This confirms the importance of the physical places and the associated rules and codes surrounding where food should be handled and prepared, animals should be kept and hands should be washed and waste should be disposed of. Even for those Gypsies and Travellers who are unable to adhere to specific traditional notions of this hygiene code, many will still follow aspects of it in line with their cultural and moral beliefs (Greenfields and Home, 2007). These strict codes of conduct surrounding cleanliness complicate boundary crossing and 'mixing' with settled communities are but one feature of the Traveller identity which may be seen to give way to difficult encounters and interactions when modern-day Travellers are forced to engage with mainstream society. Many researchers (for example, Acton and Mundy, 1997; Belton, 2004; Bhopal, 2010) have discussed the ways that Travellers cultural values are

often seen at odds with that of mainstream society and that this gives way to fear in Traveller communities surrounding 'mixing' with other communities and cultures.

2.2.2 Traveller Folklore about Hostility and the Gorgio

As previously mentioned researchers have commented on the causes of Traveller's hostility towards non-Travellers. This is long-standing and often a result of a history of discrimination against Travellers, and shared memories of hostility. The lower literacy rates that are found within Gypsy and Traveller communities have resulted in many of the stories of discrimination and abuse being passed down by word of mouth from older generations to younger ones. This oral tradition allows their subcultural identity to be maintained and to minimise contact with gadje culture (McLaughlin, 1980).

Following on from the previous discussion surrounding Traveller identity and the significance of the physical spaces through which the code of hygiene is inherent to Gypsy and Traveller life, many have also affirmed the importance of the symbolic notions of *'mochadi'* and what this (threat of pollution) means for Gypsy and Traveller communities (Douglas, 1966; Foley, 2010). In this sense, pollution is seen as dangerous and impure and can "create symbolic patterns and construct meanings of accepted behaviour" allowing pollution to be seen as a symbol of social order and solidarity (Foley, 2010: 22). For Gypsies and Travellers, the body is a site of pollution, with the inner body representing their ethnic identity and the outer body their public self that is presented to mainstream society or the 'Gorger world' (Okely 1983; Griffin, 2002; Foley, 2010). This helps explain the fear amongst Gypsy and Traveller communities towards too close an interaction with the outside world. Gypsies and Travellers are afraid of the ways in which members of mainstream society may contaminate their outer bodies. This has consequences for the ways in which Gypsies and Travellers will interact with mainstream society, confirming the aforementioned arguments of academics surrounding the integration of Gypsies and Travellers in mainstream education. Gypsies and Travellers are conscious of the interaction of their children with others (for example, non-Travellers, who are viewed as immoral) in schools. This also has consequences for the housing provision of Gypsies and Travellers who some have argued, create symbolic boundaries with the outside world (Okely, 1983; Foley, 2010). These symbolic boundaries can often be seen to take a

physical nature where Gypsies and Travellers inhabit very separate spaces. Building on this, Kendall (1997: p.83) confirms the importance of maintaining the homespace as *'wuzho'* through his suggestion that this "is a method of cultural survival and resistance for the marginal group…somewhere that Traveller women can restore their dignity, providing a safe spatial area in which to learn to love and respect their culture outside the hostility of the sedentary culture". Foley (2010) has argued that this, in turn, strengthens the ethnic identity and notions of community amongst groups of Gypsies and Travellers who are, therefore, able to add weight to their own cultural identities and the moral codes and values that have developed out of this.

Although Travellers may refer to others as the 'settled' community, the term gorgio or gadje (there are many variations on this spelling) is often the term used by Gypsies and Travellers when referring to non-Travellers. This term, which for perhaps obvious reasons features less in the media, is the equivalent to 'pikey' in terms of being pejorative. This sense of this term which has certain connotations and implications for interactions between non-Travellers and Travellers which can be seen in the example (as well as some of the potential implications for non-Traveller researchers venturing into the gendered world of Travellers) provided by Okely, 2005: 691):

> "The first evening there was a knock on my door and a handsome male Traveller came in. He was holding his young child in his arms. My first naïve reaction was 'Good. Here is someone to interview'. But his charming smiles and ambivalence signalled something else. I was in my twenties and apparently a single woman and the carrier of the stereotypes of gorgio women as sexually uncontrolled and available (Okely, 1975). Eventually, I asked if his wife knew he was there"

Okely's comments not only support the notion that Travellers have negative views of non-Travellers, but also highlight the inherent gendered and spatialised nature of the Traveller identity, where 'gorgio' women are different to Traveller women and that this 'boundary crossing' is complex.

2.2.3 The Portrayal of Travellers in the Media

Travellers have long been the focus of negative media coverage, often portrayed as dirty and aggressive. Richardson (2014: 51) comments, "Roma, Gypsies and Travellers in Britain are marginalised in society and often the subject of negative discourse in media and political debate". Some have commented on this portrayal, with Morris (2013: 214) suggesting "those who write and speak of Gypsies and Travellers often do not know them, and therefore often do not present a complete or balanced picture". Although Oleaque (2014) has ascertained that a rise in numerous forms of media has allowed Gypsies and Travellers to portray themselves more accurately and disrupt the patterns of stereotyping, they also suggest that there are xenophobic undertones to media representations of Gypsies and Travellers which reproduce their exclusion from society. Powell (2008) affirms that although the media are complicit with reproducing the negative stereotyping of Travellers, they are not the root cause and that there are larger structural issues in the dehumanizing of gypsies and Travellers. Despite this, slurs such as pikey, which are traditionally used towards Gypsies and Travellers, are often used to refer to members of these groups in media coverage (as confirmed by Bartlett et al, 2014). In addition to this, pikey has been considered a common or casualised slur, often used in media coverage and on social media and therefore, further normalising it in everyday language (Bartlett et al 2014). Richardson (2014) argues that 'whistle words' are used in the media when referring to these marginalised groups (with a particular focus on Roma) which increase community frictions and show these communities negatively. They comment that these whistle words "seem to grab the public imagination in the selection, distortion and rearticulation of Roma, Gypsy and Traveller as 'other' and indeed, not welcome" (Richardson, 2014: 61).

Richardson (2004,2017) has conducted a significant amount of research into the role that political and public discourse plays in shaping non-Traveller opinions and treatment of Gypsies and Travellers in the UK. She argues that although there is some positive portrayal of the groups in the media (Bowers and Benjamin, 2004; Barkham, 2004) the majority of negative coverage revolves around the cost of dealing with planning appeals and unauthorised sites. In this sense, it could be argued that the importance for Travellers of maintaining the spatial boundaries between them and the 'other' can be seen to perpetuate

and heighten the discrimination. Perhaps most importantly, those who have conducted research into the difficult hostility Travellers face from mainstream society is the notion that they are subject to negative discriminatory discourse that would not be acceptable against other Black and Minority Ethnic communities (Asthana, 2004; Richardson, 2017). Richardson comments (2017: p.3) "discourse can be used as a tool to control those who refuse to conform to societal norms…discourse can be controlling but it is perhaps more the actions that discriminatory discourse can lead to that are the real mechanisms of control". This draws on discussions surrounding stability and the state (Giddens, 1985) where it is seen that Travellers are disrupting societal norms, there will be further discrimination and hostility. Members of mainstream society are likely to react negatively towards a group who are defying the norms that they follow and that can be seen to provide stability to the state and the 'common citizenry'. In line with the aforementioned public discourse, Travellers who decide to cross the boundaries that they themselves have enforced and reinforced are likely to face negativity and are subject to uncomfortable encounters with a society who only see the negative portrayal of Travellers.

2.2.4 Can Travellers still be seen as Outsiders in Urban Society?

The earlier discussion which suggests there is significant hostility between Travellers and non-Travellers is consistent with Sibley's (2009) comment that Travellers have long been recognised as outsiders in urban society. The term outsider here is used with the dual meaning that Becker (1966) deployed in his classic study. An outsider is a person 'who [in the judgment of the insiders'] cannot be trusted to live by the rules agreed on by the group' (Becker, 1966: 1). Such as person may be labelled deviant. In addition, from the perspective of the deviant, the (insider) group that is so labelling her/him may be regarded as outsiders because the group is not regarded 'as either competent or legitimately entitled' to judge the behaviour of the so-called deviant (Becker, 1966: 9). An example of this dynamic, which will be discussed later in this chapter, is disaffected young working-class men being regarded as disruptive and troublesome by their school and its teachers, who in turn regard the school's value system, and the teachers who enforce it, as morally bankrupt and illegitimate (Willis, 1977). Gale and Thomas (2021) argue, "In their day to day routines and the ways in which they sustain themselves, as well as in the popular images of them developed over centuries

and rarely challenged politically, Gypsies and Travellers are incompatible with currently dominant conceptions of the modern. In that sense, they remain 'Outsiders in Urban Society', despite showing a remarkable degree of economic flexibility and adaptability over many years".

Sibley's (1981) text is central to this thesis. The ways in which Sibley acknowledges Gypsies and Travellers as outsiders in this text has been assessed throughout this thesis and arguments have been made as to whether Gypsies and Travellers can still be considered 'Outsiders in Urban Society'. Sibley builds on Becker's (1966) notions of the outsider in his text, arguing "in order to obtain an appropriate perspective on the problem, it is necessary to look at changes in the economy and social structure of the outsider group as they are affected by processes operating in the dominant social system" (Sibley, 1981; vi). This text is particularly pertinent for this thesis due to the focus on "urban areas, because it is in the city that conflict is most acute and where the presence of a non-conforming minority is most likely to be a political issue…there is the possibility of confrontations involving large numbers of people" (Sibley, 1981: viii). Although this thesis acknowledges the importance of Sibley's claims in developing its key arguments, the changes in attitudes towards and within Traveller communities that have been recognised in this and other chapters of this thesis can be seen to impact on whether Gypsies and Travellers can still be considered outsiders. This will be discussed in depth in chapter seven.

The overarching research question considers whether the young Travellers studied in this research matched Sibley's (1981) assertions about the outsider status of Gypsies and Travellers in the UK. From this we can begin to generalise about whether Travellers should still be considered outsiders in the present day and thus, whether Sibley's conclusions can still be considered to hold. Although Sibley uses the term 'travellers' in his book rather than Gypsies, at the time of the publication of the book, the word Gypsy was widely considered to be discriminatory. Despite this, Sibley occasionally uses the terms interchangeably. As previously mentioned, this thesis is concerned with the interactions of young Irish Travellers. However, due to their shared histories and the more recent developments in the terminology used towards Gypsies and Travellers, Sibley's arguments should still be considered relevant, and significant, for this thesis. What, then, is an 'outsider'?

Sibley argued that “groups …identified as outsiders … are peripheral in the sense that there is a considerable social distance between them and the majority – there is little or no social interaction – and this social gulf is usually, but not necessarily reinforced by spatial separation” (1981: 4). This definition, if unqualified, suggests that as social interaction (which we might also term ‘encounter’) increases so being an outsider slips away. This has an initial plausibility, and may explain why accounts of Traveller children attending school more regularly, or Traveller families living for a number of years in bricks and mortar housing are taken as evidence of better integration with ‘settled’ society (Smith and Greenfields, 2013). But as the literature on encounter points out, and everyday life can confirm, coming into contact and having to have some kind of social interaction does not necessarily mean that there is any meaningful ‘coming together’ of groups or individuals.

Later, Sibley (1981:13) elaborates on the nature of the kind of outsider status that he thinks Travellers have when he talks (following John Berger) of their having a different ‘culture’ from mainstream society in industrialised societies. By this he means that they have a different orientation towards and view of social change, in the widest sense, and the individual as part of that. He portrays Travellers as viewing their lives, and the goals of their lives, as protecting the essential elements of a way of life that they have been born into and will pass on in a world that always threatens to change or destroy it. These threats can be physical/natural or (as is overwhelmingly the case in contemporary Britain) socio-economic and politico-cultural. In this sense, being an outsider is a matter of having values, or more broadly a world-view, that diverges from the mainstream. This understanding of being an outsider is consistent with Becker’s (1966) formulation.

Some researchers have suggested that Gypsies and Travellers can no longer be considered outsiders as Greenfields (2010: 67) comments “one consequence of the long-established presence of Travellers in certain housing estates is that over time a considerable degree of social and cultural convergence between housed Travellers and their non-Traveller neighbours appears to be occurring. Despite the rhetoric of separateness (and indeed strong cultural preference amongst older people) for marriage between community members, there are signs of increasing rates of inter-marriage (or parenting relationships) with non-Travellers amongst both the current young adult generation and in some cases, their parents. Indeed a

number of young focus group participants were themselves in, or born as the result of, 'mixed' relationships". Greenfields (2010: 63) explains that for those Travellers who have "spent the majority of their lives in housing, adherence to an approximation of their elders' internalised world view and the importation of their own experiences and expectations of hostility towards Gypsy and Traveller culture can lead to an inward-looking model of *'being a Traveller',* dependent upon highly-bonded social networks with members of their own communities, often avoiding interactions with agencies and individuals which could enhance their 'bridging capital' but which are identified as leading to a risk of becoming *'gorjified"'* (Greenfields, 2010, Gale and Thomas, 2021).

It is clear that in many instances, for Travellers, being outsiders is not a romantic notion. Instead, as noted above, it is one which is surrounded by racialised injustices and leads these communities to be disadvantaged and face significantly worse outcomes in almost every area of their lives, including education and healthcare. That said, research with Travellers over decades has demonstrated that their lives and identities are based around distinct cultural values, to which mobility and nomadism are central (e.g. Acton and Mundy, 1997; Richardson and Ryder, 2012). As previously mentioned, these values are often at odds with those of the societal norms, and therefore, further complicate boundary crossing. These boundaries include those between the Traveller site and particular kinds of public space such as schools, parks and public transport.

As previously mentioned, one of the primary reasons for hostility is the role that nomadism plays in the lives of Travellers, which results in the discomfort of others who feel as though this disrupts societal norms. However, today it has been noted that the vast majority of UK Travellers do not actually travel seasonally or nomadically, traditionally seen as one of the most prominent features of the Traveller identity and one which has faced significant disapproval from the state. This decline is in part because of the decline in seasonal and traditional forms of employment and also the growing recognition of the importance of education (e.g. basic literacy and numeracy skills) resulting in Travellers leading more 'settled' lives so that education of children is not disrupted (Okely, 1983). This has led to some speculation that Travellers may no longer be the outsiders they once were (Bhopal and Myers, 2008). As hostility and tensions between Travellers and other members of society increase,

in part due to the earlier mentioned negative political and public discourses, the number of sites is also decreasing and Travellers are increasingly forced into housing (commonly referred to as bricks and mortar). Some have argued that, paradoxically, the barriers between the communities are thereby decreasing because historically, researchers have sited the spatial divides between Travellers and non-Travellers as the defining cause for tensions and hostility on both sides (Brown and Niner, 2009; Greenfields and Ryder, 2012).

However, others (for example, Greenfields and Smith, 2010: 1) have argued that "despite sharing spatial proximity in often deprived locales of social housing, social relations with neighbours commonly displayed a notable degree of social distance". In this sense, it can be seen that in fact, social divides between communities have not been reduced by the decrease in physical distance between the communities. This suggests that although physical, or spatial, boundaries might be shifting, hostility still exists between Travellers and sedentary society, which some have suggested is a result of the maintenance of cultural identities (Greenfields and Smith, 2010). Although some have alluded to the ongoing hostility between Travellers and non-Travellers and the spatial manifestations of this, it is clear that further research is needed to shed light on the nature of Traveller-non-Traveller relations in contemporary Britain.

2.2.5 Stability, Surveillance, the State and Travellers

As previously mentioned, this thesis will identify the ways in which Travellers may feel certain kinds of discomfort and face particular kinds of encounters when in certain kinds of spaces. To do this, it is important to acknowledge the (sometimes difficult) relationship that Irish Travellers have with the state. In doing this, the desires of the state and the interaction this may play with the lives of Irish Travellers will be explored.

Giddens (1985) comments on the complexity of the ways in which the 'state' can be interpreted. He argues that it can be understood as either "an apparatus of government or power" or the "overall social system subject to that government or power" (Giddens, 1985: p.19). This highlights the importance of the notion of power within modern society and how representations of this power can emerge. For the purpose of this research, the surveillance

and monitoring of communities as a manifestation of the aforementioned power and arguable control of these communities as determined by the state will be highlighted as particularly significant. In this sense, it is understood that the state perpetuates certain kinds of norms that are not easily accepted by Traveller communities. Numerous researchers have commented on the ways in which surveillance can be understood and, building on this, relates to notions of governance and the state. Some (for example, Giddens, 1985) have argued that surveillance can be understood in two ways. The first is "the accumulation [and storage] of 'coded information' which can be used to administer the activities of individuals about whom it is gathered" and secondly, "the direct supervision of the activities of some individuals by others in a position of authority over them" (Giddens, 1985: 14). Despite distinctions between these two strands of surveillance Giddens (1985) along with others (Wolf, 2001; Slobogin, 2008) have discussed the importance of those who are in control of the manifestations of surveillance, for example the state, large organisations or other actors, using a combination of the collection of data and the supervision of the activities of groups of individuals. As previously mentioned, to exist in modern day Britain, Travellers have been forced to engage with particular facets of society with which they have not previously done so. In this sense, Travellers are therefore, subject to unwanted consequences of their venturing off site, which leaves them open to further engagement with surveillance, the state, and possible adherence to societal norms.

In addition to being understood as a manifestation of power it has also been suggested that surveillance in society (Foucault, 1977; Lyon, 1993; 1994) can and is used as a way to support and maintain the [nation] state. In this sense, it can be suggested that through monitoring individuals and the activities of particular communities, action can be taken to ensure that individuals are shaped in line with particular views and values to produce a citizenry in support of the nation and its progression (Torpey, 2000; Petcu, 2015). Wood (2007: 257) builds on Foucault's argument surrounding surveillance and the panopticon (1977) through his comment that "surveillant practices simultaneously reconstruct boundaries and knowledge". In this sense, it is evident that surveillance facilitates the relationships between individuals and particular spaces "through categorisation, boundary maintenance and enforcement" (Wood, 2007: p.257).

Historically, Gypsies and Travellers have been 'othered' and criticised as detached from the notion of 'respectable citizenry' (Crowley, 2005) by some of the dominant actors in societies. One of the most prominent reasons for this is their differing cultural [and economic] practices, such as language (Miller and Rose, 1992) and nomadism, and how this problematises the monitoring and surveillance practised by the state. Their behaviours have often been deemed 'inappropriate' and efforts have been made to 'assimilate and rehabilitate' Traveller communities (Scott; 1998; Crowley, 2005). In addition to this, the surveillance of Gypsies and Travellers has more subtle or indirect consequences. It is widely recognised that individuals from Gypsy and Traveller communities are wary of authority and constraints as a result of their history of nomadism (James, 2007). In this sense, it is suggested that through being monitored, even in arguably innocent ways by the state, Gypsies and Travellers may feel uncomfortable and 'out of place' (Richardson, 2006; Cemlyn, 2009). This idea of the complexity of the relationship between Gypsies and Travellers and the state and the discomfort that may arise from that is supported by Scott (1998: 1) when he comments "the state has always seemed to be the enemy of 'people' who move around". In this sense, the state's monitoring of public spaces and the uses and activities within these makes certain aspects of Traveller life difficult. Where places are monitored more there is a decline in temporary site provision (Niner, 2002; Richardson and Ryder, 2009; 2012).

2.3 Encounter Beyond the Traveller Site

The second section of this chapter discusses current literature surrounding encounters in public space. It then applies this literature to Travellers and the school environment. The school environment is a central component of this research and the role it has in young people's lives and specifically young Travellers will be explored.

2.3.1 Encounter and Public Space

There is an extensive body of literature surrounding public space. This thesis uses relevant research to frame the sites of encounter in which Travellers were seen to interact with others and to help provide an analytical framework for these encounters. Public space, in a broad

sense, can be understood as a space created when diverse individuals come together and encounter one another in unpredictable and unanticipated ways (Bridge and Watson, 2011; Wilson, 2014; 2016). As Mattioli (2014: 61) comments 'sharing space with strangers and dealing with diversity' are 'two of the defining features of public space'. Such spaces, including parks, squares, and markets [which] are 'co-produced' in these encounters (Mean and Tims, 2005). This conception of public space has developed from the ideas that "space was not an objective structure but a social experience imbued with interwoven layers of social meaning" (Valentine, 2004: p.8). As Massey (1999: 283) explains space "is the product of the intricacies and the complexities, the interlockings and the non-interlockings, of relations from the unimaginably cosmic to the intimately tiny. And precisely because it is the product of relations, relations which are active practices, material and embedded, practices which have to be carried out, space is always in a process of becoming. It is always being made". On this account, the difference between public and private space is a matter of degree rather than some kind of absolute distinction. Public spaces are ones where any given individual has relatively little control over who she or he may encounter and even the nature of that encounter. The greater the degree of control by any given individual the more private that space becomes (Mattioli, 2014).

Public space is not only a space where difference is encountered; it is also one where difference can be underpinned and even created (Wilson, 2016), and in complex ways that connect diverse pasts and presents. Ahmed (2014: p.33) puts it thus: "particular histories are reopened with each encounter…". And these will inevitably be racialised histories "… such that some bodies are already read as more hateful than others". Boyer (2012: p.552) comments "difference is materially and affectively experienced as well as socially constructed". Public space is, then, a space where there is sedimented difference, but also dynamism and potential for change. In this respect, it is clear that for Travellers, who, as previously mentioned, are found to live on sites that are not inviting for non-Travellers, these spaces may give way to new kinds of encounter. These encounters can sometimes be seen to be uncomfortable.

For children, there is added complexity to engagement with public spaces, where the 'norms' and appropriate ways of acting have not necessarily become normal behaviours for them.

Horschelmann and Van Blerk (2012: 1) comment “far from being just a context for these young people’s lives, cities are significantly shaped by their activities and by the need to reflect their presence in the social organisation of life”. They further this when they argue “at the same time, what it means to be young is significantly shaped by the diverse ways in which cities and urban spaces are constructed and lived in the contemporary world” (Horschelmann and Van Blerk 2012: 1). Although this thesis is not situated within childhood geographies, it is important to understand the ways in which children may understand and behave in particular kinds of public spaces differently from adults, and the encounters and interactions they have are likely to differ from those that adults may engage in. In addition, many (including Valentine, 2004) have commented on the implicit norms and order that are often unspoken but exist, and arguably, dominate public spaces. For the context of this thesis, this difficulty surrounding norms for children in public space is potentially exacerbated by their Traveller identities. For reasons discussed earlier, it is unlikely that the values that are passed down within Traveller communities will always be in tune with those that are key to the processes within public spaces. We can hypothesise that this is likely to complicate the encounters that Travellers are likely to face within these public spaces.

Although existing research has explored the experiences and encounters of marginalised communities in public spaces, there has not yet been any research conducted which explores the encounters that Irish Travellers living in London face. Through drawing on literature surrounding some of the [bodily] manifestations of negative encounters (for example, Boyer 2012 and Wilson, 2016) this thesis explains some of the interactions between young Travellers and non-Travellers in 21st century London. This thesis builds upon and contributes to the existing encounter and emotion literature. At present, this literature neglects the lives and lived experiences of Gypsies and Travellers and this thesis will explore whether research in these areas can help understand the everyday interactions and discrimination towards Irish Travellers living in London. This thesis explores those encounters that young Irish Travellers, a group who do not easily recognise or exist alongside norms and values perpetuated in public space, face in London, where it aims to fill a gap in the literature surrounding encounter and emotion. In doing this, this thesis questions the extent to which the potential for negative encounters in properly articulated in existing literature and whether encounters reinforce rather than transform intergroup relations.

2.3.2 Public Transport as form of Public Space

In larger cities, including London, public transport is used to some extent by virtually all social groups (Augé, 2002; Cresswell, 2006). Mattioli (2014: 57) goes as far to claim that "it is impossible to overstate the importance of public transport for mobility in European cities". Certainly, social relations in cities – and, notably, inequalities of various kinds – affect patterns of usage of public transport (Mattioli, 2014). The historic caution of women to use public transport at various times of day (and night) has been researched (Smith, 2008), and well-publicised homophobic attacks on public transport make the use of public transport by gay men and women a constant source of anxiety (e.g. Tucker, 2011; Young-Powell, 2019). More generally, factors such as antisocial behaviour, unruly youths, vandalism and drug taking can shape propensity to use public transport and also behaviour of passengers themselves (Back, 2007; Hurst, 2007). Yet, public transport in populous towns and cities will still 'throw together' (Massey, 2005) people of all kinds. As Wilson (2010: 634) says of one mode of public transport "bus travel is often an intrinsic and necessary aspect of everyday life…[and] … the bus journey marks a space where interaction with unacquainted others is not only possible but for the most part unavoidable". In that sense, public transport is an example of public space, understanding that ambiguous term (Madanipour, 2003) as set out above.

Public transport exemplifies the unavoidable messiness of the notion of 'public' as used in the term 'public space'. [As Amin (2008:9) notes, 'There is no archetypal public space, only variegated space-times of aggregation']. Clearly, public transport is not a space or facility open to absolutely anyone; most passengers usually have to pay to travel, which means those too poor to pay are excluded (Church et al, 2000). Often, the physical layout of public transport facilities will further exclude (i.e. will disable) a substantial portion of the population (e.g. Aldred and Woodcock, 2008; Gough et al, 2006). Moreover, like many places routinely regarded as public space (Wilson, 2013b), public transport vehicles in Western cities will include quite sophisticated surveillance technology intended to help shape behaviour in these spaces (see also Lobo, 2014). There are also explicit and implicit norms of expected behaviour which, in part, this surveillance is intended to police. Not any kind of social interaction is allowed on public transport (or public space more generally) (Mitchell and Staeheli, 2006;

Bissell, 2010; Wilson, 2011), and these norms are shaped by, and implicated in the sustaining of social, often racialized, hierarchies (Cresswell, 1996). Yet, with all of the caveats just entered, there is clearly an important sense in which – as Mattioli (2014: 62) points out - a bus or a metro system is a very different kind of social space from a family car (notwithstanding Swanton, 2010), just as a public park is very different from a suburban garden; and the degree of openness and open-endedness about who might be encountered and how that might turn out is central to the publicness of these public spaces.

For Travellers, public transport adds further complexity to their off-site excursions where new kinds of encounter may arise. The aforementioned forms of public transport that young Travellers are likely to engage with in London are very different from those other kinds of off-site spaces. Public transport encourages new kinds of encounter and dissuades certain kinds of behaviours that are considered normal within Traveller life but might be considered 'unruly' by non-Travellers. Drawing on an earlier point, it is clear that for young Travellers, there are not only the behaviours to be learnt that all children must learn but also those that they must learn as Travellers, needing to cross boundaries into spaces which are dominated by non-Travellers who have imbued these spaces with particular values, norms and order.

2.3.3 The Nature and Outcomes of Encounter

The outcomes of encounter within this public space(s) may not be predictable yet are also generally framed by norms that are widely acknowledged. That there is no guarantee of any particular kind of outcome, positive or negative, from urban encounters is widely agreed by researchers of urban encounter (for example, Amin, 2009; Leitner, 2012; Valentine, 2008). This is perhaps especially so when encounters are fleeting and the reactions of participants not planned nor considered (Amin, 2008; Swanton, 2010).

A prominent example of a positive view of the potential of encounter in public space is Sennett's early optimism about the way individuals might grow in maturity if they were to be forced to confront the tensions of a shared urban existence with people wholly unlike themselves without the mediating – and potentially oppressive – presence of third-party agencies, typically state agencies (Sennett, 1973). Changes in the nature of urban life mean

that Sennett (2000) has somewhat modified his position, and many have pointed out that encounters in public space can harden attitudes and confirm stereotypes in some cases, while doing the opposite in other instances (Valentine, 2008; Wilson, 2016). Such encounters are inherently uncertain and unpredictable in outcome because they bring together not stereotypes, exemplars or standard social types, but unique individuals, formed but still developing and changing, who have experienced and lived within a unique constellation of intersecting, inter-twining and overlapping socio-material networks (Pile, 1999). These are in more or less obvious ways inscribed upon them and also shape their interactions with their environment. Such interactions, however, may themselves involve mobilising stereotypes, including racialised stereotypes (Lobo, 2014; Swanton, 2010). It has been suggested that this may be especially likely in the fleeting encounters that are so much a part of mobile encounters (Swanton, 2010; Amin, 2008). How these varied possibilities cash out for young Travellers – a neglected question in the literature - and why the outcomes take the form they do, will feature prominently within later sections of this thesis. In addition to this, whatever the outcome of these encounters, it is clear that the mobilisation of emotion is central to the character of the encounter (e.g. Wilson, 2013). Urban encounters, as pointed out earlier, are corporeal episodes, and perhaps nowhere more so than in the often-crowded confines of public transport, where there is necessarily an 'increased awareness of one's body in space in relation to others' (Wilson, 2011: 638).

Emotion is central to these embodied encounters. As Boyer (2012:552) notes, there are occasions on which "… certain bodies "get in the way" (either materially, symbolically or both) disrupting the comfort of others". These are bodies out of place (Cresswell, 1996; 2015), creating discomfort, and quite often evoking reactions to mobilise emotions in turn. For the purposes of this thesis, the variety of potential emotional responses in these more fraught encounters (be it anxiety, fear, embarrassment, shame, etc.) (e.g. Katz, 2006; Boyer, 2012; Lobo, 2014; Wilson, 2011, 2013) is less significant than the way emotion is mobilised to shape behaviour. A policy that possibly intuitively recognises the significance of mobilised emotion is the 2017 'Small Talk Saves Lives' campaign that seeks to reduce suicides on UK railways. This encourages passengers to make 'small talk' with a fellow-passenger should they think that he or she appeared distressed in any way (Sky News, 2017). The claim (and hope) is that the despair of the would-be suicide will be disrupted enough for the moment of crisis to pass.

However, more systematic accounts can be given of emotion in urban encounters. Boyer (2012), for example, examines the way that embarrassment is induced among mothers seeking to breast-feed in public in an attempt to modify their behaviour. Through tut-tutting and pointed looks, (some) mothers are made to feel uncomfortable about what they are doing. In Wilson's (2013) account of diversity sensitisation it is shame that is a spur for behaviour change.

Yet the potency of shame can arise only if the body cares about the interest of others' (Bissell, 2010: 282), and the same can be said of embarrassment. It is in the context of a 'contractual consensus' (Augé, 2002: 44), a shared set of values at least in relation to the circumstances a group of people find themselves in when 'thrown**together**', that emotions may be mobilised to regulate behaviour. Wilson (2010) highlights how uncomfortable encounters can occur on public transport when people defy social norms such as the expectation "that passengers maintain a minimal awareness of the needs of their consociates" (Wilson, 2010: p.640). But what if these norms and values are not shared or not even recognised as may be the case with young Travellers who have limited exposure to life beyond the spaces of their community? How do urban outsiders, in this case young Travellers, learn to navigate public spaces and public transport? Where, in turn, it can be argued that this will have repercussions for the individual and their sense of self.

Certain implications may arise from these kinds of encounter. One potential implication is that young people and indeed, young Travellers, learn how to negotiate certain kinds of public space and how it is that they are supposed to conduct themselves in public.

The discussion of the chapter to date generates RQ1:

1) **How do young Travellers negotiate encounters in off-site spaces including those on public transport?**

There is a particular interest in the way emotion is mobilised in these encounters**.**

2.3.4 The School System as a Place of Encounter

Martin (2012: 14) comments “no matter how the Western world’s philosophical theories of education have differed from one another across the ages, they have all taken it for granted that whenever education occurs an individual has some sort of encounter and that in this encounter the individual changes”. Martin uses this notion to develop Dewey’s (1923) challenges to traditional models of education, where education involves the divorce of mind and body and reason from feeling and emotion, and the separation of school from society (Dewey, 1923). Perhaps most importantly for this thesis, Martin (2012: 15) has argued that there is an exclusion “of the world of the private home and family from education thought” and that analysing “language, concepts and arguments” are not enough in understanding education. In this sense, she argues that “putting culture on an equal footing with the individual, the theory of education as encounter represents education as an interaction between the individual and a culture in which both parties change…in the one instance the change is what is commonly called individual learning; in the other the change goes by the name of cultural transmission” (Martin, 2012: 16). This thesis argues that schools are a site of encounter and are notTraveller spaces. As mentioned in chapter one of this thesis, family [and family spaces] are a dominant feature of Traveller identity and therefore, in line with Martin’s (2012) thought, tensions are likely to arise if the private home and family [life] are not considered in understanding the education of young Travellers. Furthermore, amongst researchers concerned with the lives of young Gypsies and Travellers, it is generally accepted that traditionally education comes in the form of “observation and practice, not from formal instruction…trial-and-error, even at the cost of getting hurt, it is considered the best way for children to develop the skills needed to survive in an unpredictable world” (Griffin, 2002: 124). This is not an approach that is used within most schools.

In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of research centred on the intersection between the two disciplines of geography and education. Although this thesis is situated within geographical research and not education research, there will be a focus on education in the sense that the school is a site which is not recognised as a Traveller space and within which young Travellers face potentially unknown kinds of encounter and interactions. In that sense, it is a kind of public or semi-public space. Exploring some strands in education research will assist in situating this research. It has been suggested that since the focus on developing social theories in the 1990s, geography has made substantial contribution to research within

other disciplines, particularly within the social sciences (Livingston, 1992; Johnston, 2003). Some have argued that the contribution of geography has been central to the education research for many years but has only recently gained recognition for its important role in the early origins of the [national] education system and "the roles education and curricular developments have played in nation building" (Taylor, 2009: 651). This draws on the important concepts of space, place and scale, which are central to geographical research and feature "heavily in analyses of territorial justice and governance at the level of local authorities and further down in scale to spatial analysis of the classroom" (Taylor, 2009:651). Despite this, there has been some debate surrounding the usefulness of combining the disciplines with some suggesting that geography merely lends its language to education research. For as Robertson (2009: 2) argues "it is not sufficient to simply bring a spatial lexicon to our conceptual sentences (as in 'geographies of classroom emotions' the school as a 'place'; communities of practice). This is to fetishize space". Some researchers (Lam and Quattrochi, 1992; Taylor, 2009) have explored the ways in which geography can be seen to be gaining considerable importance within education research with Taylor (2009: 652) listing what he considers to be the seven most important sites for geographically inflected research as "the learner/child; site of learning/schools/household; community of learners/neighbourhood; local authority/region; central government/nation and international". These highlight the importance of the key geographical concepts of place, scale and community and the ways in which they can be seen to relate to important aspects of education research. For the purpose of this research the ideas surrounding 'the learner/child'; 'sites of learning' and 'central government/nation' will be the focus of understanding the educational experiences of young people from Gypsy and Traveller backgrounds. Predominantly, this research is focussed on compulsory education and how the spaces associated with this can play an important role (Rutten et al, 2003; Rees and Taylor, 2006) in encounters between Travellers and non-Travellers.

There is increasing recognition in the importance of the school as a place of identity construction, with both macro and micro interventions helping to shape these, in the sense that there ae on the one hand formal and centrally-conceived initiatives but there are also significant informal factors and notions of identity construction that can have significant impacts on the lives of children within various 'sites of education'. As Butler and Hamnett

(2007: 1161) comment “education has become a major political and policy issue in recent years”. At the largest scale, policy is formulated in line with centrally conceived agendas and implemented in school settings. These include initiatives that explicitly ‘shape’ students into particular kinds of ‘citizens’ (Boden and Nedeva, 2010) thus highlighting the significance of the maintenance of the nation-state and within this national identity.

On the micro scale, there has been a significant amount of research exploring the geographies of children and, in particular, there is growing research into psychogeographies surrounding the relationship between the environment, emotions and the embodiment of children (Sibley, 2003; Matthews and Tucker, 2006) and how this relates to their own agency within the confines of school (Hemming, 2007) and the important role of gender within this (Renold, 2005). This is particularly significant for this research, as the literature suggests that gender roles and relations might be significant in the ways in which Gypsy and Traveller communities interact with individuals from other backgrounds in ‘mainstream’ places such as school and what the outcomes of this might be. This will be explored more fully within this research.

it is clear that there is an important spatiality to the ways in which education research is formulated and can therefore, be understood. In addition to this, it is clear that scale is inherently related to the development of education policy, as confirmed by Butler and Hamnett (2007: 1161) when they comment “education is near the heart of policies for fostering greater social integration, social mobility and national competitiveness and reducing social exclusion”. These issues are highly significant when policy is formulated with recognition of young people from Traveller backgrounds in attempts to improve their inclusion, levels of attainment and, in some cases, attempts made to assimilate them.

Over the years, a substantial body of sociological literature has emerged surrounding the contested views on the role that education plays, and should play, in the everyday lives of young people and how that should be related to wider society and key societal issues. This includes debate over what kinds of theory, research and practice should be considered useful for the development of the ways in which education can be understood and how this should relate to any relevant policies that may emerge within the discipline. Jardine (2005: 78) comments “education abounds with theories and arguments about what a human being is,

what “the good life” is, what knowledge is and how it should be assessed, what the suitable relationships exist between an individual and others in their family, in society and around the globe”.

In a discussion of British education, Coulter and Wiens (2009) argue that the characteristics of an educated person include using “knowledge and understanding in their engagement with other citizens, [the ability to] listen respectfully and thoughtfully and act with honesty and diplomacy” (Coulter and Wiens, 2009: 10). In addition to this, they comment on the importance of “formal schooling” and the ways in which this can be seen to impact how individuals become “particular kinds of people” (Coulter and Wiens, 2009:10). These terms are not especially precise but do resonate with the arguments of many other researchers that comment on the importance of using education to instil particular kinds of [democratic] values in pupils to ensure they become particular kinds of citizens. These desires are promoted through policies and initiatives within school, but also more subtly through general attitudes and social relations fostered within the school environment. This is the context within which young Travellers have encounters with non-Travellers and people of varied ages, some of whom are in positions of formal authority, as they undertake their schooling.

Dewey’s (2004: 21) comment that “education must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience” hints at one possible outcome of the encounters referred to in the paragraph above. Young Travellers may re-evaluate, and come to think differently about, their lives outside of school, including the nature of their relations with family and Traveller friends. It is this kind of experience that is referred to when education is viewed as promoting self-development and the shaping of young people, which also impacts on wider society (Healy and Cote, 2001). As numerous researchers (Gutmann, 1987; Kelly, 1993; Callan, 2003) have argued, education is a powerful political tool, which can be used to create a productive workforce and instil particular kinds of political values, such as mitigating violence and lawlessness, in students (Callan, 2003). Gutmann and Ben-Porath confirm this when they discuss the importance of schools serving essential public services. They build on this claim when suggesting that “modern democracies need an educated citizenry to survive and thrive” (Gutmann and Ben-Porath, 2015: 1).

Others (for example, Portelli, 1996) have built upon these notions of the importance of instilling democratic values within schools, and have suggested that through increasing the civic engagement of pupils, it also teaches them to interact with others and increases civic participation. It is evident that this not only builds upon Jardine's (2005) notion of the importance of the educational environment as a place to develop relationships but also suggests the importance of the wider context of these relationships in support of a broad-based political system or regime (in this case, some versions of democracy) (Rabou, 2016: 51). However, it cannot be ignored that there are challenges to this form of democratic education. These include social disengagement (Putnam, 1993), lack of political knowledge (Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1993) and an increasing preference by young people to remain politically uninformed (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, 2002). In spite of this, others (Callan, 2003) have suggested that education must accommodate the freedom of people who want different kinds of education and within this, must acknowledge the importance of parental choice in the education of young people (Coulter and Wiens, 2009).

For the purpose of this thesis, it is important to acknowledge the school as, similarly with other kinds of public spaces, a place of bodily encounter (inside the classroom, in the playground etc.) (Martin, 2011; Gardner, 2011; Hemming, 2011). As previously mentioned, public spaces and therefore the school, can be understood as places where young people from some groups do not easily fit. It is clear that there are certain kinds of values, and thus, tensions that young people must [learn to] cope with in the school environment (Valentine et al, 2008). Valentine et al (2008: 382) comment "there is an awkward disconnect between the dated educational strategy in place to deal with minority ethnic pupils and the contemporary realities of multiculturalism in the UK". This is particularly pertinent for young Travellers, who as previously mentioned are often forced to balance the values they must uphold in Traveller places (i.e. in the home on site) and in non-Traveller places (public spaces inclusive of public transport). In this sense, perhaps crucially for young Travellers, the school can be understood as a place of encounter with non-Traveller ways of life, values and aspirations. Drawing on earlier discussions, it is clear that public spaces are used as places to be surveyed and to reproduce particular kinds of dominant norms and where going against these norms is met with disapproval which may often create particular kinds of uncomfortable encounters. Within schools, one aspect of this encounter is the role of

education policy and therefore places of education such as schools are used as places to create a certain kind of 'citizen' subjectivity. Arguably this is more prominent and self-conscious today than ever. It is clear that the school is an important space in which Travellers are forced to negotiate any tensions that arise between the values that are embodied by life at home and the values that are embodied in life at schools. However, there remains the matter of what resources or power the child (in the case, the young Traveller) has in the face of the attempt by school to shape her or him. The implication of authors who extol the benefits of education in citizenship is that children in schools are generally malleable. This assumption – it is argued in the sections which follow – is to an extent shared by theorists who are critical of the purpose and outcomes of mainstream state education. Their approaches are evaluated, and contrasted with an approach – that of Paul Willis (1977) – which emphasises the agency and power of pupils themselves, especially when embedded within close-knit communities sharing value-systems at odds with that of the school. Before discussing these contrasting approaches the chapter will discuss at greater length two important areas – namely, gender roles and relations and attitudes towards authority – where research suggests that the values of Traveller communities and mainstream schooling may diverge.

2.3.5 Travellers, Gender and the School Environment

As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, gender relations and roles are central to much of the way that Traveller life and within this Traveller spaces (i.e. the site) can be seen to function. This is likely to have implications for young Travellers who are expected to re-negotiate their views, and in some sense, their lifestyles when moving from the site into public spaces such as schools.

There is a substantial body of literature surrounding the spatiality of gender (for example, Massey, 1994; McDowell, 2013). Massey (1994: 2) comments on "the intricacy and profundity of the connection of space and place with gender and the construction of gender relations" for it is evident that "the spatial organisation of society…is integral to the production of the social" (Massey, 1994: 4). It is worth pointing out that at a mundane, but not insignificant level, the Gypsy and Traveller communities typically reside on outskirts of towns and cities or

within relatively enclosed enclaves within them (Anderson, 2015). This itself may facilitate distinctive forms of social relations within the community, as with spatially separated groups such as Amish (McDermott, 1977).

Practices surrounding gender relations and roles within Gypsies and Travellers communities create some of the largest contrasts and most tensions between Gypsies and Travellers and mainstream society. This is perhaps not surprising, for as Yuval-Davis (1997: 39) comments "gender relations are at the heart of cultural constructions of social identities and collectivities as well as…most cultural conflicts and contestations". The collectivity of particular interests to her was the nation-state, and we might expect that as the struggle for equal opportunities in the UK – and specifically gender equality – has progressed (albeit sometimes fitfully) over a century or more than there will be changes in the kinds of attitudes relating to gender relations that are regarded as appropriately British. Thus in 2015 when the successful British boxer Tyson Fury, who is proud of his Traveller background, expressed the view that women's place was in the kitchen – along with some more crude misogyny and sexism – there was an online petition to have him removed from the shortlist for Sports Personality of the Year (i.e. a list of examples of the best of British sport). These kinds of tensions and resultant conflicts have arisen out of particular constructions of gender roles and within Gypsy and Traveller communities, with practices that are often deemed 'traditional' and viewed as out-dated by members of mainstream society, including policymakers and practitioners (Helleiner, 1997). There is a significant body of literature (Crickley, 1992; Helleiner, 2010) supporting the notion that particular ideas surrounding Traveller culture stem from longstanding discrimination and continued attempts to assimilate and 'settle' Gypsy and Traveller communities (Helleiner, 2010). The reproduction of particular gender roles and relations are some of the most problematic areas for the state in terms of Gypsies and Travellers in the sense that values within the Gypsy and Traveller community are often at odds with those accepted and generally promoted by the state and other institutions in mainstream society.

When exploring the relationship between Gypsies and Travellers and gender, some researchers have discussed the importance of considering the role of Gypsy and Traveller women within their own culture and then how this can be seen to relate to the ways in which

mainstream society constructs their views surrounding the wider Gypsy and Traveller community. There are contesting views amongst researchers as to the everyday role that Traveller women have. Some (for example, Anderson and Tighe, 1973; Appleton et al, 2003) have argued that Gypsy and Traveller women remain in the home and are mostly concerned (through their own desires and the control of their husbands and fathers) with cooking, cleaning and raising a family. Others argue that in addition to this role, traditionally Gypsy and Traveller women are "active contributors to their households through their public activities as peddlers and hawkers" (Helleiner, 2007: 281). Despite this assertion, it cannot be ignored that Gypsy and Traveller communities are traditionally patriarchal societies where there is reduced female autonomy (Gmelch, 1975) and although there should be no assumption that some Gypsy and Traveller women do not resist these oppressive structures (Helleiner, 2007), gendered discourses in Gypsy and Traveller society encourage girls to "marry young and resume domestic childcare duties" (Hamilton, 2006: 3). In addition to this, similarly with other ethnic minority groups, there is some responsibility on younger generations to provide and care for older family members once they are unable to continue to work (Bhopal, 2011). In this sense, it is evident that young Gypsies and Travellers could be faced with difficult decisions, when the views of the settled community or mainstream society starkly contrast those generally practised by members of their own community.

For the purpose of this research, this complex decision is particularly significant as it highlights the tensions young Gypsy and Traveller women may face in terms of education. They are faced with choosing between family loyalty and a desire to be regarded as behaving as 'appropriate' community members with a possible desire to remain in school and enter mainstream employment. Further importance and subsequent pressure may be added to this if Gypsy and Traveller parents feel leaving school at the age of adulthood (understood as fourteen in Gypsy and Traveller communities) to learn to look after the home in preparation for married life is the most appropriate decision (Levinson, 2008). In addition to this focus on preparation for marriage and domestic familial roles, it has been argued that the reluctance of many in Gypsy and Traveller communities to allow both young boys and girls from the community to stay in school is a result of fear "that exposure to incompatible beliefs and practices of the dominant society will erode their child's cultural identity and morals" (Hamilton, 2006: p.4) – in the terms of this thesis, will lead to a dimunition of the child's

outsider position. Many Gypsy and Traveller parents accept the importance of primary education and attitudes towards this from within the Gypsy and Traveller community are generally positive (Wilkin, Derrington and Foster, 2009). However, secondary school is often seen to pose more risks than primary due to fear surrounding the exposure of Gypsies and Travellers (particularly teenage girls) to sexual activity, drugs and alcohol (Harding, 2014). Other researchers (for example, Helleiner, 2007) have elaborated on this to confirm that there is increasing fear amongst Gypsies and Travellers surrounding the ways in which the 'mixing' of different groups within society will have drastic and negative consequences for the Gypsy and Traveller way of life. In addition to this, researchers have commented on the strong gender stereotyping within Gypsy and Traveller communities in relation to the ways it has affected their ability to undertake research (Bhopal, 2010; Greenfields et al, 2012). These specific issues will be discussed in the next chapter which deals with research design and methodology.

Within this as a background, for young Travellers, there are expectations over what aspirations they should have after leaving mainstream education. These expectations are inherently gendered.

2.3.6 The Spatiality of Traveller life: Identity, Moral Codes and Authority

This section will review research and discussions of the performance of Traveller weddings, because these have been explored by many researchers as a way of providing particular insights in symbolic interactions and moral codes (i.e. values) (Daskalaki, 2003). Weddings are one of the most significant events in Gypsy and Traveller communities and have a strong socio-economic significance (Silverman, 1986; Tremlett, 2014). Through exploring Gypsy and Traveller behaviours throughout the preparation and events of wedding ceremonies, Daskalaki (2003) highlights the role that both gender and age play on the spatiality of Gypsy and Traveller behaviour. During both the preparation and wedding ceremony men and women from the Gypsy and Traveller community can be seen to take on very different spatial roles "the elder male members of the family started serving the guests with food and drinks…women did not get involved in serving food and drinks the entire night" (Daskalaki, 2003: 22). Arguably, this could confirm previous arguments in the literature that suggest that

men are considered to be the providers for their families. In addition to financially providing they are also seen to shape and manage social events and to maintain physically separate roles from the women in the family-based ceremony. It is clear that there is a strong spatiality to the social organisation of large familial events. Age can also be seen to play a significant role in the performance of individuals at the wedding ceremony where while "little boys and little girls can express themselves completely in their own way, youngsters have to behave almost the same way as the grown-ups" (Daskalaki, 2003:22). From Daskalaki's (2003) comments it is clear that young children are allowed to play throughout the celebrations but older children (approaching their teenage years and therefore, adulthood) must sit at the table and behave 'politely', or in line with the specific aforementioned Gypsy and Traveller 'moral' code of practice. This points to the fact that young Travellers are regarded as, and regard themselves as, adults at a much earlier age than most non-Traveller children. This interaction between youngsters is furthered within the ceremony where "youngsters find significant space for interaction in the dancing area…the dance brings the young unmarried girls, who can easily be spotted because of their specific way of dressing and their bright makeup to the centre of attention" (Daskalaki, 2003:22).

This is particularly significant as it confirms the importance of the spatiality of social organisation in Gypsy and Traveller communities. As previously mentioned, it is important for many young girls from Gypsy and Traveller families to marry young so that they can perform their traditional domestic role in the home where familial values dominate their lives. Weddings, and specifically, the dance floor, can be seen as places where young Gypsy and Traveller males and females are able to meet, in line with their parent's approval and partial supervision, so that they can gain the formal consent of their parents to get formally engaged. This is confirmed by Daskalaki (2003: p.22) when he comments "early engagement not only has a supervisory and training purpose for the girl but also plays a role in promoting the success of the marriage". In this sense, weddings cannot only be seen as places that are safe for Gypsies and Travellers to socialise but they are also considered much more in terms of promoting the familial values that are deemed so significant within the community through the way that young girls are able to perform cultural aspects of their identity such as dress and dance so as to find husbands to continue to reinforce the moral focus on gender roles and family. These attitudes may not be universal among Travellers, of course, but to the

extent that they are held, they are clearly at odds with the kinds of approaches to gender roles and the socio-spatial organisation of family life and domestic work, that is portrayed as mainstream in contemporary Britain and is reproduced in educational literature on equal opportunities (Rees, 2006; Schutz et al, 2008; Allan, 2012).

When applying this discussion to the school environment, it is clear that particular tensions are likely to escalate, giving way to certain kinds of encounter between Travellers and non-Travellers.

2.3.7 Social Reproduction Theory and Education for Travellers

Morrow and Torres, 1995 and Portelli 1996 are representative of a common form of applying the Marxist concept of social reproduction to the sociology of education. In this approach class, agreed by most commentators to be a key determinant of the educational outcomes of pupils within schools, is also understood as involving power relations that systematically uphold privileges for a relatively few, and is buttressed by symbolic relationships that are enforced and reproduced by the educational system and can be passed down from generation to generation. This line of analysis has extended beyond strictly Marxist circles, with Bourdieu (2003: 63), for example, arguing that the education system contributes to the "reproduction of the structure of the distribution of [social and] cultural capital among these classes". This confirms the aforementioned connections between place and social processes, where it is evident that the school is an important site of reproduction of some of the ideas promoted by researchers concerned with place attachment and identity construction (Relph, 1976; Cresswell, 2014). Place is intrinsically linked the interaction of groups and the way individuals can be seen to feel in certain places and spaces.

A social reproduction framework for understanding the experience of education lends itself to expansion beyond class-relations to "include non-class forms of exclusion" (Morrow and Torres, 1995:3; see also Jenks, 1993). In relation to this research the lesson taken away from social reproduction theory in its many, and often contested (Picchio, 2002; MacLeod, 2009) variants, is that the school space for most schools is organised around specific sets of values and behaviours which are, at the very least, congruent with principles that would be broadly

regarded as central to the status quo in a given nation state. The significance of nationhood and national identity is a prime example of such a principle.

Since the Crick Report was produced in 1998, there has been an increased focus on the importance of encouraging young people to 'behave as active citizens'. Thus, pupils at secondary schools within the UK have been encouraged to maintain specific values and undertake particular responsibilities as a result of the mainstreaming of 'citizenship education'. The idea appears to be to help to develop a collective national identity understood as a community who share common values and willingness for civic engagement (Billig, 1995). This is not a new concern; proponents of a broad suffrage within Western societies typically regard mass education as an important vector for spreading values and behaviour appropriate for democratic polities as they understood them. So, Dewey (2004: 95) comments [democratic] "society must have a type of education which gives individuals a personal interest in social relationships and control and the habits of mind which secure social changes without introducing disorder". However, some researchers have raised concern surrounding the ways in which the development of a self-regulated learning pedagogy "can be tied to a curriculum of obedience, subordination and oppression" (Vassallo, 2012: 1). Vassallo (2012) draws on the arguments of others (e.g. Friere, 1985) to explore the ways in which institutions, such as schools, are essential for the reproduction of social norms and values. He argues that despite schools being places of hope and humanisation, it cannot be ignored that their role in democratic societies can be seen to be problematic. Others have expanded on this idea suggesting that schools are sites for dehumanisation and oppression (Young, 1990; Friere, 1985). Certainly, in practice the concern for inculcating 'appropriate' values and behaviour can have as an important strand for the promotion a singular conception of the 'national story' (Miller, 1995; Kumar, 2000; 2003). In this sense, education can be seen as a significant 'tool' in the promotion and enforcement of particular notions of banal [British] national identity. Arguably this, de facto mono-cultural educational space is more likely, if, as some contend, schooling has become increasingly focussed on preparing willing subjects for the labour market (Davies and Bansel, 2007; Boden and Nedeva, 2010; Johnson, 2013). McLaren (2015: 126) summarises this in his suggestion that "school curricula, knowledge and policy depend on the corporate marketplace and the fortunes of the economy". In this context, and with a long history of racism in Britain, even well-intended

government initiatives in relation to multi-cultural education can fail (Myers and Bhopal, 2017).

This raises concerns for groups – of which Gypsies and Travellers would be one – who might find it difficult to see themselves and their distinctive cultures and histories portrayed in the single, monolithic national history (and identity) presented. They may not peacefully co-exist with particular ideas surrounding Britishness or a singular national identity. Notwithstanding Hall's assertion that "the notion that [national] identity has to do with people that look the same, feel the same, call themselves the same, is nonsense" (Hall, 1991a: 49), the day to day assumptions around banal nationalism (Billig, 1995), which can operate within schools as much as elsewhere, raise the potential for tense encounters for young Travellers as they navigate the world beyond the Travellers site.

More generally, research on Gypsies and Travellers suggests that some of the key notions employed in school education – such as 'success' and 'respect for authority' – may be interpreted differently by at least some Travellers (Okely, 1983; Mayall, 1995) which raises the possibility that there may be resistance to this 'shaping' and 'curbing' of their behaviours (Acton, 1997). The constant contestation of the values young Travellers have learned and adhered to in Traveller spaces are often at odds with those they must learn in schools. it has been acknowledged that much of what is taught in schools adheres to wider state agendas within which Travellers are not necessarily complicit with. This is likely to have implications for young Traveller children who are going to have to make decisions surrounding what it is they should be aspiring to and therefore, which value sets will become dominant.

In principle, critical pedagogy, where critical theory from the Frankfurt school is applied to education, appears to suggest that the school, the space of education, can also be a place for self and social empowerment for pupils – i.e. they are not helpless victims or objects of schooling. Critical scholars are concerned with a "socially critical reconstruction of what it means to 'be schooled'" (McLaren, 2015: 124). The critical perspective focuses on race, class, power and gender whilst taking a critical approach to education and schools (Kovel-Jarboe, 2001). Yet there is some debate amongst critical scholars as to whether schools allow students to become empowered as active citizens and within this, the importance of class as

a determinant factor for the 'economic return' for students is explored. Pedagogues, such as Giroux (2011), confirm the importance of education for social transformation through the dismantling of the dominant power structures that have thus far prevented social change (Lipman, 2013; Howlett, 2013), yet in practice – as noted earlier – they lament the persistence of oppressive structures within and outwith the school – that limit the scope for student self-development and enlightenment.

Critical pedagogy suggests schools have powerful *potential* for social transformation and significant social change because of the aforementioned dominant power structures in society but in practice, like neoliberalist theorists, they appear to agree that these structures determine the educational experiences of children in relation to values and attitudes and specifically feelings of belonging. It is against this background that Willis's (1977) work in relation to the educational experiences of working-class young people is so arresting with its emphasis on the agency of young people, and its (essentially spatial) focus on the way social relations extend beyond school boundaries and can jump scales. Willis argues that "the working class cultural pattern of 'failure' is quite different and discontinuous from the other patterns" (Willis, 1977: 1). By this he means that disaffected working class young men (whom he terms 'the lads') actively choose the way of life they come to adopt. After leaving school, they do not find themselves having to take the jobs that others do not want because they are failures of some kind. Moreover, their disruptive behaviour in school in important ways is a rehearsal of, and preparation for, their attitudes towards the authority structures of their chosen workplaces and prepares them for fitting into the day to day life with their peers on those shop-floors. Far from 'losing out' at school, Willis suggests that, as the title of his book puts it, they are 'Learning to Labour" – but in workplaces and kinds of jobs that they are prepared to do. On the basis of ethnographic research in and out of school, Willis claimed that the rudeness and general disruption of some pupils was in fact the ever-developing performance of a counter-culture that was critical and oppositional of the purpose, values and authority of the school and its teachers. It was through this that they came – over time – to develop identities with which they were comfortable as individuals and a group. These identities were not created out of nothing – they owed much to the attitudes and behaviours of their families and those in the neighbourhoods they lived in. He argues that many of the lads' countercultural attitudes and values in relation to school were echoed by their parents.

This is not to say that all their parents initially wanted them to adopt these 'deviant' attitudes, but once they had done so, they were sympathetic and understanding and thus helped bolster the lads in the face of criticism from teachers and school authorities. Similarly, there was a collective (neighbourhood) reservoir of oppositional attitudes (such as suspicion of authority) that also helped bolster the attitudes of the lads (Willis, 1977: 73).

Without stating it in these terms, Willis is, in effect, mapping for a given period the relational space within which a group of young working-class boys explore their own developing sense of self. In a school setting, the lads creatively appropriated values and attitudes from family, neighbourhood and popular culture and made them their own – lived them out and developed them within the context and challenges of their school lives. The emphasis on the creative agency of the lads is striking, as is the claim that in a very important way their educational experience and outcome was not some kind of deficient version of that of pupils who succeed in the eyes of the school by passing exams, excelling in sports, taking on school responsibilities, and so on. Rather, their school experience was different from that of the vast majority of pupils. These social relations are power laden, of course, and the lads' evolving world-view is misogynistic, homophobic and racist. "Willis shows how control and creativity are exercised within subordinate class positions" (Skeggs 1992: 190). There can be no romanticising of these lads; but equally, they are convincingly portrayed as agents, not helpless or deficient subjects. As Rizvi (2004: 85) puts it:

"The lads were not dupes, lacking any agency; quite the contrary. In their everyday lives, they had a reasonably good understanding of the prevailing structures of power, and a working knowledge of how to live with it (sic), even if this helped produce unfavourable social outcomes for them".

This essentially practical knowledge of how to navigate a world beyond their homes and families was developed through encounter and reflection, which Willis claimed, occasionally would allow them insights into the social reality they were living within. It is this process of practical knowledge and judgement being developed through encounter that will be explored in this thesis.

Willis's research related to a very specific group of young men at a particular time and place. It is widely regarded as a seminal piece of research in youth studies, sociology and cultural studies, but one that has major limitations and silences (e.g. Skeggs, 1992). Moreover, its development by Willis himself has been strongly contested (Barker and Beezer, 1992). However, without accepting, or indeed engaging with, Willis's theses as they related to working class white men, it is argued that the framing notions of his work appear to be ones that hold promise for understanding the experiences of young Travellers in school. Willis would encourage researchers to see young Travellers as actively exploring and constructing their evolving selves and potential futures as they encounter and engage with an environment that is animated by values, attitudes, and behaviours that are in some respect unfamiliar and not congruent with those of their families and communities. These potential futures and selves may include but also go beyond the definitions of success and acceptability that are emphasised in schools. If the engagement leads to some kind of assimilation of key values of the school then the young Travellers will be slipping away from being outsiders; if it leads to confrontation and rejection then they will be outsiders in the same sense as those that Sibley researched decades ago.

Education and the places and spaces associated with education are understood as highly significant in the 'shaping' of individuals and the possible (re)construction of the identities of young people (Woodward, 1997). Martin (2012: 16) comments that some understand education not necessarily as the act or process of educating a person, instead put more simply, "education is what take place in schools". Those that agree with the latter assertion will hold that notions of British citizenship in the school environment are effective means of creating a British citizenry. However, this ignores the education that takes place outside of the school environment.

Douglas (1964: 222) comments "even in early infancy contacts between children and parents may influence later educational achievement by establishing a wish to learn". In this sense, the acknowledgment of the role of 'the home' and the wider family unit in determining the views of young people towards education and approaches towards careers is highly significant. However, there is some debate within the literature surrounding what parental involvement actually means, with Ashcer (1988: 110) confirming the ambiguity of the term

but also arguing that majority ethnic groups and middle-class parents, take the continuity of the home school interface for granted. She comments that “whilst schools have assumed the support of these middle-class parents, the parents have taken for granted that the schools will act as extensions of their desires and values in educating their children” (Ascher, 1988: 110). The interest of Willis’s work, discussed earlier in the chapter, is that it explores circumstances where parental and community values are not shared with schools. As Ascher (1988: 110) puts it, “in contrast, the fragile links that have long existed between the schools and poor and minority parents have also been made more tenuous by periodic suspicion and misunderstanding on both sides--with school staff often overwhelmed by bouts of futility, and parents equally often filled with resentment”. This highlights the aforementioned discussion surrounding the complex relationship that young Travellers have with education often recognised as an authority which should not be trusted and should be resisted so as to preserve Traveller culture (Acton and Mundy, 1997).

For the purpose of exploring the aspirations of young people from Traveller backgrounds, this chapter has already recognised the increasing focus on research on multiculturalism in education. There has been a significant amount of research conducted on the aspirations of young people from minority backgrounds and how this relates to their attitudes towards compulsory education. It is generally accepted that “education plays a crucial role in determining the status of a young person in the future socioeconomic hierarchy” (Qian and Blair, 1999: 605). However the attitudes of young people towards education can be seen to vary dramatically across classes and ethnic groups.

Research carried out in the UK and America has argued that, broadly speaking, young people from minority backgrounds have high aspirations (such as to become doctors or lawyers). For example “for youth in the Somali diaspora, education is deeply tied to imaginations for a better future” (Tzenis, 2019: 10). This research also suggests that although social and cultural influences shape these aspirations which have largely been informed around family values (Tzenis, 2019). Existing research that has been carried out with young Travellers in relation to education and aspiration is largely at odds with that carried out with other minority ethnic children. Research carried out with young Travellers suggests that there are many barriers to their education, particularly secondary education which has not traditionally been seen as

important. Instead, young people from Traveller communities often leave school well before the age of sixteen out of fear that "integration into regular schooling from 5 to 16 years of age may lead to their children increasingly adopting the values and mores of the wider peer group with a consequent lessening in valuing their own Gypsy Traveller culture" (Lloyd and McCluskey 2008: 337). Furthermore, it is generally accepted that there is little "understanding of contemporary challenges [that young Travellers face] such as the difficulties of doing homework in a shared trailer or without the support of literate parents (Lloyd *et al.*, 1999)…so difference may be romanticized, denied, simplified; identities silenced or constructed as deviant" (Lloyd and McCluskey 2008: 341). These barriers often inhibit the educational achievement of young Travellers and, therefore, in the mainstream sense, their career options. Research that has been conducted with young Travellers also suggests they aspire to go into the stereotypical, often gendered, jobs like many generations of their families before them. This often translates to manual labour jobs for males and hairdressing, beauty or child care for females (Ryder and Greenfields, 2012; Smith and Greenfields, 2012). However, Bhopal (2004) argues that attitudes towards the importance of education are changing within Traveller communities where the significance of education is increasingly recognised and often based on a "realistic appraisal of future career options" (Bhopal, 2004: 62). Despite this, it remains to be seen what practical implications this has for young Travellers in modern day Britain and the aspirations they have in terms of educational achievement and careers.

As this chapter and chapter one have discussed, Travellers have continued to have a complex and strained relationship with the state for numerous years. This is particularly evident within certain areas of Gypsy and Traveller life including education and the school environment (Smith, 1997; Levinson, 2009). Much of the literature surrounding education for young Travellers suggests they have a semi-detached relationship to school, where their attendance is variable, especially after the age of puberty; disproportionately affected by bullying and racism which leads to poor educational outcomes. Despite an increase in political and policy focus surrounding equality and inclusion in education and many documents and initiatives centred around the notion 'Every Child Matters', numerous researchers have discussed the ways in which Gypsy and Traveller children continue to face significant discrimination in mainstream schools and continue to remain the worst achieving ethnic minority group in the UK schooling system (O'Hanlan and Holmes, 2004). This is confirmed by the Equality and

Human Rights Commission (2016: 3) who state that less than eighteen percent of Gypsy and Traveller children achieved the GCSE threshold in 2012/2013 compared to over sixty percent of other White children.

Many researchers have raised concerns surrounding the 'rigidity' of the National Curriculum in UK schools arguing that it is exclusionary for many pupils of a number of different backgrounds including Gypsy and Traveller young people. Some (Cudworth, 2008; Tyler, 2005) have raised concern around the lack of recognition of Gypsy and Traveller culture in schools and particularly the absence of positive recognition of other cultures in the classrooms of many UK schools which Myers and Bhopal (2017: 126) describe as maintaining an "persistent resonance of Englishness". Through exploring the unsupportive circumstances surrounding Gypsy and Traveller education, Tyler (2005: 25) comments "much of the way school life operates and the dominant models for the way the curriculum is delivered, continue to be at odds with a nomadic existence". This confirms the cultural barriers to accessing and maintaining this access to 'mainstream' education for Gypsy and Traveller communities.

It could be argued that this 'rigidity' has been maintained through what some researchers in the social sciences have argued is the marketization of education (Ball, 2006). Since the 1988 Educational Reform Act, parents have been able to choose from a range of different schools in their local area, arguably 'commodifying' education. As Ball (2003: p.25) comments, education is now "like any other commodity and the development of the child is a lucrative market opportunity for capital". In turn, this increases the pressure on schools, policy makers and practitioners who are tasked with performing well in this 'market', thus posing a threat to the educational experiences of the individual (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Ball, 2003). In this sense, it has been argued that the "market sets up a moral framework that prioritises self-interest and personal motives at the expense of equity in social justice" (Cudworth, 2008: 366). Within this body of sociological literature there is concern that the focus on performance and the 'output' of schools, often measured by league tables and exam results neglects the specific educational needs of certain groups of pupils. As Gewirtz et al (2005: 6) comment "there is increasing evidence of a shift of resources away from students with special

needs and learning difficulties…resources are being directed more towards those students who are most likely to perform well in tests and exams".

The discussions in the latter sections of this chapter generate RQ2:

2) How do young Travellers experience their encounters with non-Travellers in schools?

There is particular interest in the aspirations of the young Travellers in relation to education and whether there is any evidence of their moving away from, or being alienated from, the values and aspirations of their families.

Therefore, it cannot be ignored that this is likely to create an uncomfortable and generally unsupportive environment for many individuals, particularly those who already have a difficult relationship with schools. Gypsies and Travellers are one such group who in many cases are likely to require additional assistance in mainstream schooling, due to their mobility and poor attendance in school and the absence of help they are likely to receive at home with homework and reading due to the poor literacy rates of their parents and older community members. Therefore, it is arguable that the atmosphere of obsession with standards and attainment in UK schools is emphasising notions of difference between communities and not taking into account the particular, often cultural and traditional needs of Gypsies and Travellers who are unlikely to be the 'best performing' students in schools and are therefore often formally or informally excluded and not allowed to reach their full potential. This gives weight to debates surrounding the actual experiences behind 'Every Child Matters', where some children, particularly Gypsies and Travellers are considered 'undesirable' due to their poor attainment levels.

Despite these debates dominating the research surrounding young Gypsy and Traveller children in mainstream education, some researchers have instead claimed that Gypsy Travellers are increasingly engaged with education, and increasingly committed to achieving educational success/qualifications as a means to expanding employment options. Others have expanded on this notion, instead suggesting there may be more to this engagement and that 'self-improvement' in a more general sense might be what some young Travellers are aspiring to. But this is likely to have implications in the sense that it also exposes children and

young people more to non-Gypsy Traveller values and culture in the schools, some of which may have the official support of the school.

2.4 Chapter Summary

Overall, this chapter has evidenced the ways in which the lives of Travellers are inherently insular and often at odds with those of non-Travellers. This chapter has suggested that, through drawing on literature from geographies of encounter, this will create uncomfortable encounters for young Travellers, who are increasingly forced to leave the site and enter spaces that are not Traveller spaces and are not safe and supportive of their values. A review of the current literature suggests that this may have wider implications for young Travellers and their Traveller identities. However, the extent of these implications and how they may play out for young Traveller living in Britain in the present day remains unclear. From this review of the literature, the following research questions have emerged:

ORQ: '**In what sense, if at all, are young Gypsies and Travellers still 'outsiders in urban society'?'** In order to do this, it will answer the following research questions.

1. **How do young Travellers negotiate encounters in off-site spaces including those on public transport?**
2. **How do young Travellers experience their encounters with non-Travellers in schools?**

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on the philosophical underpinnings, the research design and the methods that were considered the most appropriate for answering the research questions and aims identified as a result of the literature review. The research questions involve exploring the nature and quality of social encounters involving young Travellers, including their emotional engagement within them. A qualitative research approach was appropriate, therefore.

This chapter will begin by exploring the philosophical underpinnings of this research, recognising the social constructionist nature of identity in doing this. It will then discuss why a qualitative study is necessary for this research and why a case study is the most appropriate approach for exploring the interactions and encounters that young Travellers experience when off-site. It will then discuss how a strategy of conducting semi-structured interviews, observation and focus groups emerged as the chosen methods. A discussion of the key limitations associated with these methods will also be raised. Addressing ethical considerations was central to the research, and these will be discussed at some length in this chapter.

3.2 Philosophical Underpinnings

This research drew on the fields of social, cultural and political, and emotional geographies and takes a social constructionist approach to exploring the ways in which the world can be understood and constructed by individuals, often in contrasting and vastly different ways. There is significant debate amongst and between social and natural scientists regarding the epistemological considerations to be taken into account when carrying out research. In more recent years, many social scientists have rejected positivism, instead giving preference to interpretivism where researchers are “critical of the application of the scientific model to the study of the social world” (Bryman, 2008: 15), sharing the view that “the subject matter of the social sciences – people and their institutions – is fundamentally different from that of

the natural sciences" (ibid). This draws on the importance of phenomenology and inductive approaches to research, which question how individuals make sense of the world around them (Bryman, 2008) and highlights the importance of the individual removing existing preconceptions in their own grasp of the world when carrying out research (Weber, 1947). This notion is supported by Schutz (1962: 59) when he comments "the thought objects constructed by the social scientist, in order to grasp this social reality, have to be founded upon the thought objects constructed by the common-sense thinking of men [and women!] (sic), living their daily life within the social life within the social world". Furthermore, in addition to this there have also been considerable debates surrounding ontological positions and the significance of objectivism and constructionism, with substantial critiques emerging surrounding both positions from a variety of fields within the social sciences.

As previously mentioned, this research has taken a constructionist approach, thus rejecting objectivism and the idea that "social phenomena confront us as external factors that are beyond our reach or influence" (Bryman, 2008:18). Despite the concerns raised by researchers, many have confirmed the importance of social constructionism in social science research and consider it to be highly significant. Burr (2015:4) confirms this when she comments "social constructionism insists that we take a critical stance toward our take-for-granted ways of understanding the world and ourselves…[and] cautions us to be ever suspicious of our assumptions about how the world appears to be". Constructionism asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Denzin 2001), thus challenging the suggestion that "categories such as organisation and culture are pre-given and therefore confront social actors as external realities that they have no role in fashioning" (Bryman, 2008: 19). Instead some, including Strauss et al (1973), have explored the ways in which constructionism can be applied to understanding institutions which they argue can be conceptualised as 'negotiated order', where rules should be seen as "general understandings" (Strauss et al, 1973: 308) rather than commands. Therefore, in line with the constructionist approach, organisation and culture can be seen as in continuous states of construction and reconstruction. This is confirmed by Becker (1982: 501) when he comments "people create culture continuously…no set of cultural understandings...provides a perfectly applicable solution to any problem people have to solve in the course of their day and they must remake those solutions, adapt

their understandings to the new situation in light of what is different about it". Despite general agreement amongst social scientists viewing constructionism as concerned with lived experience and the role of social actors (Schwandt, 1994), some have argued that it is important to note that there are many forms of constructionism, which can be seen to differ along several dimensions with debate surrounding whether the focus should be placed on the role of communities and societies or individuals (Au, 1998). Through drawing on notions of radical constructivism (Gergen, 1985; Schwandt, 1994). Lincoln and Guba (2003: 227) confirm this difficulty and fluidity between the two concepts when they comment "realities are social constructions, selected, built and embellished by social actors and individuals…in that sense, constructions are intensely personal and idiosyncratic and consequently, as plentiful and diverse and the people who hold them".

Numerous critiques have emerged in response to the increasing focus on constructionism and many concerned with the stance have suggested that it is important to recognise the problems with the constructionist approach (Lincoln and Guba, 2003). Amongst these critiques, some have questioned the usefulness of the approach when conducting empirical research (Giddens, 1987) and whether research produced through the constructionist approach can be considered reliable (Antonnen, 1999). Issues of reliability will be discussed in more depth later on in this chapter. Many researchers have highlighted the concerns surrounding the reliability of constructionist research (Bryman, 2004; Lincoln and Guba, 2000) but others have considered the concept of confirmability as more useful to consider (Lincoln and Guba, 1989), where attention is drawn to the researcher's morality in their actions, in light of Licoln and Guba's ethical relativism (1989). In addition to this, others have argued that the theory does not account for where individuals themselves have been constructed and allows numerous internal contradictions (Stam, 2001). Stam (2001: 295) examples this through his argument that the framework is either "not realist…or assumes realism". However, some (for example, Potter, 1996 and Edwards, 1997) have dismissed these claims, instead recognising the usefulness of the approach in understanding social research and situations through which positivism, and the methods used in positivist approaches cannot be considered useful. These situations primarily include those which explore social life (see Halfpenny 2014) and involve the real-life experiences of individuals and the interactions they have with and in certain places. Harré (2001) adds further weight to these claims through his

suggestion that although social constructionism allows the social world and the role that individuals play within this to be understood, there is a growing need for a realist social constructionism. As previously mentioned, contrary to Harré's argument, within existing research in the social sciences there is a significant recognition of the importance and usefulness of a social constructionist approach in allowing the real lived experiences of individuals and their interactions with other individuals in society to be explored. Therefore, despite these critiques and calls for development of the concept, it was deemed the most appropriate for this research.

Drawing on the ideas of Au (2008: 298) who comments "from the perspective of social constructivism, it may be argued that both successes and failures in literacy learning are the collaborative social accomplishments of school systems, communities, teachers, students and families", it was evident that a social constructionist framework will facilitate further understanding of the encounters. These encounters occur between Travellers and non-Travellers when young Travellers leave the site and enter non-Traveller spaces, including schools, in London. In this sense, this framework allowed the real-life experiences of young people from Traveller backgrounds in public spaces in England, to be explored and assessed. Through an analysis of the literature in the previous chapter, the concept of identity was highlighted as a central theme of this research. The concept of identity has been considered as socially constructed and in this sense, the ways in which the identity(ies) of individuals can be seen to be constructed and reconstructed across places and scales is significant to this research. Public spaces, including parks, schools and various locations within London are key sites where formal data collection for this research took place. These places and the actors within them create particular kinds of atmospheres and thus, encounters (McDermott and Gospodinoff, 1981). Thus, the aforementioned culture and organisation can be seen to facilitate particular kinds of socialisation. Therefore, in line with some of the highlighted concepts surrounding social constructionism, places and spaces and the identities of particular groups and individual young people within this, can be constructed and continuously reconstructed in public space.

Furthering this, in a broad sense, many have confirmed the importance of spatiality in social constructionism and have suggested that the construction of knowledge can be understood

to differ spatially and temporally (Castree, 2013) whilst bearing the mark of its originators. This spatial and temporal variance allows individuals to make sense of the world they live in. Particular places and spaces can be seen to be constructed by particular groups of individuals. For example, schools and the places and spaces within them are constructed in line with centrally conceived agendas will be particularly important and the subsequent impacts this has on the wider identities and lives of Gypsy Traveller young people will be central to this study. In this sense, it is evident that places and individuals can be seen to co-construct one another. In particular, many researchers (Strauss et al, 1973; Au, 2008) have acknowledged the importance of social constructionism in institutions and the ways in which institutions construct particular social norms that have been perpetuated by social actors and in turn, may be (re)constructed by them. This is particularly significant for this research, where aspects of the literature suggest that these social norms are determined by particular groups in mainstream society. These ethnic groups are often those that are considered most dominant within society. In this sense, the literature suggests that pupils from a Gypsy Traveller background may feel discomfort and may not easily coexist with non-Travellers in certain kinds of non-Traveller spaces. This includes certain public spaces in London and schools. This signifies the importance of the social organisation and culture within these environments and the impacts that this may have on the wider lives and identities of pupils from Gypsy Traveller backgrounds. This will be explored in further chapters of this study.

3.3 Research Design: The Importance of Qualitative Research

This research has taken a qualitative, mixed method, case study approach in exploring the experiences of Traveller children when they leave the site, and thus, the home and into public spaces. One of the most important spaces for these children is their secondary schools, which are based in south London. Despite many acknowledging the important role that quantitative research plays within the social sciences, as previously mentioned this research rejects ideas surrounding positivism instead prioritising inductive forms of research. A qualitative approach was deemed necessary. Many researchers have commented on the usefulness of qualitative research in understanding the social world and making sense of individual actors within this (Bryman, 2008). Despite this recognised usefulness and importance with research produced

in the social sciences, some have highlighted concerns associated with the approach, as Bryman (2008: 366) comments “qualitative research is more controversial than…quantitative research because it exhibits somewhat less codification of the research”, thus raising potential issues surrounding reliability and validity. Many qualitative researchers are critical of the general [mis]understanding that qualitative should be defined by the lack of generation and collection of quantitative data (Bryman, 2008; Silverman, 2013). As Bryman (2008: p.367) argues “qualitative research ends up being addressed in terms of what quantitative research is not”; instead qualitative researchers (for example, Gubruim and Holstein, 1997) argue that there are distinctive features within the qualitative research tradition. Silverman furthers this through his suggestion that there must be a different set of criteria present for judging the validity and reliability of the two approaches to ensure that quantitative research is not oversimplified and that qualitative research does not limit itself to the study of participant’s meanings (Silverman, 1998).

Numerous researchers have expanded upon existing attempts at definitions of qualitative research and in doing this have commented on the subsequent difficulty with generating definitions for the approach. Denzin and Lincoln (2005b) have explored some of the issues surrounding defining qualitative research and have suggested that the tradition of qualitative research has progressed through a number of stages (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005b) that has included a diverse range of qualitative investigations. This diverse range is confirmed by Bryman (2008: 369) when he comments “qualitative research subsumes several diverse research methods that differ from each other considerably”. This presence of a diverse range of research methods was one of the most significant reasons for the choice of a qualitative approach to this research. It was been decided that a qualitative mixed methods approach (Kumar, 2014) would allow rich narrative descriptions to be generated within real-world settings [public spaces in London] (Patton, 2005; Merriam, 2009). Despite the fact that some have argued that a multi-method approached implies greater variability and makes the analysis of data more complex (Bryman, 2008) an approach that used a range of methods would facilitate the further exploration of the encounters that young Travellers experience in London. A mixed-methods approach allowed some of the ideas discussed in previous chapters, inclusive of the ways encounter impact on the wider lives of young Travellers, to be observed and analysed in particular spatial settings in London.

Furthering this, some researchers within the social sciences have commented on the advantages of using qualitative approaches in educational settings, recognised as an important facet of this research. As Hatch (2002: 3) comments "while the direct application of qualitative research to education settings are a fairly recent phenomenon, qualitative approaches to social research (especially in anthropology and sociology) have rich and interesting histories". Expanding on this, similarly to many other fields within the social sciences, researchers have argued that there needs to be a further rejection of quantitative methods due to their detachment from the real-life scenarios that are occurring within the mainstream school environment. This is confirmed by Wellington (2000: 14) who comments "it remains a mystery to me why those who work in education should attempt to aspire towards science when scientific methods, processes and codes of conduct are at best unclear and at worst lack the objectivity, certainty, logicality and predictability which are falsely ascribed to them". This draws on some of the more general arguments, which call for a rejection of the exclusive focus on positivist approaches in education research. Atkins and Wallace (2012: 20) further Wellington's claims when they suggest "we shouldn't feel we have to apologise for the fact that our research in education is not often conducted like a laboratory experiment with measurements and control groups, or the fact that our findings are not often reducible to repeats". Instead they suggest a more people-centred approach. However, many researchers (Bryman, 2008; Silverman, 2013) have reaffirmed the importance of remaining aware of the limitations of qualitative research and to remain reflexive with regard to the credibility and reliability of data obtained through this approach. Some of these limitations include the trustworthiness of the research; the internal validity; the insider outsider nature of the research; and those specifically relating to qualitative methods. These concepts will become more apparent in later sections of this chapter, where individual methods will be critiqued. In this sense, it is clear that there is an increase in focus on qualitative studies in research that is concerned with education but that it is also important to remain cautious when using this approach. For the purpose of this study, there are numerous factors that can be seen to complicate the approach, including ethical consideration to be taken into account. However, to understand and analyse the experiences of Gypsy and Traveller pupils a qualitative approach was deemed the most appropriate.

3.4 Research Design: The Case Study Approach

As previously mentioned this study adopted a case study approach. This approach is concerned with detailed and intensive analysis of the complexity and particular nature of the case in question (Stake, 2005; Bryman, 2008). Kitchin and Tate (2013: 225) confirm this when they argue that a case study allows in-depth analysis of a "specific example in time and space". There are a number of different approaches to case study research. This study involved the analysis of one or more communities in a single location (London). This approach is favoured by many researchers in the social sciences and over the years, a number of well-known studies have been produced under this approach in the social sciences (for example, Ball, 1981; Burgess, 1983; O'Reilly, 2000). In recent years, there has been a significant amount of debate surrounding case study research with some arguing that case study research cannot be considered reliable or generalisable. Although there have been both qualitative and quantitative approaches to case study research (Bryman, 2008), it is often considered that "exponents of the case study design often favour qualitative methods" (Bryman, 2008: 53). Although this means that the two aspects of research design can often be seen to complement one another, it is also clear that case study design is at risk of facing many of the critiques that qualitative research is open to more broadly.

These critiques surround the validity of case studies (Bryman, 2008) and have been debated by numerous academics over the years. Some researchers (for example, Stake, 2005) disregard these critiques in using a case study and spend little time discussing them, whilst others (e.g. Yin, 2003; Flyvbjerg, 2006) instead use their own responses to these critiques to strengthen their argument (Bryman, 2008) and their own justification for the use of a case study, thus developing and enhancing the approach. Flyvbjerg (2006) regards these critiques, which include the inability to generalise from a single case and the subjective nature of case study research, as 'misunderstandings'; he comments (2006: 221) "these…misunderstandings indicate that it is theory, reliability, and validity that are at issue". He disputes these claims suggesting that "the conventional wisdom is wrong" and that the case study "is a necessary and sufficient method for certain important research tasks in the social sciences" (Flyvbjerg, 2006: 241). There is general agreement amongst case study researchers that they "do not

delude themselves that it is possible to identify a typical case that can be used to represent a certain class of objects…they do not think that a case study is a sample of one" (Bryman, 2008:55).

Building on this, critics argue that this departure from generalisability restricts the external validity (understood as applying the research to a context outside of the research) of the research. However, case study researchers argue that it is not the purpose of the research design to generalise to other cases or to populations beyond the case (Bryman, 2008). In this sense, it is clear that the importance of generating and analysing data through the use of a case study is important for the application and development of theory out of these findings, rather than generalising the results to other cases (Mitchell, 1983; Yin, 2003). Thus, the primary focus is prioritising theory testing and theory generation (Williams, 2000; Bryman, 2008) and the quality of theoretical reasoning in which the case study researcher engages.

The use of triangulation helps overcome concerns surrounding the use of a single research method, where research "may suffer from limitations associated with that method or from the specific application of it, triangulation offers the prospect of enhanced confidence" (Bryman 2003:1142). Triangulation has been defined as "the use of more than one approach to the investigation of a research question in order to enhance confidence in the ensuing findings" (Bryman 2003: 1142).

Mabry comments that using triangulation "can help expand meaning-making, balance interpretations and guard against undue researcher subjectivity" (2008: 221) and will ultimately allow data to "reveal the invisibility of everyday life" (Mabry, 2008: 218). Triangulation is often used in both positivist and realist approaches but less frequently in line with a constructionist approach. However, some (for example, Golafshani, 2003; Olsen, 2004) have commented on the increasing relevance of triangulation in qualitative research to enhance and resolve issues of reliability and validity. Due to the many factors (such as the involvement of different sites and communities) and possible variations in the data obtained, triangulation was deemed appropriate for this study. Some of these ideas will be explored at a later stage of this chapter when the strategy for the analysis of data is discussed.

It was decided that this study, through this case study approach, would explore the experiences of participants, in this case, young people from Traveller backgrounds. As discussed in the literature review, identity and ethnicity are socially constructed and, therefore, can be considered fluid and malleable in the sense that people and places can be seen to continuously reconstruct the identities of individuals. Additionally, there is a significant body of literature surrounding the ways in which ethnicity is central to the performance of identity in certain contexts. Therefore, it was decided that the particular context of various locations where young Travellers are off-site would allow respondents experiences, in relation to particular ways of negotiating place and the experiences within them, to be explored. In this sense, it allowed the construction of the social reality of this context to be explored, in doing this the effects on the wider identities of this particular group of individuals could be investigated.

3.5 A Case Study Approach: Southwark, South London

This research explores the lived experiences and encounter young people of young people from Traveller backgrounds who live and attend schools in Southwark in South London. Specific locations in Southwark were chosen due to the super-diversity and intensely multicultural nature of the area (Hall, 2015). Super-diversity is a term conceived by Vertovec (2007: 1024) as "a notion intended to underline a level and kind of complexity surpassing anything the country has previously experienced. Such a condition is distinguished by a dynamic interplay of variables among an increased number of new, small and scattered, multiple-origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differentiated and legally stratified immigrants who have arrived over the last decade". In particular, in the Southwark example, there is a significant presence of a number of Gypsy and Traveller communities in the area in both permanent housing and on permanent sites (particularly in Peckham). Notably there is a strong presence of Irish Travellers in the community.

I volunteered at a Traveller-run charity based in Peckham between January 2017 and June 2018. This charity is a small, local charity funded by Southwark Council and by the Irish Government. When I volunteered It had three members of salaried staff (one full-time and two part-time) and between five and ten volunteers (many of whom were from the local

Traveller community). It focused on increasing cultural awareness of Traveller history and everyday life in the wider community and amongst individuals from other ethnic backgrounds whilst assisting members of the local Traveller communities in various aspects of their lives including housing, health and education. It also runs a youth group from Travellers between the ages of eight and sixteen. The youth group meets once a week (twice when there are weekend events planned), and engages in activities on the charity's premises and elsewhere such as visiting parks in the local area or going on trips to activity centres for go-karting and laser tag or to attractions such as the London Aquarium. Working in the youth group provided myself with access to young Travellers in an informal setting as well as allowing for shared experiences of negotiating the city beyond the Traveller site and, indeed the youth centre.

Two of the paid members of staff and most of the other volunteers at the charity were from the local Traveller communities and lived on nearby sites, allowing myself further access and trust with those Travellers involved in the charity and its associated activities. More recently, the charity has begun to focus on providing specific forms of educational support for young people and their families who are from the local Traveller communities. This assistance comes from increasing links between the charity and local schools and providing mediation between schools and families and helping with literacy and increasing awareness of the importance of continuing into secondary education. As mentioned in the literature review, this is a contentious issue in many Gypsy and Traveller communities and one that the Government and other institutions have focussed on in the production and implementation of specific guidelines and policies.

During the initial stages of forming links with the charity, it was decided that one of my main roles would be to begin designing and delivering cultural awareness sessions in schools which would be for teachers and other staff members. Unfortunately, as a result of a number of factors, such as limits to both time and funding, it was not possible to gain access to schools and therefore, to deliver these sessions. Consequently, my volunteering involved attending the youth sessions and trips with the youth club which facilitated significant in-depth ethnographic fieldwork and informal interviews.

3.6 Fieldwork with a Youth Club for Young Irish Travellers

From the outset of this research, access had been one of the primary concerns when considering the practicalities of fieldwork in this research, due to the inherently sensitive nature of this research. These primarily resulted from the insider outsider nature of the research. There has been significant discussion in the social sciences over whether insiders or outsiders should be the ones carrying out research and the strengths and limitations associated with each (Oliver and Eales, 2004). Maykut and Morehouse (1994, p. 123) discusses the concerns surrounding this relationship in qualitative research when they argue "the qualitative researcher's perspective is perhaps a paradoxical one: it is to be acutely tuned-in to the experiences and meaning systems of others—to indwell—and at the same time to be aware of how one's own biases and preconceptions may be influencing what one is trying to understand".

Dwyer (2009: 59) argues "the benefit to being a member of the group one is studying is acceptance. One's membership automatically provides a level of trust and openness in your participants that would likely not have been present otherwise. One has a starting point (the commonality) that affords access into groups that might otherwise be closed to outsiders." Participants might be more willing to share their experiences because there is an assumption of understanding and an assumption of shared distinctiveness". She furthers this argument when she comments, "although this shared status can be very beneficial as it affords access, entry, and a common ground from which to begin the research, it has the potential to impede the research process as it progresses. It is possible that the participant will make assumptions of similarity and therefore fail to explain their individual experience fully. It is also possible that the researcher's perceptions might be clouded by his or her personal experience and that as a member of the group he or she will have difficulty separating it from that of the participants. This might result in an interview that is shaped and guided by the core aspects of the researcher's experience and not the participant's".

This research intersected a number of hard to reach groups which complicates the data collection component of the study. Many researchers within the social sciences have commented on a variety of difficulties associated with the involvement of participants who

are from ethnic minority backgrounds and have possibly faced significant discrimination in the past (Bhopal, 2010); young people (Tisdall et al, 2008); and carrying out data collection with or in schools (McNeill, 1991; Creese et al, 2008; Maaranen and Krokfors, 2008). As this research was spanning the intersection of all these groups, a substantial amount of research and time was spent setting up these links with key stakeholders and the community itself, including volunteering with the aforementioned charity, throughout the first year of my research. In this sense, the charity acted as a *gatekeeper*; these are recognised as individuals in senior positions (Lewis-Beck et al, 2003) in an organisation who "have the power to grant or withhold access to people or situations for the purpose of research" (Burgess, 1984: p.48). Further ethical considerations and the limitation associated with some of these concepts will be discussed in more depth at a later stage of this chapter.

As a result of the low response rates of schools, as discussed in chapter one of this thesis, the research focus was changed. One of my main roles through volunteering with the charity had been their involvement with the organisation of and participation in weekly youth sessions and monthly trips that involved a range of activities. The youth groups involved children between the ages of eight and sixteen years old who live on sites in the local area. In undertaking this volunteering, I was able to gain the trust of individuals (Valentine, 1997; Emmel et al, 2007) from the local community. Initially this was planned as a means to pilot some key ideas and questions (Alderson, 2005; Veale, 2005; Morrow, 2009) in preparation for formal fieldwork. However, as the eighteen months with the charity progressed, this played a far more significant role, where ethnographic field notes were taken whilst with the youth group became key for formal fieldwork.

Many researchers who have worked with both Gypsies and Travellers have suggested that the most effective method of understanding research into these communities is to go onto sites and use both ethnography and interviews (for example Vanderback, 2009; Convey and O'Brien, 2012). This approach was not thought to be ideal for this research as the aim was to have conversations with young people in a setting where they might feel able to speak as openly as possible. Access to young people on the Traveller site would be mediated by adults who, quite understandably, were likely to want to monitor closely the interactions between a (relatively) young non-Traveller woman and their children, especially as she was avowedly

trying to find out about aspects of their lives. In allowing the young people to go to the youth group the adult Travellers were de facto delegating both the mediating and safeguarding roles to the leader of the youth group. In practice, this meant that on occasion the leader would sit in on interviews and other interactions (these will be noted in subsequent chapters as appropriate), but in general was relaxed about my activities. Consequently, the vast majority of researcher-young person interactions were 'unsupervised'. I did visit the local sites and met extended family members, and spoke to many of these individuals at parties and events organised by the charity. Nevertheless, a drawback of this strategy was that access to parents of the young people was limited as they tended not to be involved in the youth group and the charity on a weekly basis. Nevertheless, an adult Traveller perspective was provided by the charity workers, who were parents themselves (some of their children attended the youth club).

There are often serious practical difficulties in organising interviews with adult Travellers, and some researchers have resorted to turning up unannounced at Travellers sites in order to interview them (see Levinson and Sparkes, 2008; Niner, 2009). I felt uncomfortable with this approach for both methodological and ethical reasons. Methodologically, it was unlikely that forcing one's presence on an interviewee would help create the kinds of rapport that qualitative research (including the research in this project) typically requires. Ethically, turning up unannounced – essentially in order to service the researcher's need for data – appeared simply to be an example of using relatively powerless and stigmatised groups as 'data plantations' (Ladson-Billings and Tate, 2016).

3.7 Ethical Considerations

This research raised numerous ethical concerns due to the involvement of participants who were under the age of sixteen and were from an ethnic minority background. In particular, it is important to consider the ways in which individuals from Gypsy and Traveller backgrounds have previously faced a significant amount of discrimination from members of mainstream society and therefore, may be hesitant to participate in research or allow their children to participate in research. Many researchers (Mitchell and Draper, 1982; Bryman, 2003; Israel and Hay, 2006) have discussed the difficulty and the range of considerations to be taken into

account when involving members of these groups in research. Before carrying out the data collection for this research it was essential to consider issues surrounding consent, power relations, positionality and sensitivity. This is confirmed by Bryman (2008) when he argues that it is not only extreme cases that risk ethical transgression and that all research must be carried out in accordance with right and wrong (Mitchell and Draper, 1982).

Within discussions surrounding these kinds of ethical concerns, there has been significant debate and, as Bryman (2008: 115) argues a view that these issues are "not readily capable of resolution". Despite the various differing ethical stances that researchers in the social sciences have taken (Bryman, 2008), there is general agreement within these disciplines that researchers must be aware of the types of ethical issues that may arise when carrying out their research and the ways in which some of the risks can be minimised and some solutions can be offered (Bryman, 2008). Diener and Crandall (1978) list what they perceive to be the four main principles of ethical research as whether there is harm to participants; whether there is a lack of informed consent; whether there is an invasion of privacy; and whether deception is involved.

Although it was highly unlikely that any participants in this research project faced the risk of any harm, it was important to remain aware of maintaining a significant level of cultural sensitivity due to the presence of participants from an ethnic minority background. Moreover, as far as possible, participants themselves should be allowed to judge what constitutes harm. As previously mentioned, Gypsies and Travellers have faced a substantial amount of discrimination and racism in the past and therefore, are recognised as a hard to reach group who are often wary of interaction with members of mainstream society (Sibley, 2009). This draws on issues of positionality and reflexivity and the need to ensure that I remained aware of my position as a white, British, female researcher. This is confirmed by Hay (in Clifford et al 2010:35) when he comments "ethically reflexive practice includes acknowledging and working with (negotiating) different groups". As a result of my position whilst undertaking data collection, it was essential to remain conscious of the ways I dressed, acted and interacted with participants and any spatial implications this may have. In this sense, it was important to remain aware of the ways I acted, spoke to participants and dressed in different spatial settings, for example, through collecting data during the youth group, on site or in

public spaces. This is confirmed by England (1994: 84) when he comments “the research situation is structured by both the researcher and the person being researched”. Despite this, many have also acknowledged the difficulty for the researcher of remaining entirely neutral in their views, with England (1994: 85) dismissing the possibility of neutrality through calling it “completely mythical”. In line with this, others have commented on the important role that race, class and gender plays in the research process (Skelton, 2008; Kumar, 2012) and the ways in which this influences the collection of data and the subsequent interpretation and analysis of this data. This raises further and contrasting concerns surrounding power relations and the need for me to remain reflexive about my positionality in a range of environments.

This draws on the importance of what Bryman (2008) coins as ‘the politics of social research’. He argues that it is important for researchers to note that their research does not take place in a “moral vacuum” (Bryman, 2008: 131). This discussion touches on a number of relevant concerns, and arguably most importantly the issue of access to participants who are willing to be involved in the research project. Due to the ‘hard-to-reach’ nature of Gypsies and Travellers, gatekeepers have proved essential in gaining access. The use of gatekeepers is an inherently political process with the gatekeepers concerned with the researchers motives and what they will both lose and gain from participating in the research (Bryman, 2008). Many researchers have discussed the issues that may arise with the use of gatekeepers and therefore, throughout my involvement with the charity there was a need for a consciousness of ensuring the gatekeepers did not distort the primary research in anyway by guiding me towards specific individuals and therefore, specific results (Valentine in Flowerdew and Martin 1997). Furthermore, it was important to ensure the gatekeepers did not feel deceived at any point, which, as Valentine (1997) notes, is something that would have serious repercussions. Throughout participating in the youth session, it was important that I remained aware of the issues raised in the literature.

To counteract some of these concerns and areas of potential ethical risks, researchers have argued the importance of confidentiality and awareness of data protection (Bryman, 2008). In light of this, it was ensured that all data collected throughout this research was anonymised and stored in accordance with the University’s regulations. It was also important to ensure

that participants and where relevant, their parents and guardians were fully aware of this anonymisation of any data collected when giving consent to participate in the research.

As highlighted by Diener and Crandall (1978), informed consent is an area of potentially significant risk for participants in research. For the purpose of this research project, those key informants participating were requested to provide written consent. For those young people participating in the research, spoken consent was gained from their parents or guardians and the young people themselves. Due to lower literacy rates in Gypsy and Traveller communities, spoken consent will be deemed acceptable rather than written consent in line with the aforementioned discussion surrounding cultural sensitivity. Despite ensuring that consent is gained from participants, some researchers have raised arguments surrounding further difficulties that may arise. As Homan (1991: 73) comments implementing the principle of informed consent "is easier said than done". Bryman (2008: 121) furthers this claim through his suggestions that prospective participants cannot be presented with all the information required for them to make an informed decision about their involvement and that ethnography further complicated the issue of consent. However, it was decided to mitigate this problem by informing participants that their participation was voluntary, that they were able to withdraw from the research at any time and that they were able to withdraw any data within a decided time limit between their interview or participation in observation and publication (Bryman, 2008).

In addition to the concerns surrounding the ethnic minority background of participants it was also important to remain aware of concerns surrounding the involvement of children in research. Many researchers in the social sciences have discussed this and offered ways to avoid harm to participants or participants feeling uncomfortable. One method to avoid these risks has been offered by Morgan et al (2002: 6) when they discuss child centred approaches. However, within this, there are further complications due to the potential for illegitimate uses of power in inevitably unequal power relations (Morgan et al, 2002: 6). Therefore, it was not only important to ensure consent and confidentiality were priorities so that participants did not feel uncomfortable, that 'warm-up' activities (including asking simple questions) were used to overcome initial barriers but also that participants were friends or acquaintances so that they felt supported (Morgan et al 2002:17) and more confident in their responses.

Securing informed consent from children and young people is essential, but requires care and sensitivity. Children's responses will be influenced by who asks the question, who is present at the time, and will also be influenced by the children's understandings of the roles of relationships (including power-relations) between themselves, i.e. the children, and those asking consent and/or present and themselves (Gallagher, 2009a). Care was taken to explain what the research involved and how their contributions might be used in terms they might understand. Importantly, consent was regarded as a never-ending process, not an event, meaning that I was constantly sensitive to verbal and non-verbal cues that suggested that children and young people (and, indeed, adult participants) might no longer be comfortable taking part; as Gallagher (2009a: 16) puts it, consent must be "renegotiable". This included the sometimes difficult task of interpreting silences because "(l)ike voice, silence is not neutral but communicates meaning" (Bucknall, 2014:74). No researcher can guarantee that her interpretation of any particular instance is absolutely correct of course, but care, sensitivity and paying attention to context and patterns of behaviour can provide some assurance that serious harm to, and infraction of the wishes of, participants is avoided.

In relation to the ethics of representation, the developing understanding of the words, silences and actions of the young Travellers, and others, was refined and tested by triangulation over time. In essence, I worked at getting to know participants and their circumstances better. Formal recognition of the participants has not been possible as it was my judgement that the possibility of harm arising from not anonymising data, and hence encroaching on privacy (Bucknall, 2014), was greater than the potential benefit to individuals from having full recognition of their having participated in the research.

The ethics of social inclusion primarily came into play in the way that I tried to ensure that I paid attention to, and heard the voices (and silences) of all the children and young people in the group. In any group of children and young people some are livelier and more prominent to an observer than others. Power-relations operate between children and young people too, of course (Gallagher, 2009a). I was conscious of the need to ensure that I attended to all participants. One of the primary ways of doing this was to make sure that, as far as possible, the more reflective interviews/conversations with children took place in settings that would

be (as far as I could judge) be comfortable and relaxed for them. A more subtle factor that also had to be reflected upon, and taken into account, was the emotional dimension that is unavoidable, and may indeed be essential, in ethnographic research (Bondi, 2005; Gallagher, 2009b). In this case, the emotional responses of everyday interactions were complicated by those arising from the voluntary role that I played in the youth centre, which involved some exercise of authority. Only through careful and honest reflection could I be aware of the potential significance of these emotional dimensions in the way data were constructed and interpreted (Bucknall, 2014).

3.8 Observation and Ethnographic Fieldwork

The use of observation in research is often considered controversial. However, it is also considered as a useful and effective tool by many researchers in the social sciences. Bryman (2008:258) lists the main types of observation as "structured observation; systematic observation; participant observation; non-participant observation; unstructured observation and simple observation". In this study, participant observation and unstructured observation were perceived to be the most useful.

Participant observation emerged as the most useful site of data collection during the volunteering conducted with the charity. As previously mentioned, I began volunteering in January 2017 and attended numerous weekly youth sessions and monthly trips with the two youth groups which are comprised of young people, mostly from an Irish Traveller background but also inclusive of English Travellers, between the ages of eight and sixteen years old. This volunteering proved to be very useful in the development of my key themes to be used in focus groups and to form the basis of the questions I had prepared for my semi-structured interviews. Ethnographic field notes were made during and after every session and trip throughout the eighteen months. Spradley (2016: 4) comments "in order to discover the hidden principles of another way of life, the researcher must become a *student.* Storekeepers and storytellers and local farmers become *teachers*". In this sense, it is evident that this immersion with participants is essential in forming an understanding of their experiences and their way of life or the climate in which they live and work. For the purpose of this study, participant observation proved to be particularly useful in piloting some of the sensitive areas

of my data collection, meaning that I could alter these where necessary. It was also very useful to see how the charity operated in both the formal and the informal/everyday sense, as this could then be used to compare with data from the more formal environment of the schools to illuminate what the children said about their feelings and relationships in the two settings. Although this specific implementation of this method was arguably more structured that many studies involving participant observation, it proved useful as a point of comparison and triangulation. From the outset of my volunteering, I made sure that the charity was fully aware of my role as a researcher and the ways in which this would shape my organisation with them and the children who attended the youth group.

The most prominent form of observation used within this research is unstructured observation**.** There has been a significant amount of literature produced on the employment of this method where the aim is "to record in as much detail as the possible the behaviour of participants with the aim of developing a narrative account of that behaviour" (Bryman, 2008:257). Ethnographic field notes were taken during every youth group session, each week on a Friday throughout the eighteen months, and also during the bi-monthly and monthly outings into central London. These were recorded in a notebook and on my mobile phone and written up into a word document after the sessions in preparation for coding. Some of the children were interested in the notes being taken and although I maintained transparency during my role as a volunteer, I tried to keep note taking to a minimum in front of the young people so that I could engage with them and ask them questions.

3.9 Semi-structured Interviews

The interview is one of the most widely employed methods in the social sciences. When designing studies, researchers are tasked with choosing between structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews (Bryman, 2008). Generally, those researchers conducting quantitative studies favour structured interviews and have argued that this kind of rigid structure allows for heightened reliability and validity. However, despite concerns raised by some surrounding the difficulty with the reliability of data obtained through semi-structured interviews, were deemed the most appropriate for this study due to their enabling of the 'real-life' experiences of participants to be explored (Silverman, 2013). Semi-structured interviews are often credited as a central and highly useful feature of many qualitative studies

produced within the social sciences due to their flexible structure and conversational nature (Merriam, 2009; Longhurst, 2010). Unlike a structured interview, this approach allows the development of rich, detailed answers and responses to "the direction in which interviewees take the interview and perhaps adjusting the emphases in the research as a result of significant issues that may emerge in the course of the interview" (Bryman, 2008: 438). For the purpose of this study, the semi-structured interview was chosen over the unstructured interview as it ensured that participants remained primarily on-topic through sticking to central, predetermined themes. As Beardsworth and Keil (1992:261-262) comment, semi-structured interviews are "guided by an inventory of issues which were to be covered in each session…the open-ended, discursive nature of the interviews permitted an iterative process of refinement, whereby lines of thought identified by earlier interviewees could be taken up and presented to later interviewees". This reaffirms Bryman's argument surrounding the importance of flexibility in semi-structured interviews, which in turn may allow for the development of the interview process and where appropriate, the research focus. Despite the flexible nature of semi-structured interviews, many have confirmed the importance of preparation for these kinds of interviews through ensuring that a number of practical considerations have been made. These include ensuring the interview takes place in a quiet setting that is private so that the participants do not feel uncomfortable and to ensure that responses are heard "in the interviewee's own terms" (Bryman, 2008: 443) and that a good-quality recording machine is obtained prior to the interview to allow for the subsequent detailed analysis.

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with the three paid members of staff at the organisation at the community centre where the charity was based. These lasted approximately an hour each and were recorded and then transcribed. In addition to this, six semi-structured interviews and unstructured interviews were carried out with the young people who attended the youth group. These lasted between half an hour and an hour and a half. These were carried out in the community centre but also in other locations in central London including on buses and at a bowling alley. This was particularly useful as it allowed me to compare the children's responses across different 'sites' and with different actors present which gave me insight into the levels of comfort and discomfort the children felt in different spatial settings. Three sets of broad questions were developed (one for staff members, one for young people over the age of eleven and one for young people aged eight

to eleven). The questions for each interview were built on the same themes, predominantly surrounding their views on Traveller culture and their experiences in different spatial settings, including the site, public spaces (including public transport) and mainstream schools. Specialised questions were added for each individual interview. This allowed interviewees to expand extensively on the themes and provide answers beyond what had been expected. As previously mentioned, the ability to conduct informal piloting with members of the youth group was useful as some questions proved to be more sensitive and relevant that others. Interview questions were slightly altered throughout the process. In each case, the aim was to try and understand how experiences shaped the lives and identities of young Irish Travellers and the importance of education and aspirations in their lives.

3.10 Walking Methods

Walking interviews are regarded as a useful research method within the social sciences and particularly by researchers concerned with ethnography. Many researchers have suggested that the 'go along' or walking methodologies alleviate some of the issues associated with other research methods in the social sciences (for example, Kusenbach, 2003; Jones et al, 2008; Kennelly and Watt, 2013; Browne and McBride, 2015). As Kusenbach (2003: 458) has commented "the innovative method of the go-along, through combining some of the strengths of ethnographic observation and interviewing, is a tool particularly suited to explore two key aspects of everyday lived experience: the constitutive role and the transcendent meaning of the physical environment, or place". On the other hand, conducting sit-down interviews usually keeps informants from engaging in 'natural' activities, typically taking them out of the environments where those activities take place. This makes it difficult to grasp what exactly the subjects are talking about – if they are able and willing to discuss at all what researchers are interested in (Kusenbach, 2003: 459).

As previously mentioned, many of the interviews for this research took place in informal settings whilst 'on the move' in the city with the young Travellers. I initially had some concerns regarding the comfort and discomfort that the young Travellers might feel whilst discussing their lives (inclusive of their Traveller values) and experiences and encounters they had faced with non-Travellers. It was decided that carrying out a more informal style of interview would be the most appropriate. As O'Reilly (2012: 87) suggests "hanging out is also considered less

intrusive than other methods, such as participatory ethnographies or formalised interviews. Participants were also more likely to enact practices that are more part of their everyday behaviour as I presence became normalised, which was desirable in the case of this research". In this sense, it was clear that the young Travellers were not only able to feel more comfortable in the unstructured environment but were much less likely to act in certain kinds of ways as they were seen to during the semi-structured interviews which took place in the youth centre. Furthermore, this method proved extremely useful in discussing the encounters that the young people were subject to and engaging with whilst they happened and after they had happened. This draws on the importance of what some researchers have argued surrounding the significance of the actions and words of research participants and when they have said it (see Jones et al, 2008). The importance of this method will be drawn out in discussions in chapters five and six, where ethnographic vignettes will be used to frame the arguments of this thesis.

3.11 Focus Groups

In the early stages of this study, it was decided that carrying out focus groups with young people from a Traveller background would be both an appropriate and effective way to gain responses surrounding the ways in which they experience life off-site and if, and how this related to other aspects of their wider identities. Longhurst (2016: 143) defines the focus group as "a group of people usually between six and twelve, who meet in an informal setting to talk about a particular topic that has been set by the researcher". Although the use of focus groups in social research projects has only gained popularity fairly recently (Bryman, 2008), many have argued it is often considered a preferential method to interviewing as it is a multi-disciplinary tool which allows the opinions and interaction of a number of participants to be explored (Bryman, 2008). One of the most significant benefits of conducting focus groups is that they allow participants to feel more comfortable with the result that they are more likely to engage with the key themes proposed by the facilitator (Cameron, 2005). There has been some debate surrounding the ways in which a focus group differs from a group interview, with some making clear distinctions between the two (Frey and Fontana, 1991; Gibbs, 2012). For Longhurst (2016: 143) one of the defining characteristics of a focus group is that "the facilitator keeps the group on topic but is otherwise non-directive, allowing the group to

explore the subject from as many angles as they please". This 'focussed flexibility' allows participants to challenge one another and as affirmed by Bryman (2008: 475) who comments "this process of arguing means that the researcher may stand a chance of ending up with more realistic accounts of what people think, because they are forced to think about and possibly revise their views".

One of the most significant debates amongst researchers concerned with the use of focus groups is the way in which participants are recruited and how the performance of these participants may interact with that of the facilitator. Valentine elaborates on this thought through her suggestion that "when you are thinking about who you want to interview it is important to reflect on who you are and how your own identity will shape the interactions that you have with others" (Valentine, 2005:113). This draws on the aforementioned arguments surrounding the ethical considerations to be taken into account when conducting qualitative research; it is essential to remain reflexive about positionality and power relations within the research process (Mitchell and Draper, 1982).

Despite Morgan et al's (2002: 5) assertion that "methods with children are relatively under-developed", there has been considerable research into the use of focus groups as an effective tool to assess the experiences of children. However, it is also important to acknowledge the potential difficulties associated with employing this method with child participants including the "composition of groups, [the contrast between] shy and dominant members and the handling of sensitive topics and moments" (Morgan et al, 2002: 16). The disadvantages and difficulties associated with the implementation and effective use of focus groups support the notion that this is essential to use focus groups in addition to other methods as they can only provide a partial account and often need to be supplemented by other data (Morgan et al, 2002).

Due to the sensitive nature of this research and the involvement of participants under the age of sixteen and from an ethnic minority background, it was decided that focus groups would be an especially appropriate way to gain their real-life experiences. It was hoped a group setting would allow participants to feel more comfortable and, therefore, more likely to share responses. This draws on some of the aforementioned ethical considerations. This

chapter has previously evidenced the ways in which researchers conducting studies involving children adapt their methods; using focus groups ensured that the children who participated in this research were not pressured to provide an answer to specific and directed questions through being able to chat with their peers.

Informal focus groups and group interviews were carried out over a number of the Friday sessions in the community centre with both the younger and older groups of young Travellers. This involved twenty young people (twelve girls and eight boys). This allowed me to ask questions about their week at school and what they had been doing out of school, on the site or otherwise, without them feeling as though they were being recorded or 'tested' for their response. Three formal focus groups then took place, once I felt I had gained the trust and acceptance of the young people. These focus groups were split into one with the younger group (three boys and four girls between the ages of eight eleven were present), one with the older group (three girls and five boys, age twelve to fifteen, were present) and one specifically for the older girls (five girls between the ages of twelve and fifteen were present). The significance of age and gender in the lived experiences of young Travellers are a feature of the literature and the organisation of focus groups sought to capture this, whilst also allowing – as all relatively unstructured qualitative research does – for the unexpected. The focus groups lasted between ninety minutes and two hours and were recorded, notes were taken throughout the focus groups and written up when the recordings were transcribed. I asked the young Travellers involved for their consent to be recorded which they all agreed to without concern. I recorded the focus groups on my mobile phone, which in part allowed the children to feel more comfortable as this limited the equipment present which made the focus groups feel less formal.

These focus groups proved to be exceptionally useful in gaining the insight of young people into certain kinds of experiences and encounters they faced when off site. However, there were some significant limitations during the focus group with the younger children. Jane, the youth group leader, is the stepmother of two of the boys, Ryan and Kevin, and as the focus group progressed, it appeared as though Jane had told the boys specific phrases to say surrounding their experiences at schools in relation to discrimination and bullying. I did not raise this issue at the time in those terms as Jane was present in the room throughout the

duration of the focus group, and it was a difficult topic to raise in anything but a confrontational/accusatory way which might have repercussions on further opportunities for data collection. One example of this was during one conversation where Kevin (aged 10) stated *"sometimes they [other children in his class] ask you questions and it's like why do they ask that. It's stuff you don't want them to ask…I tell them why I like living there and why I do it. I tell them that I like it. I like all my friends, they're all good but sometimes they ask annoying questions. I don't begrudge them saying it*". Having known Kevin for over a year at this point, begrudge did not seem like a word he would normally choose to use and seemed an unusual choice for a nine-year-old. Despite this, it was clear that Jane had told the boys to highlight specific stories as she thought this was in their best interest. Furthermore, all of the focus groups were highly useful in providing insight into the off-site experiences and subsequent encounters that young Travellers faced in London.

3.12 Creative Methodologies

Before carrying out the focus group with the younger section of the youth club, it was decided that using creative participatory methods with the younger Travellers would be useful as both a 'warm up' activity and to allow them to express themselves in different ways, as many of them were unused to talking about their lives and experiences of being young Irish Travellers in central London. All seven children who participated in the focus group with the young section of the youth club drew three pictures: one of this was a template of a person which they were encouraged to personalise however they liked, but including the things that were important to them; the next was to illustrate their favourite place when they were at school, and the last illustrated their least favourite place in school. Although not considered a central facet of this research, these drawings provided useful insight into the young Travellers lives. There has been a significant amount of research (for example, Veale, 2005; Lomax, 2012; Robinson and Gillies, 2012; Mannay, 2015) which used creative methodologies in participatory research with young people, Veale (2005: 253) has accredited this to "an increased emphasis on children's rights and citizenship". She argues that "children and young people have traditionally been positioned passively in research and have lacked the opportunity to analyse and represent their position, often at a cost" (Veale, 2005: 253). In

using participatory methods, “the process of knowledge production” (Veale, 2005: 254) is facilitated through drawing on inventive and imaginative processes.

3.13 Limitations

Although some of the limitations associated with this research have been discussed in this chapter, this section will highlight and provide a more in-depth discussion of limitations.

One of the potential limitations associated with this study was the possibility that my position as a researcher and volunteering with members of the youth group may involve me within areas of the Traveller community that I should not be involved with, such as disagreements. It was initially thought that these disagreements may arise within and between families or between community members and the charity. In this sense, it was important that I remained aware of my role as a researcher and how that related to the way I spoke and acted when talking to respondents and being present on site and in other spaces. Throughout the eighteen months with the charity, these kinds of uncomfortable situations were not common. The majority of disagreements were between the individuals who ran the youth group and family members who, as Jane commented, *“were disrespectful and expected us to pander to their needs”.* The families did not tend to see me as a member of an organisation. Instead they saw me as an outsider with very little role or agency in the overall operation of the charity. On one occasion, one of the site matriarchs was annoyed and arguably, aggressive towards Jane for not telling her that I was working with the charity, which Jane apologised for in the moment but then said *“she thinks she runs the organisation because she’s important on the site, but we just ignore her”.*

One of the most prominent limitations throughout the fieldwork component of this research was the demand for assistance by the charity. I was travelling between Cardiff and London so last minute changes to meetings sessions and trips proved to be logistically difficult. As stated by the Travellers at the organisation, they run on ‘Traveller time’ and therefore, specific details and punctual meetings were often missed. Throughout the research the charity was struggling to maintain the funding and to keep up with the demands placed on them. This had repercussions for myself as it meant I was tasked with helping out with things that I either felt

I was not qualified for or that I simply did not have time to do in addition to my own commitments. At times, it was difficult to reinforce my position within the organisation in attempts to limit the additional commitments that I had become expected to do.

Although there were numerous strengths to the access I gained through the organisation, the weaknesses associated with this access are also noteworthy. Through working with the staff members and young Travellers for a period of eighteen months, I was able to develop close relationships with these individuals which meant I was able to gain significant insight into their lives and lived experiences. These relationships were instrumental to the findings of this research but also created complications throughout my time in the field. It was clear that these individuals trusted me, sometimes with sensitive information such as Jane's personal experiences of domestic abuse, which at times led me to feel uncomfortable. Although participants were clear of the purpose of my research and that I was making field notes throughout the youth sessions and trips, I sometimes felt as though I should not make notes from certain more sensitive discussions. I overcame these concerns through ensuring that individuals were aware they could withdraw any conversations or comments from my notes and findings at any point. Although none of them chose to do this, it allowed me to continue to conduct the research with more peace of mind. Through spending a significant period of time with the young people, I began to feel protective over them, especially when I felt they were being discriminated against during trips or in their own experiences they were recalling. I made sure they were able to discuss any concerns they had with me surrounding these experiences. These concerns surrounding trust and feelings of protectiveness in ethnographic research are not uncommon amongst ethnographers (Glesne, 1989; Atkinson, 2009) but as a researcher, I felt it was important to reflect on these throughout the fieldwork and the writing up components of this thesis.

Leaving the field is recognised as challenging for many individuals in the social sciences (Walsh, 1998; Irwin, 2006; Hall, 2016). There are ethical concerns surrounding this, and as Hall (2016: 2186) comments "leaving the field can be an emotionally intense experience, producing feelings of guilt, relief, and anxiety…some of the problems of disengagement become heightened when researching families, because for ethnography with families to take place, a certain level of rapport needs to be developed". Indeed, others have recognised that

"the better the rapport and closer the relationships, the more likely people will feel used when the researcher starts to leave" (Taylor, 1991:244). Whilst remaining aware of these ethical concerns, I was also aware of the increasing role that I was taking on and how I would be unable to maintain this whilst writing up my thesis. However, the organisation was aware of the from the outset. Furthermore, when I left the organisation, I knew they had concerns surrounding their funding and time constraints and therefore, I did not want to put any extra pressures on them by returning to the field. On a personal level, I found it difficult to leave the field due to the close relationships I had developed with the staff and young Travellers at the organisation and although I ensured they were comfortable with me to do so and had replaced me with another volunteer, it was not something which came without concerns for myself.

3.14 Data Analysis

All data has been triangulated to enhance its validity and reliability (Silverman, 2005). The value of this is confirmed by Bryman (2003, p.1142) who suggests that a single method approach to social science research "may suffer from limitations associated with that method or from the specific application of it, triangulation offers the prospect of enhanced confidence". The data collected included semi-structured interviews with both key informants and young people from Traveller backgrounds, discussions from focus groups and eighteen months of ethnographic field notes. The data collected from these methods was analysed thematically in line with a social constructionist approach. These themes were then organised in accordance with my research questions, to explore the ways in which young Traveller negotiate life off-site in London, including schools. Data was analysed in this way to ensure that the real-life experiences and perspectives of these young people was assessed in carrying out the fieldwork and analysis to ultimately answer the research questions for this study. Thematic analysis is deemed to be one of the most common approaches to qualitative data analysis. However, it does not have distinctive and clear techniques when applied within the social sciences (Bryman, 2008). Despite this, it is a widely used approach which Braun and Clarke (2006: 76) define as a "method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns in data" to provide a detailed and nuanced account of this data (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Guest et al, 2011). In line with this method, themes were identified and codes developed through the use of the software package NVivo, in preparation to address the research questions.

There is substantial discussion in the social sciences surrounding leaving the field and whether researchers should return to the field to share their data with those involved (see Hammersley, 2006; Atkinson, 2007; Pink, 2016). Although I accept there are concerns surrounding portraying young people's lives. I felt that I had gained significant trust from the young Travellers involved over my eighteen months in the field and I also trusted their responses. Therefore, I did not feel it was appropriate to return to the organisation to explore my analysis and interpretations. Furthermore, as previously mentioned, when I left the organisation I knew there were concerns surrounding their funding and time constraints.

3.15 Chapter Summary

This chapter has situated the research in the emotional geographies literature and highlighted the key focus on encounter. It has argued why a qualitative case study approach was deemed the most appropriate for this research through acknowledging both the benefits and limitations of this approach. It has discussed how the research was carried out with a significant focus on ethnography and participant observation. This was also supported by semi-structured interviews and focus groups. This chapter has evidenced why these research methods were the most appropriate for this research and has discussed their limitations. This chapter has also highlighted the ethical considerations for this research. There were a number of concerns surrounding working with young people and particularly those from a Traveller background. This chapter has highlighted the steps taken by myself to limit the concerns surrounding these methods. These primarily focussed on but are not limited to consent, recording, and positionality, particularly in reference to my role in the youth club. The following chapter will provide further context for the study. This will be followed by the two empirical chapters from this research.

4. The Context of the Study

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will provide context to the fieldwork, which will in turn support some of the discussions in the following two empirical chapters. This chapter will firstly, provide more information on the wider borough of Southwark before discussing the sites in Southwark that the young Travellers and their families live on. In doing this, it will briefly discuss the community centre where the youth club meet and its proximity to the Traveller sites and other key urban features such as public transport facilities. This will be further illustrated through the use of maps. It will then discuss the schools that the young Travellers attend and include some maps to illustrate the proximity of these schools to the sites. Lastly, this chapter will include a list and short biography for each of the young people and staff members who took part in this research, whose names have been anonymised (all names used are pseudonyms).

4.2 The London Borough of Southwark

The case study area of Southwark was chosen as a result of its wide diversity and the presence of multiple Traveller sites. The Council website (Southwark.gov.uk) states that, "Southwark is a densely populated and diverse inner London borough situated on the south bank of the River Thames, with Lambeth to the west and Lewisham to the east. Home to over 314,000 people, Southwark is a patchwork of communities: from leafy Dulwich, to bustling Peckham and Camberwell, and the rapidly changing Rotherhithe peninsula". For the purpose of this thesis, some key statistics for the primary case study area of East Central Southwark are:

- The population of Southwark is increasing much faster than the national average, up by 22% since 2001, compared with 12.5% growth for England as a whole.
- The number of residents in East Central Southwark is increasing in line with the borough trend, however the pattern is not uniform.
- Rye Lane, Nunhead & Queen's Road and Old Kent Road wards have seen the largest increases in their population.

- East Central Southwark has slightly more children and young people when compared with Southwark as a whole, particularly so in the Peckham and Old Kent Road area. In contrast, the working age population is slightly lower than the Southwark average.
- Southwark is a diverse borough with people from a wide range of ethnicities and backgrounds.
- Just over half (54%) of Southwark's population is of White ethnicity, 25% Black, 11% Asian and 10% from other ethnic backgrounds.
- The diversity of East Central Southwark is substantially higher than England, London, and Southwark. More than half of residents in Nunhead & Queen's Road, Old Kent Road, Peckham and Rye Lane are non-white.
- Children living in households claiming out of work benefits can be used as a measure of child poverty in a community. Across Southwark, this applied to 10,900 children at the end of May 2017, equating to 18.5%. This was significantly higher than the national average of 13.5%. Levels in East Central Southwark. Old Kent Road and Peckham all have claimant rates significantly higher than Southwark.
- Southwark is one of the most deprived boroughs in England, ranked 40th out of 326 local authorities. However, there is significant variation in deprivation across the borough. Levels of deprivation in East Central Southwark are some of highest in the borough.

In 2011 Southwark was ranked 14th in London (out of 32 London boroughs) for overall inequality. In 2001 Southwark was ranked 18th, representing an increase in relative inequality, or a slightly worse position compared to other London boroughs over the past decade. The Bangladeshi, Black African and Pakistani groups experience the largest overall inequality. Southwark was in the top most unequal London boroughs for employment and housing (London Ethnic Inequality Report). Between 2001 and 2011 the White British – Minority population split in Southwark changed from 52%:48% to 40%:60%. This was predominantly caused by an increase in White Other, Other and Mixed populations.

4.3 The Traveller Sites

Southwark Council owns four official Travellers sites - Ilderton Road (opened in 1986; contains 15 pitches), Brideale Close (opened in 1993; contains 16 pitches), Burnhill Close (opened in

2008; contains six pitches) and Springtide Close (opened in 1995; contains five pitches). Each pitch contains a hard standing for a single caravan with an amenity block for each pitch; so in Southwark, there are a total of 42 pitches with a caravan capacity of 42. According to the Council website (southwark.gov.uk), the council maintain the common areas of the sites, whilst the residents provide and maintain their own mobile homes. Young Travellers from all of these sites attend the youth club which takes place in the Sojourner Truth Community Centre on Sumner Road in Peckham. The Community Centre is 0.7 miles from Peckham Rye Station and 0.5 miles from Peckham Bus Station, both of which were frequently used to access other areas of London for outings for the youth club. The Traveller sites can be seen in the map (figure one) below.

4.4 The Schools

The majority of the younger children involved with the youth club attend Camelot Primary School based in Bush Road, Peckham. Camelot Primary School is a mixed community school for children aged between the ages of three and eleven and currently has a total of 429 pupils. It was rated as 'Good' in the last OFSTED inspection (18th January 2018) which found that (ofsted.gov.uk 2018:10):

- the proportion of pupils from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds is significantly above average. The majority of pupils are from families of Black African heritages
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is significantly high
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by funding through the pupil premium is well above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding which, in this school, supports pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals
- The proportion of pupils who have Special Education Needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is above average

On the Camelot Primary School website, the school lists its focus on the promotion of British Values where it states, "pupils are encouraged to regard people of all faiths, races and

cultures with respect and tolerance and understand that while different people may hold different views about what is "right" and "wrong", all people living in England are subject to its law. In accordance with the Government guidelines, the key values are: democracy, rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs. In relation to special education needs, the school "adopts a 'whole school approach' to special educational needs and disabilities. All staff work to ensure inclusion of all pupils. The school is committed to ensuring that pupils with SEN (special education needs) can fulfil their potential and achieve optimal educational outcomes". As mentioned in the literature review, many children from Gypsy and Traveller backgrounds have special education needs (Forray, 2002; Lloyd and McCluskey, 2008).

Camelot Primary School has a close relationship with many of the Traveller families who have lived on the sites over the last twenty to thirty years and the Irish Traveller families place a great deal of trust in the School. This is confirmed by Jane when she says, "*most of the kids go to Camelot for Primary* [School]*, they care about the kids and listen to us parents when we are worried, not like my son's secondary* [school]*".*

The majority of the older section of the youth club attend Harris Academy Peckham, a mixed school for eleven to nineteen year olds, on Peckham Road. The School has academy status and is part of the wider Harris Academy federation and has 916 pupils (as of the 2011 OFSTED inspection). The School achieved 'good' status in the 2011 inspection and maintained this in the 2015 short inspection. The School is diverse and has good provision for the special education needs of pupils. The 2015 short inspection (ofsted.gov.uk 2015: 2) found that:

- Leaders have worked hard to further improve pupils' behaviour. The number of pupils being excluded for a fixed period has fallen significantly, but remains marginally higher than the national average. In the last two years, no pupils have been permanently excluded. The School is forensic in its recording of poor behaviour and detailed analyses identifying trends inform future actions.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs has been refined to better meet the needs of individuals. Fewer pupils in this group are now excluded but their attendance remains behind that of the School as a whole. This is an area

which leaders are continuing to improve. A good range of different mechanisms exist in the school to help pupils in need of specific support.

- A small number of pupils are educated at a range of alternative providers, and some attend the School's own onsite alternative provision. Leaders monitor individual pupils accessing alternative provision appropriately. This includes reviewing their progress, behaviour and attendance. A sizeable proportion have been successfully reintegrated into the main School.

Some of the older girls, including two of those who took part in the semi-structured interview, attend Harris Girls' Academy East Dulwich on Homestall Road, East Dulwich. The School is an academy sponsored school for girls aged between eleven and eighteen years old and has 693 pupils in attendance. The School was rated as outstanding in the most recent OFSTED report (ofsted.gov.uk, 2012). This report found that (ofsted.gov.uk, 2012:3) "the academy serves a disadvantaged area and the proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is more than twice the national average. Around 85% of students are from minority-ethnic groups, with the largest groups having Black Caribbean or Black African heritages. Almost half speak English as an additional language, though very few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is above average. A broadly average proportion have a statement of special educational needs, most of these students have moderate learning or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties".

The choice for the older girls to attend a single sex secondary school was largely due to cultural reasons. Although the Irish Traveller families have a good relationship with the local primary school, their relationship with the secondary schools in Southwark is more strained, with cultural tensions. This also will be discussed in chapter five of this thesis.

4.5 The Staff Members

The youth club is operated by a charitable organisation based in Peckham, Southwark. The Community Southwark website (casouthwark.org.uk) lists the charitable organisations based in the borough, with many aimed at individuals from BAME backgrounds. Community Southwark describes this particular organisation as "born out of a Traveller-led campaign to

build official Traveller sites in Southwark in the 1980s. It successfully brought about the provision of three more sites in the borough. Since 2001, it has been funded predominantly by the Irish Government 'to address the multiple inequalities which Travellers in Southwark experience'. It provides advice and assistance to Southwark's Travellers and runs projects targeted at specific issues which affect the Traveller community". It is currently hosted by the Peckham Voluntary Sector Forum (PVSF). The organisation describes itself as one which "works to address the multiple disadvantages faced by the Irish Traveller community. We do this through a mixture of 1-to-1 support and casework, delivered in partnership with Advising London (previously Blackfriars Advice Centre). One of our main areas of work is in making sure that Travellers are able to access public services and the assistance of other voluntary sector organisations. We do this by working with public bodies to make sure that their services are inclusive. We also develop and maintain relationships with other voluntary sector service providers that can benefit Travellers. We pro-actively address some of the issues experienced by Travellers by running targeted projects addressing some of the key issues faced by Travellers around areas such as health, employment and education. In addition to this, we work to celebrate the culture and heritage of Irish Travellers through our Gypsy Roma Traveller History month event" (do-it.org).

Within this organisation, there are three paid members of staff employed. The full-time charity manager, Hattie; the part-time deputy manager, Katherine and the part-time youth club leader, Jane. Hattie is not a Traveller, attended university in London to complete an undergraduate degree and a postgraduate degree and lives locally. Katherine is an Irish Traveller who lives on one of the local sites with her close and extended family. Although Katherine has a teenage son, Harry, who is fifteen and therefore could attend the youth club, I only met him once as he was often with his older family members or working with his father, a labourer. Jane is an Irish Traveller who lives on one of the local sites with her family, including her three children who attend the youth club and Camelot Primary School. Jane's parents and many of Jane's five brothers and sisters, and their young families live on the same site.

In addition to myself, there was one other volunteer who frequently attended events and outings, Maria is Jane's younger sister and had recently got married when I met her and was

pregnant with her first child. Although she had spent her life (25 years) living on the site in London, she had recently moved to a farm in Kent to live with her new husband and his family. In addition to myself and Maria, there were a number of other ad-hoc volunteers who I met over the eighteen months. The majority of these volunteers were members of Jane's extended family who were called upon when there were not enough adults present to fulfil the adult-child ratio necessary for outings.

4.6 The Young Irish Travellers

The number of young Irish Travellers who attended the youth group fluctuated from week to week, totalling over thirty young people. There were a number of young Irish Travellers who frequently attended the weekly sessions and outings. These eleven young Irish Travellers played the most prominent role in the fieldwork component of this research and will therefore be listed below with further information on their lives and identities.

Jane's three children, Ryan (aged eleven), Kevin (aged ten) and Keeley (aged six) frequently attended the youth sessions and outings. Ryan and Kevin are brothers and are Jane's stepsons and Keeley's half-brothers. They attended Camelot Primary School and lived on one of the local sites with Jane and her husband. I was able to gain a significant amount of insight into their lives through seeing them most weeks, developing a relationship with the three children. Ryan was a very vocal boy who was proud of his Traveller culture and identity and was excited to start at the secondary school, despite his step-mother's apprehension surrounding him attending a new school.

Savannah (aged nine) and Sienna (aged eight) are sisters and frequently attended the youth club with their cousin, Tom (aged eight) who lives on the same site. They have four much younger siblings and often discuss caring for the 'babies' whilst at the youth group. All three children attend Camelot Primary School. Despite their young age the girls had concerns surrounding the future of the sites in the local area and spoke of members of their extended family leaving London to move to more secure sites.

Jack (aged thirteen) lives on a site that has the weakest connections with the youth club and are considered insular and to be largely 'left alone' by the charity. He has three younger brothers who are too young to attend the youth club. He attends Harris Academy Peckham and has faced significant tensions in his first year at the school.

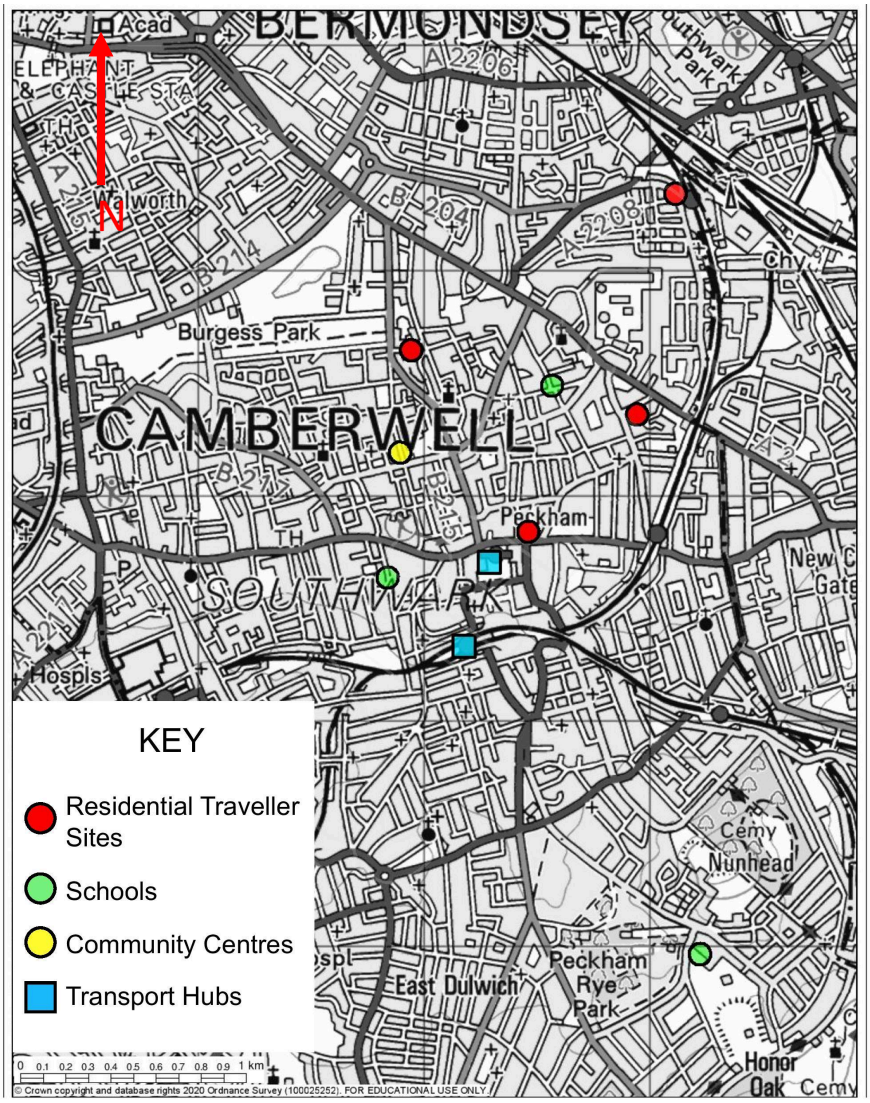
Holly is fifteen years old and, as stated herself, only attended the youth group to look after her younger brother Bobby (aged nine) as requested by her parents who were at home and busy with their younger siblings. Holly attends Harris Academy Peckham and during discussions with myself felt as those she did not fit in with the other Traveller girls who attend her school and live on the local sites. These girls occasionally attend the youth club, but spend the majority of their time on site, and do not attend school full-time. Holly spoke of her enjoyment of school frequently and was eager to discuss her options after sitting her GCSEs, despite feeling conflicted as a result of her Traveller identity and expectations within her family and on the wider site. This will be discussed in chapter five of this thesis.

Julie (twelve years old) and Jessie (fifteen years old) are sisters who are very close to one another. The girls were much quieter than Holly and less vocal about their thoughts, opinions and feelings, despite knowing me for a significant period of time. The girls attend Harris Girls' Academy East Dulwich, which none of the other Traveller girls attend. They did not feel that it was particularly supportive of their Traveller identity and culture. The girls frequently attend the youth club sessions and its outings and took part in a semi-structured interview with myself.

4.7 Summary

This chapter has provided the geographical and social context for this research. It has provided key information on the borough, the schools and the sites that the young Travellers involved in this research use. It has also provided more information on the organisation and the individuals involved in this research, building on those introduced in chapter three of this thesis.

Figure One - Map of the Traveller sites, community centre and transport hubs



5. Spaces of Encounter: A to B and Everything In Between

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will explore the experiences of young Irish Travellers living in London and the encounters that they face when outside of the home. It argues that the site is a space where young Travellers spend the majority of their time and it is a space where they are considered safe and insiders. In leaving the site, this chapter argues that young Travellers will encounter with non-Travellers in spaces where they are not always safe and understood. This chapter argues that although the youth group is only partially a Traveller space, due to the presence of non-Travellers, it helps the young Travellers who attend to negotiate their emotions from their encounters with non-Travellers. In doing this it will focus on answering the following research question:

1. **How do young Travellers negotiate encounters in off-site spaces including those on public transport?**

This chapter will argue that for Travellers the home, and by extension the site, is a place where certain values are taught to young people. It will explore the importance of the home for young Irish Travellers and what the site means for these young Travellers who live in London in a practical sense. It will then argue that for young Travellers, beyond the site their Traveller values are not always supported by non-Travellers. In this sense, public spaces are arenas where young Travellers face negative encounters but seemingly are not disconcerted by disapproval from non-Travellers and rarely react in any confrontational manner. Public transport is a place where Travellers do not easily fit in and feel no 'contractual consensus' to adhere to behavioural norms. The chapter will lastly explore the importance of the youth group and the way this is perceived by both adult and young Travellers. The youth group is a site which traverses the gaps between home and public space. This arena allows young Travellers to experience non-Traveller spaces with trusted adults who are able to develop the practical knowledge and emotional responses of younger Travellers when in these 'other'

spaces. In exploring these key areas that are essential for the every-day life of young Irish Travellers living in modern Britain, the chapter will also begin to answer the first, overarching research question of this thesis. This is '**In what sense, if at all, are young Gypsies and Travellers still 'outsiders in urban society'?'**

5.2 Young Irish Travellers and the Site

For Travellers, the home, and therefore, the site, is considered a central value and location of their own Traveller identity. This thesis is concerned with the exploration of Travellers and their encounters in places in London which are outside of the home. For this purpose, the importance of the home, and the spaces within this, for the young Travellers involved with this research, will be discussed. During the interviews and focus groups carried out in the research, the home was central to many discussions. For example:

"Some people [who are Travellers] *in my school live in houses. Some people say they can't be Travellers if they live in a house but that's not true...One time when I lived in a house I had to say of course I'm a Traveller. Just because you live in a house, it doesn't change your culture or anything. At least I got to explain that to them. It doesn't make no difference" (Kevin, aged 10).*

Kevin's comments highlight the changing circumstances for Travellers living in modern-day Britain. It is not always possible for Travellers to find sites with available pitches and they are forced into 'mainstream' housing. However, it is clear that Kevin feels as though the concept of the home extends to more than the physical spaces of the house. This is not a concept which is unique to Travellers. Many researchers (for example, Somerville, 1992; Mallett, 2004) have commented on the importance of meaning for home for individuals from all communities. However, for Travellers, home is a place where their identity is supported and they are not forced into transgressing boundaries into mainstream society and are able to produce and reproduce the Traveller values and traditions that are so central to their identity and – from Kevin's testimony – appear to distinguish them from non-Travellers even when they (Travellers) are living in a house.

Ryan (aged eleven) echoed Kevin's comments when he stated *"sometimes they [other children in his class] ask you questions and it's like why do they ask that. It's stuff you don't want them to ask…I tell them why I like living there and why I do it. I tell them that I like it. I like all my friends, they're all good but sometimes they ask annoying questions. I don't begrudge them saying it*".

Arguably, this highlights Ryan and Kevin's antipathy to feeling different or like 'the other' in the school setting. Whilst he is on the site, his Traveller identity is supported and his values are shared with other Traveller children. However, whilst he is at school, he must negotiate a space filled with non-Travellers who do not necessarily share or support these values. The comments from both boys also demonstrates the ways in which they are learning to react to the comments from non-Travellers they interact with whilst at school. It is clear that the boys are not reacting in an aggressive way even though they find the comments and questions from non-Travellers frustrating and sometimes upsetting. The boys are aware that the way they live is different from non-Travellers and seem relatively happy to explain Traveller life to the other children in their classes. As raised in chapter three, I had concerns surrounding Ryan's use of the word begrudge and the role his stepmother played in formulating his and his brother's responses. However, as I had felt I could not ask about this and had nothing to suggest Ryan's comments and views were not genuine, I have still used them to support the arguments in this chapter.

A review of the literature in chapter two highlighted the significance of the home in Traveller culture. For those who write about Traveller culture and life, it is difficult to ignore the complexity and the important relationship between Travellers, their sites and their homes. The notion of *'mochadi'* (pollution) has considerable importance within Traveller culture. This is important in the physical sense, where in the caravan particular areas are allocated for certain activities such as waste disposal (Acton et al, 1997). It could be argued therefore, living in houses complicates this for Travellers as they are 'unknown' and unsafe spaces which are not necessarily complementary to these types of activities and values but arguably the moral and symbolic nature of the term is more significant (Douglas, 1966; Kendall, 1997). The literature confirmed the importance of cleanliness in the Traveller community (e.g. Griffin, 2002) and this was noticeable as a key feature of the young Travellers values on many of the

trips undertaken during this research. Some examples of this included an aversion to the hiring of communal bowling shoes and wanting to clean their trainers after a muddy experience at laser tag. However, one of the most notable occasions which reinforced this argument can be seen in this vignette:

We're walking from the go karting centre across a field and towards a play park. It is a warm sunny day and many of the group of young Traveller children are running around, shouting and chasing one another. A medium sized dog runs over to the group, clearly excited that there's lots of children to play with. One of the younger girls screams and the children look nervous or apprehensive and stand still. They don't interact with the dog, which takes me by surprise as I know that many of the children have dogs and remember the story that Bobby told me about a fight happening because someone tried to steal his dog. The children come back towards myself and Jane and the dog returns to his owner.
(From researcher's field notes)

At first, as mentioned in the field notes, this experience took me by surprise as I knew many of the children owned dogs. However, when I spoke to Jane about this she told me that although the children like dogs, they are kept outside of trailers and the children would have been worried that a stranger's dog was not clean or might be dangerous. This confirms the importance of the cleanliness of animals in Traveller culture as mentioned in the review of the literature. Griffin (2002) discussed the ways in which those animals who clean themselves (including dogs) are considered dirty in Traveller culture and are therefore, kept outside. Furthermore, the dog belonged to an individual who was not a Traveller and would have been further polluted. This appears to confirm the discomfort that contemporary young Travellers can feel when they leave their sites where there are strict codes and rules surrounding what is considered clean and what is dirty and the spatial practices associated with this. This appears to show a clear adherence to traditional Traveller norms and values.

If Travellers are forced to live amongst members of mainstream society, there is a risk of *'mochadi'*, where Travellers may take on outside values through contamination, and the cultural identities of Travellers may be disturbed. As Griffin (2002: 110) comments "when Travellers describe individuals or groups as 'clean' or 'dirty' and act accordingly, all they are

really doing is differentiating the 'inside' from the 'outside', separating 'us' from 'them', marking a border". This significance of the home as a physical extension of the moral and cultural connotations of the insider/outsider debate for Travellers was visible throughout a number of discussions and outings with the young Travellers for whom the site was clearly viewed as a safe space with boundaries (both physical and cultural) and premeditated levels of cleanliness. Nearly all the times the site was discussed, the young Traveller girls spoke of the cleanliness of their caravans and how cleaning filled their time when not at school. Supporting this, one such example was recorded in my field notes:

On heading to Peckham, I was unaware of what this week's Friday session, planned for the older section of the youth group, would involve. This is not uncommon though, as often the Friday sessions in the community centre aren't particularly structured and involve discussing how the young Traveller's weeks have gone and any upcoming trips and activities. Arriving at the youth group, Jane tells me the henna artist who was due to come has cancelled but will come to the session in a fortnight. As I walk into the activity room, I can tell the girls are annoyed, sat in a group at one end of the long table, talking about what they're going to do at the weekend and how coming to the youth group tonight was a waste of time. The boys at the other end of the table are clearly fed up. The boys are scowling and I hear one boy, Billy, say that "the girls always get more time for them at youth club, why was the henna girl coming here for them anyway, what are we supposed to do? I wanna [sic] go back to my trailer". Jane tells the boys that they can go home, and they stand up and head off. Jane tells me that that I am free to talk to the girls about school if I want, which I had not planned to do but I accept. I find out that four of the girls who I have not spoken to before, who live with their families on one of the smaller sites in the area, have not been to school in three weeks. One of the girls tells me she was being bullied; she tells me she was being called names by another girl in her class because she is a Traveller. She told the school but her parents felt that not enough was done and pulled her out of school. As a result of this the parents of the other girls also removed their children from the school. The girls tell me that they'd rather not be in school anyway and like being at home because it means they get to help their mothers with cleaning and looking after the younger children, which means their trailers are always "sparkling". After this discussion has ended and all of the children have gone home, Jane tells me in private that she's not sure of the truthfulness of the girls account of events but that she knows they haven't been

going to school. When I press her to elaborate on this, she only comments that she knows the "girls from that site weren't going to school much in the first place".
(From researcher's field notes)

This account is significant for multiple reasons. Despite the young girls who regularly attend youth group also regularly attending school, this particular group of girls who I had not met before, were clearly receiving no formal education and, from what I could gather, were not being home-schooled or having their education monitored by the Council. This and the role of gender in education will be discussed in the following chapter. As a result of this, the girls were spending all their time on the site where they were learning the traditional role of a Traveller women's way of life, referred to in chapter two. The girls were clearly content and even happy to be fulfilling this stereotype of Traveller women. They felt that it was far more beneficial to their family and themselves than going to school. Although the young girls had attended school for many years (at the time of this discussion the girls were between the ages of thirteen and fifteen), it was clear that the home, and helping keep the home in order, was where they felt they should be, where they felt the most comfortable, and therefore, where they wanted to be. In this case there was a suggestion by the girls that uncomfortable encounters in school – amounting to bullying – had created circumstances where they felt they could not attend school. But they showed no great regret about this. On the contrary, appeared quite enthusiastic about what they were spending time doing at home. And there were, in any event, doubts cast by a generally sympathetic observer (Jane) on the veracity of their accounts of what had happened at school and why they were not there.

As previously highlighted, Traveller sites and the practices that are carried out on these sites are central to the Traveller way of life. One of the most significant features of the conversations with the young Travellers involved with this research was discussions around why they enjoy living on a Traveller site and what aspects of the site were the most important to them. One of the primary reasons for this was the open space which they were free to explore and make use of, and the relationships and friendships that living amongst other Travellers enable. For these young Travellers living in London, this illustrates a physical and a social distance that others, who are not Travellers and do not live on site are not likely to

experience. This social distance reinforces the young Travellers status' as outsiders. This is particularly pertinent in a busy urban area such as Southwark.

5.3 The Site as a 'safe' place for young Travellers

The importance of notions of family values and friendship patterns on the site, where the children are able to play together after school, emerged as an important part of the school day for the young Travellers. This importance of the spatial practices associated were highlighted in focus groups and interviews, where many of the female participants were hesitant and visibly uncertain on how to respond to questions surrounding their hobbies and the activities they carry out and participate in after school. One girl responded that her friends do not come over to her house - *"only our brother's friends come over, I just go on my mum's laptop".* It was clear that the girls both expected and were expected to look after the home and to remain there looking after the family whilst the boys were expected to go out and work with their fathers from an early age. However, through speaking to the young people involved with this research, it became apparent that young boys who were not deemed old enough to work with their fathers were allowed to play and visit their friends, whilst girls were expected to socialise with their female family members and learn essential skills such as cooking, cleaning and looking after younger family members. Although this supports the literature which emphasises the way in which activities within the home are spatialised and gendered (Sibley, 1982; Griffin, 2002), current literature does not discuss the contrast of the spatialised nature of after-school activities between pre-pubescent Traveller boys and girls.

It was clear that all the young Travellers who participated in this research enjoyed living on a site and could not imagine being in 'bricks and mortar' housing. However, furthering the above discussion, it was clear that the site was a place of shared Traveller values and one where particularly young Traveller boys spoke of friendship patterns, during the conversations I had with them. One example of this was when Kevin said *"living on my site is the best, there's always other boys to play with and even if you've had a rubbish day, you've always got someone to hang out and I can stay out until I have to go home to bed".*

Although the young Traveller girls predominantly spoke of spending time with their families whilst at home on their sites, it was clear that during the parties at the community centre, there was a strong community feel between the women who lived on the same and different sites. As highlighted in chapters one and three, one of the primary roles of the organisation and the youth club within this was to arrange parties and celebrations for significant events in the calendar such as St. Patrick's Day, Easter and Christmas. During these events, the children were able to dance, play and do crafts with other children. The fathers of the children never came to these events but the mothers often did attend, where they sat in groups (often but not confined to groupings based on sites) with their babies and children too small to be fully involved with the games the older children were playing. This demonstrates the ways in which the on-site friendships and relationships are transferred to other off-site spaces. The mothers shared stories about their children and their upcoming plans and I often overheard them complimenting one another on a new set of nails or a recent haircut. Many of the Traveller women who attended these events were either related to one another sometimes closely, sometimes not so closely - which meant that often common family members also formed the basis of these discussions. This signified that although the meaning of the connections formed between Travellers could be perceived as different for female and male Irish Travellers, the mothers had clearly formed friendships with other Traveller women, in part facilitated by the youth group. This will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter.

The importance of family and friendship with other Travellers in Traveller life has been referred to in the literature review (see Griffin, 2002). One of Griffin's central debates revolves around the relationship between Roma and Travellers on the site where there are conflicts as a result of this. Griffin (2002: 112) comments "Irish Travellers were generally less critical of Romanies than Romanies were of them. For example, I cannot recall a single case of a Traveller describing an 'English' Gypsy as 'dirty', whereas on other sites (though not my own where 'English Gypsies' were a minority, and either too careful or genuinely inclusive) I often heard Romanies describe the Irish as dirty". Although this thesis does not include any individuals from a Roma background for the reasons listed in chapter one, and as there were no individuals from a Romani background present on sites in Southwark, there are both English and Irish Traveller families on two of the sites who were involved with this research. Generally, the young Irish Travellers did not make a distinction between themselves and the

English Travellers and when asked about the relationship between the groups, Jane said that it was common for Irish Travellers and English Travellers to marry. When asked directly about this, the young Irish Travellers said that they knew certain people were English Travellers but they did not feel that it made any difference. The only time where this difference was acknowledged is noted in the below extract from my field notes:

We're travelling back from laser tag at Plumstead, sat on the upper deck of a public bus. Three of the boys are talking about the boxing practice they had yesterday, when Ryan (aged eleven) turns to Josh (an English Traveller who is ten and rarely comes to the youth group) and says whilst grinning, "yeah but we're Irish mate, we'd batter you cause [sic] Irish Travellers are much harder than you English Travellers". All of the boys, including Josh burst out into laughter.

This was the only acknowledgement of difference between Irish and English that I heard during the eighteen months of fieldwork and although the boys were clearly joking due to their expressions and tone of voice, to me, it is clear that a distinction is made between English and Irish Travellers on the sites. However, it also seems that this is a distinction without prejudicial overtones. This highlights the importance of Traveller identity and the impact this has on the places that are central to the young Travellers every-day life. Furthermore, this demonstrates the possible reasons behind the discomfort the young Travellers might feel when they leave their sites. Whilst on site, the young Irish Travellers are able to feel comfortable and at home in a community of other Travellers where being Irish and a Traveller is the dominant ethnicity. However, when they leave the site they are a minority who are noticeably Irish (due to their accents) and Travellers, two groups who have been historically persecuted and discriminated against.

5.4 The Site as a Space that Supports Traveller Culture

Although, as mentioned in the literature, there is a decline in actual instances of Travellers 'travelling' in recent years (see Smith and Greenfields, 2013), the notion of mobility and travelling was still a central feature of the lives of the young Travellers involved in this research. From the responses of these young Travellers it was apparent that more significant

today appears to be the feeling that one could just go, at will, to visit family. It is a particular kind of felt sense of self in relation to the heavily ordered society which surrounds them. They might live in static caravans, but having the means of being mobile was very important for children in this research – many had horses which were kept on or near their sites, all of the families appeared to have cars, and the children were very enthusiastic about their bicycles and quad bikes with some of the boys going as far as claiming that *"everyone on the sites has quad bikes".* Ryan (age 11) made it very clear that "We love our bikes. Most of the time, nearly every single day, and weekends and after school. All you can hear is bikes on the site. If someone gets theirs out, everyone gets theirs out". Ensuring the space and creating and taking the opportunity to use (expensive) quad bikes and to own horses in central London – especially for relatively poor families – is an achievement in itself and signifies how important these markers and practical means of mobility are to their sense of selves. Yet, there are also accommodations to a changed world that have to be made. Many still travel to visit family in Ireland, but generally during school holidays, thus respecting a rhythm to the year that is central in the modern world. More prosaically, Travellers, young and old, will need to leave the site in order to go to school, shop, and so on.

Living on the sites allows the young Travellers to play and learn to work with their mothers and fathers, in line with the values perpetuated within Traveller culture. Furthermore, the spatiality of the site means that the Travellers are physically separated from non-Travellers which in turn, influences and exacerbates the social divide between them. As will be described later in this chapter, this social distance complicates the encounters young Travellers face off-site. This thesis argues that this is a result of the young Travellers having less awareness of the social norms that are expected in mainstream society and the appropriate ways to deal with these encounters and the emotions that result from them.

Although this thesis argues that the site is a space which supports Traveller identity and one which the young Travellers felt safe and in particular, comfortable, it does not suggest the site is a romanticised space. Tensions on the sites between families will be discussed later stage in this chapter. It is also acknowledged, in line with the literature reviewed in chapter two (see Griffin, 2002), that there are tensions and conflicts within families where domestic abuse and social services removing children from Traveller families is, at times, more prevalent than

for non-Traveller families. Examples of these emerged during the fieldwork for this research. One example of this was Jane's own personal experience, as highlighted in this extract from my field notes:

We were stood on the platform at Peckham Rye Station waiting to go zorbing. I had not heard much from Jane leading up to the zorbing trip, which I thought was unusual as she normally keeps me well informed. Jane was quieter than unusual and whilst we were away from the children, I asked her if everything was okay. She told me that she would be alright but that she was having issues with her ex-husband who is the father of her daughter Keeley [Keeley is six and therefore too young to attend the youth club]. She tells me that she left him when Keeley was a baby because he was verbally and physically abusive towards her [Jane]. Until now, he had no interest in seeing his daughter but had recently decided he wants joint custody. Jane tells me that she had never reported him to the police because she was afraid they would take Keeley away but now she is afraid that he will hurt Keeley if he gets shared custody. She is also concerned about the time and financial toll that going through the courts will take.

This conversation highlights the presence of domestic abuse within Traveller families. It also illustrates the aforementioned fear surrounding institutions in their culture. Although Jane is well educated and has significant interaction with non-Travellers particularly through her job, she still fears social services, the police and lawyers. In line with the literature discussed in chapter two this fear is a result of Travellers feeling as though individuals from these institutions do not understand Traveller culture and are inherently discriminatory towards Irish Travellers. Although domestic abuse is not unique to Traveller families, it is recognised as a problem which some Travellers face and are less likely to report. Therefore, although this chapter, and the thesis in general, argues that the site is a space which is often safe and supportive for the identities of young Travellers, Traveller sites are not always safe spaces for everyone at all times.

5.5 The Youth Group as a Space for Young Travellers

Chapter four explained that the youth group was a central site in which this research was carried out. This was partly due to the organisation being the gatekeeper for this research but

also because the youth club itself was a significant site of encounter and facilitated further encounters for the young Travellers involved in this research. The youth group was designed for young Travellers living in the area and was run by the organisation. The youth group sessions were split into those that take place in the community centre and group outings that predominantly took place in various locations in central London. It was evident that these sessions worked to bridge the gap between Travellers and mainstream society to what could be considered a necessary extent, whilst maintaining and supporting Traveller values. This will be elaborated on and explored more fully with examples later in this chapter. In this sense, it could be seen that some sessions that took place within the community centre focussed on Traveller history, events and celebrations such as Traveller History Month and St. Patrick's Day. It was clear that all of the Travellers involved in this research felt these were beneficial to themselves and their understanding of their own identity(ies). However, this thesis is concerned with the encounters that took place as a result of the young Travellers participation with the youth group. The youth group allowed the young Travellers to explore new places, often quite some distance from their homes. These places were not considered Traveller places in that they led to encounters with non-Travellers.

Approximately one session a month was focussed on discussing the ways in which the young people felt that the youth group sessions and outings could be improved. It was evident that the young people who attend youth group felt as though they were well heard and appreciated in the setting. They stressed that they did not feel that this was the case in other settings, such as the school environment. This will be discussed further in the following chapter. Billy (aged 12) confirmed this when he commented "*sometimes us Travellers aren't listened to when we're at school, but at youth club everyone is nice and we can talk about being Travellers".* This reaffirms the way in which Travellers can feel as though particular spatial settings highlight them as 'the other' and the repercussions this may have on their own identities. These included the reformation of these identities in particular places in line with particular values. From the boy's comment, it can be seen that in some environments he feels that he must act in particular kinds of ways that may be at odds with those Traveller values deemed central to the Traveller way of life. In this sense, it can be seen that the Traveller youth group plays a highly significant role in reproducing the central features and

values of Traveller identity in a broader setting that is not necessarily supportive of these values.

In this sense, this thesis argues that on the one hand, the youth club is a positive space for young Travellers where they are able to perform their Traveller identities and the values that come with this. Furthermore, this space is clearly one which is appreciated by the young Travellers and their families. However, on the other hand, it is also argued that the presence of the youth group exacerbates the notion that young Travellers are outsiders. The presence of a youth group which caters only for young Irish Travellers reinforces the idea for both Travellers and non-Travellers that the group is different and can be seen as outsiders. As previously mentioned, the youth group is funded by Southwark Council and by the Irish Government. This shows that Irish Travellers are also recognised as needing extra provision which other ethnic groups do not necessarily receive. It is unlike other [non-Traveller] youth groups, where, for example, they might engage with youth centres from various areas for sports matches and other activities.

Those sessions that took place within the community centre were held in a private room and often centred around celebrating Traveller culture, for example, making displays and discussing the importance of Gypsy and Traveller History Month or making decorations for the youth group parties. Through attending these sessions, it became evident that, although some aspects of the club were very similar to the way other youth groups would operate such as making crafts and talking about how their weeks had been, others seemed unique to the Traveller way of life. For example, it was anticipated that parents would be late dropping their children off for outings and therefore, were told to arrive an hour earlier than was actually necessary. This confirms the literature which argues that keeping to time and running by a schedule do not necessarily factor into the Traveller way of life (Levinson and Sparkes, 2004). The standardisation of time, and acknowledging the importance of time-keeping, has been central to the project of industrialisation (and later stages of capitalism) in the UK and elsewhere in the world, and a disregard for time-keeping helps mark out Travellers as outsiders. Jane once commented on this, jokingly stating *“us Traveller’s aren’t very good at keeping to set times”.* In joking about it in this way, Jane was also clearly accepting it as part of how Travellers would (and could) live their lives.

In addition to this, although activities were planned and booked long in advance, attendance was always below what had been planned for due to the young people having family events such as weddings or christenings to attend, affirming the importance of family and large celebrations in Traveller culture. Those who ran the youth group did not seem to be concerned about the children not turning up as the competing family activities were deemed more important, despite this entailing the loss of a significant amount of money on each outing. This is certainly consistent with the notion that Travellers are at a social distance from Non-Travellers as they appear to organise parts of their social lives using different conventions. In part, this accounts for the difficult relationship that Travellers have with authority figures and the rules that are in place in institutions as discussed within the earlier literature review. Later, examples within this chapter will be used to evidence the ways in which young Irish Travellers living in London must negotiate relations with non-Travellers when leaving the site.

Although the relaxed attitude towards times and predetermined plans was evident across all the trips, it was particularly noticeable on a bowling trip. On this trip, two hours of bowling and a meal had been booked for fifteen children and only one child turned up. Maria justified this by informing me that many of the children had been at a wedding the night before and others could not come due to an illness in the family. This highlights the importance of celebrations within Traveller culture (e.g. Daskalaki, 2003) and how they heavily influenced the diaries of the young Irish Travellers involved. This is a feature of this thesis that will be explored in more depth within this chapter. In addition, the role of the family and the appropriate way to act as a Traveller is drawn upon in Maria's explanation. Maria commented that it would not be appropriate for the children to leave the site whilst a family member is ill. This confirms the importance of strong family bonds and the inherent spatiality of this, where the site is a key feature of Traveller life. Furthermore, this expands upon the social distance that Traveller culture has from non-Traveller culture and the implications of this. In another youth group, I highly doubt that this would be an acceptable reason which had no repercussions (such as the youth group expecting reimbursement) for all of the children who were expected to come on the trip to cancel without any prior notice.

In addition to ways in which youth group could be seen to support the identity(ies) of young Travellers, it was evident that the parents of the young people who attended youth group felt that it was a 'safe' place. Many family members of the young people who attended the youth group had been participants themselves in the past having lived in the area for many years. This also meant the group was a setting which could be trusted, despite many of the Traveller children only otherwise leaving their sites to go to school, as confirmed by the Traveller girls' discussion of spending their free time cleaning the home or looking after younger siblings. This was particularly evident for the young Traveller girls who participated in this research. It was clear that the adult community member felt that attending the youth group reinforced the particular kinds of values that are distinctive in Traveller culture and would not allow their children to be exposed to aspects of mainstream society that put these at risk. Parents and other family members were invited to attend all of the parties and celebrations that the youth group ran and many of the women and small children attended often commenting on how they were the highlight of their weeks and that *"youth club always does a great job for us Travellers".* This confirms the importance of family within Traveller culture, where it can be seen that many Travellers are afraid of what will happen to young children when they are not on the site.

Furthermore, this example reinforces the prominence of gender divides and gender roles within the Traveller community to a degree which arguably gives weight to the claim that Travellers are outsiders due to their differences in beliefs and values when compared to non-Travellers. Although the young Travellers frequently mentioned that both their mothers and fathers were concerned about their safety, in particular safety concerns surrounding the children's use of public transport, it was the mothers who raised the issue with the organisation. Furthermore, only the mothers attended the parties that were run by the youth club and although the fathers often dropped off and picked up the young Irish Travellers up from the community centre, I frequently made notes of these instances because they came across as strange and at odds with what I would expect. When the mothers picked up their children, they would come in and say hello to myself, Maria and Jane. However, when the fathers were in this position they would wait outside the community centre and often text or call their children's mobile phones. One particularly unusual example of this was on one occasion when Sienna and Mary Jo's father collected them and did so by coming into the

entrance of the community centre and loudly shouted their names. By the time I opened the door of the room in which we were based, he had disappeared back to his car. For a non-Traveller, it would be easy to assume that the fathers simply did not care about their children as much or in the same kinds of ways as the mothers did. But it was clear that the fathers, along with the mothers, were fiercely protective of their children as the research literature notes in chapter two (see Griffin, 2002; Bhopal, 2004) and as Griffin (2002:125) comments "the paradox of Traveller parenting, which on the one hand consists of a deep and unauthoritarian love of children, and on the other of an unsentimental pragmatism. Children are thought of as innocent and in need of protection from the tougher realities of adulthood". But the way that these caring emotions are refracted through rigid gender roles further demonstrates the stark differences between Travellers and non-Travellers and gives weigh to the claims that Travellers may still be outsiders in society.

5.6 The Youth Group, Conflict and Being Part of Travellers' Lives

As this thesis has illustrated, the youth group is a space which is unlike other non-family institutions that feature in the young Travellers lives. However, it is also recognised as a space which is not only for Travellers, such as the site is. Myself and other non-Travellers work and volunteer with the youth club and it is based in a community centre where a diverse range of groups meet and work or play. The youth club can be considered an intermediary space between Traveller and non-Traveller spaces. One vivid illustration of the way that the youth club was intertwined with the spaces of Traveller life was demonstrated in how the organisation also found itself involved with site conflicts. One such example of this involved families from one site in particular. Many of the mothers from other sites spoke of families on one site *"keeping themselves to themselves"*. Furthermore, as discussed in chapter three, some believed that the matriarch from this site felt that she ran the youth group which caused a number of issues for the organisation. Her grandchildren - Billy and Robbie - also attended the youth club and the friction between these boys and the boys from other sites can be seen in this extract from my field notes:

Jane calls Ryan and Kevin over to where we are sat, I can tell from her tone [she] is stressed and she doesn't seem particularly happy with the boys. She tells them off for behaving

"like criminals", she tells them to stop knocking things over and running around so fast and shouting at the other kids for getting in their way. Up until this point, I hadn't noticed the boys' behaviour as particularly unusual but on reflection thought they had been slightly more disruptive than usual. One of the boys sighs, they look fed up, and Ryan says, in a pained tone, "you know what it's like when Billy and Robbie and that lot are here, they're always causing trouble and looking for a fight".

From this example, it is clear that Jane and the other individuals who work for the organisation have to negotiate tensions between families and groups of Travellers who live in the local area. From my eighteen months with the organisation it was clear that although these conflicts and tensions were often underlying, they were a factor that was constantly in mind in relation to how the staff had to behave. Although other organisation and youth clubs might have to navigate tensions between individuals, it is unlikely that it would be on this scale or between tight-knit communities. This demonstrates further complexities to the Traveller way of life and supports claims that there is significant social distance between Travellers and non-Travellers.

It was clear that Jane (in particular) was also forced to negotiate tensions that arose between the project running the youth group itself and the families. But this, in itself, was a mark of how deeply intertwined the youth centre was with Traveller life. This was particularly evident on one outing to the London Bridge Experience which had been planned for the older children. The young Irish Travellers had requested this trip for months and it had cost the organisation hundreds of pounds. The trip was cancelled at the last-minute due to multiple children trying to attend the trip, despite not attending the youth club, which is compulsory for those wishing to go on trips. The events leading up to this are detailed in this extract from my field notes:

I had arrived in London at 7pm on the Friday night in preparation for the trip to the London Bridge Experience on the Saturday morning. Jane had previously told me to arrive at the community centre for 10am on the Saturday so that we could take the group into central London. At 11pm I received a call from Jane. I could tell she is furious by her tone. She told me that for the last few days she has been bombarded with calls and texts on her personal mobile

phone (given to the families for emergencies) from parents and children late into the evening demanding a place on the trip. Despite telling them that the children would be unable to come as they had not attended any or enough youth club sessions to come on trips and that the booking could not be changed, the families were increasingly persistent and she felt they were acting threateningly towards her. She told me that she has cancelled the trip and lost all of the money that has been paid. I question this, asking her if she's sure that it's worth losing that amount of money and letting the children down who have not broken the rules and she responds, "I'm not having them disrespect me like that, I work hard in this job and there are rules. The kids and their parents need to learn to respect the rules and [the organisation], they all need to get some manners and respect us and what we do for them".

From this account, it is clear that Jane was upset that the rules she has put in place for the youth club have been broken. Although the literature, and in part, this thesis argue that Travellers take issue with the placement of rules and regulations, this episode illustrates that it is not to say that Travellers do not value their own rules. Through looking at Jane's reaction to this episode and by returning to the discussion surrounding dirt and cleanliness on the site, it is clear that rules and conventions do have a significant place within Traveller society and Traveller places. This variance in attitudes towards rules reaffirms the aforementioned social distance between Travellers and non-Travellers through the example of youth groups. Although the rules in place often differ from those which you might expect to find at a non-Traveller youth group, it is clear that rules are central to the operation of the youth group. In this sense, this chapter argues that the youth group is an extension of the site, in that it is predominantly a Traveller space with particular kinds of rules and values. However, as a result of this, the staff members, and specifically Jane, are forced to negotiate extensions of conflict from the site and have certain expectations put on them from the Traveller families. This demonstrates the cultural distance between Travellers and non-Travellers and the impact that the presence of Traveller spaces has on spaces which are not solely for Travellers and the rules/norms that are embedded within these spaces.

5.7 Venturing into Public Space: Young Travellers in Central London

As has been highlighted throughout this thesis, 'travelling' remains a central value of the Traveller way of life in the UK though few if any lead a nomadic life. All of the participants for this research lived in caravans on permanent sites in Southwark yet as discussed there were indications they regarded themselves as a distinct social group, with mobility at its core and a distinct set of social mores that was at odds with society beyond the site. This could lead to a somewhat embattled attitude to the world of non-Travellers. This is illustrated by the way young people who participated in focus groups and interviews spoke about certain kinds of discomfort and fear that they feel even when they are within their homes. One child (Patrick, age 8) stated *"when we hear the police cars coming, we also think they're going to come onto the site, they think we've been causing trouble again".* Being unjust and discriminatory are only some of the deficiencies of the non-Traveller world as recounted to young Travellers by their elders. It is also a place that Travellers perceive as not being consistent with a swathe of their values in relation to, for example, cleanliness, respect for family and propriety in relation to gender relations. Discussions with the children who participated in this research made clear that mobility is still a central feature of their lives, albeit in a different form. In this context, Mary-Jo (eight years old) considered the literal connection between caravans and travelling as simply an annoying distraction: *"it annoys me when other children in my class ask me why I still live in a caravan when I don't travel but that's just my home".* 'Travelling' appears, rather, to denote the antithesis of the order and regulation of capitalist modernity (Thomas, 2000). It is not nomadism as such, that is significant, though memories and myths of nomadism play a role in developing a sense of identity (Smith and Greenfields, 2013).

For any young person living in central London today, public transport is largely unavoidable. The young Irish Travellers who participated in this research were frequent users of public transport and portrayed themselves as comfortable when doing so. How this might be interpreted will be discussed below, but it is certainly a significant claim in itself in the light of the point made in the literature review about young Travellers' ambivalence about non-Traveller figures of authority, such as the police and teachers (Richardson and Ryder, 2012). Public transport, and the metro as part of it, is a regulated space, and an affective atmosphere (Cidell and Prytherch, 2015) is created which conveys this. Directional signage is

supplemented by visual and aural injunctions about where to walk (and where not to walk), what actions may or may not be permissible (such as begging and busking), and injunctions to be vigilant – in relation to suspect packages, but also personal property and personal safety. Uniformed employees regulate entry and exit to the metro system and occasionally manage passengers on the station platforms. The London metro is certainly a variant of public space, but one overseen by an authority external to passengers, and an authority only partially embodied in its visible staff.

Some (for example, Boyer, 2012) have highlighted the ways in which deviant groups are managed in public spaces. One example of this is through the 'looks and tutting' referred to previously. Whilst carrying out the ethnographic component of this study, these 'funny looks and tutting' were observed when some of the younger members of the youth group were displaying what could be considered deviant behaviour on public transport. Examples of this included running around on trains, putting their feet on seats or pressing the stop button at inappropriate times on buses. However, although some passengers (including myself) will have considered this as unruly, no one made any overt comments of the kind that have been recorded in encounters between adults on public transport when widely shared informal norms about appropriate behaviour have been breached (Lobo, 2014; Wilson, 2013). It could be speculated about why this was the case. Perhaps because the 'offending individuals' were children, and therefore, could not necessarily be held accountable for these acts of deviance. Or perhaps because of folk-myths about the alleged viciousness of Travellers. But we need not pursue these speculations further because the focus is the young Travellers themselves, and what was absolutely clear was that the children seemed almost entirely unaware of tutting and disapproving looks, and certainly did not acknowledge them or alter their behaviour. In interviews, some young Travellers were vocal that they *"weren't scared of getting the bus alone because they had to do it for school" (Kevin, age 10).* Yet this could not have been a universal practice, certainly for younger Travellers, because Sienna (age 8) commented, *"my daddy always picks me up and drops me at school and wherever I go, he's always waiting in the car for me".* Parents insisted that the youth group arrange mini-buses for outings due to perceptions of safety concerns in central London. One child judged this to be *"an overreaction…"* (Holly, age 15). But my interpretation would be that the parents understood that while the young Travellers may have felt comfortable on public transport,

and public space more generally, this was largely because they behaved in a way that was oblivious to non-Travellers and to the informal norms of public transport. The relative informality of how much behaviour is regulated on public transport allowed the young Travellers to often act with impunity, but if new circumstances arose they might not possess the practical understanding, nor sheer power, to deal with them.

One such example of this is presented below. This episode can be seen to illustrate precisely such a confrontation and the lessons older Travellers wanted the younger people to learn from it.

Some of the younger boys (Ryan, Callum, Patrick and Kevin) were waiting on the platform for the train to arrive, as the train pulled in, the doors opened and, despite being told to move away from the doors by myself and the youth group leader, the boys were partially obstructing the doors, distracted and chatting loudly. A man, who looked to be in his twenties, stepped off the train onto the platform and said something, inaudible from where I was stood, to one of the boys (Ryan) as he walked past and continued down the platform. Ryan responded, again, I could not hear what was said. Shortly after this, Ryan, aged eleven, walked over to me and the youth group leader who is also his stepmother whom he lives with and said, "that man just told me to get out of the way and called me a pikey, so I called him a gorgio back". His stepmother's response to this was "I've already told you never to use that word around Charlotte".
(from researcher's field notes)

In order to understand this episode, it is necessary to be aware that 'pikey' is a common racist epithet used for Travellers. The tacit acceptability of racism against Travellers referred to early in this research means that the term can be found in the mainstream media (and even more so on-line) unlike most racist terms (see e.g. Irish Traveller Movement in Britain, 2012; van Dijk, 2016). 'Gorgio', which for perhaps obvious reasons features less in the media, is the equivalent in terms of being pejorative, and is the Traveller term for non-Travellers. This has already been discussed briefly in chapter two, where the example given by Okely (2005 :691) is revisited to show the connotations (as well as some of the potential implications for non-Traveller researchers venturing into the gendered world of Travellers):

> The first evening there was a knock on my door and a handsome male Traveller came in. He was holding his young child in his arms. My first naïve reaction was 'Good. Here is someone to interview'. But his charming smiles and ambivalence signalled something else. I was in my twenties and apparently a single woman and the carrier of the stereotypes of gorgio women as sexually uncontrolled and available (Okely, 1975). Eventually, I asked if his wife knew he was there.

To return to the metro episode, it has two sequential and connected components which will be discussed in turn. The episode begins with an encounter between young (male) Travellers and an adult non-Traveller as the latter leaves a metro carriage. This encounter of human bodies is central to what this thesis discusses, but a full understanding of the episode must take into account some norms of metro travel in London, specifically that (a) there is no rigid or otherwise defined manner for those waiting to get on to a carriage to organise themselves (e.g. by queuing) – by the standards of British public transport in general it is quite a free-for-all, with everyone looking after his or her interests, and quite a lot of standing around and jockeying for position. Where you stand is in effect your own business, subject to (b) there being a norm that exiting passengers be allowed to leave before those wanting to enter the carriage attempt to get on. This is underpinned by occasional public announcements and hectoring by metro staff on the occasions they are on the station platform. The physical organisation of the metro rolling stock, much of it quite old, means that passengers are not evenly distributed on the train, exacerbating congestion as people enter and leave carriages (Transport for London, 2014). For these reasons alone, exiting and entering a carriage is likely to create anxiety for most people, especially at busy times. Feeling that one's exit or entry is being unreasonably blocked is, according to newspaper reports, a major source of passenger aggravation and dissatisfaction (Ackerman, 2017).

Bodies, norms, and the material reality of the metro come together, then, in the fleeting encounter described above, and result in an exchange of racial abuse. It would be difficult to make an attempt to understand the exiting passenger's behaviour. Without in any way sanctioning racist abuse, it is necessary to be mindful of the very real dangers of radical misinterpretation of the reasons for the behaviour of people encountered for such a short

time (Lobo, 2014; Wilson, 2011). In any event, the focus is the young Travellers' behaviour and its aftermath. Their (racialised) response to the derogatory term hurled at them was immediate, and not in any sense premeditated. It was what Amin (2008) and Swanton (2010), among others have termed 'pre-cognitive', but which it is suggested that – following the ideas, though not terminology of Pragmatist philosopher Schön (1983) – might be better termed pre-conscious. Our interpretation of their virtually instantaneous response is that it was an expression of their 'knowing how' to respond to the kind of racial abuse that Travellers experience regularly. It was of course an emotional response, an angry response, the anger cognitively-generated in that they understood the significance of the word used to describe them. For these reasons, this thesis suggest that cognition runs through the episode in complex ways, but not as conscious deliberation, and it is emotion, not any deliberation, that brings into play the practical knowledge that is embedded in the action.

It could be questioned how and whether the exiting non-Traveller passenger recognises the young group of boys as Travellers and within this, one of the central questions in this thesis is and to what extent did the young Travellers think of themselves as distinct? It is also important to highlight the way emotion was mobilised in these recognitions.

One significant marker was the Irish accent that all the young people shared, though most, perhaps all, had spent most of their lives living in London. As a global city, London is a place of diversely accented English, but it is reasonable to claim that a group of children and young people with an Irish accent who are not obviously tourists is likely to be viewed by at most of those they encounter as a distinctive group, and by some at least as possibly Travellers (depending upon other cues that they may also perceive). The young Travellers were themselves aware of the significance of accent. One young English Traveller explained his Irish accent in this way: "I've never been to Ireland but I just sound like this because I live on site and have so many Irish Traveller friends".

There were also more or less subtle visual cues that seemed to have marked the young Travellers as such for some they encountered. Some were crude Ryan, for example, was sure that non-Travellers he met when on a boat trip in London "like waving to me because I look like Cristiano Ronaldo" – a reference to the world-famous footballer who has the darker skin

colour common in southern Europe. More subtle, perhaps, were cues related to style of dress and general appearances. Visits to the cinema with the youth group involved efforts at looking good by the teenage Travellers of both sexes. For the teenage girls this involved heavy use of make-up, fake tan, false eyelashes, short tight skirts and cropped tops. Thus attired they attracted considerable attention from other young people, male and female. The young men, washed and brushed, sometimes wearing spotless matching tracksuits, and always wearing clean shoes appeared to attract less attention, but were themselves aware of the lower standards (as they judged them) of the non-Traveller young men who, for example, wore relaxed looking sheep-skin UGG boots. This draws on earlier discussions on the appearances of the young Travellers and how these portrayed masculinity/femininity – although UGG boots are considered unisex, they are more often worn by females. Not every trip involved so much dressing up of course, but there were generally enough cues for the people who encountered the young Travellers to realise that this was a distinctive and cohesive social group, even if not all could give them a precise label.

But the reaction of the stepmother/worker (Jane) on the train station platform – who was also a worker at the youth group – was critical of the young Travellers' practical knowledge on this occasion. It is clear that the grounds of her criticism alert us to important aspects of Traveller life; and also remind us that management of emotions is an important part of urban encounters. The stepmother's focus is not the angry outburst as such. To that extent she is condoning and underpinning a mode of reacting to hostility from non-Travellers that the young people will have been introduced to, and will have practised, for some time. Her criticism is of their using a racialised term for non-Travellers within the hearing of the researcher. Here, too, subtle, but important, distinctions need to be underlined. She is not critical of their responding to the world using racial categories. 'Race thinking' in Barzun's (1965) sense of mankind being divided into explicatory categories which for all practical purposes are durable appears to be as central to Traveller social ontology as it is to those who racially abuse them. But she is critical – and anxious, possibly even embarrassed - of their using racial terms in 'racially mixed' company, a taboo that has long been recognised as widespread in racialized societies (e.g. Tatum, 1992). It could be speculated that she may also have wanted to make it clear that whatever the young Travellers, and indeed she herself, thought about *gorgios* in general, this particular *gorgio* researcher was an exception, again a

strategy consistent with retaining racial thinking, albeit one that may open up the possibility of changes in racial stereotyping (e.g. Leitner, 2012). The stepmother makes her comments on the assumption that the young Travellers can work on changing the nature of their responses even in fleeting encounters. In brief, they can practise managing their emotional responses in ways which will allow them to adopt a more nuanced approach to encounters with non-Travellers. Implicit in the step-mother's admonishment is an acknowledgment that expressed anger might well be appropriate in some encounters, particularly those where Travellers feel threatened. But some non-Travellers earn the right to more sensitivity being shown to their feelings; and this sensitivity involves habituating the body to acting appropriately even when doing so pre-consciously.

5.8 Spaces and Encounters within the City

As highlighted, the young Travellers who participated in this research often used public transport as a means to travel to the monthly outings as a group. These monthly outings involved all forms of transport provided by Transport for London but also often included walking between locations. These walks, where the children walked in pairs, often with myself at the front of the group and Jane at the back to insure none of the children got lost, often led to various forms of encounters. The below extract is taken from the researchers notes from one of the youth group outings in the Summer of 2017.

After leaving the go- karting centre we are walking across the large park, heading for the train station. It is very warm and sunny and there are lots of other members of the public using the park for various activities, including dog-walking. The children are very apprehensive of some of the dogs they encounter, something which I find unusual as many of them discuss having dogs at home. Although the younger children are tired, they are visibly excited to be outside, running around, laughing and playing tag. The older children are discussing how much they enjoyed go karting even though they didn't like the overalls they had to wear, and listening to music on one of the girl's phones, walking at a noticeable distance from myself, Maria and Jane. We approach a play park in the park and Jane suggests that it might be nice for the children to play for a little while as it's such a nice day and we have time before the children are being collected from the community centre. Upon entering the park (there are 15

of us) many of the parents look over, some parents are visibly annoyed, rolling their eyes and sighing, I find this upsetting and feel defensive over the children, who seem unaware of these reactions to their presence. The children split up, with some going to the swings, some going to climbing frame and some of the older children sitting on the grass. As the younger children approach the swings, one parent who is there with her young son takes him by the hand and moves to another area of the park.

It seemed obvious to me, as a participant, that the negative reactions were a result of the children being from a Traveller background (though I stress again the difficulty of being sure about motivations which were not subject to research enquiry). In this instance, it was arguably clearer than it had been on other outings, that the children were a group of Travellers due to the presence of the older girls. Many of the older girls do not regularly attend the youth group due to family commitments such as caring for younger children at home. This is consistent with, and shows little has changed in this respect, since much of the existing literature was written on Gypsies and Traveller which explores the home-lives of young female Travellers and how this relates to the values and subsequent commitments they undertake at an early age. The older girls' appearances would largely be considered stereotypical Gypsy or Traveller in the sense that it supports what is portrayed by the media. Broadly speaking, this includes short and tight clothes, fake tan, a large amount of make-up and heavily styled hair and acrylic nails. In addition to this, all of the children present had strong and therefore noticeable Irish accents.

Much of the existing research that has explored negative encounters between Gypsy Travellers and mainstream society in public space is set in significantly smaller geographic areas where Travellers reside on much larger sites than the Old Kent Road sites. This existing research has often explored the spatial conflict which has resulted between groups as a result of this (for example, Okely, 1983; Richardson and Ryder, 2012). However, as demonstrated in the above encounter, it is clear that discrimination occurs in more diverse areas with much smaller sites. This signifies that for the non-Travellers who were present during this encounter, the Traveller children were clearly seen as different and even a danger to their own children. In this sense, the non-Travellers parents appeared to see the young Travellers as outsiders – i.e. despite the young Travellers wanting at that moment to play with the non-

Traveller children and behaving in an acceptable manner which did not contravene the social norms expected in a play park, the non-Traveller parents thought there was no certainty that they would continue to adhere to these norms. Although it appeared that members of mainstream society reacted in the way they did due to the presence of Traveller children, the youth group children and leaders seemed unaware of this, and even if they were aware they did not mention the incident at the time or afterwards. This could suggest that they are used to these types of reactions and therefore, do not comment or react. Returning to the previous vignette on the train platform, there the leader was trying to teach or train the young boy, to act and speak around non-Travellers in a particular way. The absence of reaction from the Travellers in the park could suggest that these values passed down from older Travellers to younger generations limits the conflicts between communities. In addition to this, during my period in the field of eighteen months, I witnessed no physical conflict and only a small amount of conflict between Travellers and non-Travellers. Speaking to the young people involved, few had first-hand accounts of conflict. Yet many had accounts that were second-hand and related to older people. That these were passed on to the young people – and remembered – also suggests a degree of social distance between Travellers and non-Travellers.

I would argue that this distrust or fear was seen to be evident between Travellers and non-Travellers at the 2017 Summer Fair in Leyton Square, Peckham. The Fair is run annually by the youth group and is open to individuals from any background, including staff from the Council. This event was fairly unusual in that it was the only event that I attended that was run by Travellers for Travellers and non-Travellers alike. However, I was later informed that this was due to conditions necessary to receive the funding from Southwark Council and the Irish Government for the event.

Jane gives me a lift from the community centre to the square so that we can set up, Hattie [the manager of the organisation] is rushing around trying to collect things from the shops in Peckham and is visibly panicked about the time. On arriving, Katherine [the deputy-manager of the organisation] is already there with her sons and we set up the main stalls which include the raffle, the Traveller history stall (this is my job and includes putting up photos and the organisations tote bags, banners and keyrings) and the food stall. The event is being

run in collaboration with the nursery who are based in the square; they have their own stalls and a bouncy castle which has already been set up. Whilst I am setting up the stall, Jane's husband Patrick arrives in his van, this is the first time I've met Patrick, despite knowing Jane and his children for over six months. Patrick unloads extra chairs and tables from his van and returns to his site to see Jane's parents. Shortly after this, Katherine's sons leave in a Range Rover and when leaving they do a few laps of the park – an area which clearly has no road or space for cars. Although I am slightly taken aback by this, no one else seems to be. As families begin to arrive the divide between Travellers and non-Travellers seems clear to me – the Travellers are dressed up smartly with the young girls wearing their Irish dancing clothes and shoes as there is a performance and a workshop on later in the day (although the class is run by an instructor who many of the Traveller families know well, she is not a Traveller herself). The non-Traveller families generally consist of a mixture of mothers and fathers and small children, whilst only Traveller women and children are now present. Two non-Traveller families seem to be very interested in the history display and although it is being run by Jane's three sisters they are clearly reluctant to talk to the non-Travellers. When asked questions about their lives the Traveller women respond with a nod or shaking their heads or one word answers. This made me feel uncomfortable as it was clear they did not want to respond.
(from researcher's field notes)

It could be suggested that, in line with the literature, the women were reluctant to respond due to fear or mistrust of mainstream society as a consequence of historic discrimination. Despite the non-Travellers only behaving in a pleasant and interested way towards the Travellers; it could be argued that the uncertainty surrounding encounters with mainstream society leads to fear or dislike of unnecessary communication. However, from my perspective, the uncomfortable encounter appeared to result out of an attitude to the wider event and the need for communication. It seemed that for the Traveller women the encounter was unnecessary and a 'pointless' conversation when there were so many Traveller families there to talk to. This interpretation supports the assertion that the main aim of those Travellers families living on sites in Peckham is to limit encounters and conversations to sufficient to sustain their lives in the way they already operate. For those young Travellers who attend the youth group this is a skill that they learn through attending the sessions and activities run by the group, especially those that take place outside the community centre. In this sense, it can

be argued that Travellers are learning these skills whilst engaging and doing the minimum so as to get by in modern British society whilst maintaining Traveller value systems.

It is clear that these notions of discomfort and negotiating uncomfortable encounters are inherently spatial. The youth group allows these young people, and at larger events such as the Summer Fair Travellers more generally, to have a 'safe Traveller space'. This arguably bridges the gap between Traveller value systems and mainstream society. However, this also supports the notion that the insular nature of Traveller life reproduced their outsider status despite some attempts at engagement. In this sense, young Traveller children could be seen to be engaging with mainstream society through taking public transport and visiting busy London attractions whilst supervised by other Travellers; activities which they may not partake in otherwise. Through the youth group, young Travellers are exposed to the kinds of encounters they may face throughout their lives, inclusive of positive and negative encounters, and learn the appropriate way to react to these. It could be argued that these distinctive aspects of the youth group are central to the ways in which the young Travellers are so well integrated into other areas of their lives and the reason for older community members being so supportive of the youth group. Although the youth group can be seen to support Travellers values and reinforce a strong sense of Traveller identity and belonging, it is clear that they prepare younger Travellers for integration into the mainstream. Through following a schedule, using public transport and visiting public spaces, the members of the youth group are exposed to areas of mainstream society that they would not be otherwise. The citizenship literature discussed in chapter two argues that through encouraging particular shared views in society, and the spaces within this, a citizenry with modern, common views can be produced. However, it is apparent that the situation for Travellers is more complex. Although the Travellers who participated in this research could be seen to be immersed in the mainstream of contemporary British life, in particular areas of their lives, especially at young ages, a reluctance to part with inherent Traveller value systems means this engagement does not necessarily continue or expands into adulthood. In this sense, it could be argued that Travellers are still distant from these views and values surrounding citizenship and merely do the 'bare minimum' for survival in modern society. Although this thesis acknowledges attending the youth group and engaging with non-Travellers in non-Traveller spaces goes above the bare minimum, it is also argued that in going to the youth club the young Travellers

are able to engage with mainstream society whilst also remaining at a distance from the insider groups, whose values they do not uphold or necessarily agree with.

5.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has argued that the home is a significant feature of Traveller life and Traveller identity. Within the site, and therefore the home, there are particular kinds of norms that the young Travellers must adhere to. These norms have an unavoidable spatiality and support many of the traditional Traveller values and way of life. For the young Travellers involved in this research, leaving the home and the safety of the Traveller space that is so central to their identity gives way to new and potentially unknown kinds of encounter. The youth club is a space which is designed for, and supportive of the young Travellers and the Traveller way of life. However, this is not to say that it is without its own norms and conventions, which gives way to certain kinds of tensions and conflicts. The young Travellers frequently ventured off site, in part due to their connections with the youth club, another space which can largely be considered a 'Traveller space' but one where non-Travellers are permitted. The distinctive way in which the youth club operates and supports the specific needs of the young Irish Travellers illustrate the social distance between Travellers and non-Travellers who live in London. This further impacts the encounters that the young Travellers face when venturing into public spaces. This chapter has also evidenced the complexity of the emotions that the young Travellers must learn to deal with when off-site. Within this, the youth club has emerged as a central site for learning to appropriately engage with and react to these encounters and the emotions within this. Public transport has emerged as a key site of encounter and one in which young Travellers are forced to negotiate their emotions. It is clear that [young] Travellers are still subject to discrimination and face discomfort and encounter which can be seen as negative and racially motivated. This, too, suggests that the young Travellers are still understood as outsiders and different from non-Travellers.

This chapter argues that although many non-Travellers see Travellers at outsiders, the young Travellers are aware of the social distance between themselves and non-Travellers. The young Travellers are able to negotiate this social distance and navigate their encounters and the emotions within these encounters, in part through what they learn at the youth club. This

contrasts with what Sibley (1982) argues. This chapter suggests that Travellers are able to navigate the non-Traveller world through developing mechanisms to engage with non-Travellers as necessary i.e. they are learning to control the ways they react to negative encounters. Furthermore, it is evident that the young Travellers involved are not assimilating and do not share the values of non-Travellers in regard to the appropriate ways to act in public and on public transport. Through living on sites, the young Travellers are able to maintain a physical and social distance from non-Travellers and able to continue the Traveller way of life. The following chapter will explore in-depth the Travellers experiences of and attitudes towards formal schooling to further question and assess this outsider status.

Four key findings have emerged within this chapter. The first of these findings is about some of the ways that the site and the young Travellers homes remain central to their way of life and understanding of the world; so that, for example, notions of cleanliness and traditional spatiality of the site remain key to the young Traveller everyday life. The second finding is that attending the youth club allows young Traveller to negotiate off-site spaces which are also non-Traveller spaces, including public transport, under the guidance of older Travellers. The third finding is that through the guidance of older Travellers, younger Travellers are able to navigate their emotions and learn to react to negative encounters with non-Travellers in off-site spaces. The last finding of this chapter is that it appears that young Travellers see little need to assimilate with the non-Traveller world; young Travellers do not necessarily adhere to the rules on public transport and in other non-Traveller spaces and only engage with non-Travellers to a necessary extent. In doing this, they are able to navigate the non-Traveller world as necessary for every-day life but are also able to maintain Traveller values.

6. Spaces of Encounter: Young Irish Travellers and Schools in Southwark

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will explore the experiences, encounters and views of young Irish Travellers in London in mainstream secondary schools. This chapter argues that for young Irish Travellers, schools are sometimes uncomfortable spaces. Schools are recognised as semi-public non-Traveller spaces and as mentioned in the literature review are historically negative places for Irish Travellers. This chapter argues that young Travellers are forced to negotiate these sometimes negative interactions in non-Traveller spaces. It ultimately argues that Traveller children are not inclined to accept school and its values and organisation i.e. they come to school with a way of thinking about the world, about themselves and about non-Travellers that already diverges from the mainstream values of their schools.

This chapter will first identify the ways in which young children attend and engage with mainstream schooling despite the ideas in schools sometimes being at odds with what they are taught at home. In doing this, this chapter will argue that young Travellers are forced to manage these differing value sets and have developed strategies for managing encounters (both positive and negative) with non-Travellers in school. These typically involve drawing on family ties and friendship patterns. This chapter concludes that although attitudes may be changing towards higher education and wider aspirations, there is still a strong gender divide between young boys and girls in the Travelling community.

In discussing these aspects of the encounters that happen in mainstream secondary schools and the emotions that are mobilised within these, this chapter will add to the previous analysis surrounding the question, **in what sense, if at all, are young Gypsies and Travellers still 'outsiders in urban society'?** This chapter will specifically focus on the following research question:

2. How do young Travellers experience their encounters with non-Travellers in schools?

6.2 "Why would we tell them we're Travellers?"

For the young Irish Travellers who participated in this research, community and belonging can be seen to shape how they feel and how they act in certain places and spaces. As mentioned in the literature review, schools create and recreate a particular kind of citizenship and within this, a sense of belonging. As previously mentioned, for the purpose of this research, citizenship is understood as the ways in which pupils can be seen to share particular kinds of 'values', which in the context of the school would include as central having a certain respect for the school as an institution and authority within it (this being a precursor for respecting institutions that will shape adult life – such as the justice system, the taxation system, as we as employing organisations). Displaying and performing these values involves doing things like adhering to school rules, including those surrounding timetabling and the school day and wearing the same uniforms as one another, as prescribed by the institution. Failure to adhere to these values can lead to uncomfortable interactions, negative encounters and being an outsider in Becker's (1982) sense (see chapter two).

When interviewed, it was clear that all of the young people were proud to call themselves Irish Travellers and of many of the features of Traveller culture and identity. Within this, it was clear that they enjoyed living on their sites and the, sometimes unique, activities. Yet, during interviews and focus groups, it was clear that some students were hesitant to self-ascribe as Travellers when asked by schools and individuals of authority within this. Julie (aged 12) commented, "*when I was younger, like when I was in year 6 and that…primary…I wouldn't put it [on forms] or when we was being interviewed because sometimes people would be calling us pikeys and all that so we wouldn't really tell anyone"*.

Her sister, Jessie (aged 15) agreed that she was also reluctant to label herself as a Traveller in the school setting for similar reasons, commenting, *"yeah, because when I did tell people that I was a Gypsy in my old school they was all going around and calling me names and calling me disgusting and all that".* Julie then said, *"in school I got into an argument and a girl called me a pikey and I said that's being racist and loads of people said that I didn't know what being*

racist meant and that wasn't being racist because it's only racist if you're black or white or Asian but that's not the case".

These accounts present examples of what is called 'passing', when someone from a socially-constructed-as-stigmatised group passes themselves off as someone from a socially constructed non-stigmatised group. For example, a light-coloured person whose family background, if known, would lead to them being perceived/constructed by dominant groups as 'black' may pass as a non-black person. Ong (2005:603) comments "Passing" refers to the act of establishing a false social identity through corporeal self-presentation, performance, and management of social interactions. The accomplishment of passing enables the actor to eschew discrimination associated with his or her original (usually marginal) group, and to enjoy, instead, benefits as a member of another (usually dominant) group". This illustrates the ways that young Travellers sometimes use passing to negotiate uncomfortable encounters. What any particular act of passing does not reveal in itself is the motivation involved, for example whether the person passing is ashamed of their (actual) marginal status – i.e. has internalised value judgements that legitimise racialised hierarchies and racism - or whether the passing is actually just a practical necessity to avoid unpleasantness at a particular time. That is, passing does not in itself provide evidence that young Travellers wish to give up outsider status or retain it; it does seem to indicate a desire, for the moment, to avoid intense emotional work associated with being on the receiving end of racial hostility.

Many researchers have commented on this ignorance and negative attitude towards Traveller culture. As discussed in the literature review, in recent years there has been little change in the attitudes towards Gypsies and Travellers (Acton and Mundy, 1997; Levison and Sparkes, 2008). Many individuals do not see discrimination towards individuals from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller backgrounds as racism with McGarry (2017) commenting "Romaphobia is the last acceptable [form of] racism in Europe". The literature review highlighted that some progress has been made towards inclusive education, particularly in the form of policy, for all pupils, including those from ethnic minority backgrounds such as Irish Travellers. However, this thesis casts doubt on how useful this change in policy is on changing the wider views of young Traveller children. From the responses of those young people who participated it is clear that many children are unlikely to receive the extra support on offer if they are not comfortable

with others being made aware of their ethnicity. This discomfort results from familial stories of negative encounters over the years and personal experience which have shaped the views of these young people. The impact of story-telling from older generations to younger ones in Traveller communities will be discussed later in this chapter.

For some of the children who took part in this research, concealing this aspect of their identity is not an option due to the high numbers of Traveller children in their schools. Brothers Ryan (aged 11) and Kevin (aged 10) live on a site where many of the primary school aged children are registered at the same school Ryan remarked *"everyone in our class knows we're Travellers. Sometimes we're not as quiet* [as the children who are not Travellers]*, we'll tell people".* During a focus group Kevin commented:

"People call me Gypsy but then they get a green form so they might get excluded. I told the deputy head they called me a Gypsy and they got taken away, they kept saying "oh go away Gypsy boys and girls". I don't know why they were saying that. Some people in our school are jealous. They're trying to be mean, I have weird people in my class".

This confirms the aforementioned hostility towards the young Travellers, although for Kevin, it is clear that he finds the school's system of disciplining children who comment on the Traveller's ethnicity as somewhat of a deterrent and therefore, arguably comforting. In his discussion, it is clear that Kevin is trying to understand why the other children in his class call him names and make these kinds of comments. This provides some explanation for Ryan's reasoning when he says *"we have 50 Travellers in our school but um still, sometimes it's good to have Travellers in your school like, if you get rejected sometimes you still have friends. Some non-Travellers don't like to fill you in [*Ryan means that they don't like to communicate with him and involve him with conversations and games]*. Not all people but some treat you different. Sometimes it'll happen but not all the time".* Ryan's comments suggest that although he feels as though he does belong at the school and throughout the focus group, he stated that he has friends who are not from a Traveller background, he finds the presence of other Travellers in the school comforting and arguably, like an extended family.

This draws on the discussion surrounding the outsider status of the young Travellers involved in this research. It is clear that the young Travellers see themselves as different to the non-Travellers who they go to school with. Likewise, at least some non-Travellers also act as if they seem themselves at a social distance from the Irish Travellers in their class. From the young Travellers responses to questions, it was evident that despite seeing themselves as outsiders, they saw the value of an education and accepted this distance between themselves and non-Travellers.

As explained in chapter three, in the initial stages of this research numerous schools in South London were contacted with very little response. One school claimed that they did not have any Traveller pupils at the school despite some of the children at the youth group being enrolled there. When asked about this, Jane said "*one of the [Traveller] boys was beat up by other kids outside the gates the other day because he's a Traveller and now his Dad drives him to school, maybe they don't want any attention about that".* Although it was not clear what was being done about this fight, it is clear that the school is a site for negative encounters and one which Travellers are forced to take measures to co-exist in this particular arena. Furthermore, it could be argued that the school in this example was hesitant to recognise Travellers as different out of fear of creating further tensions between themselves and the local Traveller communities. However, it is clear that the school's reluctance to acknowledge the Traveller children that are enrolled there could have significant impacts on the non-Traveller children's attitudes towards them and the encounters that may occur as a result of this.

Through exploring the emotions of the young Travellers in relation to these encounters, this thesis argues that in semi-public settings such as schools, Traveller boys generally adopt, and are encouraged to adopt, an uncompromisingly confrontational attitude to perceived aggression, bullying and unwanted attention by non-Travellers (Cemlyn et al, 2009). The Traveller children had many anecdotes about such episodes. Jane's explanation of her time at school illustrates this: "*they* [other Traveller children] *go to an all-girls school because their parents don't want them mixing with boys but I went to a mixed school because there were about twenty people, Travellers, who went to our school so if we got approached by a boy we had our brothers and cousins so people knew not to come around us so my situation was*

different from theirs". The exaggerated masculinity that is referred to in this quotation, where the Traveller boys physically protect the Traveller girls, is also performed through their participation in, and/or following of, activities like boxing, which is very popular among Traveller boys. Building on the discussions in the previous chapter, this thesis suggests that the Traveller children's somewhat uncaring behaviour in both semi-public and public spaces, such as public transport, towards the attitudes and discomfort of non-Travellers can be explained in part in terms of the belief of young Travellers, particularly boys, that they – the young Travellers – could hold their own in any confrontation that might arise. This further demonstrates the social distance between the Travellers who participated in this research and the non-Travellers they interact with. The young Travellers could be seen to have immediate and often confrontational reactions to the non-Travellers which also had a significant gendered component. This notion that young male Travellers are tasked with looking after young related female Travellers also further illustrates the importance of kinship and instilling values surrounding the importance of family – rather than individual achievement for example - in Travellers from an early age.

6.3 Travellers, School and Rules: Uniform

Whilst carrying out the ethnographic fieldwork for this research, it was clear that appearance, including clothes, hairstyles and makeup were very important to those Travellers who participated including both boys and girls of all ages. The previous chapter highlighted that much of the preparations surrounding family events and parties to mark holidays throughout the year were based upon appearance. It also illustrated the importance of appearance for every day outings into public space and highlighted the ways in which this differed between Travellers and non-Travellers. However, when asked about their school uniforms, those who responded did not seem to view these negatively or generally have any particular objection to wearing them. Discussions included how the younger children, in particular the boys, were looking forward to moving onto the older children's uniform (from jumpers to blazers) in the next academic year. Although this could confirm the aforementioned discussion surrounding the importance of formal attire to young Traveller boys, arguably, it is more likely a result of the younger boys wanting to feel more grown up or to 'fit in' with the older boys. It would be reasonable to suggest that this is similar across all cultures and communities in the UK and

not unique to Travellers, but allows those Travellers who wish to, to become equal 'citizens' in the school arena, at least in terms of appearance.

Whilst talking to Jack (aged 13) on the bus back to the youth group from a trip we had been on in London, he remarked that he had a bad week in school and was *"really annoyed"* with his English teacher. He elaborated on this by saying that *"he'd been expelled from school for a week for wearing his trainers to school*" and that he *"wasn't even messing around in English this time".* Although Jack, and the other boys, often admit they are disruptive in class often describing themselves as *"loud*", *"cheeky"* and *"confident"*, it seems as though the punishment was slightly harsh for this particular rule that he had broken. However, it could be argued that Jack wearing his trainers instead of his school shoes, which he happened to be wearing on the trip, confirms the earlier argument surrounding the performance of identity that Travellers adopt to gain some agency and control that they might not have otherwise. Although wearing trainers is not unique to Traveller identity or a uniquely Traveller form of defiance, it signifies Jack refusing to conform to rules surrounding footwear in his school.

In addition to this it could also be argued that Jack did not see this particular rule, or the school's rules in general, as important and felt that he did not need to adhere to this uniform rule as he is a 'citizen' of the Traveller community above being a 'citizen' of the school. Jack's defiance draws on discussions in the literature where Traveller boys are considered men at the age of fourteen (Griffin, 2002). In Traveller terms Jack is almost at the age of adulthood. This further explains Jack's resistance to adhere to his school rules and being told what to do by other adults. Although this confirms some of what is argued in the literature, for example discussions surrounding the performance of identity and the lack agency in the school environment, it contests the remarks of others. One example of this draws on Hamilton's (2006: p.4) comment which draws on the fear of the "exposure to incompatible beliefs and practices of the dominant society [and how that] will erode their child's cultural identity and morals" (Hamilton, 2006: 4). It is clear that from the above anecdote, Jack is maintaining his beliefs and practices by contesting the rules of the school which has led to an uncomfortable encounter with his teacher where it can be seen he is rejecting the rules that have been set in that particular space.

Although the literature suggests that Gypsy and Traveller pupils do not respond well to institutional rules, generally the children involved with the youth group followed the rules and guidelines set within the youth club. Although these rules were largely designed and implemented by Travellers, the young people also listened to myself and the other non-Travellers when we reiterated them. Jane often mentioned the importance of good manners and teaching the young people the difference between right and wrong throughout the sessions and trips. Her comments on one event, which was discussed in significant depth in the previous chapter, illustrates what she means by this. Jane described how one family *"rang and text me continuously the night before trying to get me to book another child* (who does not attend youth group) *on the trip but I wouldn't let them…It's important for them to learn that you have to respect people…and can't bully people".* Jane's insistence that the young Travellers must not bully her (and other members of staff) confirms the importance of respecting older Travellers within the community. Furthermore, it illustrates the particular kinds of skills that young Travellers are learning through attending the youth club.

Despite this negative encounter as recited by Jack, these episodes and the responses of the young Travellers when asked about school rules and in particular, their uniform, largely show the changing attitudes of Travellers towards education. This supports some of what has been argued in the literature review but also suggests that the school is an arena where the social distance between Travellers and non-Travellers is decreasing. The young Travellers who participated in this research did not discuss any particular aversions to the rules in place in their schools and did not feel they directly had an impact on the encounters they had or their Traveller identities. In light of this, this thesis argues that the extent to which young Travellers living in London and attend local secondary schools are seen as outsiders in these schools is likely to be decreasing. This will continue to be discussed in depth in this chapter and the final chapter of this thesis.

6.4 Do Young Irish Travellers face (Dis)Comfort within the School Environment?

During interviews and focus groups the young people were asked to discuss their favourite and least favourite subjects. They were also asked to do the same for spaces within school

and any extra-curricular activities that they participated in. All of the pupils who participated in this research seem to value education and found that their parents were generally supportive of their aspirations and saw the importance of them regularly attending school. Jessie stated that her family said that she had to go to school and that *"it's mostly about getting an education [because] most Travellers don't get an education".* Julie developed this point by saying, "*yeah, like on the TV, where some Travellers drop out of school by the age of 12 just to work at home, like as a house wife. Like 'Big Fat Gypsy Wedding', it's all lies. Yeah like 90 percent of that is lies, they say that all Travellers drop out but I'm 16 and I haven't, I'll be doing my GCSEs for college and all that".*

Whilst interviewing the sisters, it was clear that despite being the only members of the Travelling community enrolled at their school, the girls were well integrated and see the importance of completing their education. Whilst being interviewed the girls spoke of their general enjoyment of their lessons and the friendships they had with non-Traveller children in their class. It was also clear that this importance had been promoted by their parents who supported the girls by, as Jessie comments, "*making sure we do our homework*" and "*dropping us at school every day*". This confirms the discussion in the last chapter surrounding the every-day mobility of Travellers in London and the ways in which Traveller parents support their children's education and are protective of them. The attitudes of the young Traveller girls' contests what is suggested by some researchers (for example, Wilkin et al, 2009; Harding, 2014) who argue that secondary education is not considered important by many members of the Travelling community. However, it does confirm what some have said about the changing attitudes towards education due to changes in employment opportunities for Travellers (Levinson, 2008). In completing secondary education, it is likely that the girls will have far more employment opportunities. In addition to this, having remained on site, it is likely that their attitude towards physically travelling, i.e. only for holidays, will remain into adulthood and therefore, they will be able to engage with areas of employment that may not be usual for members of the Travelling community. In this sense, this research argues that the social distance between Travellers and non-Travellers is decreasing in line with the increasing recognition of the importance of education in Traveller families. However, these comments made by the sisters do not say much about the actual experiences of the Travellers when in schools and whether they feel they are portrayed as insiders or outsiders.

Julie and Jessie both attend the local single sex girls school. When asked why this is and how they felt about it, Julie responded, *"we go to an all-girls school because our parents don't want us mixing with boys".*

This is consistent with the aforementioned discussions surrounding the importance of gender, gender relations and gendered spaces within Traveller communities. In addition to this, it echoes Jane's earlier discussion about her own school experiences and shows they are very similar for young Traveller girls two decades later. Some activities for example, going to school and the experiences within it are not deemed acceptable for both girls and boys, as Julie confirms when she says, *"mostly the boys do the sports, because the women have to act a certain way, lady-like basically. We're supposed to clean and cook and sometimes we do other things but we don't really do sports".* In this sense, it is clear that spaces, and indeed the activities within these spaces, are still considered gendered for the Travelling community. Although education for girls, and boys, is considered important by all of the families who participated in this research, only certain aspects of education are deemed important for girls. As mentioned in both the literature review and the previous chapter, despite the increasing importance of education within the Travelling community, whilst at their homes, boys are often expected to go out with their dads, often to assist with and to learn a manual trade, possibly providing one part of an explanation for the importance of physical activity, whilst girls help at home (Helleiner, 2004). From the responses of Julie and Jessie it is clear that although Traveller's attitudes towards education are changing, many central cultural values and attitudes remain with a significant focus on spatiality. This spatiality is unique to Traveller culture and, in line with the discussions in the previous chapter, and takes the form of what activities are deemed appropriate for males and females in certain places on the site but also beyond the site. This demonstrates the differences between Travellers and non-Travellers in the present day, and the ways in which this can be seen to manifest in the school environment. For non-Travellers, physical education and after-school sports are only deemed appropriate activities for boys, and therefore, it is likely that young Traveller girls are likely to see themselves as and be seen as different for not engaging with these lessons and sports clubs.

Although this thesis has recognised the importance that gender plays within and divides the activities that young Traveller boys and girls participate in, there are also issues which both groups face in relation to friendships with non-Travellers. Although this thesis has thus far recognised the uncomfortable encounters that the young Irish Travellers have with non-Travellers in the school, during interviews and focus groups the Travellers also spoke of their friendships with non-Travellers. Kevin said *"Harry is my best friend at school and he's not a Traveller, sometimes he's annoying but I always like it when we play football together".* Jessie also spoke of her friendships with non-Travellers. When asked about what she most enjoys about going to school, she said *"I like some of the other girls in my class, it's cool seeing them every day and catching up with them out of lessons".* However, when I asked if she sees these non-Traveller girls outside of school, she said "*no I don't do that, I just see them when I'm at school, when I'm at home I just see other Travellers*". When I asked her to elaborate on this she was reluctant and seemed slightly uncertain or apprehensive to give more reasoning, her only response to this question was, "*it's just culture, innit [sic]".*

This draws on the discussion in the previous chapter surrounding the ways that Traveller culture is embedded within the site. Young Travellers do not necessarily view themselves as outsiders in the non-Traveller spaces but they still make the distinction between Traveller spaces and non-Traveller spaces. This also reaffirms the argument that young Irish Travellers are learning to negotiate non-Traveller spaces to the extent it is necessary but that they do not see the importance of, and do not see it as appropriate, to engage with non-Travellers beyond non-Traveller spaces. Whilst on site, in a Traveller space, the young Travellers have the relationships and friendship patterns that they need for support. They also reassume their role within their families and the, often gendered, tasks that come as part of this i.e. working with their parents or caring for younger siblings.

The earlier discussion surrounding the wariness of young Travellers to self-identify as such and the [often negative] encounters that come along with this identification supports the argument that young Travellers feel as though they are outsiders in schools. The discussion of this section has somewhat disputed this. Instead, it is suggested that Travellers are maintaining their Traveller culture and identity in the school, a non-Traveller place where they engage with some activities, rules and some aspects of the curriculum and non-Travellers but

only to a certain extent. It is evident this is the extent necessary to form relationship and engage with the compulsory aspects of education so as to navigate the non-Traveller (and semi-public) space with limited negative encounters until they can leave the school and enter employment.

6.5 Young Irish Travellers and the School Curriculum

Nearly all of the young people involved in interviews and focus groups had different responses when discussing their favourite subjects, ranging from Maths and English to Music. Although it is likely that this would be expected when discussing school with children from any background, the reasoning behind these choices could arguably be seen to be based upon their cultural practices and values.

As mentioned in the methodology chapter of this thesis, creative methods were used with the younger section of the youth club. During one focus group, the younger children who were present were asked to draw the spaces within their schools which they felt the most comfortable and those within which they felt the least comfortable. These are shown below (figure 2 and figure 3).

Figure 2 – School Spaces (Drawn by Ryan, aged 11)

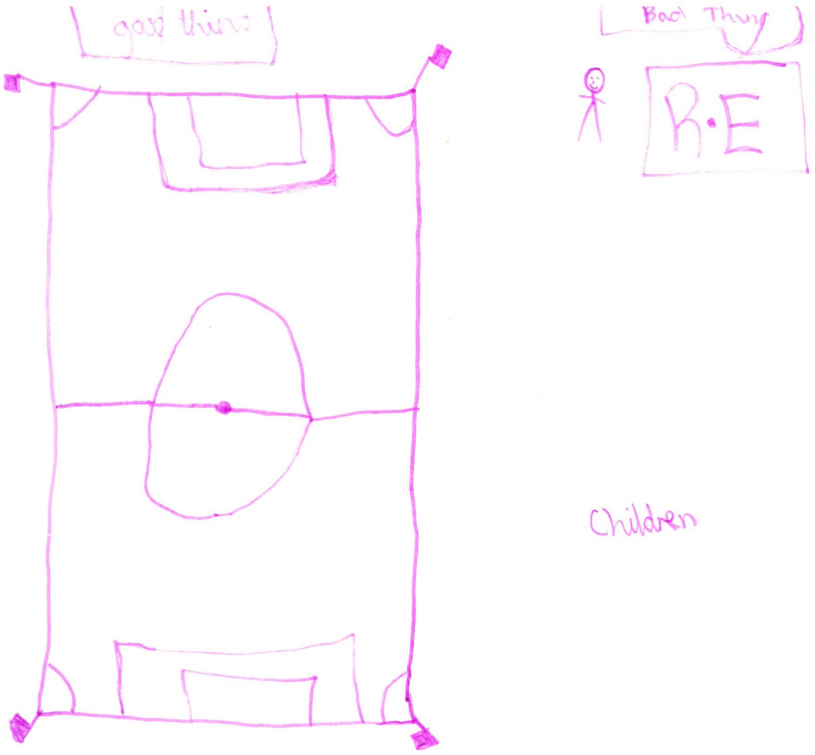
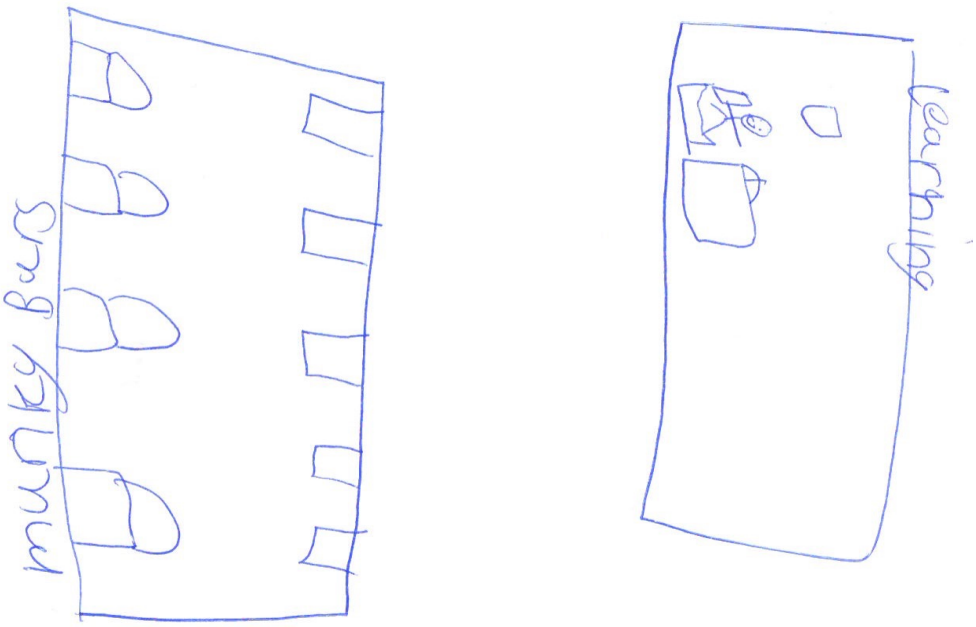


Figure 3 – School Spaces (Drawn by Kevin, aged 10)



Both of the children's drawings show that the boys favourite places were outside, either on the football pitch or in the playground (on the monkey bars) whilst their least favourite places are in the classroom with Ryan showing that R.E. (Religious Education) lessons are his least favourite place to be whilst he is in school. Although the boys' favourite places are not unexpected and are not likely to be a uniquely Traveller response, they do support the discussions in the literature review and the previous chapter. These discussions surround the notion that Travellers are most comfortable in open spaces, where they are not 'trapped' within institutions, where authority figures who do not share their own opinions and attitudes control their days. This is explored in more depth later in this chapter.

The brothers were asked to give reasons for these choices, which prompted significant discussion surrounding Religious Education and how they see the curriculum as unfair and dismissive of Traveller culture. Ryan argued *"I don't like RE because we have to learn about Islam and all that and I don't know anything about that"*. In agreement with Ryan, Mary-Jo (aged 9) commented "*we asked the head teacher if we could learn about Travellers and if we could learn about Catholics and he said no, we have to learn about Islam. We don't want to learn about that"* and Savannah (aged 8) concurred "*I told my mum to tell the head teacher to talk about Catholics…we haven't learnt about Christianity this year. Because we're Christians I like that it's relevant to you. When RE is other religions I don't like that. You get really stuck".* The agreement amongst the children was unexpected as the focus grouped comprised of a mix of boys and girls of different ages, who attended different schools. A variation in answers was anticipated. However, when prompted the children explained that they felt that learning about other religions was unimportant, as it would not help them in later life and that they felt it was unfair. It was evident that the children felt they should not have to learn about other religions and cultures when their own Traveller culture was not acknowledged in the mainstream school environment. Alicia (aged 8) suggested instead of other religions and cultures, she'd "*like them to talk about St. Patrick's Day and talk about Travellers more instead of stuff we don't know. And Irish dancing"*.

This confirms the earlier discussion surrounding the importance of the maintenance of Traveller culture and the comments of those researchers (Harding, 2014) who have suggested that the reluctance towards mainstream education has developed from a fear of the 'dilution

of Traveller culture' and the values that are associated with this. It is clear that the children want to learn about the culture they understand and can relate to. Arguably, this suggests that the children want children who are not Travellers to also understand their culture and identity(s) perhaps in an effort to 'fit in' in their classes. Furthermore, this confirms the insular nature of Traveller culture and the values that are promoted on Traveller sites where mixing with other members of society is carried out only to a functionally necessary level and, therefore, in-depth education on other religions is not deemed necessary for the every-day activities of Traveller life.

Although this demonstrates that religion and specifically Catholicism are significant in Traveller culture and every-day life, this thesis argues that this discussion is also a significant illustration of the difference in attitudes towards the purpose of education between Travellers and non-Travellers. For the young Travellers involved with this research, it was clear that education was a tool for which they could learn the appropriate skills to get a job which would allow them to support their families. What kinds of jobs were appropriate for Travellers – boys and girls – was something determined by their life outside school, not by any interests or aspirations that would be instilled in school. This resonates with the discussion of Willis' arguments in chapter two.

It is evident from the responses of the young Travellers that there are significant similarities to be drawn with Willis' 'lads' and their attitudes towards the purpose of education. As previously mentioned, Willis' working class young men (whom he terms 'the lads') actively choose the way of life they come to adopt – which involves larking around and generally negative approaches to authority, both within school and the workplace. After leaving school, they do not find themselves having to take the jobs that others do not want; rather they have social networks that mean they can find the kinds of jobs they can bear to do. Their disruptive behaviour in school in important ways is a rehearsal of, and preparation for, their attitudes towards the authority structures of their chosen workplaces and prepares them for fitting into the day to day life with their peers on those shop-floors. In this research too, the school is a relational space within which Travellers explore their own developing sense of self. The young Travellers are appropriating values and attitudes from family, neighbourhood and Traveller culture and making them their own through the way they negotiate school. These

discussions further evidence the substantial gaps in values and attitudes between children from Traveller and non-Traveller backgrounds. Broadly speaking, non-Traveller children accept learning about other religions and cultures without question. However, the young Irish Travellers involved with this research see the school as a place to build on the attitudes towards school and the experiences of older family members to develop skills to fit in with these older Travellers. This demonstrates further differences between the communities and illustrates ways in which young Travellers will feel, and will be made to feel, outsiders.

The school's, and indeed on a larger scale, the government's, reluctance to incorporate Traveller culture into the national curriculum relates to the discussion in the literature review surrounding the marketisation of education. It is evident that the increased pressure on schools, policy makers and practitioners who are tasked with performing well in the competitive education 'market', poses a threat to the educational experiences of the individual (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Ball, 2003). The literature suggests that often the cultural and traditional needs of Gypsies and Travellers are not met as those students are unlikely to be the 'best performing' in schools and are therefore not allowed to reach their full potential. This supports the comments of the children who feel that their culture and traditions are not taken into account as they are not 'valued' in the same ways that other pupils are. Additionally, schools who are looking to be the most competitive may not acknowledge their Gypsy and Traveller pupils as they feel they will not complete their formal education and therefore, any additions to religious or historical education in the classroom is unnecessary.

Although the purpose of this thesis is not to demonstrate the ways in which policy excludes young Travellers from formal education, this neglect of Traveller culture in the school environment elaborates on previous discussions on the way in which the young Travellers will perceive school and also how they are perceived in school by non-Travellers. It is evident that this lack of acknowledgment of Traveller culture is likely to continue to create an environment of discomfort for Travellers, some of whom are increasingly recognising the importance of secondary education but are forced to attend schools where they often feel like their cultural needs and values are not supported, maintained, or valued. In light of this, the ways in which the young Travellers see the school as somewhere they belong is likely to decrease and,

therefore, in line with the current experiences of young Travellers, negative encounters and increased discomfort will arise.

6.6 The Relationship between Travellers and Teachers in Schools

As highlighted previously, when interviewed, some of the children felt that they were unfairly victimised, or targeted, as result of their ethnicity. The previous example was Jack's punishment for wearing improper footwear to school which he, and the other children present on the bus journey felt was unfair and that, as Jack said, his teachers were always *"looking for him to do something wrong".*

When asked about her teachers at the single-sex school she attends, Julie recounted her experiences with a past P.E. teacher. She said, *"I once had a teacher for PE, he doesn't like me at all as a person and I think it's because I'm a Traveller. You can tell from the way he acts like he'll say, "oh you're here again"".* Although Julie and Jessie agreed that some teachers and pupils know that they are Travellers and some do not, this anecdote demonstrates Julie's concern and fear surrounding the repercussions of individuals at the school being aware of her ethnicity. It could be suggested that the teacher was trying to make a joke or that he does not understand or approve of the disengagement of girls from a Travelling background with physical activity, particularly in 'public spaces' or non-Traveller spaces like schools. However, not only does this reinforce ideas surrounding the ignorance and lack of awareness of Traveller culture in schools but also confirms the comments of those who suggest there are pre-conceived ideas and negative attitudes surrounding Gypsy and Travellers in public space, in the sense that they will cause disruption or create problems (Levinson, 2008). This gives weight to what some (Crickley, 1992; Helleiner, 2010) have remarked regarding the ways in which particular ideas surrounding Traveller culture stem from longstanding discrimination and continued attempts to assimilate and 'settle' Gypsy and Traveller communities (Helleiner, 2010). In line with this, Sibley (1981) has argued that some view Gypsies as unproductive and dirty, which in turn, 'allows' others "to perpetuate the ordering of culture, and the bordering of place, keeping some behaviours and people in one place, and out of another" (Anderson, 2012: 58). This suggests that the teacher's comments come from a place of dissatisfaction of Traveller culture and the subsequent reluctance of individuals from a Traveller background

towards assimilation. It is also recognised that the teacher's comments suggest they do not see the young Travellers as 'normal' or 'usual' inhabitants of the space and therefore, the young Travellers are outsiders in the teacher's mind.

Continuing this discussion, Julie's sister Jessie commented that she too often feels like people are judging her or disapproving of her actions in more passive ways. She remarked *"people nowadays, they don't really say many names or anything but they give you a look and you can tell they don't want anything to do with you. It's just like dirty looks".* This illustrates the comments of Urry (2005) and Boyer (2008) who argue that places are inherently bordered and ordered by dominant members of society and for those who do not comply with these socio-spatial restrictions, there are consequences that are likely to make them feel awkward or uneasy. This research is demonstrating that young Travellers, in modern day London, among the most diverse parts of Britain, are facing very different expressions intended to make them feel out of place and therefore are having to learn to deal with these kinds of negative encounters in order to 'get by'. What this research explores is the various strategies used to do this – including 'passing', confrontation, and acquiescence to norms of behaviour widely held among non-Travellers. The latter, in particular, as shown in this and the previous chapter, can involve the muted mobilisation of emotion - which young Travellers must learn to employ so they do not react to these negative encounters and create further tensions with non-Travellers.

Jack and Jessie's anecdotes illustrate the possibilities for uncomfortableness in encounters with non-Travellers in non-Traveller spaces. Julie recounted an episode that was more overtly antagonistic. As Julie was recalling the episode during an interview with myself, it was clear that both the encounter itself and repeating it to others made her feel extremely uncomfortable and upset. The event described below occurred during one of Julie's GCSE History lessons:

"In History, we were learning about the holocaust and the teacher, I don't like him very much, was talking about how many people were killed and said that lots of Gypsies were killed but then started saying about Gypsies stealing and leaving rubbish everywhere so I said, "sir

you don't know this but I'm a Traveller". He looked really awkward and started talking about something else"

This confirms the aforementioned discussions surrounding the lack of awareness and ignorance towards Traveller culture within mainstream society and the ways in which this can be seen to lead to uncomfortable encounters. Although the teacher was not aware that he had a Traveller in his class. In chapter four, I discussed the issues surrounding the literal veracity some of the responses and accounts given by the young Travellers who participated; the point was made there that the purpose of this thesis is to explore the ways in which young Travellers feel and feel they are perceived in off-site spaces. Therefore, without necessarily accepting the word for word account of what the teacher said (in the absence of any opportunity for him to reply) it nevertheless appears to be compelling evidence of the alienation Julie feels from school and accords with other accounts of discomfort experienced by Traveller children in every-day settings within schools.

Furthermore, whatever the exact words spoken by the teachers referred to in these anecdotes it seems reasonable to conclude that in at least some parts of the school day and some parts of the school estate there are comments spoken and attitudes conveyed, by someone in a position of power, which will normalise and legitimise comments that other children in the class might make. This makes the school environment uncomfortable for children from Gypsy and Traveller backgrounds. The authority figure and someone who is in charge of institutional power is confirming the notion to the children in his class, as he sees it, that Travellers should be considered outsiders. For the purpose of this research, it is clear that regardless of the intentions and reasoning behind the comments of the teachers, they made the young children (Jack, Jessie and Julie) involved feel discomfort. In this sense, it can be seen that the children did not feel included, or in a 'safe' place in the school environment. This reinforces the argument surrounding the ways in which individuals from mainstream society create and enforce borders in particular places that make 'other' group feel discomfort and 'out of place' (Massey, 1994). Furthermore, this reinforces the argument that the young Travellers feel as though they do not belong or are not recognised as, or supported as Travellers in schools. This supports the notion that the young Travellers feel as though they are outsiders and are seen by non-Travellers as outsiders. However, it is clear the young

Travellers often accept this discrimination and do not see these conflicts as motive to leave school. This thesis argues that ultimately, in line with Willis' arguments, young Travellers are learning to cope with these kinds of negative encounters in non-Traveller spaces so that they are able to leave school with qualifications and negotiate other kinds of non-Traveller spaces in order to get jobs and support their families.

However, this thesis also argues that Julie's reaction to her History teacher's comments is a significant illustration of her agency and outspoken reaction to these comments. Furthermore, it is noticeable that this reaction is one which has been considered by Julie and is one which is informative, not aggressive or confrontational. This draws on the previous discussions surrounding the young Travellers mobilisation of emotions in response to negative encounters with non-Travellers. This thesis argues that the young Irish Travellers involved with this research were capable of controlling their emotional reactions to uncomfortable encounters with non-Travellers in non-Traveller spaces, as assisted by the older Travellers who work with the youth club. Dissimilarly to Ryan's experience in the previous chapter, Julie has not reacted in a discriminatory or aggressive way, as Ryan did (and was subsequently chastised for). One reason for this could be Julie's age – she is older than Ryan and, has therefore, spent more time at school than him. From this episode and Julie's reaction to her teacher, it is clear that although some non-Travellers in her school are discriminatory towards Travellers, Julie is asserting her Traveller identity and affirming her place in the school environment.

6.7 Generations, Stories and Rumours

Many of the children recalled stories that older generations had told them about their own experiences of schools, and to some extent it was clear that these shaped the educational experience of the young people at the youth group. Although, as mentioned, some of the children have experienced bullying and discrimination towards themselves and their friends, all of the children who participated were able to recount often very dramatic, stories that their parents and their grandparents had told them about their time at school in both Ireland and London. This demonstrates the importance of the relationship between young Travellers

and their families and friends and the insular nature of Traveller communities. One example of this was the following anecdote as recounted by Julie:

"Before my dad was telling me that when they were younger, his brothers when they were in primary, the teachers would strip them and take all their clothes off and wash them off with a cold hose because they were Travellers and they thought they were filthy. That's just cause they were non-Gypsies, they would take out the children and wash them but not the other children".

Jane shares a similar story about her father's experiences when she comments *"back in my Dad's time, Travellers could be 7 or could be 15 and they'd be put into one room. You were not allowed to associate with non-Travellers. Our parents knew the whips that they used to get. All the kids in one room wasn't learning. We're trying to change things though".*

The literature (Okely, 1983; Levinson, 2008) confirms that historically, Gypsies and Travellers have been treated badly within schools and faced high levels of discrimination by pupils and teachers alike. However, it is important to acknowledge that many of these stories seemed to have little context and it was evident that many of the children were telling the same stories (despite being from different families) that seem to have been dramatised in difference kinds of ways. This resonates with Difonzo and Bordia's (2007) discussions surrounding rumours and urban legends within communities. It has already been confirmed that Traveller communities are extremely close. When combining this with lower literacy rates amongst Gypsies and Travellers, it is unsurprising that stories are told over many years and added to and reformulated between generations. In line with Difonzo and Bordia's (2007) thought, it could be suggested that these stories have arisen out of Traveller's fear and discomfort surrounding education, which has been validated over the years, for security. However, in turn it is likely that these rumours will enhance this fear and discomfort amongst communities. Bordia (2007: 20) has claimed that "rumours also arise in situational contexts that are threatening or potentially threatening and when people feel an acute need for security". Theorising about rumours illuminates why negative stories about Travellers' experiences of education are recounted. But it is also illuminating to think of these stories as urban modern and contemporary legends, defined as "stories of unusual, humorous, or

horrible events that contains themes related to the modern world, [which] are told as something that did or may have happened, variations of which are found in numerous places and times, and contain moral implications" (Difonzo and Bordia, 2007: 23).

In this sense, it is clear that due to the numerous negative experiences Gypsies and Travellers have faced over the years in public spaces and notably in the school environment that many have passed stories down to their children and their children's children in an effort to enhance their preparedness and therefore, security. However, in line with Difonzo and Bordia's discussion, this in turn has enhanced the mistrust that Travellers feel towards mainstream society and within this, schools. In addition to the examples above, there were numerous instances of the young Travellers telling stories that their parents had told them about their experiences at school. The children would often tell these stories in an excited tone, almost as if they were horror stories to be enjoyed. That this remains the case, and that young Travellers appear to be adding to the store of anecdotes – as recounted in this research – suggest that many continue to feel out of place in school.

This thesis argues that the Traveller home (understood as extending to the Traveller site as a whole) is a very different place to others such as the school or other public spaces where Travellers are forced to encounter different values and world views. These stories provide part of the context and the basis for the views and opinions that young Traveller children have when first going to school. These stories are likely to shape the way children from the Traveller background see school, and therefore, how they see and feel within the school environment and the other individuals there, including both teachers and other students. They also begin to indicate to the young Travellers how their parents view school and its values. Although the telling of stories and rumours are not central to this thesis, these experiences of young Travellers feeling a level of discomfort in the school, one of the places where young Travellers spend the majority of their time when off-site, illustrate the social and economic differences between Travellers and non-Travellers. Furthermore, these examples illustrate the ways in which these are passed down from older generations of Travellers to younger ones and the impact this has on younger Travellers engagement with non-Travellers and non-Travellers spaces.

6.8 Attitudes towards Higher Education

The literature review highlighted that, traditionally, members of the Traveller community struggle with school attendance due to their frequent travelling and the reluctance of schools to continue to register children who are mobile. It has been recognised that children from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities have the poorest attainment and achieve the lowest results out of any group in the UK. Therefore, as confirmed by the literature, many Traveller children do not continue their secondary education past their early teenage years for a variety of reasons that are largely based around cultural and economic values. Contrastingly, it has also been recognised within chapter three that attitudes towards education may be changing and that Travellers are increasingly recognising the importance of going to school. Does this suggest that Travellers are no longer outsiders in urban society?

Some of the children who participated in a focus group commented on this, with Ryan (aged eleven) suggesting *"the bigger kids from my site don't go secondary. I dunno why, most of them finish year 6 cause they got put back a year so they stopped, now they go work with their dads, when they finish year 6, that's when they start going to work. They do tree servicing, whatever their dads do".* Yet many of the children involved with this research could be seen to value education, enjoy going to school and were sitting or expecting to sit their GCSEs in the coming years. Although a positive attitude towards the importance of mainstream qualifications was prevalent amongst children's responses, many of the children who participated in interviews and focus groups did not see these qualifications to be useful or significant when deciding on a career path. Julie and Jessie listed their favourite subjects as English and Maths respectively. Despite this, when asked what they would be doing at college and what this meant for future jobs, Julie responded,

"I want to do beauty or child care when I finish school, I kind of want to do child care more because I want to work in nurseries for children because I have lots of nieces and nephews that I'm used to looking after. I like children as well, not really the olders though. I might do beauty though cause I kind of want to be a make-up artist and work for myself. I might do a year of beauty and two years of child care but it depends".

Her sister Jessie echoed these comments when she replied *"same thing for me, beauty or child care. I wanna do child care because if I did work in a nursery or something then I could make the teachers more aware of learning about Travellers. It's really important for even the little ones that they know about Travellers".*

Jessie's comments provide an insight into the reasoning behind these decisions. Unspoken, but seemingly in the background, is the assumption that at some stage in their lives the girls will stop work or work less as they take on domestic responsibilities. This was confirmed by Maria during a later conversation at a bowling alley when she said *"young girls spend so much time around children whilst they're growing up…I'm not sure why they don't have higher ambitions but it's most important that you can provide for your family and spend time with them".* From this, it can be seen that some of the factors that shape the decisions surrounding career paths for individuals from other backgrounds such as career progression, income size and relevance to what they have studied is perhaps less important for children from the Travelling community. For Travellers, supporting the community through providing particular services, economically providing for families and in this sense, creating an environment of comfort and safety for Travellers can be seen as the most significant factors. Thus, in turn, self-sufficiency and enhancing the sufficiency of their families are what have been deemed important by the young Travellers.

Lack of awareness and education surrounding the career options that the young Travellers have emerged became evident and significant in their responses of the children. During a focus group with the younger children, Savannah (eight years old) said "*I'm not going to go to college or university. I don't want to go. You have to stay in college for absolutely ages".* Ryan immediately responded to Savannah's comments by arguing *"you only have to go a couple of days a week. You don't learn maths, you do what you want to do. That's why I'm going as far as I can, I'm going everything secondary, university, college".* Although Ryan showed significant interest in attending college and university, when asked what he wanted to do when he finished his education he said *"I want to be like my dad and be a lorry driver. Or a plumber. Or a pro football player or a boxer. I'm the best footballer in my school, when I was in year five I was better than some year sixers* [sic]*".* His younger brother Kevin followed up Ryan's comments by stating *"I want to be a boxer. Or a plumber. I'm into rugby not*

football". Although Kevin and Ryan's comments surrounding their desires to become professional athletes could be considered normal for young boys of their age, it is unlikely that many ten or eleven-year-old boys who are not part of the Travelling community would respond, when asked about their plans and future career aspirations upon leaving school and college by expressing their wish to become a plumber. Following this, I asked Ryan what drew him to this. He said *"plumbing is something me uncle Pat and Joe does. Sometimes, I just want to follow them because my dad says get a good education and have lots in life".* This confirms the literature which suggests that kinship is key within the Traveller community; the opinions and values amongst the elder members of the community are valued and listened to by the younger members. Therefore, this could be one explanation for the children's reluctance to go to university and to deviate from the 'usual' career paths amongst Travellers. It is also suggested that young Travellers have a view of what constitutes career success (and indeed fulfilment in life more generally), and the place of formal education in that, which is not congruent with that of schools.

This is confirmed by Julie's comments surrounding her attitudes towards being the first member of her family to attend university. She said:

"I don't think any of my cousins or my aunties or none of them have been to university. But my cousin got an acceptance letter to one of them but she doesn't know if she wants to do it because Travellers don't really believe in going to university, we don't know anyone who has, my cousins would think "why is she doing that?" it'd be weird…my cousins went to college, the women do child care or beauty and the men do plumbing, electricians, construction worker, if someone wanted to be a doctor everyone would think why is she doing that, it's weird. They'd be weird about it"

When asked why they would not be supportive of her decision to choose an alternative career path she replied "*they'd think I was just joking or lying, and say I should do beauty".* Jane immediately became defensive as Julie said this, commenting *"but they would support you… her dad is my uncle and I know that if she thought she was capable of being a doctor they would support her because you've got to go where the money is. Like beauty there's different industries that earn different money, like botox and fillers. It depends what you're capable of".*

From the tone in which she said this, it was clear that Jane was concerned that I would feel that Travellers were not aspirational and that Julie's parents would not support her if she deviated from the normal and 'acceptable' aspirations in the Traveller community. I presume that she assumed (correctly) that I broadly accepted and lived my life in line with mainstream (and non-Traveller) conceptions of what constitutes career and worldly success. She was, perhaps, concerned that I might judge Travellers harshly as a consequence. In addition to this, it is clear that Julie is aware of the gendered component of careers within the Traveller community and how this features into her responses. This will be discussed in the following section of this chapter.

In light of the responses of the children drawn upon in this section, it could be argued that the changing attitudes towards the importance of education may result in more children viewing higher education as a viable option. During one discussion surrounding employment, Jane commented *"a lot of women are working for Traveller organisations now though, like the Traveller Movement. It just takes time and as time goes on it changes, maybe in 20 years' time people will be going to university"*. As previously mentioned, there is a significant amount of literature on the importance of education amongst ethnic minority groups and their reasons for going to university and the choices they make in relation to this (for example, Ball et al, 2010). Although, as previously suggested, Travellers do not follow some of the patterns and attitudes towards higher education as other individuals from ethnic minority backgrounds, it could be suggested instead, in line with Jane's thought, that these attitudes take more time to change amongst Travellers. As this chapter has suggested, for Travellers, one of the key factors in decisions around education is whether they will feel as though they 'fit in', are comfortable and feel as though they belong. Therefore, as actual forms of nomadism continue to decrease and the community becomes more 'settled', with permanent sites and high levels of attendance within primary and secondary education, the likelihood of children attending college and university may be greater. But at present, there is very limited evidence that fundamental attitudes are changing.

These discussions illustrate the social and economic differences between young Travellers and non-Travellers living in modern day Britain and the impact that these differences have on determining their decisions surrounding further education and careers. In this sense, it is

clear that in non-Travellers spaces, Traveller values do not necessarily easily fit and are visible as being at odds with those of non-Traveller children. This thesis argues that young Travellers are viewed as outsiders by educational institutions as they do not always share the same values as non-Travellers. From the responses of the young Travellers involved with this research, it was clear that the employment choices of their parents and older family members heavily influenced their own decisions and their attitudes towards university. These conversations support the aforementioned discussions surrounding the comparisons to be drawn between the young Travellers involved in this research and Willis' young working class 'lads'.

6.9 Does Gender play a role in the Career Choices for Young Travellers?

Gender and gender roles emerged as significant themes and feature throughout this research. Throughout the fieldwork for this research it became clear that these continue to play a significant role in the responses and attitudes of young people towards higher education and future career opportunities. Although this has been partially explored in the previous section of this chapter, it will be discussed in more depth below. Furthermore, this thesis argues that these gender roles that are present in Traveller communities are significant in creating social distance between Travellers and non-Travellers. This social distance encourages young Travellers to feel as outsiders and for non-Travellers to see them as outsiders as their values do not easily coexist with one another.

The last section of this chapter explores the attitudes of the young Traveller girls towards future career options. In doing this it argues that many of the young Traveller girls are considering careers in the usual employment options of Traveller women. However, it also evidences the experiences and attitudes of one of the older Traveller girls, Holly, who does not necessarily share this particular world-view. This discussion occurred on one particular outing with the youth club. This chapter also discusses Jane's reactions to Holly's interest in career options which are not usual for a Traveller woman. Jane's response reinforces the idea that older Travellers are encouraging younger Travellers not to stray from the Traveller attitude towards employment and careers despite increased engagement with education.

During one focus group, the younger children were asked what jobs or careers their parents carry out. Savannah replied *"my dad builds stuff in someone's house and my uncle helps and my mum does everything at home. I asked her if she could work in my school but she has to look after my little brother. Maybe when he goes to nursery she can work in the dinner hall".* Lucy added to this by commenting *"my daddy just does pallets. He followed my grandad because they had loads of pallets in the pallet yard. We used to play there but now we can't because it's only trailers and mummy looks after the littluns [sic]".* Confirming the earlier comments surrounding the role that their parent's decisions played in the young boy's decisions surrounding their own future careers, it was clear this played a role in Savannah and Lucy's responses, Savannah said "*I don't want to work…I might work in a hospital or on a farm. I want to work with horses. We have loads of horses on our home".* Whilst Lucy replied "*I want to work…I want to be a babysitter so I get loads of money. No actually, I wanna work on a sunbed".* This confirms the earlier discussions surrounding how these choices reflect Travellers desires to belong and feel comfortable in their jobs and also in the environments and, within this, the places and spaces that they are the minority group in such as public spaces in the town and cities they live in and more specifically, schools. This could be seen in Savannah's response about her Mum working as a dinner lady in the school where this would make Savannah and the other Traveller children feel more safe and comfortable and at less at risk of discrimination.

This discussion also confirmed the importance of traditional Traveller culture in the young Travellers lives. Horses are a significant feature of traditional Traveller identity in the sense that they are considered 'clean' animals as they do not ingest the dirt they lick whilst grooming (Griffin, 2002). It is clear that gender also played an important role within the following collection of field notes from one trip with the youth group. I recognise that not too much should be read into the comments of young children whose views of possible futures is very likely bounded by the kinds of world they encounter on a daily basis. But their comments can be accorded some weight when they are consistent with comments by older children and remain in line with an established picture of life within Traveller communities that some have suggested is undergoing significant change (see chapter two). That young Traveller women envisage working in nurseries, schools and in the field of social care show a significant amount

of agency and desire to co-exist with non-Travellers in non-Traveller spaces. In doing this, it is clear that young Travellers feel comfortable to engage with non-Travellers to this extent so as to support other Travellers in these spaces in the future.

In July 2017, I visited 'Shrek's Adventure', an interactive fairy-tale experience located on London's Southbank with the younger section of the youth group and Jane. One fifteen-year-old girl, Holly, was present as her parents wanted her to keep an eye on her younger brother Bobby (aged, 9) who was regarded as cheeky and disruptive. It was clear that Holly and Bobby's parents not only wanted Bobby to be kept from being too disruptive amongst the other Travellers, but that they also wanted him to be safe and out of trouble in central London. Although Holly is young enough to attend the youth group herself, it is clear that her parents have deemed her in a more caring role for her younger sibling(s) confirming the literature and data which suggests that young girls are 'trained' from a young age to care for younger family members and to 'help' out in the domestic environment. Continuing this, I had not met Holly before and noted that she had not attended any of the youth group sessions herself, despite being in the appropriate age group, living on one of the local sites and attending one of the local schools. In my field notes I documented that *"Holly was polite and helpful during the experience, both making sure Bobby didn't get into any trouble and helping the other children. She is comparatively very shy and quiet, and dressed in jeans, a hooded sweatshirt with her hair tied back. She is not wearing any makeup".* Having already attended a number of sessions with the older group, it was clear that Holly did not dress, or act, the same as the other teenage girls which as previously mentioned, became apparent to be one of the defining features of Traveller identity, as confirmed by the literature. After leaving Shrek's adventure, we took the children to play in a park that was situated close by. Whilst the children were playing, myself and Jane sat with Holly and spoke to her about her views on school and whether she had considered what she wanted to do when she left school.

I was interested in why I had not seen Holly at the youth group before as I knew that she lived nearby and went to school with the girls who already attended the older section of the youth group. On asking Holly why this was she said *"I don't mind the other girls but I don't have much in common with them as they live on a different site and used to go to a different school and now they never go to school".* As mentioned at an earlier stage of this chapter, Jane had

told me at a previous session that many of the older girls were not attending school at the time as one of the girls in the group had been bullied by non-Traveller children in her class, leading to the other parents to take their daughters out of school and were now home-schooling them. When I asked Holly what she thought of the girls being home-schooled, she laughed and said "*they're not doing any school work in the day, they're just helping their Mums at home and not learning anything".* It is clear that the other girls were content with remaining on site and helping their mothers out but that Holly felt this was amusing and inappropriate.

Holly explained that she would be sitting her GCSEs the following year and although she was unsure what she wanted to do when she's older she was thinking about studying social work at college and then doing the same at university. When asked about how her family would feel about her going to university she said, *"my Dad is very supportive and wants me to do whatever I want but my Mum says, "why would you want to go to university…why don't you do something for an easy life".* I noted that it was clear that Holly was very interested in university, asking me numerous questions about my PhD and time at what I had studied at University and whether I had enjoyed it. She was also interested in my opinions of Travellers, commenting "*it's always important to remember if a Traveller is wary or unkind it's because many are afraid of the settled community".* I noted that this was the first time one of the Travellers (whom I had been working with for over six months) had asked whether I was finding my research interesting and had asked me how I felt about the Travelling community. It was clear that Holly was thoughtful and bright and was interested in non-Travellers and non-Traveller life. But the extent of her interest in non-Traveller matters was unusual in my experience.

After Holly had explained her thoughts surrounding her future, Jane asked *"have you thought about going into beauty or hairdressing?"* She followed this up by saying *"there's lots of money…you need to remember that Travellers trust other Travellers and that you'll never be short of work because of all the sites in the area".* Although to myself, it was clear that Holly was uninterested in beauty and hairdressing, it was not unexpected that Jane suggested these, as, as previously mentioned, these are the usual career paths for Traveller girls and women. Jane's voicing them as possibilities, given her position of authority within a Traveller

project, was in effect an endorsement of them as employment options, and her rationale for suggesting them amounted to an endorsement of a Traveller world-view that diverges from the view of career aspirations, success and the place of education that schools typically promote. Holly's comments and responses were interesting and significant, although it became clear that her opinions were not shared by the other girls and women who participated in the fieldwork for this research. It could follow the suggestion that attitudes amongst young people within the Traveller community, especially young girls, are changing and once avoided forms of education and professions are becoming a possibility.

This thesis argues that for young Traveller girls there are a variety of factors to take into account when considering further education and careers. For many of the girls involved with this research, following their older family members and staying at home to care for young children and to ensure that the trailer is clean is what they have planned to do once they leave school. For those young Traveller girls who want to work, beauty, hairdressing, child care and social work, are appealing. These vocations would allow them to work with other Travellers and particularly Traveller women. One reason for this, as stated by Maria, is that young Traveller girls are *"raised from early on to be caring and especially to always look after the littluns [sic]".* In addition to this, as stated earlier, working in these careers allows Traveller women to further appropriate non-Traveller spaces and encourages other Travellers to use these services without feeling discomfort.

6.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter has addressed the second research question; in doing this it has argued that young Travellers living in London face uncomfortable encounters in schools with non-Traveller pupils and teachers. Despite policy progress being made in breaking down the barriers that young Traveller face in terms of education and employment, young Irish Travellers maintain the views of older Travellers in relation to education, employment and careers. This chapter has argued that despite the negative encounters and uncomfortable interactions that the young Irish Travellers involved with this research negotiate whilst at school, they are able to maintain agency within the school environment. They engage with their schools, and non-Travellers within these schools, to the extent necessary to 'get by' and

work towards their career goals. In line with Willis' argument, this chapter argues that the ways in which young Travellers perform in schools is a rehearsal of their lives after school. However, it is argued that the ways in which young Traveller view school is different to the ways many non-Travellers do. Although this chapter has evidenced that not all of the young Traveller involved follow the same sorts of aspirations, many of them do.

Overall, it is clear that the young Travellers who participated in this research generally enjoy school and see it as an important part of their everyday lives. Although there are still many issues surrounding belonging and discrimination, it is clear that Travellers are adapting to 'mainstream environments' and are increasingly becoming more settled. In the sense that more mothers are working within schools, children are making friends with individuals who are from other ethnic backgrounds and are encouraging schools to acknowledge and appreciate Traveller culture in an effort to raise awareness. Previous research has highlighted reluctance to comply with the National Curriculum, attendance and forms of citizenship such as wearing school uniform. However, the young girls and boys who were involved with this research did not seem to share these views, instead settling into the school environment. In addition to this, it is clear that for some, attitudes towards gendered professions, such as women either staying at home or working as beauticians or hairdressers and men working as manual labourers, remain and largely, dominate the views of young people.

Three key findings have emerged from this chapter. These relate to the experiences of young Travellers in schools. The first of these is that young Irish Travellers still face discrimination, hostility and in some cases racism, in schools in London today. These often take the form of negative encounters with non-Travellers in these non-Traveller spaces. The second is that young Traveller children learn to respond to these uncomfortable encounters with non-Travellers. In doing this, they often mobilise a muted or carefully considered response to non-Travellers so as not to create further tensions in their schools, recognised as non-Traveller spaces. The last of these is that despite the removal of some barriers to education that Travellers have historically faced, young Travellers are reluctant to change their views in relation to higher education, employment and careers. In line with the arguments of Willis (1975) it is clear that young Travellers generally share the views of older Traveller and despite increased participation in mainstream education, their world-view is not changing.

7. Overall Conclusions

This chapter will primarily draw out the key threads in the thesis that together constitute answers to the research questions. Answering these questions is the thesis's main contribution to knowledge. The overarching question of whether young Travellers remain outsiders in urban society will be considered after first considering the two empirical chapters which are the focus of chapter five and six. The chapter also discuss the strengths and limitations of this thesis. In covering these areas, this chapter will explore the possible directions for future research and any policy implications that have arisen from this thesis.

7.1 Research Questions One – Young Irish Travellers and Off-Site Encounters

7.1.1 How do young Travellers negotiate encounters in off-site spaces including those on public transport?

Chapter two of this thesis highlighted the gaps in the relevant literature which provided a rationale for research question one. There has been extensive research conducted with Gypsies and Travellers over the years on their experiences of healthcare, education and housing. Despite this there has been very little exploration of the experiences of Irish Travellers in non-Traveller spaces; yet understanding something of the nature and quality of that experience would contribute to understanding of the lives of contemporary Travellers including whether they remain outsiders in urban society. During this review, it was pointed out that public transport was a significant site of encounter, as would be confirmed during the fieldwork stage of this research. Other public spaces, such as parks and the attractions in central London that the youth club visited, also emerged as significant in chapter five of this thesis.

In answering this research question in chapter five of this thesis, data was drawn from eighteen months of ethnographic fieldwork with the youth club. The young Irish Travellers involved attended the youth club in the community centre each week and frequently went

on outings into public spaces and the attractions in central London. On these outings, the Travellers were observed navigating their way through these public spaces and I was able to observe and talk to the young Irish Travellers throughout these outings. I was able to gain the trust of the young Travellers over this period of time and had substantial discussions with them and the staff members involved.

Several significant vignettes were drawn upon in answering this research question, which I recorded during these outings with the youth club. These were then written up after the outings and were analysed thematically. These were also supported with data gathered from focus groups and informal conversations with the young people One of the key themes that arose from both the literature and discussions with the young Irish Traveller was the importance of home within Traveller communities. This thesis has used the young Travellers' attachment to home to provide context for their experiences and the mobilisation of their emotions in non-Traveller spaces. Within this, chapter five highlighted the perception of mobility and the meaning of nomadism for the young Travellers involved in this research; as previously mentioned, these young people live on permanent sites in central London and only travel for holidays or to visit family. Through discussing this, they raised concerns over the views of some non-Travellers towards their lack of travelling; they strongly felt that this did not detract from their traveller identity, as Jessie (aged 15) asserted, *"it's just culture, innit [sic]".*

7.1.2 The Youth Club as a Semi-Public Space

For the young Travellers who participated in this research, the trailers and sites which constitute their homes were highly significant to their day-to-day activities but also their way of life. In line with Sibley's (2000) views, this thesis suggests that the home is a Traveller space which is viewed as safe and comfortable. However, from the responses of the young people who participated in this research, the meaning of their Traveller home extended far behind the physical space in which they live. This signifies the symbolic and deep-rooted insular nature of Traveller life and identity. In this sense, although leaving the site for the young Travellers left them vulnerable to uncomfortable kinds of encounter and interactions with non-Travellers, in leaving the site they felt they were still able to conduct themselves as Travellers and did not, seemingly, risk 'diluting' their Traveller identities and thus, their ties

with Traveller culture. There was no sense of their wishing to present themselves as young Londoners, for example, rather than as young Travellers.

In answering this research question, data was drawn on to consider the role that the youth club plays in the lives of the young Irish Travellers who participated in this research. The Traveller children looked forward to the trips and often spoke of their excitement about attending the youth club, the outings and the parties. The youth club is a space that is considered safe, comfortable and welcoming by the young Travellers who attend the club and their families. This thesis has argued that it can be considered a space which sits between a Traveller space and a non-Traveller space. Although it is in close proximity to the local Traveller sites, is run primarily by Travellers and only Traveller children attend, it is in a community centre that is a base for a number of organisations and groups and has a diverse range of individuals coming and going at all times. Furthermore, the trips run by the youth club take the young people out into central London where they will encounter a diverse range of individuals and take part in activities in areas of the city that they might not do so without the youth club. In doing this, the youth club could be seen to act as both a physical and a social space where appropriate individuals are able to teach the young Travellers and provide them with the kinds of skills necessary to navigate their way through modern-day London. In doing this, these skills also allow the young Travellers to learn to negotiate their emotions in sometimes uncomfortable situations and the ways in which they can easily 'get by' in a city and indeed, world that is not necessarily supportive of their Traveller identities or way or life. The youth club acts as a place where the older Travellers who are employed by or volunteer with the organisation, and even the older children who attend the youth club, are able to pass down their views and 'tools' to navigate the city to the younger Travellers through the youth club and the outings that are organised by the charity.

7.1.3 Encounters on Public Transport

Public transport plays a highly significant role in the lives of the young Travellers involved in this research. Through a review of the current literature it has been established that there has been no exploration of the experiences of Irish Travellers on public transport. This thesis argues that those Travellers who are settled in London are forced to negotiate different kinds of non-Traveller spaces to get about the city, go to school, work and to facilitate the activities

that are essential in every-day life. Through drawing on key literature (e.g. Wilson, 2016) this thesis has argued that young Travellers must negotiate a number of factors and learn the appropriate ways to deal with and mobilise their emotions when uncomfortable encounters arise. In answering this research question in chapter five, a particularly informative encounter on the platform at Peckham Rye station was explored.

Public transport emerged as a central site in which a range of encounters involving the young Irish Travellers took place. Primarily, this involved buses and trains. As mentioned in chapter five, I, at times, felt uncomfortable with the events that occurred on public transport with disapproving looks and tutting frequently directed at the young Travellers. Perhaps most significantly, the young Travellers were either unaware of these actions or did not feel as though they warranted a response. Returning to the earlier vignette recorded on the platform at Peckham Rye station, where vocalised discrimination towards a young Traveller boy was heard by myself, the youth workers reaction suggests a reason for the young Travellers ignorance towards more passively negative encounters. Jane, the youth group leader, reprimanded the boy for responding to the racist abuse. In this sense, it is clear that young Travellers are largely insensitive to the attempt at creating uncomfortable affective atmospheres that others have suggested can effectively mould behaviour in public space. This is evidence that the young Travellers do not feel party to any kind of 'contractual consensus' with respect to norms of behaviour in public space. This, arguably, is because young Travellers (and by extension adult Travellers too) are not relinquishing their outsider perspective on contemporary British society as some have speculated they may be. Many may, indeed do, have an appreciation of the material benefits of aspects of formal education, but it does not follow that they are adopting wholesale the norms and values of non-Travellers. The persistence of race thinking by Travellers, with the key binary of Traveller/non-Traveller remaining central, is further evidence of their resistance to the kinds of norms and values formal education ostensibly instantiates and inculcates and hence suggests that this is an important respect they remain outsiders in urban society.

Standing as they do outside a 'contractual consensus' young Travellers rely on their willingness and ability to be aggressively confrontational if and when encounters with non-Travellers become fraught. In that respect, they bring to their mobility within the city the

same capacity for focused anger as they deploy in schools. Adult Travellers appear to concur in all this, which is why I argue that they, too, remain voluntarily 'outsiders in urban society' [a position that does not in any way justify or legitimise racism in relation to them]. However, the adult Travellers in my research wished to extend the behavioural repertoire of the young people they were responsible for so that they could control even anger in fleeting encounters in circumstances that required this. I argue that in doing this the adults are developing an aspect of the practical knowledge of the youngsters, and that some kinds of 'knowing how' – such as the one described in chapter five of this thesis – require a training of emotional response. In that sense, emotional reactions in fleeting encounters are not so much pre-cognitive as pre-conscious.

7.1.4 Public Parks and Attractions in London

The encounters for the young Travellers who ventured off-site and into the busy public areas of London were significant for both the Travellers and non-Travellers involved. This research has explored ethnographic data from a variety of outings into central London including parks and attractions where the young Travellers had to negotiate hostility from non-Travellers and how to respond to these encounters. One of the key arguments from this thesis is that the presence of the youth workers, the majority of whom were Travellers themselves, in these spaces and the encounters that happened within them, allowed the young people to learn the kinds of appropriate ways to act so as not to draw attention to themselves as Travellers. in doing this, the young Travellers learnt how to behave so as to 'get by' in a world that is not necessarily supportive of their values and way of life. In some ways, some of these events in which the young Irish Travellers could arguably be viewed as normal interactions between young people and adults of any background, where the adults help them navigate the world and the events that take place within it. However, this thesis, has shown for Travellers there is an added complexity to this navigation. This complexity is a result of the young Travellers often being forced to learn to react to hostility from non-Travellers.

7.1.5 Summary

One of the most substantiate arguments which forms the basis of this thesis is the ways in which particular values are central to the Traveller identity and the Traveller way of life. This

thesis has illustrated the ways these are not necessarily congruent with those of non-Travellers; one example of this which has remained pertinent throughout this thesis is gender and gender roles within the Traveller community. Examples of this include, but are not restricted to the site, where girls are given domestic roles and rarely allowed to socialise in the same kinds of ways as boys. This also could be seen to extend beyond the site where girls were given the role of caring for younger children on outings with the youth group. From this, it is clear that certain kinds of traditional Traveller values remain central to the present-day way of life.

Through answering this research question, this thesis has made significant contributions to the ways in which the encounters that young Travellers experience and engage with in present day London can be understood. Furthermore, this chapter has made significant contribution to the literature on encounter where there had previously been very little research conducted on the experiences, and encounters faced, of young Travellers in public spaces. Four key findings emerged within chapter five of this thesis. The first of these findings was that the site and the young Travellers homes are central to their way of life and understanding of the world, notions of cleanliness and traditional spatiality of the site remain key to the young Travellers everyday life. The second finding was that attending the youth club allows young Traveller to negotiate off-site spaces which are also non-Traveller spaces, including public transport, under the guidance of older Travellers. The third finding was that through the guidance of older Travellers, younger Travellers are able to navigate their emotions and learn to react to negative encounters with non-Travellers in off-site spaces. The last finding of this chapter was that it appears that young Travellers see little need to assimilate with the non-Traveller world; young Travellers do not necessarily adhere to the rules on public transport and in other non-Traveller spaces and only engage with non-Travellers to a necessary extent. In doing this, they are able to navigate the non-Traveller world as necessary for every-day life but are also able to maintain Traveller values.

This thesis adds critically to the encounters literature, where it acknowledges the transformative potential of encounter whilst also recognising that encounters stand in relation to a much wider set of social processes. It is these social processes through which group identities and relations are established, and hence are necessary but not sufficient to

an understanding of how Travellers maintain cultural integrity and achieve social reproduction. One of the key contributions of this thesis is the evidence it provides to support the notion that encounters can be negative as well as positive, reaffirming rather than overturning existing group relations and perceptions. In this sense, encounters can be consciously restricted and canalised as part of group-mediated strategy and are thus not only the result of happenstance and 'passing propinquity'. Overall, encounters need to be understood, at least for this group, in terms of their dialectical relation to strategies of avoidance.

7.2 Research Question Two – Young Irish Travellers and Schools in London

7.2.1 How do young Irish Travellers experience their encounters with non-Travellers in schools?

Through a review of the literature, education emerged as the focus of the second research question due to the important role that it plays in the lives of young people in the UK in the present day. In this sense, it is evident that children spend the majority of their days in the school environment, which is recognised as an important feature in learning to socialise and to gain the necessary academic skills and qualifications for adult life. As mentioned in chapter four, the young Traveller attend schools full-time and do not travel during term-time. Largely, as confirmed in the literature, this is a result of changing attitudes in the community towards the importance of education and the desire of older community members for their children to have more opportunities in terms of higher education and careers.

7.2.3 Schools, Hostility and Discrimination

Although the relationship that Gypsies and Travellers have with British education and schools has been researched over the years, the thesis argues that the encounters that happen in schools and the experiences of young Irish Travellers can illuminate whether young Travellers are beginning to share values and aspirations in relation to education which mean they are not so much outsiders in urban society. Central to this research, and this thesis, has been an acknowledgment of the agency of young Travellers. In this it echoes Willis (1977), who argued that young working-class men who were 'failures' in educational terms actively choose the way of life they come to adopt and indeed that 'disruptive behaviour' in schools is preparation for their attitudes towards the authority structures of their chosen workplaces. He also points out the ways in which these attitudes are echoed by their parents, and therefore, are central to 'the lads' developing sense of self. This text has been considered central to the development of this thesis; although the young Travellers involved attend school regularly they spoke of numerous tensions between themselves and authority figures in schools which at times, had resulted in conflicts. Furthermore, Willis' approach contributed significantly to the understanding of how young Travellers might develop aspirations and future careers, and how they might regard the place of school in this process.

In answering this research question in chapter six, evidence has been drawn on from focus groups, semi-structured interviews, drawing as a creative method and informal discussions with the young Travellers who attend the youth group. In doing this, the chapter explored the areas of schools that the young Travellers who attend the youth group find the most comfortable and the most uncomfortable in the schools which they attend and the reasons behind this. Data was also drawn on which explored the young Travellers adherence to their 'school citizenship' such as their attitudes towards the school day, the national curriculum and their uniform. One of the key features of this question related to the attitudes of the young Travellers and the aspirations they have towards higher education and future career options. I focussed on this as a key feature of the fieldwork process as the older Travellers who worked for and volunteered at the youth group and the family members that I had spoken to were adamant that their children would stay in school until they had completed their exams. I was interested in the wider implications this would have on the young Travellers and their views on life post mainstream education. However, one of the key features of the responses of the young people towards their views on mainstream education and higher education and career options was the negativity they had felt as a result of the discrimination their parents had received in various forms of education and employment. Furthermore, many of the children felt that they would not belong in the university environment as their older family members had not attended university themselves. In saying this, very few showed any regret or sense of loss; rather they appeared to regard education beyond a certain stage as irrelevant to their aspirations.

As mentioned in chapter four, the young Travellers who were involved in this research attended schools close to their homes (on sites) and the youth club in Southwark in South London. Whilst carrying out ethnographic research and interviews with the young Travellers, their enjoyment and appreciation of the role that education plays in their lives was highly apparent. This thesis has evidenced the ways in which the school can be considered a significant site of encounter. Many of the children who participated in this research discussed the ways in which they had faced uncomfortable encounters in their schools with both other young people, who are not Travellers, and their teachers. These encounters seemed largely to be a result of ignorance towards Traveller culture and identity, and upset the children, who

although they felt this was unfair, considered it reinforced their Traveller identity. There has been significant discussion in this thesis surrounding the ways that emotions are mobilised and clashes arise when value sets are not necessarily cohesive with one another meet. The young Travellers strongly felt that their schools did not support their identity as Irish Travellers, and they therefore, felt resentment towards the institutional powers in the school. This thesis argues that this is a result of their strong ties to Traveller culture, but does not inhibit their ability to attend and achieve in mainstream education. This was evidenced in chapter six through anecdotes from the young Travellers and their experiences in schools.

The young Irish Travellers spoke openly about their views on their schools; their views and experiences seemed to differ dramatically between schools and the young Travellers who were attending them. The older children, especially the girls, felt that they were victimised and unsupported in the non-Traveller environment where young children adhered to historical stereotypes and discriminated against them. Returning to the aforementioned discussion surrounding the distain of Travellers towards institutional power, this thesis argues that through attending the youth group, the Travellers were able to navigate a 'middle-ground' between Traveller and non-Traveller places which provided them with the skills necessary to 'get by' in their non-Traveller schools. In this sense, the Traveller children have learnt to navigate the non-Traveller spaces limiting unwanted attention from non-Travellers and any uncomfortable encounters that may result from this.

7.2.4 Young Irish Travellers and Aspiration

This thesis argues that some of the young children had significant aspirations in relation to their education; these seemingly would not be uncommon for young children of their age who go to school every day and want to achieve qualifications (i.e. GCSEs). However, despite the young Traveller children speaking at length about their favourite subjects and upcoming examinations, when asked about further career options and what they planned to do once they left school the majority of the young Traveller children voiced their desires to enter particular kinds of employment that Travellers would traditional engage with, and which would mesh with what their parents and extended families were already doing, such as manual labour or beauty/hairdressing. These responses are in line with the idea that young Travellers are more focussed on doing that which is necessary to maintain an existing way of

life (in difficult circumstances) than in pursuing individualistic ambitions. The answers also emphasised the continuing significance of gender roles within Traveller life. This thesis therefore, argues that despite the growing recognition of the long-term importance of education within Traveller communities; this does not necessarily lead to wanting to explore a variety of career options after the age of sixteen. Even those young Travellers whose responses did not fit this pattern voiced concerns surrounding going against the patterns of employment. Therefore, within this thesis, there is little evidence which supports the notion that Travellers are told not to go against these patterns, rather that they do not see it as an option. This discourages the suggestion that frequent attendance at school, and spending significant periods of time in non-Travellers spaces encourages young Travellers to move away from traditional Traveller values and identities. They are outsiders because they hold particular values and wish to pursue a particular way of life. That is not to say, of course, that they invite racism or are to blame for the racism they endure.

In turn, this argument is supported by the assertions made by Willis (1977); young Travellers learn to act in particular kinds of ways and sometimes these are considered at odds with that of the mainstream education system. The young Travellers involved in this research felt they did not fit in at times in the school environment, and those authority figures considered their behaviour deviant. For many of the young Travellers involved, they were the first in their families to attend school full time and therefore, their families did not have any or many positive experiences of mainstream education and frequently spoke of the discrimination they received from their teachers and peers. In line with Willis' thoughts, parallels can be drawn between the young Travellers and 'the lads', where their behaviours in the school environment can be seen to be preparing them for their future careers. Even though this thesis has evidenced the positive experiences of education that many of the young Travellers involved have towards school, their own sense of self is developing in line with their Traveller identities and culture which have partially already decided what futures careers and workplaces they are likely to adopt. This signifies the ways in which young Travellers are broadly not moving away from the values and desires of older family members.

7.2.5 Summary

Through answering this research question in chapter six, contributions have been made towards the existing literature on the education of young Gypsies and Travellers in the UK in the present day. This thesis has argued that the school is a significant site of encounter and that both positive and negative encounters occur in this environment which have wider implications on the wider lives and identities of young Travellers living in London. This thesis has argued that the school is often not a comfortable place for young Travellers but that some have changing attitudes towards the importance of education and what it might mean for them after they complete compulsory education. Although the young Travellers largely enjoy their experiences of education, very few of them considered courses or careers that are not 'traditionally Traveller'. This confirms the strength of Traveller identity and culture and the continued implications that this has for young Travellers living in the UK today.

Despite policy progress being made in breaking down the barriers that young Travellers face in terms of education and employment, young Irish Travellers maintain the views of their elders in relation to education, employment and careers. This chapter has argued that despite the negative encounters and uncomfortable interactions that the young Irish Travellers involved with this research negotiate whilst at school, they are able to maintain agency within the school environment. They engage with their schools, and non-Travellers within these schools, to the extent necessary to 'get by' and works towards their career goals. In line with Willis' argument, this chapter argues that the ways in which young Travellers perform in schools is a rehearsal of their lives after school. However, it is argued that the ways in which young Travellers view school is different to the ways many non-Travellers do. Although this chapter has evidenced that not all of the young Traveller involved follow the same sorts of aspirations, many do.

Three key findings have emerged from this chapter. These relate to the experiences of young Travellers in schools. The first is that young Irish Travellers still face discrimination, hostility and in some cases racism, in schools in London today. This often takes the form of negative encounters with non-Travellers in these non-Traveller spaces. The second is that young Traveller children are learning to respond to these uncomfortable encounters with non-Travellers. In doing this, they often mobilise a muted or carefully considered response to non-

Travellers so as not to create further tensions in their schools, recognised as non-Traveller spaces. The last of these is that despite the removal of some barriers to education that Travellers have historically faced, young Travellers are reluctant to change their views in relation to higher education, employment and careers. In line with the arguments of Willis (1975) it is clear that young Travellers generally share the views of older Traveller and despite increased participation in mainstream education, their world-view is not changing.

7.3 Should Travellers still be Considered Outsiders in Urban Society?

This overarching research question considers whether the young Travellers studied in this research matched Sibley's (1981) assertions about the outsider status of Gypsies and Travellers in the UK. From this we can begin to generalise about whether Travellers should still be considered outsiders in the present day and thus, whether Sibley's conclusions can still be considered to hold. Although Sibley uses the term 'travellers' in his book rather than Gypsies, at the time of the publication of the book, the word Gypsy was widely considered to be discriminatory. Despite this, Sibley occasionally uses the terms interchangeably. As previously mentioned, this thesis is concerned with the interactions of young Irish Travellers. However, due to their shared histories and the more recent developments in the terminology used towards Gypsies and Travellers, Sibley's arguments should still be considered relevant, and significant, for this thesis.

In his 1981 book, Sibley comments that his "primary interest is in Gypsies and other peripheral groups in urban areas, because it is in the city that conflict is most acute and where the presence of a non-conforming minority is most likely to be a political issue – there is the possibility of confrontations involving large numbers of people" (Sibley, 1981: viii). As previously mentioned, the fieldwork for this research was carried out in central London and in line with Sibley's notions, the previous chapters have evidenced the ways in which the young Travellers were at times 'non-conforming', occasionally leading to confrontations and other kinds of uncomfortable interactions.

Sibley has argued that "groups are identified as outsiders because their social structures and economies are perceptibly different from those of the larger society. They are peripheral in

the sense that there is a considerable social distance between them and the majority – there is little or no social interaction – and this social gulf is usually, but not necessarily reinforced by spatial separation" (1981: 4). Sibley asserts that, in line with Cohen's (1980) beliefs, it is the insider that creates the outsider. However, the previous chapters have argued that for the young Travellers involved in this research their arguable 'outsider' status is not necessarily entirely a result of this labelling from individuals from the insider group. Although the young Travellers who participated in this research experienced and were aware of differences between themselves and other non-Traveller members of society, this thesis has argued that Travellers have significantly more agency in their outsider status than Sibley suggests. The social structures that underpin Gypsy and Traveller society have not changed a considerable amount since Sibley's book was published. However, as mentioned in earlier chapters of this thesis, the 'economies' and the jobs that many of the Traveller families involved with this research carry out have altered due to numerous changing circumstances. These circumstances revolve around the decline in traditional forms of seasonal employment and have been discussed in chapters two, five and six.

The spatial separation that Sibley discusses is still evident, albeit to a smaller scale in this London example where the young Travellers in this study all lived on sites which were segregated from the surrounding areas (see the discussions in chapter four). In addition to Sibley's argument, this thesis has evidenced the ways in which the young Irish Travellers involved in this research are learning and implementing the methods used by older members of the community to 'get by' in a world which is not necessarily supportive of their lifestyle and beliefs. It has been argued that instead of reacting to uncomfortable encounters in negative ways the young Travellers are largely unaffected by these and ignore them. One key example of this is the uncomfortable encounter than occurred on the platform at Peckham Rye station (as introduced in chapter five) between a young Traveller boy and a non-Traveller member of the public. Earlier chapters have evidenced the ways this may be a result of the young Travellers simply not caring about the way non-Travellers view them because they have no desire to become 'insiders'. In doing this, the young Travellers are able to continue to reproduce their Traveller culture and continue the spatial and social distance that Sibley's has made consideration to, on their own terms. Discussions in chapters five and six highlighted the ways in which the youth group can be seen to support Travellers values and reinforce a

strong sense of Traveller identity and belonging, whilst preparing younger Travellers for integration into the mainstream.

This thesis has evidenced the sometimes complicated nature of the relationship between Gypsies and Travellers and institutions; Sibley argues (1981: 21) "there are a number of institutions in the dominant society that impinge on the economic and social life of outsiders, constraining their activities and modifying their behaviour. Apart from the direct economic relations between peripheral groups and mainstream society, the most important points of contact are with the social control agencies – teachers, social workers, police and local government officers, who, apart from the subversive ones, are all concerned with maintaining the boundaries of the larger society and fitting the peripheral group into its social and economic categories". Although this thesis has made some arguments that are consistent with Sibley's comments surrounding the difficulty that Gypsies and Traveller face regarding their relationship with institutions and the individuals within these institutions, it has been pointed out that recent research literature has argued that there has been some change in attitude towards many of these institutions amongst Traveller communities, particularly with more individuals recognising the importance of education. The interviews and focus groups involved with the young Travellers at the youth group showed that there is increasing interest among young Travellers, and especially young Traveller girls, to work within some of these institutions, for example as teachers and teaching assistants or social workers. In doing this, the young girls have stated that they hope to raise awareness around Traveller culture and the specific needs of Travellers so that future generations will not be unfairly treated or discriminated against by these institutions. This signifies that although Sibley's arguments cannot be entirely discounted, there are changing attitudes within and towards Traveller communities. There are some key examples of evidence to support this claim in chapter six where the young Travellers are discussing their attitudes towards further education and employment where for example, Ryan (aged eleven) comments *"you only have to go a couple of days a week. You don't learn maths, you do what you want to do. That's why I'm going as far as I can, I'm going everything secondary, university, college".*

Sibley (1981: 195) argues "accounts of non-conforming behaviour assume the form of a romantic myth or they involve imputations of deviancy which are also largely mythical; the

romantic image, located at a distance or in the past, necessarily puts the minority on the outside, while deviant behaviour, being polluting also excludes". This thesis has evidenced the ways in which the young Travellers have, at times, been viewed as performing non-conforming behaviours. In line with Sibley's view of the myths surrounding outsiders, these behaviours have been considered deviant and continue to reinforce the notion that Travellers are outsiders. However, this thesis has also argued that Traveller children are often viewed as performing deviant behaviours as they have not necessarily yet learnt the appropriate ways to act in particular kinds of places.

This thesis argues that young Travellers face significant barriers and cannot be considered fully integrated with mainstream society but that they have significant agency in their position in relation to other members of society. It has been suggested that Travellers want to remain 'separate' and as an insular group, as in line with their cultural beliefs, this is the most effective way to support and continue Traveller culture. Furthermore, it is clear that despite engaging with school and non-Travellers in public spaces, it is clear that young Travellers still hold Traveller values above anything else. This thesis has evidenced the ways that [young] Travellers are engaging with mainstream society, to the extent that they need to for economic survival. Largely, the young Travellers are content with their engagement with other members of society and do not desire insider status as it is determined by members of society who do not support or uphold the same values as they do.

7.4 The Strengths and Limitations of the Thesis

This thesis discusses issues surrounding a relatively unexplored area of the lives of young Irish Travellers living in London. It has drawn on ethnographic field-notes taken over a period of eighteen months, a significant period of time spent with young Irish Travellers. These notes are detailed, and give a significant amount of insight into the encounters, emotions and wider lives of the young Irish Travellers. One of the initial strengths of this thesis, was the ability to gain access to a Traveller run organisation and within this, the young Travellers who were involved. As mentioned in the literature, Irish Travellers are a particularly hard group to access due to their insular nature of their community; in addition to this, conducting research with young people is recognised as methodologically and ethically difficult. For myself, being a

young female, allowed me to relate to and engage with the adolescent females in the youth club and the female members of staff involved with the organisation. This was particularly significant for working with Irish Travellers where, as this this thesis has highlighted, gender roles dominate the ways in which the community operates even in the present day. This draws on discussions surrounding power relations, where if I were older or a male, I may not have been able to develop a close relationship with the Traveller women who worked for the organisation and spoke of the difficult relationships they had previously had with males. In relation to the aspirations of the young people, those who were eager to finish school and attend university, were keen to talk to me about her own education and the kinds of university degrees and future careers that they were interested in exploring meant that they spoke openly with myself about my experiences in school and university. As some of the older girls (for example, Holly age 15) did not feel that I was substantially older than them, they spoke openly about their views on education and future aspirations and the apprehension they had surrounding going to university; an environment which is arguably less of a Traveller space that school and one which none, or very few of their family members and those on their site, had any experience of.

One of the more significant limitations to this study was that despite the extensive access to the youth club, I was still recognised as and at times stood out as a non-Traveller. Although the young Travellers could be seen to trust and openly chat to myself, it was inevitable that they would still feel uncomfortable discussing some topics and being completely open with a non-Traveller. Furthermore, despite the length of the study, one of its limitations is in relation to the second research question; although the young Traveller spoke extensively of their experiences within the school environment, as previously mentioned, I was unable to gain access to schools. If I was able to conduct ethnographic research in schools, further insight into the way young Travellers feel and act in the environment would be gained. Furthermore, it would be useful for interviews and semi-structured interviews to be carried out in other spatial settings and with other key individuals and informants, involving both Travellers and non-Travellers. Despite the community centre hosting a variety of individuals from varying backgrounds at any one time, the youth club in itself, felt like a ‘Traveller space’ and therefore, conducting interviews and focus groups outside of this setting would provide insight into other aspects of the young Travellers lives. As highlighted in the previous chapters, I felt that

one of the key limitations was Jane's presence during the focus groups and interviews, at times it felt as though she was controlling what the young people said and although this was interesting methodologically, I felt that some information was withheld or not entirely truthful. Although I had seen some of the sites that the young people who attended the youth club lived on and had met some of their wider family members, it would have been useful to interview some of these individuals and spend more time on site so as to gain a fuller picture of the wider lives and identities of the young people involved.

Furthermore, returning to the discussion in chapter three, I faced challenges surrounding the trust and feelings of protectiveness towards staff members at the organisation and the young Travellers who attended the youth group. Although other ethnographic researchers have commented on similar concerns, it was important for me to reflect on these concerns throughout my fieldwork and ensure that individuals felt they could withdraw their participation or have certain conversations removed from my notes at any point.

7.5 Directions for Future Research

This research makes a significant contribution to filling the gap discussed in the introduction surrounding how encounters that occur off-site, in public spaces, are experienced by and impact the wider lives of young Travellers, but there are a number of opportunities for further research. Specifically, places of education would be a particularly interesting and important off-site spaces of encounter. Carrying out ethnographic research in primary schools, secondary schools and in post-sixteen educational environments such as colleges and universities would give significant insight into how young Travellers see other kinds of non-Travellers spaces. In doing this, the aspirations of the young Travellers and any developments that may occur to these aspirations as the young Travellers continue to develop and negotiate new non-Traveller spaces. As mentioned in the earlier section of this chapter, the aspirations of the young children involved and the ways in which despite, the changing attitudes of the young people towards education in general, this did not appear to have any consequences for their aspirations and views on future careers. It would be interesting to see how this played out in reality for the young Irish Travellers involved and whether they would change their views on further education or their career options.

It would also be interesting to conduct focus groups with Traveller and non-Traveller young people to explore some of the ideas around Traveller culture; in doing this, any misinformation about Traveller culture and identity could be collected and turned into policy recommendations or guidelines as highlighted in the following section. As mentioned in the limitations section of this chapter, it would be interesting to spend more time on the sites that were introduced in this thesis. Conducting research in this space would allow myself to develop more significant understanding of Traveller spaces and the significant role these play in the experiences and encounters that young Travellers have outside of these spaces.

In more recent years, there has been substantial recognition in the social sciences of the usefulness of conducting peer-led or participatory action research. Relevant research (see Trell and van Hoven, 2010; Marvell et al, 2013) highlights the ways in which the method encourages individuals to participate in research and the wider research process. This have proven particularly useful for young people and the exploration of their lived experiences; in this sense, the method facilitates the co-construction of knowledge (Tandon, 1996). One possible avenue for the direction of future research related to this thesis is the development of peer-led research in relation to young Travellers. Through working with young Travellers to develop more creative ways to explore their daily lives and negotiation of non-Traveller spaces, significant developments could be made to some of the ideas that have been explored in this thesis. This would continue to fill the gap in the literature that was highlighted in chapter one.

7.6 Policy Implications of this Research

Although this research did not intend to make policy recommendations, it is clear that there are possibilities for these. Despite the notable attempts made in education policy and guidelines produced in the UK to be more inclusive for children from ethnic minority backgrounds, it is clear that there are still considerable barriers for young Travellers in the UK to accessing and utilising mainstream education in the UK. This thesis has argued that for the young Travellers involved in this research, their cultural values and cultural identities are the most significant aspects of their own identities. In this sense, it would be important for the

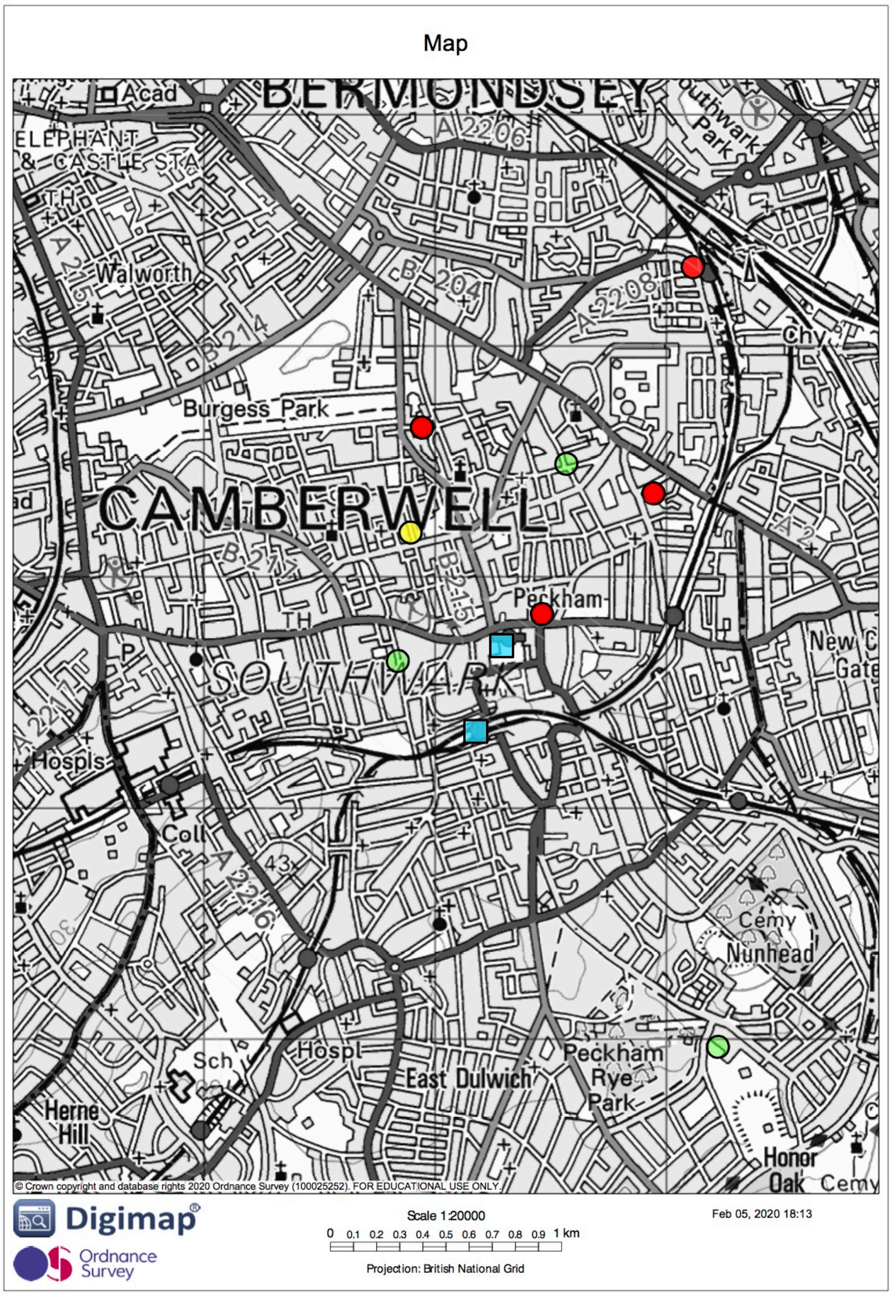
Government and subsequently schools and key individuals within these institutions, to place more recognition and respect on Traveller culture not just in terms of the national curriculum but also in day to day school life. Furthermore, through conducting this research and through observing the strained financial situation on Traveller organisations and services, and the decline in Traveller Education services in the UK [and particularly in England], it became clear that these barriers to services such as education, are likely to increase in the coming years. In light of this, it would be useful if policy and guidelines and funding initiatives that are formulated for young people from ethnic minority backgrounds, would be more specific and targeted so that young Travellers are able to benefit more substantially from this. Through increasingly recognising Traveller culture in schools, it is also likely that instances of bullying and discrimination against young Travellers would reduce, further facilitating the comfort that young Travellers would be able to feel in non-Traveller spaces.

Appendices

Appendix A – Map of the Traveller sites, community centre, schools and transport hubs

KEY

- Residential Traveller Sites
- Schools
- Community Centres
- Transport Hubs



Appendix B – Letter for Parents to give to Children's Schools

Dear _____,

My name is _____and I am the parent/guardian of _____ in year _____ at your school. I am writing to you today because I am actively involved in and strongly support the local community organisation, XXXX. One of the areas in which XXXX support local Travellers and our children is education. I am aware of, and increasingly concerned about the many barriers that Gypsies and Travellers face in accessing and remaining in education. I think it is extremely important that schools are more aware of the need to create a more inclusive environment for Gypsies and Travellers and continue to make significant progress in encouraging this. I would be very grateful if you were able to work with XXXX, who are looking to collaborate with local schools, to support the education of Gypsies and Travellers.

We are offering local schools support in three ways. These include:

- Providing **mediation** between schools and families to achieve the best outcomes for young people
- Providing **cultural awareness training** in partnership with the Traveller Movement (a national organisation for Gypsies and Travellers) of a flexible length, either in after school sessions or on inset days
- Partnering with schools in **delivering activities around Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month** and Gypsy Traveller history and culture

In addition to this, Charlotte Eales, XXXX PhD student from Cardiff University, is interested in the educational experiences of Gypsy and Traveller children; she's looking to carry out interviews and focus groups with members of staff and pupils over the next academic year. Charlotte is offering participating schools an individual summary of her findings in your school and a report of good practice in the area.

I think it is extremely important for Gypsies and Travellers to receive the best education possible and therefore, I would appreciate your participation in XXXX project. If you are interested in hearing more about this opportunity, please contact XXXX at XXXX as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Appendix C – Reminder Letter for School Participation

To Whom It May Concern:

Due to a low response rate we are recirculating this invitation. Please see below details of an opportunity to work with XXXX; we would really appreciate your involvement in this project.

XXX a community organisation for Gypsies and Travellers based in Southwark, is offering local schools the chance to be part of a project focused on overcoming the barriers young Gypsies and Travellers face accessing and remaining in secondary education.

Research published this month has shown that 70% of Gypsy and Traveller young people have experienced discrimination in education. This contributes to high drop out rates at secondary school and low levels of attainment in the community.

We are offering to support local schools in three key ways:

- Providing **mediation** between schools and families to achieve the best outcomes for young people
- Providing **cultural awareness training** in partnership with the Traveller Movement (a national organisation for Gypsies and Travellers) of a flexible length, either in after school sessions or on inset days
- Partnering with schools in **delivering activities around Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month** and Gypsy Traveller history and culture

In addition to this, Charlotte Eales, our PhD student from Cardiff University, is interested in the educational experiences of Gypsy Traveller children; she's looking to carry out interviews and focus groups with members of staff and pupils over the next academic year. Charlotte is offering participating schools an individual summary of her findings in your school and a report of good practice in the area. We see participating in this opportunity as a great way for schools to meet their **Public Sector Equality Duty** and continue to facilitate an **inclusive** environment for all pupils. We hope you take us up on this opportunity.

If you are interested in hearing more about this opportunity, please reply to this email or contact XXXX.

Kind regards

Appendix D – Questions for the Older Children at the Youth Club

Introduction

- If someone asked you to describe yourself how would you do this?
- Some people might use the word British or English to describe themselves, what do you think about that?
- What kinds of things do you do when you're not in school?
- Are there particular activities that you do for fun?
- Is thing something for boys/girls?
- Do non-Travellers take part too?
- Where do you go to do this/play in general?
- Do both girls and boys go here?
- Are non-Gypsy Traveller children part of this activity?
- Do you socialise with members of the settled community? If so, where?

School

- Do you go to school? If so, where do you go to school?
- Do you like school?
- How do you get to school?
- How does being a pupil at your school make you feel?
- What's your favourite aspect of school?
- What is your least favourite aspect of school?
- Are there particular areas of your school that you like the most? Why do you think this is?
- Are there places in school where you feel uncomfortable? Why?
- In the classroom, are you allowed to sit next to whom you want?
- What do you think of your uniform?
- Do you like starting school early in the morning and finishing in the afternoon? If you could choose, when you went to school, when would this be?
- Do you have school assemblies every week? What kinds of things are spoken about in these? How do you feel about them?
- Do you have Citizenship lessons? What kinds of things do you learn in these lessons? How do you feel about them?
- If you could change anything about your school and the way you learn, what would it be?

Housing

- Do you live on site, in a caravan or in a house?
- Do you like living there?
- Have you always lived there?
- What do you like about where your home is?
- Do you dislike anything about it?

- Some members of the settled community might say that if you live in a built house, you could be considered a member of their community rather than the Gypsy Traveller community, what do you think about that?

Mobilities

- Do you go travelling at any point during the year?
- Do you travel for special events/holidays?
- Do you enjoy travelling?
- Do you go to a different school when you are travelling?
- Do you miss school when you aren't able to go?
- What do other pupils and your teachers say when you go and come back?
- Some members of the settled community would say that if you aren't travelling, you might not be considered a Traveller or Gypsy, what do you think about that?

Aspirations

- Do your Mum and Dad have jobs? What do they do?
- Do you have any older brothers or sisters? What do they do?
- Do you know what you want to do when you finish school?
- What do your family think about this?
- If you could do any job when you're older, would this be your first choice?
- What would your family say if you decided you wanted to become a doctor or a police officer?
- Do you think you'll stay in London when you're older?

Appendix E - Staff Questions

Broad Questions

- Do you live locally? Is this in a house or on a site?
- Have you always lived here [in London]?
- Who do you live with?
- Some people might say that if you live in a house you might not be considered a Traveller, what do you think about that?
- Do you have family in Ireland?
- Do you Travel? If so, where do you go and who do you go with? Do you enjoy Travelling?
- Some people who aren't from a Travelling background might say that if you don't travel then you might not be considered a Traveller, what do you think about that?

Job

- What is your role at the organisation?
- What kinds of things do you do on a day-to-day basis?
- What do you think the organisation's main aims should be?
- Why do you think this is important?
- What other jobs did you do before you started at the organisation?

Education

- Where did you go to school?
- When did you leave full-time education?
- Did you enjoy your time at school?
- Did you feel a sense of belonging in this school?
- Do you have brothers and sisters? Did they go to this school too? What kinds of jobs do they do now?
- Did other Travellers go to this school too? If so, did you know them from outside of school?
- What kinds of things did you do when you weren't in school?
- Did you socialise with non-Traveller children outside of school?
- What kinds of things do you think are important for children to learn in schools today?
- Do you think that the current school curriculum covers the kinds of things children should be learning?
- Do you think schools have changed much since you were at school? If so, in what ways? Do you think this change is an improvement?
- Do you think school is an important part of all Travellers lives?

Choice of Education for their Children

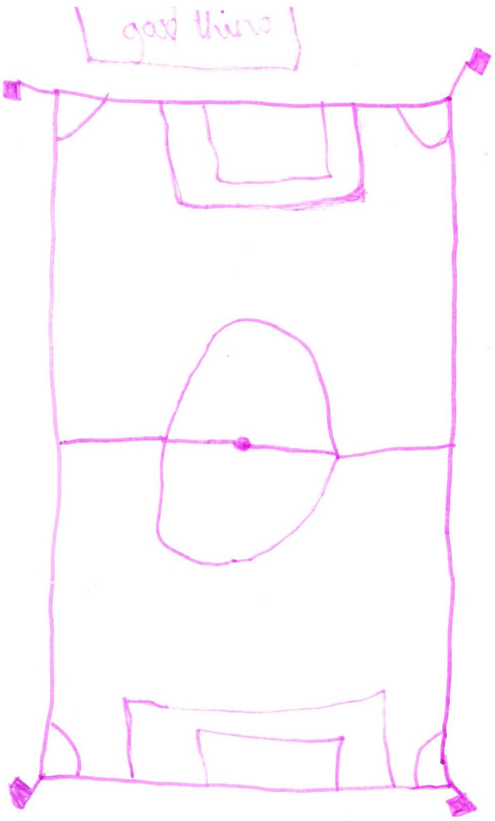
- Do you have children? If so, how old are they?

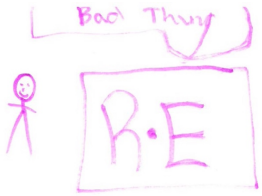
- Are you children in mainstream education?
- **If so**, what school do your children attend? Do you think this is a good school?
- Do your children like the school they attend?
- **If they are not in mainstream education**: why did you make the decision to home-school your children?
- How does home-schooling work? What do you on a day-to-day basis?
- What do you think the benefits are of home-schooling? Do you think there are some disadvantages too?
- What kinds of hobbies do your children have?
- Do they socialise with children who are both from a Travelling background and with children who are not?

Aspirations for Children

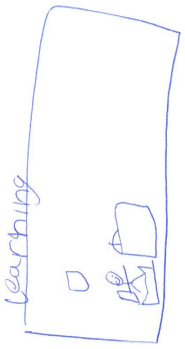
- Do your children know what kind of job they'd like to do when they finish school? If so, what do you think about this?
- What kind of job would you like them to do when they finish school? Why is this?
- Do you think education is important for them to get this job?
- Do you think children from a Traveller background sometimes have difficulties getting a job?
- If so, why do you think this might be?

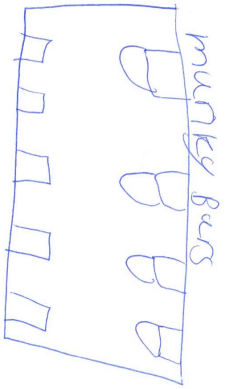
Appendix F – Images Drawn During Youth Club





Children





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