SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

Doctorate in Educational Psychology (DedPsy)

Thesis Research Project

Rachael Kenny

2018

Fixed Period Exclusion: Exploring the Experience of Primary Aged Pupils Attending a Specialist Setting

Abstract

Government data indicates that Fixed Period Exclusion (FPE) rates in primary schools are not in-keeping with an overall national trend of reduced rates of exclusion across the country. Moreover, pupils with identified Special Educational Needs and/or Disability, particularly those identified to have Social Emotional Mental Health Difficulties (SEMH), previously categorized as 'Social Emotional Behavioural Difficulties', remain disproportionately represented in the exclusion data. Although research has explored the phenomenon of exclusion from the perspective of secondary aged pupils, the voices of their primary school counterparts remain limited within the literature. Thus, this research explores the lived experience of FPE from the perspective of primary aged pupils, who attend a specialist provision for SEMH in England. Semi-structured interviews were completed with 7 pupils in Years 5 and 6, in order to explore their experience. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was conducted in accordance with guidelines from Smith Larkin & Flowers (2009). The experience of FPE was interpreted from the pupils' sense-making. The Superordinate IPA themes included: 'Relationships', 'Attribution' and 'Managing change'. 'Relationships' captured the importance of both the adult- pupil relationships and peer relationships. There was observed polarity within the adult-pupils relationships, which appeared to be positively or negatively impacted by the adults behaviour management and communication styles, and the level of practical and emotional support that was provided. Peer relationships were also noted to be important in the pupils' narratives, as they appeared to provide a sense of belonging and security. 'Attribution' was a further superordinate theme emerging from the analysis, capturing the internal and external attributions held by the pupils that underpinned how they made sense of their school exclusion experience. 'Managing change' was the final superordinate theme identified; this describes how the pupils coped with their exclusion, the emotional impact of that exclusion and the effects of the exclusion processes. Recommendations for future research are made and the implications of the results are discussed in relation to educational psychology practice. This research highlights the value of educational psychologists (EPs) listening to pupil voice and considering their exclusion experience using an eco-systemic framework; this generates thinking about the broader systemic factors which are at play for excluded pupils and those at risk of exclusion. Additionally, findings highlight the need for further training to promote nurturing environments and better emotional support for excluded pupils' that EPs are well placed to provide. Moreover, they would also indicate that clear guidance developed by EPs and implemented by schools in relation to the processes and effects of exclusion, with an emphasis on the involvement and communication of pupils and their families, would be beneficial.

Summary

Part one provides a review of the available literature relating to school exclusion; this has been split into 2 sections. Firstly, the researcher aims to provide context for the reader in part 1A. This begins by broadly considering school exclusion, including exploration of: available definitions, underpinning legislation, the impact of school exclusion and the prevalence of school exclusion both nationally and locally. The researcher also considers the disproportionate representation of pupil groups within the exclusion data. Part 1A proceeds to focus upon the rights of Children and Young People (CYP) to access education and contribute to debates around matters relating to them. In part 1B, the researcher provides a summary of findings from available research, which gives voice to the perspective of CYP who have experienced school exclusion. An appraisal of methodological approaches utilised in the literature in review is also offered. Finally, part 1B identifies gaps in the available literature and subsequent research questions are proposed.

Part two is an overview of the qualitative study, which aimed to explore the lived experience of primary school pupils who had experienced a Fixed Period Exclusion. This section includes an overview of the context of school exclusion and highlights findings from relevant literature, in a bid to provide a clear rationale for the current study. An outline of the research methodology is provided, including the researchers ontological and epistemological positioning, adopted research methods and ethical considerations. Qualitative research findings are presented and discussed in relation to existing literature, psychological theory, implications for educational psychology practice and possible future research.

Lastly, part three offers a critical appraisal of the researcher's professional development. A reflective and reflexive narrative of the research process is provided, exploring the philosophical underpinnings, decision-making processes and the contributions to knowledge; ultimately providing a critical account of the research practitioner.

<u>Acknowledgements</u>

Table of Contents

Tables

Table of figures

List of Abbreviations

BESD	Behavioural, Emotional Social Difficulties
BPS	British Psychological Society
CYP	Children and Young People
DfE	Department for Education
EBD	Emotional Behavioural Difficulties
EP	Educational Psychologist
FPE	Fixed Period Exclusion
HCPC	Health and Care Professions Council
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
SE	School Exclusion
SEBD	Social Emotional Behavioural Difficulties
SEND	Special Educational Needs and/or Disability
SEMH	Social Emotional Mental Health
TEP	Trainee Educational Psychologist
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on The Rights of the Child

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

Doctorate in Educational Psychology (DedPsy)

PART ONE

Major Literature Review

Fixed Period Exclusion: Exploring the Experience of Primary Aged Pupils attending a Specialist Setting

Word count: 9988

PART ONE: Major Literature review

1.1 <u>Overview of the Literature Review</u>

This major literature review has been split into two parts. Part 1A aims to provide a contextual background of School Exclusion (SE) to help the reader understand the phenomenon of study, whilst part 1B aims to critically evaluate literature pertaining to the perspectives of Children and Young People (CYP) who have experienced SE.

Part 1A begins by providing a definition of SE, a brief history of development of the legislation and policy underpinning SE, and consideration of the reported impact of SE. The national and local context of SE is then surveyed; trends in the available data are explored, with an emphasis upon pupil vulnerability to SE. The 'paradox of the excluded child' (Haynes, 2005), which highlights the discord between the legal requirement for a CYP to attend school when they meet compulsory school age, and the process of SE is then explored within the context of children's rights. Concluding part 1A, the rights of CYP who are to be involved in discussions about matters relating to them are considered, and the benefits of exploring pupil perspectives in research and practice are highlighted.

Part 1B aims to provide a more detailed exploration of SE from the perspective of CYP who have experienced SE through discussion of themes evident across the reviewed literature. An appraisal of the Studies' methodological strengths and weaknesses will also be provided. The research findings relating to how pupils experience SE is then discussed in relation to educational psychology practice. Finally, research questions and aims are generated.

PART 1A

1.2 School Exclusion Defined

When discussing SE, it is in reference to a disciplinary measure that a head teacher may invoke in response to challenging, inappropriate or serious misbehaviour (Barker, 2010, Daniels, 2011). The Education Act (2011) stipulates that the head teacher of a school has the power to exclude a pupil on a permanent or fixed period basis. The Department for Education (DfE, 2017) state that:

"... permanent exclusion refers to a pupil who is excluded and who will not come back to that school

(unless the exclusion is overturned)." (p.8)

Whereas,

"Fixed period exclusion refers to a pupil who is excluded from a school for a set period of time. A

fixed period exclusion can involve a part of the school day and it does not have to be for a continuous

period. A pupil may be excluded for one or more fixed periods up to a maximum of 45 school days in

a single academic year. This total includes exclusions from previous schools covered by the exclusion

legislation." (p.8)

Although permanent and fixed period exclusions are recognised within the legislation, it is widely acknowledged that 'unofficial' and 'hidden' exclusions occur within schools (Hayden, 2003). Government guidance (DfE, 2017) continues to stress that such "*informal exclusions*" are "*unlawful*" (p.10), yet McClusky, Ridell, Weedon & Fordyce (2016) note that informal exclusion practice continues to occur in the UK; with CYP and their families often unaware of their legal rights. Therefore, statistics presented within this review must be treated with caution, as exclusions are not only thought to be underreported by various local authorities (Gordon, 2001), but only give a partial picture of extent of SE, given the prevalence of unofficial exclusions.

1.3 History of School Exclusion and Underpinning Legislation

Head teachers have had the authority to exclude pupils since the conception of the 1944 Education Act. Arguably, up until the 1990's, SE was the prerogative of individual head teachers, with limited regard to the rights of CYP (Hawkins, 2011). With time, legislation, policy, guidance and procedures have been amended to recognise and protect the rights and best interests of CYP. Most recent developments include the Department for Education and Skills white paper (DfES, White Paper, 2010), guidance from the Children's Commissioner (2011) and changes to the legal framework encompassing:

- the Education Act 2002 (including s51A inserted by Education Act 2011)

- the School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012; and

- accompanying statutory guidance (Department for Education, *Exclusion from maintained schools, Academies and pupil referral units in England*, 2015).

Most recently, in September 2017, the Department for Education (DfE) published Statutory guidance for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion, which stated that:

"Any decision of a school, including exclusion, must be made in line with the principles of administrative law, i.e. that it is: lawful (with respect to the legislation relating directly to exclusions and a school's wider legal duties, including the European Convention on Human Rights and the Equality Act 2010); rational; reasonable; fair; and proportionate."

1.4 The Impact of School Exclusion

For pupils who have experienced school exclusion, the negative impact that it may have on their life can be substantial (Parker, Paget, Ford & Gwernan-Jones, 2016). Within the literature, the consequences appear to fall into two categories of negative outcomes: psychological and practical.

Lown (2005) discusses the psychological harm young people may experience as a result of exclusion and the negative impact that this experience of school exclusion can have on a pupil's mental health is widely acknowledged (Rendall & Stuart, 2005). Negative psychological outcomes associated with school exclusion include the pupils experiencing feelings of rejection, stigmatisation and shame (Harris, Vincent, Thomson & Toalster, 2006). Furthermore, Osterman (2000) reports that exclusion can lead to strong negative feelings, such as depression, grief, loneliness and jealousy.

At a practical level, statistics demonstrate that pupils who have experienced school exclusion are at greater risk of academic underachievement (McCrystal, Higgin, & Percy, 2007) and future unemployment (Kaplan & McArdle, 2004), with 34% of all permanently excluded pupils falling into the category of 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET) (Thompson, 2011). Additionally, excluded pupils are reportedly at a greater risk of drug use, anti-social behaviour and crime during adolescence, and subsequent marginalisation and social exclusion in later life (The Children's Commissioner, 2011; McCrystal, Higgins, & Percy, 2007).

Considering the aforementioned negative psychological outcomes and negative life trajectories, which may result from experiences of SE, arguably, it is appropriate to explore the occurrence of SE in further detail.

1.5 Prevalence of School Exclusion

1.5.1 National Context

Although it is acknowledged that quantitative data can be overly reductionist (Verschuren, 2001) and subsequently fail to capture the nuance in the experience of SE, the statistics relating to SE rates have been presented in a bid to provide context relating to the prevalence of SE. Moreover, the researcher recognises that the data discussed may appear negligible in percentile terms, however, urges

the reader to consider the data in relation to the population of over 11 million children in England, as each small percentage represents the lives of many CYP. Further exploration of how SE may be experienced by CYP and attention to nuance in lived experiences, is offered in part 1B of the literature review.

During the past 10 years, the overall rate of permanent exclusion across primary, secondary and special schools in England, has decreased from 0.12% of pupil enrolments in 2005/6 to 0.08% in 2015/16. However, during this timeframe, whilst there has been a decrease in the overall rate of permanent exclusion in secondary school (0.23% of pupil enrolments to 0.17%) and special school (0.18% of pupil enrolments to 0.08%), the primary school rate of permanent exclusion has remained stationary, with 0.02% of pupil enrolments experiencing a permanent exclusion; equating to 1,145 children experiencing permanent exclusion in the academic year 2015/16. (See figure 1).
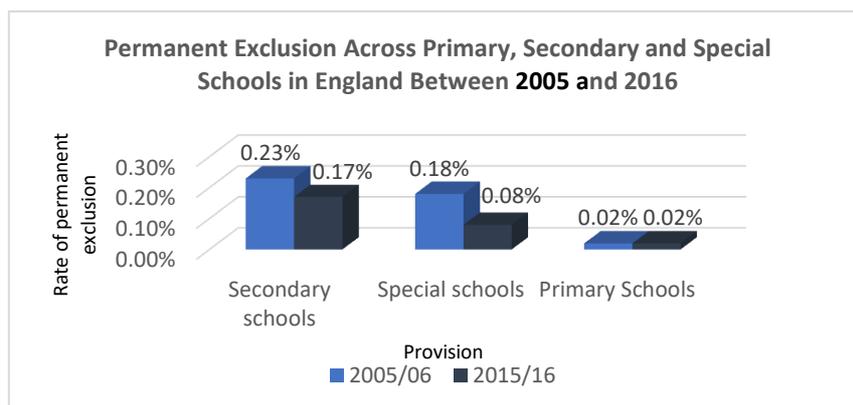
Figure 1: Permanent Exclusion Across Primary, Secondary and Special Schools in England Between 2005 and 2016

Furthermore, during the past 10 years, the overall rate of fixed period exclusion (FPE) across primary, secondary and special schools has decreased from 5.65% of pupil enrolments in 2005/6 to 4.29% of pupil enrolments in 2015/16. Yet, when considering the longitudinal data, the overall rate of FPE in primary schools has increased from 1.11% of pupil enrolments in 2005/6 to 1.21% of pupil enrolments in 2015/16, whilst rates of FPE in secondary schools (10.92% to 8.46%) and special schools (18.32% to 12.53%) have decreased. (see figure 2).
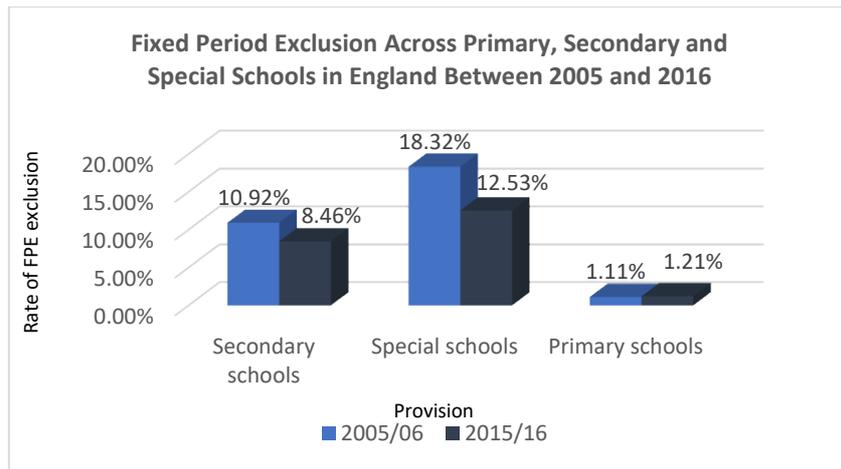
Figure 2: Fixed Period Exclusion Across Primary, Secondary and Special Schools in England Between 2005 and 2016

Arguably, the long-term data indicates that progress has been made in reducing the number of school exclusions occurring in secondary and special schools, but raises questions as to why FPE exclusion rates continue to rise in primary schools in England. Moreover, data indicates a relatively steady increase in the rate of FPE issued to primary aged pupils in the last 5 years (0.90% in 2011/12 to 1.21% in 2015/16). It is acknowledged that this increase of 0.31% may appear negligible in percentile terms; yet, this translates to 17,950 more FPE being issued in 2015/16 than 2011/12. (see figure 3).
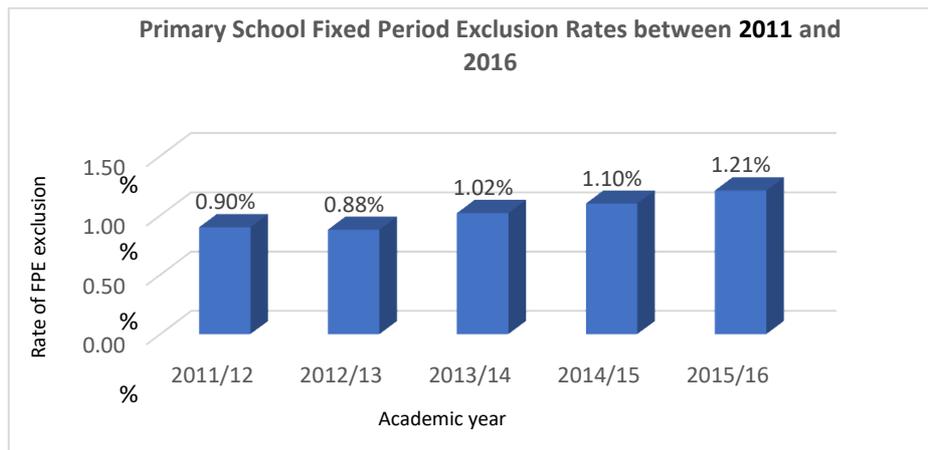
Figure 3: Primary School Fixed Period Exclusion Rates between 2011 and 2016

Thus, the prevalence of FPE of primary age pupils is considered in further detail within this review.

1.5.2 Local Context

Over the past 5 years, local authority exclusion rates reflect a relatively consistent rate of FPE (range between 0.87 in 2016/17 and 0.96 in 2012/13); on average this equates to 241 primary aged pupils receiving a FPE each academic year. Although exclusion rates have been below the national average (except in 2012/13), the local authorities schools strategy (2016) '*Working together to enable all our children and young people to be the best they can be*' highlights concerns regarding exclusion rates and pledges to "*support pupils who have been excluded to access learning in an appropriate educational setting*" (P.14) . Thus, is it plausible to suggest that this is a key objective for change within the local authority.

1.6 Vulnerability to Exclusion

In a yearly statistical release, the DfE annually highlight that certain pupil groups are disproportionately represented in the exclusion data (see DfE, 2012 ,2013, 2014, 2015, 2016). Such trends appear to persist today, as the DfE (2017) note higher FPE rates continue to be observed in relation to certain pupil groups. Pupil groups identified to experience higher rates of FPE included:

- Boys, who were nearly three times more likely to receive a FPE than girls;

- Pupils eligible to receive Free School Meals (FSM), who were approximately four times more likely to receive a FPE;

- Pupils identified to have Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) make up almost half of all fixed period exclusions;

- Pupils with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) or statement of SEND were almost 6 times more likely to receive a FPE than pupils not identified to have SEND.

The Children's Commissioner (2011) described the differentials in exclusion rates to be a major concern, and reminded schools and other professionals supporting CYP, of their responsibility to reduce

the disparity in exclusion rates between different groups, when working to implement their statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010. In the Children's Commissioner's School Exclusion Enquiry (2011) it was concluded that a further examination of the reasons underpinning disproportionate rates of exclusion for certain groups was required. Loiziduo (2009) postulates that data sets depicting groups at greater risk of exclusion do not allow us to understand underlying factors which contribute to school exclusion. Arguably, one way in which to address this area is by talking directly to CYP with additional needs who have experienced SE, as they have experiential knowledge distinct to that of adults, which may provide a unique insight to SE (Cook & Hess, 2007).

1.6.1 Social Emotional Mental Health Difficulties

A further subgroup of pupils identified to be disproportionately represented within the exclusion data, are those identified to have Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties (see figure 4), therefore, further exploration of the experiences of this subgroup of pupils is arguably relevant and purposeful.

Fixed Period Exclusions by Category of Identified Special Educational Need

(DfE, 2017)
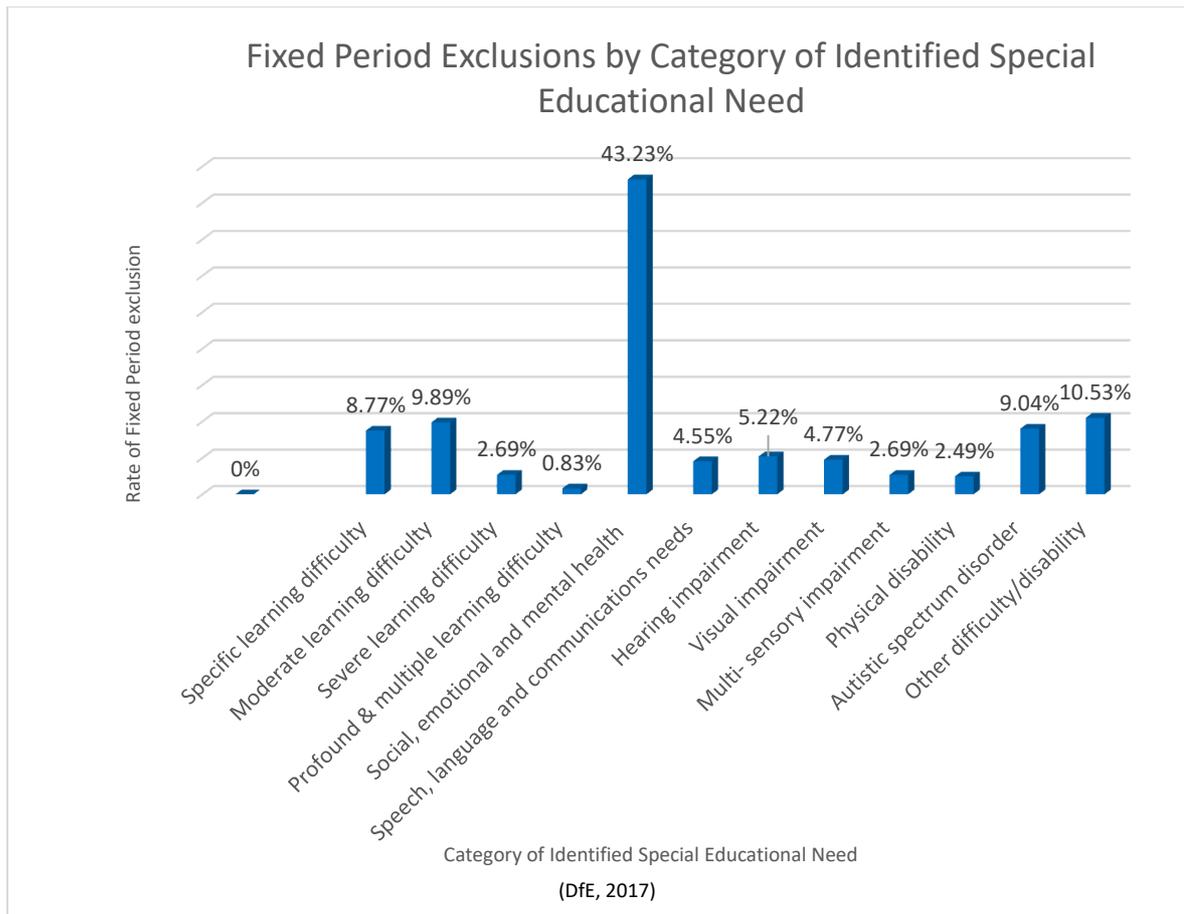
Figure 4: Fixed Period Exclusions by Category of Identified Special Educational Need (academic year 2015-16)

It is important to recognise the range of terminology, observable within research, policy and legislation regarding the labelling and categorisation of behavioural difficulties in CYP. Furthermore, it is imperative to reflect upon the evolving conceptualisations of SEMH and consider the discourse surrounding this category of identified special educational needs to date.

Historically, pupils with Special Educational Needs were identified as 'maladjusted' (Education Act, 1944). This term encompassed children who exhibited behavioural difficulties and the way in which the maladjusted or 'problem child' was supported (i.e. 'cared for', 'punished', 'educated' or 'treated'), was dependant on the individual or professional who was engaged with them (Visser & Cole, 2003, p.11). As time progresses, understanding of CYP's behaviour develops. This was reflected in changes to the Education Act (1981) where the term 'maladjusted' was replaced with 'Emotional and Behaviour Difficulties' (EBD) and the Code of Practice (1994) which acknowledged "*Children with*

EBD are on a continuum. Their problems are clearer and greater than sporadic naughtiness or moodiness, and yet not so great as to be classed as mental illness" (Department for Education, 1994a P.4). Terminology further evolved to encompass the social aspects of behavioural difficulties, with the Code of Practice (2001) referring to 'Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties' (BESD), whilst the most recent change sees the category of BESD being superseded by the category of SEMH. This was not a direct replacement but represents further evolution in the conceptualisation of pupils with SEMH difficulties; emphasising the importance of mental health and wellbeing that influences behaviour. Given the evolving terminology, the terms (i.e. BESD/EBD/SEMH) will be used interchangeably to reflect the terms used in the literature cited.

Knowles and Cole (2011) highlight that the confusion relating to the characteristics and classification of pupils with SEBD is historic, and remains evident to date. Research cites numerous challenges which are likely observable for pupils with SEBD, including: low motivation, low self-esteem, difficulties with learning, poor interpersonal skills, poor social communication skills, and low levels of attention and concentration (Hamill & Boyd, 2002; Osler, 2006; Pomeroy 2000). Although there are challenges defining SEBD, it is arguably clear as to why CYP with SEBD are more vulnerable to school exclusion.

Furthermore, debates persist around the origins of SEBD, with Cooper and Jacobs (2011) noting that some researchers advocate for the dominance of biological, genetic, social or psychosocial factors. Seed (2001) postulated that such confusion is not only based on the variation in perspectives but highlighted that the complexity and uncertainty surrounding SEBD is such, that it is not desirable to seek to define it (Seed, 2001). Subsequently, the researcher accepts that "*SEBD are best understood as the result of a complex interaction between a child, as a biological and social entity and their environment"* (O'riordon, 2015, P.5).

Labels have been described as helpful, in terms of raising awareness and promoting understanding of a particular group (Lauchlan & Boyle, 2007), whilst also being identified as unhelpful, as Hodge (2005) warns that "*labels can become more significant than the nature of the child*" (p.345). Within

the context of the current research, it is believed that exploration of the conceptualisation of SEMH was essential as it is a term that exists within the policy, education and professional discourse. However, in this current research, less emphasis will be placed upon the categorisation of pupils with SEMH, unless the pupil themselves note this to be important to how they experience school and school exclusion; as Cole, Visser & Daniels (1999) suggests, the individuality of the child can be lost when the label is given a greater status.

1.7 The Rights of CYP

The importance of education is such that education is declared a human right (Quennerstedt, 2015); yet, CYP can be officially and legally excluded from school. In their paper titled 'the paradox of the excluded child', Haynes (2005) highlighted the discord between the legal requirement for a CYP to attend school when they meet compulsory school age and the process of SE. It may be argued that in considering 'the paradox of the excluded child', SE is inharmonious with the implementation and protection of children's rights, based upon Article 28 in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (United Nations, 1989) that clearly describe a child's right to an education, and that discipline in schools must respect a child's human dignity. In addition to article 28, the Children's Commissioner (2012) highlights other articles of the UNCRC, which are of particular relevance when considering SE in relation to children's rights, and when considering the disproportionality in exclusion rates:

- "Article 2: All rights apply to all children whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, abilities, whatever they think or say, and whatever type of family they come from.

- Article 3: The best interests of the child must be a primary consideration in all actions.

- Article 12: Every child has a right to express their views regarding all matters that affect them; and for these views to be taken seriously.

- Article 23: Children with a disability have a right to special care and support to live a full and decent life, with dignity and independence.

- Article 29: Children's education must develop each child's personality, talents and abilities to the fullest." (P.52).

In the report 'United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC): how legislation underpins implementation in England', the DfE (2010) highlights that the government has endeavoured to implement articles 1-54, through the development and review of legislation and policy initiatives such as: the Children Act 1989, The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (UNESCO, 1994) Every Child Matters (2003), Children Act (2004), Equality Act (2010), and the Children and Families Act (2014). The commitment to the implementation of the UNCRC in England, is noted to be 'robust and thorough' (P.596), yet, Mclusky, Riddell and Weedon (2014) suggests that government commitment to the UNCRC, highlights priorities which appear counterintuitive to school exclusion practice. For example, article 3 identifies that the best interests of the child must be a primary consideration in all actions, yet, in the act of exclusion for disruptive behaviour, it may be argued that the best interest of a 'troublesome child' is not a head teacher's primary concern. This binary illustration is offered to exemplify the conflicts raised relating to school exclusion and the UNCRC, however, the researcher recognises that there are tensions when a Head Teacher makes the decision to exclude (e.g. the rights of other children to an education), that makes it a highly complex decision.

1.8 Pupil Voice

As aforementioned, the rights of CYP who are involved in discussions about matters concerning them (including their education), gained legal backing in 1989, through the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989) and the Children Act (H M Government, 1989). Following this, the SEN Code of Practice (DfE, 1994) continued to raise awareness of children's rights by emphasising the importance of pupil participation in a broader context, despite age or ability. Arguably, this could be described as the beginning of a movement dedicated to allowing *'all'* children to be partners in their education.

The rights of CYP and the importance of seeking their views continued to become central to guidance for professionals working with CYP identified to have SEND. Firstly, the Special Educational

Needs Code of Practice (DfE, 2001) included an entire chapter, devoted to the participation of pupils with SEND in procedures adopted to support their needs. Within recent years, revisions made to the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (DfES, 2015), placed more emphasis on the rights of CYP to be active participants in planning and decision-making processes that relate to them, although both Codes of Practice place a duty on professionals to elicit and pay regard to the views and wishes of CYP. Both documents also highlight that professionals should take into account the CYP's age, maturity and capability when considering their views. Newton (2016) suggests that subsequently, the degree to which the views of CYP are sought and considered varies, as contextual and individual differences culminate in subjective practice. Yet, it is important to note that the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (DfES, 2015) also stresses "*the importance of the child or young person, … participating as fully as possible in decisions, and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions*" (p.119). Gray (2004) highlights that the need to provide appropriate support and opportunity to facilitate involvement of CYP, is especially important for CYP with communication difficulties, whether due to their age or the nature of their SEND. Arguably, this highlights a professional duty to strive to facilitate the participation of all CYP.

It could be further reasoned that the development of roles such as the Children's Commissioner, is indicative of the increasing value being placed on pupil voice by the government and society at large; as "*The Office of the Children's Commissioner promotes the rights, views and interests of children in policies or decisions affecting their lives. They particularly represent children who are vulnerable or who find it hard to make their views known*" (DfE 2018). The Children's Commissioner has explicitly emphasized the need to listen to the voices of CYP in order to comprehend the experience and impact of school exclusion. (Children's Commissioner, 2012). Yet, Kirby (2001) noted that research aiming to explore the lived experiences of children through their own accounts is relatively limited in the academic arena. Moreover, of the research available, much of the research is criticised for being constructed through an adult lens, which fails to explore the essence of real life experience through the

perspectives of the CYP (Daiute & Fine, 2003). Fielding (2001) attributes this to the traditional approaches to working with CYP, where professionals observed, and tested children, rather than considering them as expert enough in their own experiences to provide valuable insight.

1.9 Benefits of Eliciting the Voice of CYP

Warshsak (2004) posits that there are two key benefits of adults eliciting the voice of CYP, and giving true consideration to what they have to say, including:

1. *Enlightenment for the adult*, resulting from understanding the unique perspective of CYP;
2. *Empowerment for CYP*, resulting from involvement in discussion and/or decision making regarding matters that affect them.

1.9.1 Enlightenment for adults

Jones (2004) stated that exploring '*understandings of the phenomena they observe, measure or are part of, new possibilities are opened up'* (P.125) in relation to developing existing knowledge and understanding, and advancing educational policies and practice. However, it is argued that eliciting the voices of CYP who have experienced school exclusion, may raise questions about taken for granted school practices. This may explain why adults have been reluctant to listen to pupil perspective in previous years, as discussions with CYP who had experienced exclusion can "*illustrate the short-comings of schools in particular and of society as a whole*" (De Pear & Garner, 1996, p. 154–155). Moreover, Sellman (2009) argues that if pupils with identified SEBD are given the opportunity to discuss their experiences, they could be articulate in their sense making, and raise issues and questions around practice within schools. Pomeroy (2000) discussed how pupils with SEBD may be able to articulate why they find it difficult to cope within school, in a way that only this particular subgroup of CYP can, as they clearly experience barriers to education that other children do not. Arguably, the enlightenment, which occurs for adults, resulting from understanding the perspectives of CYP is most valuable, when used constructively as a means of shaping future practice.

McIntyre, Pedder and Rudduck (2005) described this as pupils having the potential to be "*catalysts for school-wide change*" (p.156), however, they also warn that this can only occur if professionals are willing to embrace what they term both the "*comfortable*" and "*uncomfortable learnings*". Only then will pupil voice have the potential to be truly impactful.

1.9.2 Empowerment for CYP

Moreover, Sharp (2014) posits that eliciting the views and experiences of CYP, helps to address the power imbalance that exists between CYP and adults. He suggests that, through conversation with CYP about matters that affect them, CYP are provided with a sense that they have been listened to and had their contributions valued. Subsequently, CYP may perceive themselves as more powerful, and such discussions may result in a positive effect on their psychological wellbeing, especially their levels of resilience moving forward (Sharp, 2014). However, professionals are warned about the perils of a tokenistic approach to pupil involvement. For example, Tucker (2013) noted that young people were invited to meetings, only for adults to dominate discussions and expect the young people to agree.

In summary, alongside a legal and moral imperative to listen to the voice of CYP, the clear value in listening to pupil voice has been well established within the research (e.g. Mannion, 2007). Furthermore, evidence suggests that tokenism is rife in research and practice that elicits the voice of CYP (Children's Rights Alliance for England, 2013), with some authors suggesting that the voices of CYP may be heard but not truly listened to (Lewis & Burnam, 2008). Subsequently, although the benefits of a systemic exploration of a given phenomenon is acknowledged, this research aims to solely focus upon the experience of school exclusion from the perspective of children and young people, in a bid to champion the voices of CYP through providing an undiluted account of their experience.

PART 1B

2.1 <u>Introduction to the Literature Review</u>

Part 1B aims to provide a review of literature relating to pupils' experience of school exclusion, from the perspective of excluded pupils. During this critical review of the literature, the researcher aims to communicate:

- The search terms and sources used to retrieve relevant research;

- The process of inclusion/exclusion of research articles for review;

- An overview of studies that met the criteria for review;

- An appraisal of methodological approaches used in the studies in review;

- Findings from the studies in review;

- Implications for educational psychology practice; and

- Identified gaps in the available literature.

2.2 <u>Search Terms and Sources</u>

A systematic literature review was conducted between November 2016 and December 2017. Electronic journal searches were conducted through PsychINFO (1806-2016), PsychArticles and Google Scholar. A combination of key search terms including: 'school exclusion', 'fixed term exclusion', 'fixed period exclusion', 'disciplinary exclusion', 'pupil voice', 'pupil perspective', 'pupil experience', 'pupil views', 'SEBD', 'social emotional behavioural difficulties', 'SEMH', 'Social emotional mental health difficulties' and 'challenging behaviour' were used.

2.3 <u>Inclusion/Exclusion of Research</u>

As recommended by Meade and Richardson (1997) and Jones (2004), the studies returned during the journal search were considered at 3 different stages.

- **Stage 1:** the studies were considered using the title alone;

- **Stage 2:** the studies were considered by reviewing the abstract; and

- **Stage 3:** the studies were considered by reading the journal article in its entirety.

Studies were excluded at each stage of this process if they did not meet the following inclusion criteria:

- Studies that explored school exclusion from the perspective of CYP who had experienced it, as this allowed for exploration of literature that illuminated the perspectives of individuals who had experiential knowledge of exclusion and may be able to highlight how CYP may make sense of the lived experience of school exclusion. Exclusively quantitative research was viewed to be too reductionist in exploring the school exclusion experience and was subsequently excluded; thus, only studies employing qualitative research methods were included;

- Studies published between 1989 and present day, as 1989 marked the year that children's rights gained legal backing, through the UNCRC (United Nations, 1989) and the Children Act (H M Government, 1989); and

- Studies conducted in the United Kingdom, as it was felt that research conducted out of the United Kingdom, may reflect systems and procedures that are substantially different to the United Kingdom.

The total number of studies initially retrieved was 560, 54 of which were duplications and thus excluded, leaving 506 studies for review. 28 studies were published before 1989, meaning they were also excluded from review. Using the exclusion criteria above, 289 studies were excluded based upon the title. The number of studies rejected at the abstract was 146, meaning 43 studies were perceived to warrant full exploration, based upon the above criteria. Following this, 31 studies were rejected after each paper was read in its entirety. Subsequently, 12 studies were deemed to meet the inclusion criteria and were selected for further review (See Figure 5).
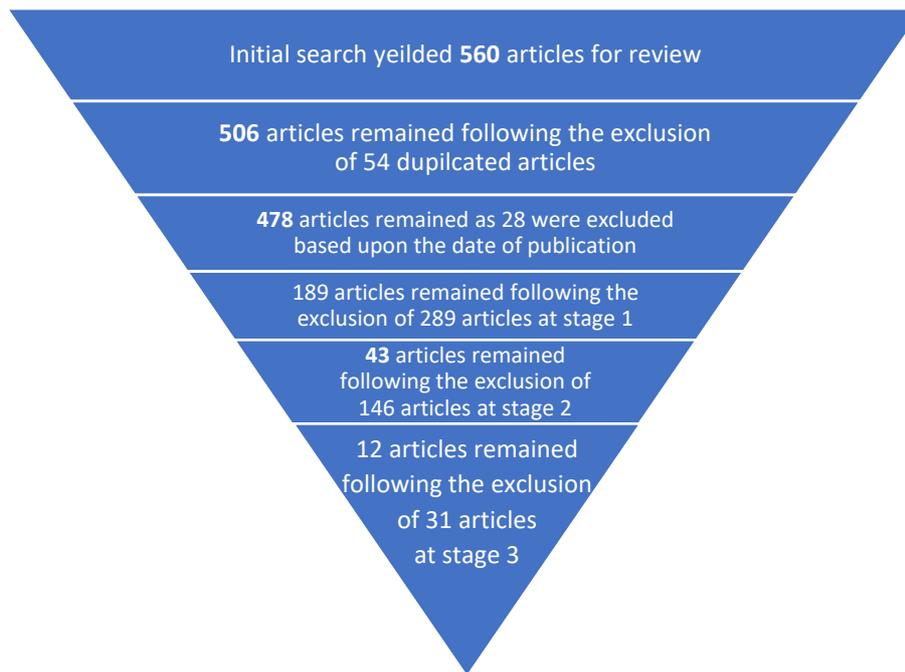
Figure 5. Representation of the process of including/excluding available literature

It is important to note that once the articles for review were identified, a provisional literature review was conducted in order to develop a surface level understanding of the research available and to generate research questions. Deeper engagement with the literature occurred following data collection and analysis, as the researcher did not wish to hold a biased theoretical perspective when embarking on the journey of sense making with the pupils.

2.4 Overview of the Research in Review

The studies included in this review (Farouk, 2017; Gilmore, 2013; Hamill, & Boyd, 2002; Harriss, Barlow & Moli, 2008; Hilton, 2006; O'Connor, Hodkinson & Burton, 2011; Osler, 2006, McCluskey, Riddell & Weedon, 2015; Michael & Fredrickson, 2013; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015; Tucker, 2013) elicited the views of CYP who had experienced one or more exclusion; including internal exclusion and/or FPE and/or permanent exclusion. It is important to note that many of the studies included in this review also explored parents' and professionals' (i.e. teachers,

social workers', voluntary agencies) perspectives and experiences of exclusion. As this research aims to exclusively champion the voices of CYP, the findings relating to how CYP experience exclusion will be the focus of this review.

2.5 Critical Reflections pertaining to the Literature in Review

Before exploring the findings from the literature that has met the criteria for review, it is important to consider the research methodology which underpins the findings, as consideration of the methodology (including, study characteristics, pupil participant characteristics, data collection techniques, data analysis and sampling), will provide an enhanced understanding of how knowledge relating to the pupil experience of school exclusion has been produced. (An overview of the research articles that met the criteria for critical review can be found in appendix A)

2.5.1 Study Characteristics

Considerations of study characteristics are illustrated in table 1 below.

Table 1: Considerations of study characteristics

Study Characteristics	
Geographic Location	All of the research in this review was conducted in the United Kingdom: one study was conducted in Wales (McCluskey, Riddell & Weedon, 2015), three were conducted in Scotland (Hamill, & Boyd, 2002; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Hilton, 2006) and seven were conducted in England (Farouk, 2017; Gilmore, 2013; O'Connor, Hodkinson & Burton, 2011; Osler 2006, Michael & Fredrickson, 2013; Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015; Tucker, 2013). Harriss, Barlow & Moli, (2008) did not report a specific location within the United Kingdom, in which their research was completed. The geographical location of each study is worthy of consideration, as England, Wales and Scotland all have respective government initiatives and policies devised to address rates of school exclusion, and pupils experience may vary slightly by country.
Research Methods	The majority of the research in review adopted qualitative research methods (10/12 papers), whilst 2/12 papers adopted a mixed methods approach. Creswell

(2007) states, "*We conduct qualitative research when we want to empower individuals to share their stories, hear their voices, and minimise the power relationships that often exist between a researcher and participants in a study*" (P.40); considering the limited research exploring the views of CYP who have experienced school exclusion, arguably, qualitative research methods allow researchers to zoom out to indefinite scope (Willems & Raush, 1969), enabling them to capture experiential factors unique to an individual experience; thus, qualitative research methods are believed to be a strength in the studies exploring school exclusion from the perspective of excluded CYP.

Sample   Whilst all studies explored the experience of excluded CYP, many of the studies collected information from multiple sources, which allowed for triangulation of data. Alternative sources included: professionals working with pupils in education, health and social services, voluntary sector agencies (Osler, 2006), parents, teachers and other professionals (Hamil & Boyd, 2002), parents/grandparents, teachers headteachers, educational psychologists, social services, staff and youth offending team members (Mclusky, Riddell & Weedon, 2015), parents/carers and residential school staff (Harriss et al., 2008) and behaviour coordinators (Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015). Such triangulation of data may be recognised as a strength; for example, Osler (2006) posits "*No single perspective or standpoint is likely to provide us with the complete picture*" and subsequently "*draws on students' own voices, but is informed by professionals' perspectives and by other research on exclusion and violence in schools*" (P.573). Conversely, this could be criticised to provide an account of pupils' experiences that has been distorted through others' perspectives or through theoretical bias; in which case, findings which provide only the perspective of excluded young people, could be commended (e.g. Munn and Lloyd, 2005, Gilmore, 2013).

The total number of pupil participants across the research in review is 426; it would appear the data considered within Trotman, Tucker & Martyn (2015) and Tucker's (2013) study, was generated from the same participant group but used to consider a different research question, thus, the participant data has not been included twice. Sample sizes varied across the research, with a large range between the smallest

(N=5) and the largest (N=81). Such variety in sample sizes, raises questions as to the varied depth of the findings across the studies in review.

2.5.2 Pupil Participant Characteristics

Considerations of pupil participant characteristics are illustrated in table 2 below.

Table 2: Considerations of pupil participant characteristics

Pupil Participant Characteristics

Gender	From the reported statistics, the gender breakdown of the participants across the research, identified 120 male and 157 female pupil participants; some research studies did not report gender specific data (McCluskey, Riddell & Weedon, 2015; Munn & Lloyd, 2005), subsequently, a full overview of gender is not possible. Arguably, this ratio is not reflective of the current exclusion data (DFE, 2017), which reports that Boys were over three times more likely to receive a permanent exclusion and almost three times more likely to receive a fixed period exclusion than girls. It is posited that such an overrepresentation of girls is impacted by Gilmore's (2013) study, that only sought to explore girl's experiences (N=81) and by other researchers who particularly targeted girls in order to "*address the fact that their experiences of disaffection and exclusion have been relatively neglected.*" (Hilton, 2006, P. 300). The researcher commends this attempt to readdress the underrepresentation of girl's voices in the research, however, is mindful that the gender ratios represented across the research in review may not be representative of the pupils who experience SE.
Age	There was varied age range of participants across the 12 studies, with the youngest participants aged nine years and the oldest participants aged seventeen years. Two of the studies did not report the age of their participants (Osler, 2006; Munn & Lloyd, 2005), although it is possible to infer that the participant sample in Osler's (2006) study were of secondary age. Only two of the 12 studies explored the experiences of primary aged pupils. Firstly, McCluskey, Riddell & Weedon (2015), analysed young people's experiences of alternative provision and schools exclusion within a children's rights context. Of the 56 CYP involved, only 1 case

study occurred within a Pupil Referral Unit for primary aged children. Moreover, there is no representation of the primary aged pupils voice in the findings, which appeared to be dominated by the discourse of adults and older pupils. In the second study that explored the experiences of primary aged children (Harriss et al., 2008) all of the pupil participants (N=6) had experienced an exclusion from a mainstream primary setting. This study aimed to explore the perspectives of pupils, parents/carers and staff about the benefits and disadvantages of attendance at a residential school for children with severe emotional and behavioural problems. However, once more, adult discourse appeared to dominate the findings as 16/19 quotes illustrated adult discourse, compared to 3/19 illustrative quotes from pupils.

Special Educational Needs and/or Disability

The number of participants with SEND was not consistently identified across the literature in review. Whereas some papers focused upon subgroups of pupils with identified SEND (e.g Hamili and Boyd, 2002; Oconnor et al., 2011), other authors made reference to SEND as a pupil characteristic but did not consider this factor in their findings (Gilmore, 2013) and many papers made no reference to SEND (e.g Osler, 2006). This is viewed as a limitation when considering the findings to be explored in this review, as an understanding of pupils individual SEND, provides a possible lens through which the findings may be interpreted. For example, if a pupil had identified learning needs, this may influence their behaviour and subsequently their experience of exclusion.

Exclusion experience

Whereas some literature is very clear about the type of exclusion the pupils had experienced (i.e. internal exclusion, FPE or permanent exclusion) (e.g Gilmore, 2013), the way in which other studies (e.g. Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015) reported exclusion information was more ambiguous, (i.e. identifying multiple exclusion types, without reporting how many participants experienced each exclusion type). This causes difficulty in understanding which exclusion phenomenon is under investigation and presents challenges when making links between individuals' school experience and the type of exclusion they received. Subsequently, this lack of clarity hinders consideration of the implications of the findings on professional practice.

2.5.3 Appraisal of the Studies' Methodological Approaches

This methodological evaluation of the literature in review, considers how robust the researchers' methodological approaches were, by exploring some of the strengths and weaknesses observed in the literature.

2.5.2.1 Data collection

Interviews appear to be the primary means of data collection utilised in the research in review. The majority of researchers utilised semi-structured interview schedules to explore participants experiences (Farouk, 2017; Gilmore, 2013; Harriss, Barlow & Moli, 2008; Hilton, 2006; Michael & Fredrickson, 2013; Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015; Tucker, 2013); this is recognised as a strength as "*it allows depth to be achieved by providing the opportunity on the part of the interviewer to probe and expand the interviewee's responses*" (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, P.88); thus, enabling the interviewer to remain grounded in their research questions, whilst also allowing exploration of factors important to the participant in relation to their experiences. Whereas, other studies may be criticised for providing limited transparency regarding data collection (i.e. structure, semi-structured or unstructured interviews) (e.g Osler 2006; McCluskey, Riddell & Weedon, 2015); arguably, insight as to how knowledge is constructed and co-created during the interview process is useful in interpreting the findings.

Other methodological strengths worthy of note were acknowledged during the literature review. Munn and Lloyd, (2005) offered the options of different locations for the pupil interviews; this encouraged a more neutral environment to discuss their exclusion experience, potentially facilitating a more comfortable and liberal dialogue. Whereas, O'Connor, et al., (2011) did not rely on semi-structured interviews, instead they developed inventive, exploratory methods of eliciting the voices of pupils with identified SEBD. This is acknowledged as a strength as it potentially addressed the power

imbalance that can exist between researcher and participant, where the young people are objects of investigation (Ravet, 2007); instead O'Connor et al., (2011) opted for methods of data collection that aimed to focus on empowerment and facilitation by using creative methods such as group activity sessions and the use of educational life grid templates during interviews.

Some studies in this review opted to use focus groups as a method for data collection. The benefits of this approach are acknowledged, as focus groups provide the researcher with the opportunity to collect data inductively and concurrently, with individuals reacting to and building upon the responses of other group members (Krueger & Casey, 2000). Moreover, focus group methodology allows the researcher to explore, and attempt to understand, the multiple social constructions of meanings and knowledge in relation to exclusion. However, the researcher remains cautious about findings generated through this medium as to the potential for one or several group member(s) to dominate the discussion, and concerns that focus groups can suppress or encourage conflicting, contentious and non-normative views to emerge (Smithson, 2000). Moreover, focus groups are arguably not conducive to the generation of knowledge which capture the nuance in individuals lived experience of school and exclusion.

2.5.2.2 Methods of Data Analysis

Consideration of how data is analysed also provides insight as to how knowledge relating to the pupil experience of school exclusion has been produced. In this section the researcher offers some judgements relating to the impact of data analysis methods adopted within the studies in review.

Farouk (2017) used theory and research led thematic analysis, meaning he "*was guided by the theoretical assumptions and findings of previous research*" (P.18). It could be suggested that this method of data analysis caused the author to focus upon emergent themes that were reminiscent of previous research; thus, rendering her un-alert to the nuances of school exclusion that the participants may have expressed. Michaelson and Fredrickson (2013), also utilised a primarily deductive approach

to thematic analysis, as coding used was intended to classify particular features, subsequently, other influential factors may have been overlooked.

Alternatively, Hamil and Boyd (2002) and Trotman et al., (2015) adopted an ethnographic approach, which is commended for acknowledging that all pupils have knowledge, histories and cultural experiences which influence their experience of school. However, as an ethnographic approach focuses upon the culture of a group of people in a bid to understand meanings and behaviours associated with a group, it could be argued that it loses sight of the individual's subjective experiences.

Trotman et al., (2015) utilised "progressive focusing" (Parlett & Hamilton, 1972) during the data analysis process. Trotman et al., (2015) stated that this approach to analysis was chosen, as it allowed for "*a systematic reduction of broad categories of data and ensured that 'unique and unpredicted phenomena' were made visible in the analysis*" (P.243). The way in which knowledge was created in this inductive and flexible manner, may suggest that the findings are closer to the participants experiences.

A Grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) adopted by O'Connor et al., (2011) is observed to be a suitable and helpful approach when exploring pupil voice. Through the process of meticulous data analysis of emergent themes, explanations and theories can be developed; such explanations are grounded in reality constructed by the participant, as continuous reference to the data occurs (Mason, 2002; Denscombe, 2004). As a result, findings are closely linked to participant experiences.

The way in which pupils were consulted about the themes emerging from the data, to confirm that their experiences had been interpreted correctly, was also recognised as a strength in O'Connor et al., (2011), and Gilmore's (2013) research. As this was viewed as a measure to ensure that the voice of CYP is not misrepresented or silenced by the researcher's interpretation (Barker & Weller 2003).

Harriss et al., (2008) reported that their data was analysed thematically using QSR N5, in line with the principles of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (Smith 1995). However, they reported

that "*The first transcript was initially analysed in detail to establish emergent themes. These themes provided a template for the analysis of the remaining interview transcripts*" (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, P.35), arguably, this is not in keeping with the underpinning philosophy of idiography which is dedicated to the thorough investigation of individual factors. Arguably, Harriss et al., (2008) may have completed an in-depth analysis for one case study but failed to 'bracket off' their findings in exploring each pupil experience in turn, as recommended by smith et al. (2009). Yet, this criticism is tentative as no further detail or appendices illustrated the data analysis process.

Arguably, IPA is an approach that was not adopted by the studies in review, which may have been better suited as it allows the space for in depth exploration of pupil experience, whilst 'bracketing off' previous knowledge, and capturing the essence of the phenomenon under investigation (i.e. the experiences of excluded pupils) (Smith ,et al, 2009).

2.6 Psychological Theory Underpinning the Research in Review

Little discussion about theoretical perspectives, ontological and/or epistemological positions, was observed within the literature in review. Arguably, the papers, which stated an explicit psychological theory, offered clarification of the way in which their data had been considered. For example, Farouk (2017) adopted a narrative dialogical perspective, underpinned by symbolic interactionism and stated, "*Besides the organisation of autobiographical memories, the analysis of the data was informed and guided by the theoretical concept of a narrative dialogical self. The autobiographical recollections were therefore conceptualized as re-created social landscapes populated by the voices of significant others and institutions who explained, and sometimes justified, the position of the participant in a lifetime period or memorable event in their lives. In addition, the data analysis took into consideration participants' comparisons to themselves at earlier and later periods in their lives*" (P.18). This provides a clear explanation of the framework in which participant discourse was considered and encourages findings to be linked to psychological theory. Moreover, in discussing their findings the majority of authors also failed to make explicit links with psychology. Through engagement with this literature, the researcher made a number of tentative connections

between the findings and psychological theory, yet cautions, these are her own interpretations and it is up to the reader to appraise how helpful they find the links. These will be highlighted when discussing the findings of the research in review.

2.7 Summary of Methodological Appraisal

In summary, a number of methodological limitations were perceived by the researcher. Large sample sizes cause the researcher to consider if the research in review was truly able to capture nuance in the lived experience when exploring data from larger samples.

Moreover, many of data analysis methods utilised appeared to be deductive rather than inductive processes, raising questions as to whether the lived experiences of pupils' captured, had been viewed through a predetermined lens. The researcher also identified limitations in relation to the age of pupils who have been consulted, as this appears to be restricted to secondary and post-secondary age groups. Furthermore, of the research that did also explore primary aged children's perspectives, their voices appear to be overshadowed by the discourse of older pupils and adults. Finally, it is also difficult to determine which exclusion phenomenon is discussed based upon lack of clarity relating to participant characteristics.

2.8 The Voice of Excluded Pupils: Findings from the Studies in Review

Although variability in the experience of school exclusion was evident through pupil narratives, CYP alluded to a number of factors that, positively or negatively, impacted upon their experience of school and school exclusion. In order to establish patterns of commonality and divergence pupil experiences, as reported in the studies in review, the researcher read each paper in turn, made notes relating to the findings and explored occurring themes, these themes were then grouped. The researcher recognised that some of the themes were cited more regularly, than others across the literature in review. Table 3's aim is to illustrate the occurrence of key themes emerging from the studies chosen for review.

Table 3: key themes emerging from the studies chosen for review.

Key theme	Studies identified	Occurrence of themes
Pupil teacher relationships	(Farouk, 2017; Gilmore, 2013; Hamill, & Boyd, 2002; Harriss, Barlow & Moli, 2008; Hilton, 2006; O'Connor, Hodkinson & Burton, 2011; Osler, 2006, McCluskey, Riddell & Weedon, 2015; Michael & Fredrickson, 2013; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015; Tucker, 2013)	12/12
Pupil teacher interactions	(Farouk, 2017; Gilmore, 2013; Hamill, & Boyd, 2002; O'Connor, Hodkinson & Burton, 2011; Osler, 2006, McCluskey, Riddell & Weedon, 2015; Michael & Fredrickson, 2013; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015; Tucker, 2013)	12/12
Impact of family	(Farouk, 2017; McCluskey, Riddell & Weedon, 2015; Michael & Fredrickson, 2013; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015)	5/12
Impact of peers	(Farouk, 2017; O'Connor, Hodkinson, Burton, 2011; Osler, 2006; Michael & Fredrickson, 2013)	4/12
Impact of primary to secondary school transition	(Farouk, 2017; O'Connor, Hodkinson & Burton, 2011; Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015; Tucker, 2013)	4/12
Environmental factors	(Harriss, Barlow & Moli, 2008; Hilton, 2006; Osler, 2006; Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015; Tucker, 2013)	5/12

2.8.1 Pupil- Teacher Relationships

Of all the literature in review, that explored pupil experience of exclusion from the perspective of CYP, each study found that relationships with staff were a crucial factor in the CYP's lived experience. CYP highlight the influence of both positive and negative teacher- pupil relationships. Based upon responses from CYP, Hamil and Boyd (2002) concluded that teachers were key to promoting good behaviour and preventing exclusion for pupils identified with SEBD.

The extent to which CYP feel listened to appears to impact on the lived experience of CYP in a positive or negative way. When discussing their relationships in school, before their exclusion, some young people expressed a negative construction of teachers as 'annoying', as they felt that teachers did not listen to their point of view. Michael and Fredrickson (2013) reported that one pupil said, *" They don't listen to my point of view all the time or when I need them to. They just think that it's all about them really."* Hamil and Boyd (2002) noted that when young people felt that they weren't listened to, it impacted on their disaffection with school. O'Connor et al., (2011) reported that some pupils shared a negative construction of their relationships with teachers, as they expressed feeling unwanted and how they felt that the teachers did not care about them. One pupil went as far to say *"Yeah, they don't care you could get hit by a lorry tomorrow and they wouldn't be arsed"* (P.299).

On the other hand, Michael and Frederickson (2013) reported that one pupil explained how emotional support, where she felt that she has someone to talk to, was invaluable in reducing her SEBD. The pupil said that *"Well they brung in a behaviour support person for me, J, sort of thing. She just talks to me about everything; home and that and I usually just talk to a teacher here that I'm quite close to about everything so it helps me a lot. If I've had a bad day at home, I'll bring it into school and take it out on everyone so... there's more opportunity for teachers to listen here than in mainstream"* (P.412). This suggests that, feeling listened to is an element which is vital when providing emotional support, which may provide a sense of being cared for. It may be argued that the unavailability of such support in a mainstream setting, may have a detrimental impact on a young person's SEBD, which may result in exclusion, as it did for this particular pupil.

2.8.2 Pupil Teacher Interaction

Some pupils reflected upon their interactions with teachers at school, during which they deemed what the teachers did or said to be unreasonable. Munn and Lloyd (2005) illustrated that for some pupils, such unreasonable behaviour on the teacher's part, subsequently elicited feelings of anger and

resentment; which underpinned behaviour, which resulted in their exclusion. Hamil and Boyd (2002) also reported that CYP indicated that dictatorial approaches to behaviour management, which allow no room for pupils to express their views or perspective, was also a factor that may provoke exclusion. Munn and Lloyd (2005) highlight that this is not to suggest that rules, boundaries and sanctions are not appropriate, but note that such approaches are counterintuitive to active pupil participation. In Osler's research (2006), pupils implied that a reduction in the power imbalance between the teacher and pupil, is vital in supporting a positive school experience; with one pupil drawing comparison between mainstream and alternative provision where "*if you do something wrong they just talk to you about it*" (P.583). They noted that this was a factor that positively influenced their school experience and ability to remain in school, once they moved to an alternative provision.

A sense of inequality and unfairness is also observable in a variety of research where young people discussed their exclusion experience. Hamil and Boyd (2002), highlighted significant linguistic features of the participant responses in their research; where the young people used language including 'fair', 'equal' 'rights' and 'respect' when discussing their exclusion experience. Across the research CYP reported that they felt targeted in a negative way by staff in school (Hamil & Boyd 2002; Osler 2006; Munn & Lloyd 2005). CYP reported feeling targeted for a variety of reasons including:

- Family reputation; specifically, the behaviour of their peers
- Negative reputation based upon, their own previous behaviours.

Osler (2006) highlighted that some pupils reported that their reputation often preceded them and influenced how teachers perceived them and their behaviours; subsequently, having influenced the teachers approach to their own behaviour management. One pupil who was permanently excluded, talked of how she had a bad reputation before she started at her school because of her sister who behaved badly, reporting that "*teachers didn't even give me a chance*" (P.582), whilst another pupil reported that they were "*tarred with the same brush*" due to their family name (Munn & Lloyd, 2005, P.212). O'Connor et al., (2011), reported that pupils felt that their teachers had preconceived ideas about 'the

sort of pupil they would be', and expressed that they would be treated differently based upon this preconception.

CYP also reported that teachers held a negative preconception of them, based upon their own previous challenging behaviours. CYP noted that Teachers were more vigilant to behavioural transgressions and the punishments they received were harsher (Hamil & Boyd, 2002).

Munn and Lloyd (2005) posited disruptive behaviour (or the anticipation of disruptive behaviour) by CYP, can challenge a teacher's sense of authority and self-efficacy. They suggested that the way in which teachers negatively construct pupils based upon their background or family reputation, may be used as a means to remove responsibility from themselves. Considering the impact of a perceived negative preconception staff may have of an individual child, using the concept of circular causality (Dallos & Draper, 2010), it is understandable how behaviour may escalate and result in an exclusion. (See figure 6).
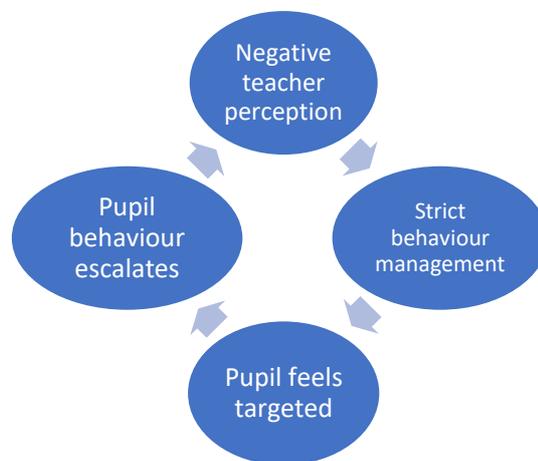
Figure 6. illustration of circular causality

CYP also alluded to inequitable behaviour management, noting that when they engaged in certain behaviours they were excluded, whilst other pupils engaged in similar behaviours and avoided

exclusion. O'Connor et al., (2011) reported that some of the young people felt that they were being unfairly isolated by their teachers and deliberately picked on. One young person reported "*Do you know what it feels like? It is not like he picks you up on things – he goes out the way to see what is wrong. Do you know what I mean ... to look for a fight". (*Munn and Lloyd, 2005, (P.212). Hilton (2006) posited, that for many CYP "*their sense of resentment about how they had been treated at school by teachers had served to exacerbate their anger and disruptive influence*" (p. 304). Thomas, Walker and Webb (1998) note that the measure of how inclusive a school is, is the extent to which everyone is treated equally and valued thus, the way that CYP are making sense of their school experiences, raises questions relating to the inclusive practice and equality within schools, specifically in relation to those pupils who present with challenging behaviours. Yet, it is important to note that although a sense of unfairness was evident in the experience of some CYP; some pupils felt that their exclusion was warranted, based upon their behaviour, and presented with a sense of acceptance (Hamil & Boyd, 2002). The way that some CYP accepted responsibility for their own behaviours and reported that their exclusion was just, whilst other CYP focused upon factors, beyond their control, is arguably indicative of the extent to which attribution theory (Heider,1958) and locus of control (Rotter, 1966) may play a part in how CYP make sense of their exclusion experiences.

2.8.3 Impact of family

CYP discussed the impact of their home circumstance, in relation to the behaviour that they displayed in school, which they were excluded for (Munn and Lloyd, 2005). CYP shared experiences of being a young carer, living in a women's refuge, witnessing domestic violence and abuse. Some CYP talked to the level of understanding or consideration, that school staff had, relating to the challenges that they face outside of school. Munn and Lloyd (2005) assert that the perceived lack of understanding and/or consideration of pupil's home circumstances by school staff is an important revelation that schools must reflect upon. Thus, it could be suggested that sensitively sharing necessary information with relevant staff is of great importance in the cases of these young people, as knowledge of their

circumstances may influence the way in which teachers perceive and manage their challenging behaviour. It could be suggested that greater understanding of how home circumstances may be influencing a pupil's behaviour, may influence the way in which challenging behaviours are managed. Subsequently, it may be of benefit for exclusionary practices to be replaced or preceded with much needed pastoral support.

Support and involvement of family in the CYP's lives, was also identified as an important factor in how they experienced school. Trotman et al., (2015) reported that pupils recognised the lengths that school would go to 'keep them on track' and acknowledged the benefits of direct contact between school and their parents. Conversely, pupils discussed the lack of encouragement and support from parents, with one young person discussing how his foster carer placed no value in school, hence, exclusion was not something to avoid.

2.8.4 Impact of peers

A small number of young people reflected upon how positive relationships with their peers provided a sense of reassurance or safety during their school experiences. Yet, more children appeared to reflect upon the impact of negative relationships and interactions, with their peers.

Osler (2006) reported that young people highlighted the impact that peer arguments had on their school experience and subsequent exclusion. For example, one pupil reported that peer arguments distracted one pupil from her work to the point that she received an internal exclusion. CYP also noted the negative impact that other pupils' disruptive behaviour had on their learning (Osler, 2006; Hilton, 2006). A more extreme example of negative peer interactions, that was pivotal in the exclusion experience of some CYP, was bullying. Osler (2006) represents a pupil view that bullying was a factor that impacted on their exclusion experience, as she reacted to persistent racially abusive discourse from

a peer, and subsequently received a fixed period exclusion. Furthermore, O'Connor et al., (2011), noted that peer behaviour outside of school impacted greatly on pupil behaviour in school. For example, one pupil shared that he had been attacked on the bus, which resulted in a negative behavioural reaction on his part in school, and a subsequent exclusion.

2.8.5 Impact of Primary to Secondary School Transition

Trotman et al., (2015) reported that when discussing their transition from primary school to secondary school, young people described feeling disconnected from supportive relationships, with the sense of being physically and emotionally 'lost' in secondary school. Young people highlighted this to be a catalyst for behavioural difficulties; with a particular pupil noting that he used 'poor behaviour' as a means of eliciting attention from staff and getting noticed. In addition to this, Farouk (2017) reported that young people also highlighted the impersonal and inflexible culture in secondary schools, to be very different to their primary school experiences; suggesting that young people found the change difficult to cope with, which exacerbated their challenging behaviours. Trotman et al., (2015) reported that based upon analysis of pupil interviews, "*negative behaviour is magnified when the effects of transition are inadequately managed*" (P.245), which emphasises the need for schools to provide more support for pupils struggling with the transition, as their research suggests that if not supported, the trajectories of these pupils may involve exclusion.

2.8.6 Environmental Factors

Environmental factors referred to here, included the appropriateness of the curriculum, pupil-teacher ratios and the availability of support. Rather than attempting to discuss each of these factors discretely, it is hoped that the interrelatedness of each is highlighted in order to illuminate the impact.

Hilton (2006) reported that young people she interviewed highlighted the work that they had to do and the difficulties they experienced, paired with a lack of support, as factors that negatively impacted on their school experiences. Young people referred to large class sizes in mainstream, the pupil teacher ratios and the subsequent struggle to access support, given the other pressures on teacher's time. Young people interviewed in Osler's (2006) research reiterated the negative impact of large class size and limited support, with a number of young people having expressed that they were able to flourish in alternative provisions, due to the low teacher pupil ratio and additional support. Furthermore, the young people noted that in alternative provision, they not only had improved access to academic support, but benefited from emotional support. Moreover, Michael and Fredrickson (2013), reported that where young people referenced their improved experiences at alternative provision, they attributed positive outcomes to the learning environment; specifically, in relation to class size. (One pupil suggested that the small class size provided a calmer learning environment, in comparison to larger classrooms facilitate a tense atmosphere. Another pupil noted that when part of a larger class, he messed about due to a lack of support. He indicated that smaller classes in alternative provision promote positive learning and behavioural outcomes).

Porter (2000) highlighted that "*a relevant curriculum is both a preventative and interventive measure in relation to disruptive behaviour*" (P.118). Michael and Fredrickson (2013) reported that young people also discussed the positive impact of a curriculum that was relevant and engaging. To some young people this meant a curriculum which was specifically teaching them the skills they needed to go on to the career of their choice. Hamil and Boyd (2002) noted that pupils highlighted that the curriculum they received was inappropriate and often exacerbated their behavioural difficulties. Based upon the responses of young people, an engaging curriculum could mean a curriculum that teaches skills they felt they needed to reach their aspirations. Other pupils referred to the level of differentiation they received, which appeared to have a positive impact on their academic self-concept and their engagement with education. Arguably, a relevant curriculum would also encompass emotional literacy, tailored to the needs of the young person (Weare & Gray, 2003).

2.8.7 Preference for Alternative Provision

Of the pupils who attended an alternative provision, the majority of pupils interviewed, showed a clear preference for the learning environment and support available in the alternative provisions. Many factors that negatively affected their experiences in mainstream (e.g. curriculum, class size, formality of relationships and amount of pastoral support) were noted to change drastically upon entering an alternative provision (Hamil & Boyd, 2002; Harriss, Barlow, & Moli, 2008; Michael & Fredrickson, 2013; & McCluskey et al., 2015). Thus, it could be suggested that these factors have been key in the pupil's post exclusion experience and facilitate the maintenance of their placement at the alternative provision.

2.8.8 Summary of Findings

In summary, research evidence (Farouk, 2017; Gilmore,2013; Hamill, & Boyd, 2002; Harriss, Barlow & Moli, 2008; Hilton, 2006; O'Connor, Hodkinson, Burton, 2011; Osler 2006, McCluskey, Riddell & Weedon, 2015; Michael and Fredrickson, 2013; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015; Tucker, 2013), illustrates that talking directly to CYP who have experienced a SE is an effective way of exploring the phenomenon of SE; as they have experiential knowledge distinct to that of adults, that may provide a unique insight to school exclusion (Cook and Hess, 2007). Furthermore, the methodological strengths and limitations, paired with the findings, provide a sound basis for the consideration of future research.

The CYP who shared their experiences in the research in review, have provided insight to the factors that were important within their lived experience; they identified a myriad of factors relating to school systems, interpersonal relationships and family circumstances, that professionals are encouraged to reflect upon in their practice. Considering these findings, the researcher would posit that consideration of an eco-systemic view of school and SE (Bronfrennbrener, 1979), would be a helpful

framework through which pupil experiences may be explored, as findings highlight that SE is not experienced in a vacuum at the individual level.

3. Implications for Educational Psychology Practice

Arguably research that elicits pupil voice, relating to school exclusion experience highlights an area of particular relevance for educational psychologists (EPs), as Ingram (2013) suggests that EPs have a vital role in gathering and communicating children's views. Professionals, including EPs, have been urged to listen to pupils in order to gain an insight to their experiences that may help to support the maintenance of school placements. Fox (2015) recognises a specific role for EPs in gathering the voice of pupils with SEND, and Aston and Lambert (2010) assert that not only should EP's be involved in gathering pupil views and experiences, but they are "*arguably very well placed to assist local authorities to develop supportive 'cultures', 'attitudes', 'environments' and 'systems'*" (p. 50). Potentially, EPs are able to use the information gathered from CYP who have experienced SE to follow Lambert's recommendation. Moreover, given the core functions of an EP, arguably, they are able to provide support at a variety of levels (strategic, group and individual) for CYP who experience school exclusion (Farrell, Woods and Rooney, 2010). Kelly, Woolfson and Boyle, (2008) recognise that promoting the inclusion of all pupils, and reducing barriers to learning is central to EP practice; arguably, pupils who are at risk of exclusion, or have experienced exclusion, meet this brief more than most.

4. Gap in the Literature

When reviewing available literature that has attempted to explore exclusion from the perspective of CYP, it is apparent that most research has sought to explore how secondary aged pupils understood their experience of school exclusion (see. (Farouk, 2017; Gilmore, 2013; Hamill, & Boyd, 2002; Hilton, 2006; O'Connor, Hodkinson, Burton, 2011; Osler, 2006, McCluskey, Riddell & Weedon,

2015; Michael & Fredrickson, 2013; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015; Tucker, 2013). The researcher is only able to find two papers that explored primary aged pupils' experience of school and SE, however, limitations relating to the focus of inquiry (Harriss, Barlow & Moli, 2008) and the voice of primary aged pupils within the findings are evident, as the majority of the findings evidenced through adult dialogue (McCluskey, Riddell & Weedon, 2015). It is acknowledged that a focus upon exclusions in secondary school is logical, as most exclusions are issued to pupils in Key stage 3 and 4. However, nationally 1145 children experienced permanent exclusion and 55,740 children have experienced FPE from primary school in the 2015/16 academic year (DfE, 2017). Arguably, a moral imperative and legal framework outlining a duty to elicit the voice of CYP regardless of age (DfES, 2015) raises questions as to why primary aged children appear to be offered fewer opportunities to engage in conversations relating to matters that affect them (i.e. exclusion) in comparison to their secondary aged counterparts, within a research arena. This presents a noticeable gap in the literature that the current research aimed to investigate.

5. Aims of Current Research

This study aims to contribute to existing literature in this area, by specifically focusing upon the lived experiences of primary aged pupils in years 5 and 6, as the majority of literature explores the experiences of secondary aged pupils. It is hoped that the experiential knowledge accessed through this research can be utilised by professionals working with vulnerable groups (i.e. pupils with SEND/ SEMH), to promote positive social and emotional outcomes and educational inclusion. This information will be shared anonymously with the Head of Education, the Head Teacher of the specialist setting, and the Head Teachers of mainstream primary schools, to support thinking about the process and experience of school exclusion.

Research question: *what is the lived experience of fixed period exclusion, from the perspective of pupils in year 5 and 6 with identified SEMH, who have experienced FPE?*

The purpose of the research is exploratory, as it aimed to provide a rich account of the lived experience of fixed period exclusion, in turn evolving understanding of how primary aged pupils with identified SEMH, experience school and FPE. The reasoning for the research design and methodology by which the research question will be explored, will be outlined within the Empirical research paper.

6. References

Barker, J. A. (2010). Pupils or prisoners? Institutional geographies and internal exclusion in UK secondary schools. *Area, 42(3),* 378-386.

Barker, J., & Weller, S. (2003). "Is it fun?" Developing children centred research methods. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, *23*(1/2), 33-58.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Chamberlain, T., Golden, S., & Bergeron, C. (2011). Office of the Children's Commissioner: Children and young peoples views on education policy.

Children's Commissioner for England. (2012). *They never give up on you*, Office of the Children's Commissioner for England school exclusion enquiry. London: Office of the Children's Commissioner.

Cole, T., J. Visser, and H. Daniels (1999). "A Model Explaining Effective EBD Practice in Mainstream Schools." *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties* 4 (1): 12–18.

Cook, T., & Hess, E. (2007). What the Camera Sees and from Whose Perspective Fun methodologies for engaging children in enlightening adults. *Childhood*, *14*(1), 29-45.

Cooper, P., & Jacobs, B. (2011). *From inclusion to engagement: Helping students engage with schooling through policy and practice*. John Wiley & Sons.

CRAE (Children's Rights Alliance for England) (2013). State of Children's Rights in England. Review of Government Action on United Nations Recommendations for Strengthening Children's Rights in the UK. 10th Report. London: Children's Rights Alliance for England.

Creswell, J.W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design*: *Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks

Dallos, R., & Draper, R. (2010). *An introduction to family therapy: Systemic theory and practice*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

Daniels, H. (2011). Exclusion from School and its Consequences. *Psychological Science & Education (1),* 38-50.

Daiute, C., & Fine, M. (2003). Youth perspectives on violence and injustice. *Journal of Social Issues*, *59*(1), 1-14.

Denscombe, M. 2004. *The good research guide: For small scale research*. 2nd edition. Berkshire: Open University Press.

Department for Education (DfE) (1994). *Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs*. London: DFE.

Department for Education and Skills. (2001a). *Special educational needs: code of practice.*

Nottinghamshire: DfES

Department for Education and Skills (DfES) (2003). *Every Child Matters*. London: HMSO

Department for Education. (2010). *The Importance of Teaching. The Schools White Paper.*

London. DfE. Retrieved November 3rd, 2016, from

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachme

nt_data/file/175429/CM-7980.pdf

Department for Education. (2011). *The Education Act 2011: equalities impact assessment.*

Retrieved November   3rd, 2016, from

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-education-act-2011-equalities-

impact-assessment

Department for Education. (2011). National Statistics, Permanent and fixed-period exclusions

in England: 2010 to 2011. Retrieved November 3rd, 2016, from

https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-

from-schools-in-england-academic-year-2010-to-2011

Department for Education. (2012). National Statistics, Permanent and fixed-period exclusions

in England: 2011 to 2012. Retrieved November 3rd, 2016, from

https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-

from-schools-in-england-2011-to-2012-academic-year

Department for Education. (2013). National Statistics, Permanent and fixed-period exclusions

in England: 2012 to 2013. Retrieved November 3rd, 2016, from

https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-

england-2012-to-2013

Department for Education (DfE) & Department for Health (DfH) (2015). *Special educational*

needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years Statutory guidance for

organisations which work with and support children and young people who have

special educational needs or disabilities. Retrieved on, 27th[th] January, 2016, from

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815

/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf.

Department for Education. (2014). National Statistics, Permanent and fixed-period exclusions

in England: 2013 to 2014. Retrieved November 3rd, 2016, from

https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-

england-2013-to-2014

Department for Education. (2015). *Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil*

referral units in England Statutory guidance for those with legal responsibilities in

relation to exclusion. Retrieved November 5th[th], 2016, from

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachme
nt_data/file/641418/20170831_Exclusion_Stat_guidance_Web_version.pdf

Department for Education. (2015). National Statistics, Permanent and fixed-period exclusions

in England: 2014 to 2015. Retrieved November 3rd, 2016, from

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/539704
/SFR_26_2016_text.pdf.

Department for Education. (2016). National Statistics, Permanent and fixed-period exclusions

in England: 2015 to 2016. Retrieved November 3rd, 2016, from

https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-
england-2015-to-2016

Department for Education. (2016). *Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil*

referral units in England Statutory guidance for those with legal responsibilities in

relation to exclusion Retrieved November 3rd, 2016, from

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/641418
/20170831_Exclusion_Stat_guidance_Web_version.pdf

Department for Education. (2012). The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews)

(England) Regulations. Retrieved November 5th, 2016, from

http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/1033/made

De Pear, S. & Garner, P. (1996) Tales from the exclusion zone: the views of teachers and pupils, in: E. Blyth & J. Milner (Eds) *Exclusion from school: inter-professional issues for policy and practice* (London, Routledge).

Farouk, S. (2017). My life as a pupil: The autobiographical memories of adolescents excluded from school. *Journal of adolescence*, *55*, 16-23.

Fielding, M. (2001). Students as radical agents of change. *Journal of educational change*, *2*(2), 123-141.

Gilmore, G. (2013). 'What's a fixed term exclusion, Miss?' Students' perspectives on a disciplinary inclusion room in England. *British Journal of Special Education*, *40*(3), 106-113.

Glaser, B., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. Aldine Publishing Company. Hawthorne, New York.

Gordon, A. (2001). School Exclusion in England: children's voices and adults solutions? *Educational Studies,   27(1),*69-85.

Hamill, P., & Boyd, B. (2002). Equality, fairness and rights–the young person's voice. *British Journal of Special Education*, *29*(3), 111-117.

Harris, B., Vincent, K., Thomson, P., & Toalster, R. (2006). Does every child know they matter? Pupils' views of one alternative to exclusion. *Pastoral Care in Education*, *24*(2), 28-38.

Harriss, L., Barlow, J., & Moli, P. (2008). Specialist residential education for children with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties: pupil, parent, and staff perspectives. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *13*(1), 31-47.

Hilton, Z. (2006). Disaffection and school exclusion: Why are inclusion policies still not working in Scotland?. *Research Papers in Education*, 21(3), 295-314.

Heider, F. (1958). *The psychology of interpersonal relations*. New York: Wiley

HMSO, (1944) Education Act 1944. London: HMSO

HMSO, (1981) Education Act 1981. London: HMSO

H M Government (1989). *The Children Act*. London: HMSO.

HM Government (2003). *Every Child Matters*. Norwich: The Stationery Office.

HM Government (2004). *The Children Act*. Norwich: The Stationery Office.

H M Government (2010). *The Equality Act*. London: HMSO.

H M Government (2014). *The Children and Families Act*. London: HMSO.

Hawkins, B. (2011). *A Study of Pupils at Risk of Exclusion and their Attitudes to School* (Doctoral dissertation, University of York).

Hayden, C. (2003). Responding to exclusion from school in England. *Journal of Educational Administration*, *41*(6), 626-639.

Haynes, B. (2005). The paradox of the excluded child. *Educational Philosophy and theory*, *37*(3), 333-341.

Hodge, N. (2005). Reflections on diagnosing autism spectrum disorders. *Disability & Society*, *20*(3), 345-349.

Kaplan, C. A., & McArdle, P. (2004). Ethical and legal principles. In I. B. Crome, H. Ghodse, E. Gilvarry, & P. McArdle (Eds.), *Young people and Substance Misuse*. London: Royal College of Psychiatrists.

Kirby, P. (2001, June). Participatory research in schools. In *Forum* (Vol. 43, No. 2, pp. 74-77). *Symposium Journals*.

Knowles, B., & Cole, T. (2011). *How to help children and young people with complex behavioural difficulties: A guide for practitioners working in educational settings*. London and Philadelphia. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2014). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research*. CA: United States of America. Sage publications.

Lauchlan, F., & Boyle, C. (2007). Is the use of labels in special education helpful?. *Support for learning*, *22*(1), 36-42.

Lewis, R., and E. Burman. 2008. Providing for student voice in classroom management: Teachers' views. *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 12, 151–67.

Loizidou, C. (2009). *School exclusion: exploring young people's views*. Institute of Education, University of London.

Lown, J. (2005). Including the excluded: participant perceptions. *Educational & Child Psychology, 22(3),* 45-57.

Mannion, G. (2007). Going spatial, going relational: Why "listening to children" and children's participation needs reframing. *Discourse: studies in the cultural politics of education*, *28*(3), 405-420.

Mason, J. 2002. *Qualitative researching*. 2nd ed. London: Sage.

McCluskey, G., Lloyd, G., Riddell, S., Weedon, E., & Fordyce, M. (2014). Exclusion from School: compounding or tackling inequality. *Discourse: Studies in the cultural politics of education/in press*.

McCluskey, G., Riddell, S., & Weedon, E. (2015). Children's rights, school exclusion and alternative educational provision. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *19*(6), 595-607.

McCluskey, G., Riddell, S., Weedon, E., & Fordyce, M. (2016). Exclusion from school and recognition of difference. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *37*(4), 529-539.

McCrystal, P., Percy, A., & Higgins, K. (2007). Exclusion and marginalisation in adolescence: The experience of school exclusion on drug use and antisocial behaviour. *Journal of youth studies*, *10*(1), 35-54.

McIntyre, D., Pedder, D., & Rudduck, J. (2005). Pupil voice: comfortable and uncomfortable learnings for teachers. *Research papers in education*, *20*(2), 149-168.

Michael, S., & Frederickson, N. (2013). Improving pupil referral unit outcomes: pupil perspectives. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *18*(4), 407-422.

Munn, P., & Lloyd, G. (2005). Exclusion and excluded pupils. *British Educational Research Journal*, *31*(2), 205-221.

Newton, M. (2016). *Educational psychologists' practice: obtaining and representing young people's views* (Doctoral dissertation, Cardiff University).

O'Connor, M., Hodkinson, A., Burton, D., & Torstensson, G. (2011). Pupil voice: listening to and hearing the educational experiences of young people with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD). *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *16*(3), 289-302.from school.

O'Riordan, Z. (2015). Building productive relationships with young people with SEBD in transition: the role of identity. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *20*(4), 415-431.

Osterman, K. F. (2000). Students' need for belonging in the school community. *Review of educational research*, *70*(3), 323-367.

Osler, A. (2006). Excluded girls: interpersonal, institutional and structural violence in schooling. *Gender and education*, *18*(6), 571-589.

Parlett, M., & Hamilton, D. (1972). *Evaluation as illumination: A new approach to the study of innovatory programs*: in Occasional paper, Centre for Research in the Educational Sciences, University of Edinburgh. Edinburgh.

Parker, C., Paget, A., Ford, T., & Gwernan-Jones, R. (2016). '. he was excluded for the kind of behaviour that we thought he needed support with…'A qualitative analysis of the experiences and perspectives of parents whose children have been excluded from school. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *21*(1), 133-151.

Pomeroy, E. 2000. *Experiencing exclusion*, Stoke on Trent: Trentham

Porter, L. (2000) *Behaviour in our schools- theory and practice for teachers.* Buckingham;
    Oxford university Press.

Quennerstedt, A. (2015). *Education and children's rights*. Routledge international handbook
    of children's rights studies. London, 201-215.

Ravet, J. (2007). Enabling pupil participation in a study of perceptions of disengagement:
    methodological matters. *British Journal of Special Education*, *34*(4), 234-242.

Rendall, S. and Stuart, M. (2005*). Excluded From School: Systemic Practice for Mental
    Health and Education Professionals.* London: Routledge.

Rotter, J. B. (1966). Generalized expectancies for internal versus external control of
        reinforcement. *Psychological monographs: General and applied*, *80*(1), 1.

Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2011). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. CA:
    United States of America. Sage.

SEED. (2001) *Better Behaviour – Better Learning.* Report of the Discipline Task Group.
        Edinburgh: Stationary Office.

Sellman, E. (2009). Lessons learned: Student voice at a school for pupils experiencing social,
        emotional and behavioural difficulties. *Emotional and behavioural*

difficulties, *14*(1), 33-48.

Sharp, R. (2014). Ready, steady, action: what enables young people to perceive themselves as active agents in their lives? *Educational Psychology in Practice, 30(*4), 347-364.

Smith, J. A. (1995). Semi-structured interviewing and qualitative analysis. *Rethinking methods in psychology*. London: Sage.

Smith, J.A., Flowers, P., Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method, research*. London: Sage.

Smithson, J. (2000). Using and analysing focus groups: limitations and possibilities. *International journal of social research methodology*, *3*(2), 103-119.

Thomas, G., Walker, D., and Webb, J. (1998). *The making of the inclusive school*. London: Routledge/Falmer.

Thompson, R. (2011). Individualisation and social exclusion: The case of young people not in education, employment or training. *Oxford Review of Education*, *37*(6), 785-802.

Trotman, D., Tucker, S., & Martyn, M. (2015). Understanding problematic pupil behaviour: perceptions of pupils and behaviour coordinators on secondary school exclusion in an English city. *Educational Research*, *57*(3), 237-253.

Tucker, S. (2013). Pupil vulnerability and school exclusion: developing responsive pastoral policies and practices in secondary education in the UK. *Pastoral Care in Education*, *31*(4), 279-291.

United Nations (UN) (1989). *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Brussels: The UN General Assembly

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (1994). The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education. Retrieved from: http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/SALAMA_E.PDF

Verschuren, P. (2001). Holism versus reductionism in modern social science research. *Quality & Quantity, 35,* 389-405.

Visser, J., & Cole, T. (2003). *A study of children and young people who present challenging behaviour*. School of Education, University of Birmingham.

Warshak, R. (2004). Payoffs and pitfalls of listening to children. *Family Relations, 52*, 373-384.

Weare, K., & Gray, G. (2003). *What works in developing children's emotional and social competence and wellbeing?*. London: Department for Education and Skills.

Willems, E. P., & Raush, H. L. (1969). Naturalistic Viewpoints in Psychological Research Holt, Rinehart, & Winston. *New York Google Scholar*.

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

Doctorate in Educational Psychology (DedPsy)

PART 2

Empirical Research Paper

School Exclusion: Exploring the Experience of Primary Aged Pupils attending a Specialist Setting

Abstract

Government data indicates that Fixed Period Exclusion (FPE) rates in primary schools are not in-keeping with an overall national trend of reduced rates of exclusion across the country. Moreover, pupils with identified Special Educational Needs and/or Disability, particularly those identified to have Social Emotional Mental Health Difficulties (SEMH), previously categorized as 'Social Emotional Behavioural Difficulties', remain disproportionately represented in the exclusion data. Although research has explored the phenomenon of exclusion from the perspective of secondary aged pupils, the voices of their primary school counterparts remain limited within the literature. Thus, this research explores the lived experience of FPE from the perspective of primary aged pupils, who attend a specialist provision for SEMH in England. Semi-structured interviews were completed with 7 pupils in Years 5 and 6, in order to explore their experience. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was conducted in accordance with guidelines from Smith Larkin & Flowers (2009). The experience of FPE was interpreted from the pupils' sense-making. The Superordinate IPA themes included: 'Relationships', 'Attribution' and 'Managing change'. 'Relationships' captured the importance of both the adult- pupil relationships and peer relationships. There was observed polarity within the adult-pupils relationships, which appeared to be positively or negatively impacted by the adults behaviour management and communication styles, and the level of practical and emotional support that was provided. Peer relationships were also noted to be important in the pupils' narratives, as they appeared to provide a sense of belonging and security. 'Attribution' was a further superordinate theme emerging from the analysis, capturing the internal and external attributions held by the pupils that underpinned how they made sense of their school exclusion experience. 'Managing change' was the final superordinate theme identified; this describes how the pupils coped with their exclusion, the emotional impact of that exclusion and the effects of the exclusion processes. Recommendations for future research are made and the implications of the results are discussed in relation to educational psychology practice. This research highlights the value of educational psychologists (EPs) listening to pupil voice and considering their exclusion experience using an eco-systemic framework; this generates thinking about the broader systemic factors which are at play for excluded pupils and those at risk of exclusion. Additionally, findings highlight the need for further training to promote nurturing environments and better emotional support for excluded pupils' that EPs are well placed to provide. Moreover, they would also indicate that clear guidance developed by EPs and implemented by schools in relation to the processes and effects of exclusion, with an emphasis on the involvement and communication of pupils and their families, would be beneficial.

PART TWO: Empirical Research Paper
1.1 <u>School Exclusion Defined</u>

In the context of this research, school exclusion (SE) refers to a disciplinary measure that a head teacher may invoke in response to challenging, inappropriate or serious misbehaviour (Barker, 2010, Daniels, 2011). Relevant legislation details that SE may be permanent (meaning a pupil will not return to that school, unless the exclusion is overturned) or SE may be on a fixed-period basis (meaning a pupil is excluded from a school for a set period of time.) (The Education Act, 2002, as amended by the Education Act, 2011). "*A fixed period exclusion can involve a part of the school day and it does not have to be for a continuous period. A pupil may be excluded for one or more fixed periods up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year. This total includes exclusions from previous schools covered by the exclusion legislation*" (Department for Education DfE, 2017. P.8).

1.2 <u>Impact of School Exclusion</u>

For pupils who have experienced SE, the negative impact that it may have on their life can be substantial (Parker Paget, Ford and Gwernan-Jones, 2016). Within the literature, the consequences appear to fall into broad categories of negative outcomes; psychological and practical.

Figure 7: Psychological and Practical impact of School Exclusion

Psychological harm

Psychological harm has been associated with the experience of SE (Lown, 2005) and the negative impact SE may have upon CYP's mental health and wellbeing is evident (Rendall & Stuart, 2005). Negative psychological outcomes associated with SE include: the pupils experiencing feelings of rejection, stigmatisation and shame (Harris, Vincent, Thomson & Toalster, 2006). Furthermore, Osterman (2000) reports exclusion can lead to strong negative feelings such depression, grief, loneliness and anger.

Practical implications

At a practical level, statistics demonstrate that pupils who have experienced school exclusion are at greater risk of academic underachievement (McCrystal, Percy & Higgins, 2007) and future unemployment (Kaplan & McArdle, 2004), with 34% of all permanently excluded pupils falling into the category of 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET) (Thompson, 2011). Additionally, excluded pupils are reportedly at a greater risk of drug use, anti-social behaviour and crime during adolescence, and subsequent marginalisation and social exclusion in later life (McCrystal, Percy & Higgins, 2007).

1.3 <u>Prevalence of School Exclusion</u>

1.3.1 National Context

A yearly statistical release provided by the Department for Education (DfE, 2005: 2006: 2007: 2008: 2009: 2010: 2011: 2012: 2013: 2014: 2015: 2016: 2017) offers an overview of exclusion data over time. During the past 10 years, the overall rate of fixed period exclusion (FPE) across primary, secondary and special schools has decreased from 5.65% of pupil enrolments in 2005/6 to 4.29% of pupil enrolments in 2015/16. Yet, when considering this longitudinal data, the overall rate of FPE in primary schools has increased from 1.11% of pupil enrolments in 2005/6 to 1.21% of pupil enrolments in 2015/16, whilst rates of FPE in secondary schools (10.92% to 8.46%) and special schools (18.32% to 12.53%) have decreased. Arguably, the long-term data indicates that progress has been made in reducing the number of school exclusions occurring in secondary and special schools but raises questions as to why FPE exclusion rates continue to rise in primary schools in England. Moreover, data indicates a relatively steady increase in the rate of FPE issued to primary aged pupils in the last 5 years (0.90% in 2011/12) to 1.21% in 2015/16). It is acknowledged that this increase of 0.31% may appear negligible in percentile terms, yet, this translates to 17,950 more FPE being issued in 2015/16 than 2005/06.

1.3.2 Local Context

Over the past 5 years, local authorities exclusion rates reflect a relatively consistent rate of FPE (range between 0.87 in 2016/17 and 0.96 in 2012/13); on average this equates to 241 primary aged pupils receiving a FPE each academic year (DfE, 2017). Although exclusion rates have been below the national average (except in 2012/13), the local authorities schools strategy (2016) '*Working together to enable all our children and young people to be the best they can be*' highlights concerns regarding exclusion rates and pledges to "*support pupils who have been excluded to access learning in an appropriate educational setting*"(P.14) . Thus, it is plausible to suggest that this is a key objective for change within the local authority.

1.4 <u>Vulnerability to Exclusion</u>

In a yearly statistical release, the DfE annually highlight that certain pupil groups are disproportionately represented in the exclusion data (see DfE 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016). Such trends persist, with FPE rates continuing to be observed in relation to certain pupil groups (DfE, 2017). A subgroup of pupils identified to be disproportionately represented within the exclusion data

are those identified to have Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties; this subgroup of pupils account for 43% of the SEND exclusion rates. In the Children's Commissioner's School Exclusion Enquiry (2011), it was concluded that a further examination of the mechanisms underpinning disproportionate rates of exclusion for certain groups was required. Thus, the current research's aim to explore the experiences of pupils with SEMH, (a disproportionately represented group in the exclusion data), is arguably relevant and purposeful.

1.4 The Rights of Children and Young People and Pupil Voice

The importance of education is such that education is declared a human right (Quennerstedt, 2015); yet, CYP can be officially and legally excluded from school. In their paper titled 'the paradox of the excluded child', Haynes (2005) highlighted the discord between the legal requirement for a CYP to attend school when they meet compulsory school age and the process of SE. Additionally, Children's rights include the right to be listened to and have their contributions valued (Office of the Children's Commissioner, 2017).

Although school exclusion is considered extensively at an academic, government, and community level, the CYP who are at risk of, or have experienced, school exclusion are rarely offered the opportunity to join the debate and have their voices heard (Thomas, 2007). Lee and Breen (2007) highlight a lack of research exploring exclusion from the perspective of CYP, alongside an apparent professional "*reluctance about consulting pupils*" (p.451), thus suggesting that many CYP are not being extended their legal right. Moreover, much of the limited research is criticised for being constructed through an adult lens, which fails to explore the essence of real life experience through CYP's perspectives (Daiute & Fine, 2003). Thus, the process of SE and CYPs limited involvement in discussion about SE within a research arena presents a challenge within a children's rights context.

1.5 Benefits of Exploring Pupil Voice

Warshsak (2004) posits that there are two key benefits of adults eliciting the voice of CYP: Enlightenment and empowerment.

Enlightenment

Elicitng pupil voice is argued to provide enlightenment for the adults around the child/young person, occurring from understanding the unique perspectives of CYP. This is most valuable, when used constructively as a means of shaping future practice. McIntyre, Pedder and Rudduck (2005) advocated the importance of pupil voice and described pupils as having the potential to be "catalysts for school-wide change" (p.156). However, they also warn that this can only occur if professionals are willing to embrace what they term both the "comfortable" and "uncomfortable learnings" that may depict professional practice unfavourably. Only then will pupil voice have the potential to be truly impactful.

Empowerment

The potential empowerment for CYP, resulting from involvement in discussion and/or decision making regarding matters that affect them is also an identified benefit of eliciting the voice of CYP. Sharp (2014) posits that eliciting the views and experiences of CYP, helps to address the power imbalance that exists between CYP and adults. However, professionals are warned about the perils of a tokenistic approach to pupil involvement (Tucker, 2013).

Figure 8: Benefits of exploring pupil voice: Enlightenment and empowerment

1.6 Research Exploring Pupil Voice in Relation to School Exclusion

The studies that met criteria for review can be seen in Table 3. It is important to note that many of the studies also explored parents' and professionals' (e.g. teachers and social workers) perspectives and experiences of exclusion, however, as the current research aims to exclusively champion the voices of CYP, the findings relating to how CYP experience exclusion will be the focus of discussion.

Although variability in the experience of SE was evident through pupil narratives, CYP alluded to a number of factors that, positively or negatively, impacted upon their experience of school and SE. Some of the factors were cited more regularly than others across the literature in review. Table 3 illustrates the occurrence of key themes emerging from the studies chosen for review.

Table 3: Key Themes Emerging from the Studies Chosen for Review

Key theme	Studies identified	Occurrence of themes
Pupil teacher relationships	(Farouk, 2017; Gilmore, 2013; Hamill, & Boyd, 2002; Harriss, Barlow & Moli, 2008; Hilton, 2006; O'Connor, Hodkinson & Burton, 2011; Osler, 2006, McCluskey, Riddell & Weedon, 2015; Michael & Fredrickson, 2013; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015; Tucker, 2013)	12/12
Pupil teacher interactions	(Farouk, 2017; Gilmore, 2013; Hamill, & Boyd, 2002; O'Connor, Hodkinson & Burton, 2011; Osler, 2006, McCluskey, Riddell & Weedon, 2015; Michael & Fredrickson, 2013; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015; Tucker, 2013)	12/12
Impact of family	(Farouk, 2017; McCluskey, Riddell & Weedon, 2015; Michael & Fredrickson, 2013; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015)	5/12
Impact of peers	(Farouk, 2017; O'Connor, Hodkinson, Burton, 2011; Osler, 2006; Michael & Fredrickson, 2013)	4/12
Impact of primary to secondary school transition	(Farouk, 2017; O'Connor, Hodkinson & Burton, 2011; Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015; Tucker, 2013)	4/12
Environmental factors	(Harriss, Barlow & Moli, 2008; Hilton, 2006; Osler, 2006; Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015; Tucker, 2013)	5/12

1.7 <u>Rationale</u>

Primary school FPE exclusion rates have been steadily climbing over the past 5 years, with continued disproportionality of subgroups (i.e. pupils with SEMH) observable within the data (DfE, 2017). The reviewed literature reveals several factors that CYP constructed to have impacted upon their school and exclusion experiences (see table 3), whilst also representing the complexity of SE experiences. This highlights that whilst commonality is observable in the exclusion experience, nuance is also present, indicating that an exploratory approach when investigating FPE experiences would be appropriate. Identified methodological limitations with the reviewed literature are also addressed within the current research design (e.g. data analysis methods).

Ingram (2013) positions educational psychologists (EPs) to have a vital role in gathering and communicating children's views and EPs are "*arguably very well placed to assist local authorities to develop supportive 'cultures', 'attitudes', 'environments' and 'systems*" (Aston and Lambert, 2010, P. 50). Therefore, the current research aims to explore this phenomenon by talking directly to pupils identified to have SEMH, who have experienced FPE, as they have experiential knowledge, distinct to that of adults, that may provide a unique insight into school exclusion (Cook and Hess, 2007) which can be shared with local authority leaders (e.g. Head of Children's Services) and headteachers to inform practice.

1.8 <u>Gap in the literature</u>

When reviewing literature that has attempted to explore exclusion from the perspective of CYP, it is apparent that most research has sought to explore how secondary aged pupils understood their experience of school exclusion (see Table 1 for full study list). The researcher is only able to find two papers exploring primary aged pupils' experience of school and SE, however, limitations relating to the focus of inquiry (Harriss, Barlow & Moli, 2008) and the lack of primary aged pupil's voice within the findings, as the majority of the findings evidenced through adult dialogue (McCluskey, Riddell & Weedon, 2015). It is acknowledged that a focus upon exclusions in secondary school is logical, as most exclusions are issued to pupils in Key stage 3 and 4, however, nationally 1145 children experienced permanent exclusion and 55,740 children have experienced FPE from primary school and in the 2015/16 academic year (DfE, 2017). Arguably, a moral imperative and legal framework outlining a duty to elicit the voice of CYP regardless of age (DfES, 2015) raises questions as to why primary aged children appear to be offered fewer opportunities to engage in conversations relating to matters that affect them in comparison to their secondary aged counterparts, within a research arena. This presents a noticeable gap in the literature that the current research aimed to investigate.

1.9 <u>Research Aims and Questions</u>

This study aims to add to previous literature in this area, by specifically focusing upon the lived experiences of primary aged pupils in years 5 and 6, as the majority of literature explores the experiences of secondary aged pupils. It is hoped that the experiential knowledge accessed through this research can be utilised by professionals working with vulnerable groups (i.e. pupils with SEND/ SEMH), to promote positive social and emotional outcomes and educational inclusion. This information will be shared anonymously with the Head of Education, the Head teacher of the specialist setting, and head teachers of mainstream primary schools, to support thinking about the process and experience of school exclusion.

Research question: *what is the lived experience of fixed period exclusion, from the perspective of*

pupils in year 5 and 6 with identified SEMH, who have experienced FPE?

The purpose of the research is exploratory, as it aimed to provide a rich account of the lived experience of fixed period exclusion, in turn evolving understanding of how primary aged pupils with identified SEMH, experience school and FPE. The reasoning for the research design will be outlined below.

Method

2.1 Ontological and Epistemological positioning

The researcher believes that the current research falls within a constructionist-interpretivist paradigm (McKenzie & Knipe, 2006), as this aligns with her intention to understand the "*world of human experience*" (Cohen & Manion, 1994, P.36) and the exploratory nature of the research. This is underpinned by a relativist ontological position and social constructionist epistemology.

ONTOLOGY

Ontology is concerned with the 'nature of the world' and considers the question 'What is there to know?' (Willig, 2013, P.4). A relativist ontology is accepted, as Guba & Lincoln (1994), note that relativism is the view that reality differs from person to person, as the external world only exists as far as our construction of it (Blaikie, 2007); suggesting that multiple realities exist, and each is socially constructed (Mertens, 2014).

.

EPISTEMOLOGY

'Epistemology' relates to the 'theory and nature of knowledge' and contemplates the question, "How, and what, can we know?" (Willig, 2013, p.4). A social constructionist (Burr, 1995) epistemological position is accepted, as the theory of social constructionism posits that knowledge is co-created through social processes and interactions (Burr, 2003; 2015), rather than being generated independently (i.e. uninfluenced by of the wider social world) (Gergen, 2009) Moreover, social constructionism is concerned with understanding the experience of a specific sample, rather than making claims about causation or generalisation (Thomas, 2009). Thus, this epistemological position was viewed to be congruent with the researcher's aim to explore how excluded pupils have made sense of their FPE.

Figure 9: Ontological and Epistemological positioning

2.2 Research design

Creswell (2007) states "*We conduct qualitative research when we want to empower individuals to share their stories, hear their voices, and minimise the power relationships that often exist between a researcher and participants in a study*" (p.40). The researcher adopted an exploratory approach and utilised qualitative research methods that allowed for a comprehensive enquiry of the

participants' lived experience of FPE, in order to answer the research question. Although the researcher acknowledges that this approach may be subject to criticism due to its level of subjectivity (Thomas, 2009), the researcher feels that it is appropriate when considering the research question:

what is the lived experience of fixed period exclusion, from the perspective of pupils in year 5 and 6 with identified SEMH, who have experienced FPE?

2.2 <u>Recruitment</u>

'Key informant recruitment' (Peek and Fothergill, 2009) was utilised as the researcher was aware that a number of pupils attending the specialist SEMH primary provision had experienced FPE. The Head teacher at the school was engaged to recruit pupils who met the study criteria.

2.3 <u>Participants</u>

It is important to note that all children attending the specialist provision have an Education Health and Care plan (EHCP), or a Statement of SEN, if this is yet to be converted to and EHCP in accordance with the special educational needs reform in 2015. All pupils have a primary need of SEMH identified on their respective plans or statements. It is possible that pupils may have other needs, but it was deemed unnecessary to identify these needs unless the pupils themselves chose to. Pupils who attend may have had different lived experience of a variety of exclusion experiences prior to their placement at the specialist SEMH provision, including (but not exclusively):

- Single FPE exclusions;
- Multiple FPE exclusions;
- Permanent exclusion;
- Internal exclusions;
- A change of school through identification of SEN that could not be met through mainstream provision (either during or prior to an EHC needs assessment);
- An assessment placement; and/or
- Periods of non-attendance/school refusal.

For example, participant 4 talked explicitly about having experienced internal exclusion and FPE.

Patton (2002) posited that purposeful sampling refers to the selection of *"information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry, thus the term purposeful sampling. Studying information-rich cases yields insights and in-depth understanding rather than empirical generalizations." (P.230).* Subtypes of purposeful sampling strategies include 'criterion sampling' (Patton, 2002) which involves recruiting participants that meet a predetermined criterion of

importance. To ensure that pupils had the experiential knowledge required to explore the research question, the researcher adopted a criterion-based variant of purposeful sampling.

Table 4: Criteria for Participant Recruitment

Criteria for recruitment

Criterion 1   At the time of data collection, pupils must have experienced a FPE within two years of the interview, as Harker (2003, 2004) advocates the benefits of CYP being able to provide a retrospective account of their experience. Pupils must not have experienced a FPE within 2 weeks of the interview, as the researcher considered her duty to avoid any potential risks to their psychological well-being; she worried that recalling the exclusion experience too soon after the event may have resulted in negative emotional impact.

Criterion 2   At the time of data collection, pupils must be in years 5 or 6, and currently attending a specialist provision for pupils identified to have SEMH difficulties, as this population is represented the most in primary FPE data (DfE, 2016).

Eight pupils met the criteria to participate in the research, whilst seven provided assent. All participants were boys, four of whom were in year five and two of whom were in year six.

2.4 Data Collection Procedure

Decision made to use semi structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews were employed as a means of data collection, as they are reported to have the potential to provide "rich and highly illuminating material" (Robson, 2002, p.273).

Development of interview schedule

In a bid to develop interview questions that would elicit the information necessary to answer the research question, the researcher developed an interview schedule through a process of research, supervision and self-reflection. A visual prompt, developed based upon narrative techniques (Wengraf, 2001), was used during the interviews as a means of supporting the pupils to reflect upon particular events or times in their lives that were important in relation to their experience of exclusion (see appendix B). The research questions aimed to elicit narrative and descriptive responses that would allow for further interpretation by the researcher.

Initial meeting with pupils

When meeting with the pupils to provide information about the research and explore their interest in participating, the researcher used this opportunity to establish a rapport with each pupil, making time to engage in discussion about things, unrelated to the research, that interested them. In a bid to address the power imbalance, for pupils who agreed to participate, they were asked where they would like to the interviews to occur (i.e. home or school).

Semi structured interview

All pupils chose to meet me at school. Each interview began with a general question about the pupil's day, in a bid to build further rapport and assess the appropriateness of completing the interview that day. Each participant was reminded of the process of the interview (i.e. time commitments, audio recording, time to go card, and the importance of their views). The researcher ensured that the participants knew there were no right or wrong answers and maintained a sense of curiosity and unconditional positive regard. The researcher consciously considered the importance of embracing silences in during the interview and aimed to get a balance between providing space to think and gentle prompting.

Figure 10. Data Collection Procedure

2.5 Ethical Considerations

Although the research did not intend any manipulation of the environment or participants, the researcher considered a number of fundamental ethical issues in order to adhere to the ethical guidelines outlined by the British Psychological Society (BPS) (2009a) and the Health Care Professionals Council (HCPC) (2016). A summary of the pertinent issues can be found in the table below. Ethical approval from the University's Ethics Committee was obtained prior to data collection.

Table 5: Overview of Ethical Considerations and Research Action

Ethical Consideration	Researcher Action

Risk to the participants	• The researcher sought to develop a therapeutic alliance with the participant as Paterson (1997) noted it to be applicable to the researcher participant relationship in interviews. Paterson (1997) further postulated that the adoption of the attitudinal qualities below, help to diminish a power imbalance that may occur during interviews and subsequent participant discomfort.
	Hence, the researcher aimed to exude:
	   o relatedness/congruence;
	   o empathic understanding; and
	   o unconditional positive regard towards the participant.
	
	• The researcher clarified that the participant does not have to answer any questions that they did not wish to, and the researcher was also vigilant to any signs of discomfort or distress and prepared to terminate the interview if necessary.

Anonymity, Confidentiality and Data Protection	• The researcher was clear with the participants that she would not discuss any identifiable views emerging from the interview and did not transcribe any information that would have allowed an individual to be traced. • The researcher was explicit with the participants regarding other measures taken to maintain their anonymity, such as the use of pseudonyms. • Information was handled and stored in line with the data protection act. Any information relating to the research was stored on a password protected laptop. • Audio files were downloaded and securely stored electronically on a password protected computer. • After the audio file was anonymously transcribed, it was destroyed.
Disclosure	• Due to the researcher's ethical duty of care towards the participants, if a participant was to divulge information that would suggest that they or another child or person(s) were at risk of significant harm, or poses a risk of significant harm to others, safeguarding procedures outlined in the schools' safeguarding policy would have been triggered. The participant would have been informed, if the researcher felt it necessary to share such information, before doing so.

<u>**Informed Consent, Right to Withdraw and Debriefing**</u>	• In order to obtain gatekeeper consent, a letter, information sheet and consent form was sent to the Head of Education Services (Appendix C.1, C.2 and C.3) and the Principal Educational Psychologist (Appendix D.1, D.2 and D.3).
	• The head teacher of the specialist setting was then provided with a letter, information sheet and consent form (Appendix E.1, E.2 and E.3).
	• Parent/Carers were then given an information sheet and consent form, relating to their child's potential for involvement in the research (Appendix, F.2 and F.3). This was accompanied by a cover letter written by the school's head teacher. (Appendix F.1)
	Informed consent was obtained from the afore mentioned parties before contact was made with the pupils.
	• The researcher then met with the potential participants, within school and verbally informed them of the objectives of the research and the processes involved in the research, with information regarding their participation being explained thoroughly. This information was also provided in written form (Appendix G.1) and a familiar member of school staff was available during this discussion. Assent was gained from individual young people through a detailed assent form (Appendix G.2).
	• Participants were reminded of their right to withdraw from the study without providing any reason, prior to the interview, during the interview and up until 14 days after. It was made clear to the participants that after 14 days the audio data collected would be anonymously transcribed, and as such, it would not be possible to withdraw their contribution.
	• During the interview, a red 'time to go card' was placed in front of each participant in case they wanted to withdraw from the study non-verbally.
	• Upon completion of the interview, the participants were provided with a debrief form (Appendix H) that provided an overview of; the aims of the research, what has happened, how their input was of benefit and possible options for support should this be required.

2.6 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

The researcher adopted Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis as a method of data analysis, as it enables the researcher to examine how participants make meaning of their individual lived experiences (Pietkiewicz and Smith, 2012). IPA assumes a "*philosophical approach to the study of experience*" (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009, P.11) by drawing upon fundamental principles of phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography, all of which are in line with a relativist ontology and social constructionist epistemology (Robson and McCartan, 2016).

Table 6: Theoretical Principles Underpinning IPA

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis		
Phenomenology	**Hermeneutics**	**An idiographic approach**
Phenomenology, derived from the work of Edward Husserl, is concerned with the study of individual experience, and emphasises that the study of experience is justified in its own right (Ashworth, 2008). Phenomenology sets aside accepted truths and accepts an individual's subjective experience and perceptions as a valuable form of knowledge. Hence, a phenomenological approach, considers a given phenomenon through the investigation and analysis of lived experiences of the phenomenon within a given context (Giorgi & Giorgi, 2008). Within the current research, FPE was viewed as a phenomenon, which exists for individuals within their own subjective world. Bryman (2012) notes that although phenomenology focuses upon how people make sense of the world around them, it is the researcher's job to ascertain this from the perspective of those with experiential knowledge.	**Hermeneutics**, (the theory of interpretation) influences the interpretative stance adopted by IPA (Ashworth, 2008). Hermeneutics suggests that every individual is a sense-making creature and therefore pupil accounts of their experiences, represent their attempt at sense making (Smith et al., 2009). Furthermore, through a dialogue with a researcher, reflections on experience can result in a deeper understanding of a phenomenon, as not only does the participant aim to make sense of their experience, the researcher attempts to make sense of the participant's account; this is referred to as the "*double hermeneutic*" (Smith et al., 2009, P.35). Thus, the hermeneutic element of this approach acknowledges the researcher's presence and the bearing this can have upon the research. Within the interview process, the researcher aimed to adopt "a spirit of openness" (p.27) identified by Smith et al. (2009) to be important in truly being able to reach the participants perceptions. Continuing researcher reflexivity was a vital prerequisite in IPA, as it is recognised that the researcher's prior knowledge, values, beliefs, experience and perceptions are unavoidably present and can influence the research process. This will be discussed further in part 3 of this writing.	Smith et al., (2009) suggest that an **idiographic approach** is dedicated to the thorough investigation of individual factors, aiming to learn how a given phenomenon is experienced for each individual person, within their own context. In line with guidance from Smith et al., (2009) once the researcher explored each individual case in depth, she then explored the similarities and differences between cases, using a process of analytic induction to move towards shared themes across cases (Smith et al., 2009).

In summary, underpinning principles of IPA recognise that lived experiences are complex and aim to develop an understanding of 'what' and 'how' individuals experience an event, resulting in descriptions of the essence of that experience (Creswell 2013, Moustakas, 1994). Smith et al (2009) suggest that "…*only through painstakingly detailed cases…can we produce psychological research which matches and does justice to the complexity of human psychology itself*" (p.37-38), arguably, making IPA a suitable framework to support the exploration of the complex phenomenon of FPE.

2.7 Data Analysis

Figure 11 illustrates the data analysis process.
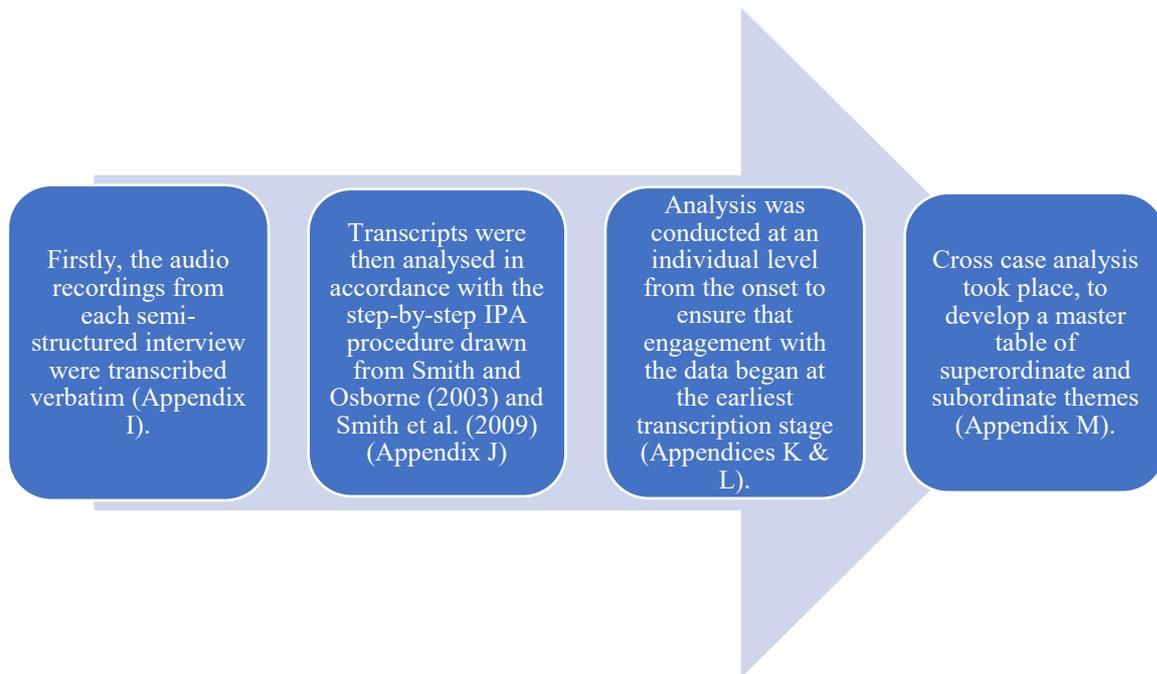
Figure 11: Data Analysis Process

Results

This section aims to illustrate the findings from the current research, by conveying the pupil voice and researcher interpretation; the findings will then be brought back into contact with psychological theory and existing research within the discussion section.

Before proceeding to discuss the findings, for clarity, it is important to address the links between the pupil's experience of school over time, and how this relates to their exclusion experience. It is extremely difficult to disentangle the pupil's experiences both leading up to, at the time of, and following, their exclusion. Therefore, it is important to note that the responses from the children interviewed suggest that the 'exclusion' itself is the tip of the iceberg, and consideration must be given to the pupils' wider lived experience.

3 Findings

This section examines the themes interpreted from the IPA exploration of the research question:

What is the lived experience of fixed period exclusion from the perspective of primary aged pupils in years 5 and 6?

The results of the IPA are presented in a thematic map (see figure 12). The themes represent higher order concepts and thematic patterns developed from the individual and cross group analysis. The thematic map in figure 12 has been simplified in a bid to provide clarity for the reader, whilst capturing the essence of the findings. (Please see appendix N for a more complex thematic map that was held before some of the themes were subsumed).

Figure 12. Thematic map

RELATIONSHIPS

Adult-pupil relationships
- *Behaviour management*
- *Communication* → Restraint
- *Support*

Peer relationships
- *Belonging*

ATTRIBUTION

Internal attribution
- *Personal constructs*
- ADHD

External Attribution
- *Peer behaviour*
- Teacher's actions
- *Curriculum*
- *Facilities*

MANAGING CHANGE

Exclusion processes
- *Involvement*
- *Non- attendance*

Coping mechanisms
- *Maintaining a sense of connection*
- *Self-protective* processing
- Denial

Emotional impact
- Loneliness
- *Confusion*
- *Anger*
- Feeling unwanted

Key:

BOLD UNDERLINED = super-ordinate theme

Bold = sub-ordinate theme

Italic = emergent theme

Blue text = Divergent theme

⬭ = Connections observed between themes

71

Prior to exploring the findings, it is important to note that although the sample of pupils interviewed were recruited upon the basis of having experienced a FPE, only one pupil explicitly described this process (i.e. excluded from school for a period of time to then return), with some pupils discussing exclusion followed by a move to specialist provision and others possibly describing permanent exclusion. Thus, as there is uncertainty relating to the type of exclusion pupils discussed (i.e. FPE/or permanent) within this writing the broader term 'SE' will be used.

The researcher aims to illustrate observable commonality across pupils' lived experience of SE, whilst also capturing nuance; it is recognised that the researcher is offering an illustration of different themes which may not be exhaustive within the scope of this writing. Appendix O aims to supplement the reader's understanding of the factors important in the participants' lived experiences.

Commonality in the lived experience of SE will be highlighted through the discussion of '**SUPER-ORDINATE**' and '**sub-ordinate themes**', with reference to '*emergent themes*' that the researcher interpreted to be particularly illuminating. As IPA is "*not a prescriptive method of analysis*", Smith et al., (2009) "*encourage the analyst to explore and innovate in terms of organising the analysis*" (P.96), thus, the researcher aims to illustrate nuance in the lived experience of school exclusion through discussion of 'divergent themes'.

3.1 Super-ordinate theme: RELATIONSHIPS

The first superordinate of relationships encompassed the sub-themes: '**Adult-pupil relationships',** and **'Peer relationships'**. All of the children interviewed discussed relationships with adults in either a positive or negative light. Such polarisation was most evident as pupils discussed the relationships with adults in the specialist setting; with positive teacher-pupil relationships in the specialist setting being the norm, rather than the exception as it appeared in mainstream. However, for one pupil the variety in the pupil-adult relationships was also present within the mainstream setting. When asked about the teachers in his mainstream primary school, he expressed:

> "*they're just horrrrible. n I mean horrible*" (Participant 7, line 42)

but did acknowledge that individual teachers made the difference to his experience.

> "*My miss, She was like me mum in school.,.. She would be good with me.*" (Participant 7, line 212)

This suggests that regardless of if the relationships were positive or negative; relationships are an important factor in the pupil's school and exclusion experience.

3.1.2 Sub-ordinate theme: Adult-pupil relationship

The super-ordinate theme, '**Adult-pupil relationship**' relates to pupil- adult interactions. Pupils referred to: '*behaviour management*', '*means of communication*' and the level of '*support*' they received in school.

3.1.2.1 Emergent theme: Behaviour management

Teacher's '*behaviour management*' approaches appeared to be a factor that was important to the pupils, when reflecting upon their lived experience of school and eventual exclusion. The minority of pupils commended teacher approaches to behaviour management:

"They break up the fights n that. Which is pretty good. They don't get annoyed. They literally just deal with the situation, (Participant 2, lines 141-142)

suggesting that a calm approach to managing challenging behaviours was perceived as positive. However, the majority of pupils expressed a sense that teachers were hypervigilant and over-reactive to their behaviours; one pupil shared that:

"They wouldn't even let you sit in the tree area n tha, coz there used to be a big group of trees in the playground yeah…and we all used to just go and group up in there and speak to each other n that. N they were like, boys "na, get out of there now". We weren't even doing anything, and they were always at us. Over tiny tiny things." (Participant ,7 lines 42-45*)*

For some pupils, there was a strong sense that the teachers targeted them. This was when they compared consequences for their behaviours, with consequences for their peer's behaviour:

"Dunno- they were just nice to everyone else, like if I just snapped a ruler or sumin. They'd be like WHY DID YOU DO THAT!? But then if someone else snapped a ruler they'd just say ah its ok, don't worry". (Participant 1, lines 69-71)

A sense of unfairness was present in their narrative; this was reinforced through pupil perspectives that teachers were waiting and looking for negative behaviours:

*"Dunno she would just turn her back and wait, and then exactly when I started to like flip, she'd just see straight away. It's like she knew I was gona flip. Like she was waitin for it…. I got the blame for all of it. She was lookin for it." (*Participant 1, lines 326-327)

> *"Teachers shouted at me- put me in detention for no reason. I got into trouble for stuff other kids wouldn't ...like when I was climbing, other kids do it. They don't get told off."* (Participant 7, lines 296-298)

From the pupil responses, it is plausible to infer that a sense of injustice was important in their narrative. Furthermore, the perception of unfairness and inequality in the management of behaviours negatively impacted the way in which he perceived his exclusion:

> *"Well other kids were doing the same stuff I did and they get off with it….that made it (the exclusion) worse"* (Participant 1, line 128-130)

3.1.2.2 Divergent theme: Restraint

Adult use of 'restraint' was identified as a divergent theme linked to the emergent theme of '*behaviour management*'. This is being discussed, as for participant 6, it appeared to be the critical factor that influenced how he made sense of his school experience, pre and post exclusion. This pupil discussed in depth:

- his experience of restraint;

> *"And then the day of like before I was excluded, which was a snow da. And I ended up getting restrained in Mrs N's office. It was horrible. Just uncomfortable"* (lines 114-116)

- his perception that restraint was used in an unprincipled manner; and

> *"in this school you get restrained every 10 minutes. It's not ok"* & *"They can't just restrain you whenever they want"* (lines 155-156)

- his emotional and behavioural responses to restraint;

> *"And they started comin at me n stuff so started getting really angry n then they got me into Mr Hs room and then restrained me .. Then I bit one of the teachers like really hard"* (lines 105-106)

Based upon this discourse, it could be suggested that, for this pupil, restraint used by school staff exacerbated his challenging behaviours, therefore increasing his vulnerability to exclusion.

3.1.3 Emergent theme: Communication

A further emergent theme from the pupils' narrative is the importance of how teachers communicated with them. Shouting was identified to be a negative means of communication which influenced the pupils' perceptions of if the teachers cared about them:

> *"They never shouted at me really. They cared about me. they didn't really shout"* (Participant 6,

Whereas, with other teachers he noted:

> *"They are never nice, they always shout. Never listen"* (Participant 6, lines 161-162)

Another pupil reported:

> *"Coz only two of them liked me. The other teachers shouted at me"* (Participant 7, line 296)

This excerpt draws attention to communication as a two-way interaction, and the importance of teachers taking time to listen and value the pupil perspective. Moreover, pupils appeared to make connections between the ways in which a teacher communicated with them and if they liked/cared for them.

3.1.4 Emergent theme: Support

The emergent theme '*support*', refers to both practical and emotional support (and lack thereof) within the pupil-adult relationship. Practical support refers to the things that adults did for children, whilst emotional factors identified by the participants relate to the way that adults made them feel.

3.1.4.1 Practical Support

The level of support that pupils received appeared to vary greatly in individual experiences. On the whole, pupils noted that the level of support in the mainstream school was lesser than in special provision, with pupils only referring to the positive support provided by 1:1 teaching assistants during their experience in mainstream education:

> *"Yeah I had an erm 1:1. She was nice*
>
> *She just like helped me with my work n all that."* (Participant 4, lines 62-64)

> *"N dya know what i can't believe I forgot. What was her name. I got a ta {mrs x} I think. I've got a TA in this school too.* (Participant 2, lines 170-171)
>
> *They just teach me . they teach me to solve problems. Like when people are winding me up and I'm winding people up... you know the usual. The same really and work."* (Participant 2 line, 173-176)

Whilst another pupil also noted that he received support from specific adults, this was the exception, and generally, these pupils felt unsupported in school:

> *"Yeah, they were the only two that proper proper helped me, they sat down all the time next to me and helped me with all of me work"* (Participant 7, lines 37-38)

This would suggest a sense of disconnection in the pupil-teacher relationships.

Some pupils reflected upon a lack of support and the implications of being unable to do their work:

> *"And the teacher just gave me a big pile a stack of work and she said if it isn't finished the you will be excluded for another week.no help."* (Participant 1, lines 138-139)
>
> *"they'd make you do stuff, n if you couldn't do stuff they would tell you to do it"* (Participant 1, lines 40-41)
>
> *"In my old school we didn't get no help. if you asked her (the teacher) again shed say 'were you listening or what?' and then she would just say 'figure it out yourself'"* (Participant 1, lines 261-262)

3.1.4.2 Emotional support

In relation to the emotional support, feeling understood appeared to be a key factor in the pupil narratives. There appeared to be a polarity in pupils' experience of feeling understood by staff, with some pupils feeling understood:

> *They just get me. They definitely get me* (Participant 7, line 253)

And some pupils feeling misunderstood:

> *"they just didn't get us, they would just say 'stop getting so angry' and that's it"* (Participant 1, lines 266-267)

Discourse would suggest the pupils felt more understood by teachers in the specialist setting, with one pupil explaining that he felt staff were more knowledgeable about how to support pupils with behavioural difficulties:

> *"N the teachers just get it. Like get that we get angry"* (Participant 4, lines 231).
>
> *"These teachers get it more. They know how to help"* (Participant 4, line 234)

Some pupils alluded to a sense of security gained from the teacher pupil relationship noting*:*

> *"Those two teachers I talked about. They were just there. They just talked to me"* (Participant 7,

This illustrated the importance of knowing a key adult would be there for them.

One pupil appeared to suggest a sense of trust/respect was a positive emotion gained from the teacher-pupil relationships. He noted that the being given a level of autonomy and responsibility was a positive factor in his experience, that suggested that he felt that he felt listened to, and valued:

> *"they say they don't make your decisions for you here. In my old school it wasn't like that. I used to say its my body and I'll do what I want to do- it's different here. Here I make decisions about what I want and need. People listen to you here"* (Participant 1, lines 234-236)

3.1.5 Sub-ordinate theme: Peer relationships

Most pupils discussed the extent and strength of their '**peer relationships'**, with many of the pupils noting that they *"had loooooads of mates, loads".* The bond that the pupils had with their friends appears to be important in their story, with some pupils illustrating a sense of belonging and security from such relationships:

> *"N I made loads of mates, all of them always stick up for me now. Dya know what they always say here? one fights, we all fight… feel like here I've got a big group of mates, just standing here, feel like I've got a big massive group of people standing with me"* (Participant 7, lines 192-193)

Several pupils also alluded to a sense of 'belonging', when identifying the similarities between themselves and peers at the specialist setting, and discussed the benefits of this:

> *"And all my friends would stick up for me and that when I get into trouble. They were just like me…{pause} they all got angry sometimes"* (Participant 4, lines 125-128)

Other pupils discussed how being with pupils who experience similar difficulties, meant that it wasn't a 'big deal' when their behaviour escalated; suggesting that peer understanding was an important factor in enhancing their sense of belonging, as they felt less prone to judgement:

> *"yeah. Like every other child understands like the other child and understands why you might be doing something"* (Participant 1 lines 269-270)

> *"Yeah coz somebody does something wrong like every day. At least one person. It's not like a big thing if you lose your temper."* (Participant 5, lines 159-156)
>
> *"Yeah- they don't judge you as much as people in other places. So, like if you are screaming for no reason in public everyone will judge ya, but in this school and especially team A its normal to just hear screamin. So no one judges ya. Everyone gets ya".* (Participant 5, lines 212-214)

It is possible that experiencing a sense of belonging meant that pupils' behaviour was less likely to escalate, which enables the pupil to maintain their school placement.

3.2 Super-ordinate theme: ATTRIBUTION

The way in which the pupils made sense of their exclusion experience as fair or unfair appeared to be linked to their attributions when considering the exclusion. The causal effects identified by the children have attempted to be captured under the superordinate theme '**ATTRIBUTION'**. The sub-ordinate themes of '**internal attribution'** and '**external attribution'**, illustrate the within child attributions or external attributions, which illuminate factors that positively or negatively influenced their school experience and exclusion experience.

3.2.1 Sub-ordinate theme: Internal attribution

From the pupil dialogue, it is argued here that some pupils held an '**internal attribution**' for their behaviour and subsequent exclusion. The emergent theme, of '*personal constructs*' captures pupils' identification of themselves as naughty, a handful, or immature, suggesting that if pupils constructed themselves as responsible for their behaviour they appeared to construct their exclusion as fair or just. One pupil reflected:

"I think I was like disrupting the class and stuff and calling other children stuff and I was like hurting property n stuff as well so like flipping tables and stuff too" (Participant 5, line 173-174)

and was asked if he thought this was why he was excluded, to which he responded:

"Yeah I think so. Fair enough really isn't it?" (Participant 5, line 176)

Another pupil spoke about the impact that his behaviour had on his peer's education:

"It was unfair tho {pause} for my class tho. That they had to wait for me to go, coz they had to put up with me in the class. I should have been excluded sooner. They just had to put up with me" (Participant 4, lines 90-92)

"They just had to put up with me being naughty and all tha. I just got in the way". (Participant 4, line 94)

This suggests that he constructed himself as a burden on his peers; he did not show concern about the fairness of his exclusion for himself but focused upon the consequences of his behaviour for others.

3.2.2 Sub-ordinate theme: External attributions

Other pupils felt that their exclusion was unfair, and that their behaviour, and subsequent exclusion, was the result of situational or environmental factors beyond their control. '**External attributions**' were demonstrated across many of the participants, with '*peer behaviour'*, '*teacher's actions'*, '*curriculum'* and '*facilities'*, emerging as factors that influence pupil behaviour, and subsequent adult perceptions of the need for exclusion.

3.2.2.1 Peer behaviour

Peer behaviour' was identified by several pupils, as a factor that negatively impacted on their school experience and exacerbated their behaviours resulting in exclusion; for some pupils, they reported that peers used to intentionally 'wind them up' and 'annoy them' which impacted their behaviour:

> *"a lot of people were annoying, and they would do anything to annoy ya and they were just, they would always just mess with you, n stop ya from doin your work and then you would get into trouble"* (Participant 1, lines 320-322)

Some pupils suggested that it was the cumulative effect of peer behaviours that pushed them to their limits, suggesting a reaction on their part was inevitable:

> *"I react. I say names and that. Because I can't really help it. I do try to ignore it, I try really hard but then it keeps happening and happening..."* (Participant 2, lines 136-137)

It may also be suggested that participant 2 indicates a lack of intervention from staff, based upon the repetitive nature of peer behaviour, which may be classed as a connected external attribution.

3.2.2.2 *Curriculum*

Some pupils attributed their behaviour to the disengagement they experienced with the curriculum. Boredom, was cited by many pupils as a reason for their disengagement:

> *"Well they weren't even very good. The subjects. N the lessons. Just sittin down, no activities no fun just nothin, just ...borin"... "Just got bored in class, walked out n was like whatever."*
> (Participant 7, lines 84-85)

Other pupils referred to the emphasis placed upon academic progress, and how academia dominated their school experience:

> *"In my old school they wouldn't even let you miss like 5 minutes of work. N in my old school they would just tell you to get out and take your work with you and sit outside the class door"*
> (Participant 1, lines 226-228)

suggesting that the focus of their educational experience in mainstream was academia.

Another pupil talked to the difference between the curriculum in their mainstream school and special school, saying:

> *"It's better than the others {schools}…Because erm the way they take us out on trips n that n spend time with us. Learn other stuff. And I'm in Mr B's class now, have you seen the train track in there. It's like amazin. We don't just do work here" (*Participant 4, lines 212-218)

This suggests, that participant 4 felt that his time in the specialist setting was about more than academia; instead of an attainment focus, this pupil expressed a sense of balance, highlighting that time was given to build positive relationships with staff and increasing social emotional wellbeing, and life skills.

3.3. Super-ordinate theme: MANAGING CHANGE

'Managing change' emerged as a superordinate theme, as all pupils reflected on the process of exclusion and shared internal and external factors linked to the changes that occurred as a result of their exclusion.

3.3.1 Sub-ordinate theme: Coping mechanisms

The pupils interviewed, demonstrated a variety of approaches that have helped them to process their exclusion experience and move on from it, including: '*Maintaining a sense of connection', 'denial' and 'self-protective processing'.*

3.3.1.1 Maintaining a sense of connection

For some pupils, they discussed the importance of '*Maintaining a sense of connection'* to their previous setting:

> *"Na that's when I left. And then I got a big massive clap off all of the teachers and all the kids. And they gave me a card from everyone. Even the nursery kids n tha…"* (Participant 4, lines 113-114)
>
> *I liked it. I've still got it. Its hanging up on my bedroom…"* (Participant 4, line 116)
>
> *"Yeah n I got one from St As when I got excluded from there. So,I have one from St A's and St B's"* (Participant 4, lines 117-118)

For another pupil, it was important that he maintained the positive relationship with his 1:1 teaching assistant, despite his exclusion:

> *"Yeah I can imagine her walking round the school like my little buddy has gone…"I saw her once (at the shops) and I gave her a big hug"* (Participant 7, line 216)

This suggests that it was important for pupils to feel that despite of their exclusion, they were missed. This is indicative of the level of community and belonging they may have experienced, which may have made it easier to cope with the exclusion experience.

3.3.1.2 Self-protective processing

When discussing the exclusion itself, for some pupils there appeared to be a reluctance to consider the experience at a deeper level; this is what the researcher has termed '*self-protective processing*'. For one pupil, this manifested as a 'lack of caring' about his exclusion, possibly as a means of protecting himself:

> *"N then I went down and then she just said your being excluded. And I said k"* (Participant 1, line

The majority of pupils frequently informed the researcher that they couldn't remember their exclusion experience:

> *"Not really no. I can't remember that day. Na memory fails just like technology sometimes."* (Participant 2, line 79)

> *"Yeah. Can't remember it much though. I just remember going to The head"* (Participant 4, line

Whereas, other pupils appeared to try to distract the researcher from the question:

> *"You have a whole description about what it was like for me before exclusion and after*
>
> *{Researcher: Yeah, so I'm wondering if we could focus on the time that you were excluded}.*
>
> *… It's one minute till break."* (Participant 6, lines 279-280)

3.3.1.3 Divergent theme: Denial

For one participant, he did not acknowledge that he had received any form of exclusion from school, he simply stated:

> *" I wasn't excluded. I just moved schools"* (Participant 3, line 19)

This may have been a means of processing his exclusion experience or could raise concerns about that lack of involvement and communication with children during the exclusion process, resulting in a limited understanding.

In summary, the researcher has interpreted the multiple means of avoiding 'deeper thought' relating to the exclusion experience, as an indicator of the negative impact that exclusion may have had on the pupils. This interpretation would be compatible with the negative **emotional impact** associated with the **exclusion process** that was communicated by the pupils.

3.3.2 Sub-ordinate themes: Emotional impact and the exclusion process

When talking to pupils about their exclusion experience their discourse highlighted the ways in which they managed the change and the '**emotional impact'** associated with exclusion emerged from their narratives. Emergent themes and divergent themes highlight emotions including: 'loneliness', 'confusion', 'anger' and 'feeling unwanted'. This sub-ordinate theme will be discussed in relation to the sub-ordinate theme: '**process of exclusion'**, as based upon pupil narratives this appears to be inextricably related to the emotional impact on pupils.

For some pupils, '*confusion'* and '*anger'* appeared to be dominant emotions associated with exclusion; linking to the lack of communication and pupil/parent involvement in the exclusion process. With one pupil recollecting walking into the school office, to go to school and being told:

> *"you're not a pupil here anymore'* (Participant 7, line 103)

with this came emotions such as '*confusion*' and '*anger*':

> "*I didn't even do anything bad then…*" (Participant 7, line 113)
>
> "*I just dunno, I went to walk in and they just went na. bye…*" (Participant 7, line 126)
>
> "*n I was just like 'what do you mean I come her every day, I've always come here', n I was just like phhhhhh {shaking head}*" (Participant 7, lines 103-104)

This pupil explicitly discussed the lack of involvement and emotional impact that resulted from the process of exclusion:

> "*Yeah no phone call or nothing. No one bothered. They just said no. They could have said come n sit down we need to explain something to ya*" (Participant 7, lines 278-279)

Conversely, another pupils experience of the exclusion process, where there was improved communication, resulted in less explicit emotional impact:

> "*I would describe it {exclusion) like, it's not that much of a big deal really like, its ok. So before you are excluded they just send a letter to your mum, then you have the week off.*
>
> (Participant 6, lines 7-8)

Arguably, this suggests that the way in which pupils are informed about the exclusion, affects the emotional impact resulting from the exclusion process.

For 2 pupils the process of exclusion involved a period of '*non-attendance*', which resulted in '*loneliness*' for the pupils. They discussed how following their exclusion, they needed to change schools:

> "*Because my mum hadn't found another school for me to go. And they just kicked me out. And I was just staying at home*" (Participant 1, lines 125-126)

> *"So I get excluded from there. Coz it takes quite a while to get back into a different school doesn't it. So I had some time'* (Participant 7, lines 142-143)

Initially, non-attendance was perceived by participant 7 as a positive experience, with him reporting he was "*haaappppy*" to be at home, however, during this period of non-attendance there was an observed shift in how he experiences his non-attendance; he also reported that a sense of disconnection set in; this strongly linked to the sense of loss of his friends:

> *"I was just getting dead lonely and it stopped being fun"* (Participant 7, line 159)
>
> *"Just felt all, dead alone inside"* (Participant 7, line 161)
>
> *"Yeah spent some of the time thinking about if me mates would remember me"*
>
> (Participant 7, line 282)

Another pupil talked of how he was made to feel 'unwanted' during his first exclusion, and upon his return to school:

> *"Yeah they all said I couldn't come back. The first time I got excluded they said you can't come back for a day. The second time they said you are changing school* (Participant 4, lines 16-17)

Upon his return to school following a FPE, participant 4 shared:

> *"The head teacher said, I don't like the head teacher in there anyway- said to me erm.*
>
> *They said to me if you get excluded now you are gone. You aren't coming back. You*
>
> *won't come back here. You will go to St M's…. I was just like what why am I getting*
>
> *excluded again?"* (Participant 4, lines 99-101)

This is reminiscent of the approaches of teachers, identified by pupils as 'looking and waiting for' for them to do something wrong (see emergent theme: '*behaviour management*').

Discussion

The findings illustrate that children in primary school are able to offer a contribution to knowledge relating to SE, despite their age or SEND, if professionals are prepared to take the time to listen and embark on the journey of sense making together.

4.1 Findings Linked to Existing Literature and Psychological Theory

During this section, whilst remaining grounded in the pupil voice, the researcher aims to push the level of interpretation further; becoming curious about how the pupil voice and researcher interpretation can be linked to existing literature relating to SE and psychological theory. Within the scope of this writing, not all findings (i.e. all **sub-ordinate themes**, *emergent themes* and divergent themes) can be discussed. Each **SUPER- ORDINATE** theme will be discussed in turn and other themes that the researcher believes are particularly relevant to EP practice will be considered within table 7.

Table 7: Findings Linked to Existing Literature and Psychological Theory		
Superordinate theme:	**Links with existing literature**	**Links with psychological theory**
RELATIONSHIPS	The current findings indicated that the '**adult- pupil relationships'** were an important element in the participants' discourse, when reflecting upon their lived experience of SE. In line with existing literature (Farouk, 2017; Gilmore,2013; Hamill, & Boyd, 2002; Harriss, Barlow & Moli, 2008; Hilton, 2006; O'Connor, Hodkinson, Burton, 2011; Osler, 2006, McCluskey, Riddell & Weedon, 2015; Michael and Fredrickson, 2013; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015; Tucker, 2013) participants reported that they experienced both positive and negative adult-pupil relationships, which appeared to be either protective or detrimental to the maintenance of their school placements. This highlights that the importance of positive adult-pupil relationships does not differ within the way in which primary age pupils, and secondary aged pupils construct their school and subsequent exclusion experiences.

The current findings also highlighted a similarity between the way in which primary aged pupils and secondary aged pupils made sense of teachers' approaches to *behaviour management* with a number of pupils highlighting inequitable behaviour management approaches from staff (Munn and Lloyd, 2005; Oconnor et al ., 2011) and a sense of being targeted (Hilton, 2006). Hilton (2006) proposed that for many pupils interviewed in her study "*their sense of resentment about how they had been treated at school by teachers had served to exacerbate their anger and disruptive influence*" (p. 304). It is possible that this statement is also true for primary aged pupils. For one pupil, teachers' use of restraint as a method of *behaviour management* was the central factor when making sense of his exclusion experience. This appeared to directly relate to his negative relationships with staff and exacerbate his challenging behaviours. | Attachment theory is identified to play an important role in the classroom (Geddes, 2006), with Bergin and Bergin (2009) positing that attachment relationships between teachers and pupils are vital in supporting CYP to flourish in school. Arguably, the findings of the current study and existing research, which highlight the impact of adult-pupil relationships, may be explained by the development of secure attachments with staff (categorised by feelings of safety, consistency and trust that give the pupil the confidence to embraced challenges knowing that their needs will be met by the adult who provides a secure base). As attachment theory has been criticised to be limited to the early years (Crittenden & Landini, 2011), arguably, the Dynamic Maturational Model (DMM) (Crittenden, 2006) provides a helpful variant of attachment theory given the age of the sample in this study. Crittenden (2006) posits that through a child's interactions with significant adults, they learn self-protective strategies that they employ to meet their needs. Strategies may be viewed as appropriate or maladaptive; it is important to note that strategies that may be appropriate in one environment may be viewed as maladaptive in another (e.g. shouting to gain attention at home versus at school). Based upon this theory, it could be suggested that for excluded pupils, and indeed those pupils on the cusp of exclusion, challenging behaviour served a function in meeting their needs. In observing the findings through an attachment lens, it is possible that the benefits of adult-pupil relationships (as identified by the pupils), may mitigate maladaptive behaviours through the development of a secure base. |

	The current findings that suggests that '**peer relationships**' are a protective factor when considering the lived experience of SE from the perspective of primary aged pupils, which is less evident in the literature exploring the perspective of excluded secondary age pupils. This observed difference may be explained by the sense of '*belonging*' established from attending a specialist provision with children who experience similar behavioural difficulties, as the pupils interviewed described a sense of understanding from their peers. Alternatively, the difference may be explained by the change in the school organisation when children transition to secondary school, which some secondary school pupils reported exacerbated their behavioural difficulties (Farouk, 2017; Trotman et al.,2015). It is possible that '**peer relationships**' as a protective factor is a finding specific to the current sample of primary aged pupils, as the pupils interviewed are yet to experience the organisational changes associated with transition to secondary school (i.e. changes of classes, larger peer group); this may underpin why secondary aged pupils appeared to reflect upon the negative impact of peer relationships and interactions with their peers (O'Connor et al, 2011; Osler 2006; Hilton, 2006), with little reference to protective relationships.	Sochos (2015), posits that an attachment framework has applications beyond the field of interpersonal relationships, offering that humans need to experience a sense of security from social group as well as primary caregivers; this highlights how attachment frameworks can also support an understanding of wider sociocultural phenomena (i.e. classroom behaviours and SE). Moreover, attachment theory is useful in predicting relational and coping behaviours (Rana, Moyhuddin & Rana, 2016). This aligns with the researcher's findings that highlight a sense of belonging as a protective factor when considering their school and exclusion experiences. It could be asserted that a sense of belonging is easier to establish within a smaller school organisation, potentially underpinning why peer relationships are more central (in a protective capacity) in the lived experience of primary aged pupils in comparison to their secondary counterparts.
ATTRIBUTION	**Internal attribution** Some of the literature in review suggests that young people constructed their exclusion as justified based upon attributing their behaviour to internal factors (i.e. being naughty) (e.g. Osler, 2006) . This was echoed in the current findings, for example, one pupil who constructed himself as 'disruptive' reported that his exclusion was 'fair enough'. **External attribution** The current findings highlight **external attributions** held by pupils relating to their exclusion experience, including the importance of: *peer behaviour, curriculum* and *facilities* (including class size and the availability of support). Existing literature indicates that secondary aged pupils hold similar external attributions that impact upon their exclusion experience, including: Peer relationships (O'Connor et al., 2011),	Attribution theory, conceived by Heider (1958), relates to the process by which individuals form causal interpretations of their behaviours and/or events. Thus, considering attributions held by pupils is relevant in considering how pupils make sense of their challenging behaviours and their exclusion experiences. "*The theory applies more generally, however, to the process whereby people attribute characteristics, intentions, feelings, and traits to the objects in their social world. The attribution process seems to serve the individual's need to make sense of the world around him*" (Kanouse and Hanson, 1971, p. 47). Whilst Heider (1958) postulated that individuals hold either: • Internal attributions; attributing the cause of a behaviour or event(s) to internal characteristics, for example, beliefs

curriculum (Hamill, & Boyd, 2002; Hilton, 2006; Michael and Fredrickson, 2013), pupil-teacher ratios (Hilton, 2006; Osler, 2006) and the availability of support (Michael and Fredrickson, 2013).

Hilton, 2006 suggested that the incidence of learning difficulties among CYP with SEBD is important when considering pupils' experiences of school and school exclusion. The current findings that showed that disengagement, or inaccessibility of the '*curriculum*' had a negative impact upon pupils' behaviour. However, whilst this finding possibly pointed to insufficient differentiation for pupils, the inaccessibility of the curriculum may also be indicative of an unidentified learning need which may have exacerbated pupils challenging behaviours.

Michael and Frederickson (2013) highlighted the benefits of a relevant and engaging curriculum on positive learning and behavioural outcomes This is echoed in the current findings; one pupil talked to the difference between the way in which mainstream, and specialist provisions approached learning, highlighting that his time in the specialist setting was about more than academia. Instead of an attainment focus, this pupil expressed a sense of balance, highlighting that time was given to build positive relationships with staff and increasing social emotional wellbeing, and life skills. This pupil perspective reinforces the message from The National Children's Bureau, that stated "*There is too much emphasis on academic attainment and not enough focus on promoting the wellbeing of students*." (National Children's Bureau, 2017). Within the current educational climate that sees an attainment focus and increased curriculum demands (DfE, 2012), the current research highlights the negative impact of an academia driven curriculum in primary schools and encourages consideration of this as a factor impacting the school exclusion phenomenon.

or personality traits or within child difficulties.
- External attribution; attributing the cause of a behaviour or event(s) to external factors out of their control, such as environmental factors or luck.

Literature is rich exploring attribution theory in relation to how children make sense of academic performance, "*yet the framework has been used sparingly applied to understanding non-academic student behaviour*" Cothran, Hodges & Garrahy, 2009, P.157).

It is recognised that there is a difference in the attributions (i.e. internal or external) held by excluded pupils dependent on their type of exclusion.

Sellman (2009) argued that if pupils with identified SEBD are given the opportunity to discuss their experiences, they could be articulate in their sense making, and raise issues and questions around practice within schools. Given the external attributions held by pupils making sense of their school and exclusion experiences, arguably, the findings of the current study provide a sound basis for further exploration of the school exclusion experience using an attribution framework.

MANAGING CHANGE	In considering the identified '**coping mechanisms'** (*i.e. denial and Self-protective processin*g) that appeared to be employed by pupils to manage the changes associated with their exclusion experience, the researcher posits this to be a finding unique to the current research. The researcher postulates that it is possible that the primary aged pupils interviewed did not allow themselves to consider their exclusion at a deeper level, as a means of protecting themselves from it, and notes this was not present in literature exploring the school exclusion from the perspective of secondary aged pupils (Farouk, 2017; Gilmore, 2013; Hamill, & Boyd, 2002; Harriss, Barlow & Moli, 2008; Hilton, 2006; O'Connor, Hodkinson & Burton, 2011; Osler, 2006, McCluskey, Riddell & Weedon, 2015; Michael & Fredrickson, 2013; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Trotman, Tucker & Martyn, 2015; Tucker, 2013) .Yet, it is also acknowledged that predominate method of data analysis utilised in the critically reviewed research (i.e. Thematic analysis) did not give licence for researcher interpretation that IPA allowed in the current study; It is possible that only explicit findings were reported as a result. Of the children who did reflect upon the emotional impact of exclusion, feelings of loneliness, confusion and anger were prominent in their experiences. The negative **emotional impac**t experienced by some pupils, when experiencing the change associated with school exclusion, is reflective of previous literature (Parker, Paget, Ford and Gwernan-Jones, 2016). In the current research, the **emotional impact** associated with school exclusion was also interpreted to be influenced by the **exclusion processes** in the pupil's respective experiences (i.e. lack of involvement/communication and periods of non-attendance). The pragmatics of the exclusion processes as perceived by the pupils interviewed will be discussed in the part 3, as they provide a contribution to knowledge relating to the systems and processes that applied educational psychologists work within.	In their writing relating to social identity theory, Tajfel and Turner (1979) proposed that the groups which people belonged to provide a sense of social identity: a sense of belonging to the social world. This is arguably a relevant theory when considering the act of school exclusion, as research suggests a sense of rejection, distance and loneliness following school exclusion (Harris, Vincent, Thomson & Toalster, 2006; Osterman, 2000). Tajfel and Turner (1979) posited that in order to increase an individual's self-regard they enhance the status of the group to which they belong. He suggested that in order to increase a positive sense of self, individuals hold positive views towards their own group and negative views of the group they are not a part of. Social identity theory provides a theoretical lens through which we can consider how the pupils interviewed managed the changes associated with their exclusion. For example, some pupils *maintained a sense of connection* to the school from which they had been excluded; arguably, a continued sense of alignment with the excluding school may have been a bid to maintain a positive social identity. Whereas other pupils interviewed disparaged their excluding school, whilst expressing positive views of their new school; this may be a result of realignment with a new social group and a bid to promote a positive sense of self. This may be held in mind by professionals when issuing a FPE. It is possible that if a pupil experiences negative emotion in response to school action (i.e. exclusion), they may reject their social identity as part of the 'school group', potentially making their return to school more difficult.

4.2 Eco-systemic Model for School Exclusion

The superordinate themes emerging from the pupil narratives highlight the importance of the systemic context within which their challenging behaviours occurred. Researchers' have highlighted the benefits of an eco-systemic approach to understanding challenging behaviour in schools (e.g. Cole, Visser & Daniels, 1991), as this approach supports a move away from child deficit models and encourages consideration of environmental influences (Cooper and Upton, 1991). This approach also aligns with the evolving conceptualization of SEMH, (O'riordon, 2015), arguably, making it a suitable framework given the identified SEMH needs of the sample. Consideration of the interactive nature of the systems, within which a pupil's behaviour occurs, may provide an insight into how systems may contribute towards, or prevent, exclusion of pupils with SEMH, yet this psychological theory has not been discussed in the reviewed research.

Although the current research never explicitly sought to consider pupil experiences of exclusion within an eco-systemic perspective, the reoccurring link with this theory is worthy of further exploration, as the researcher believes that it may also be a suitable framework to consider the findings of existing SE research. The researcher considers Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) as a useful framework when considering how CYP experience exclusion. This framework supports professionals' understanding of individual differences in relation to environmental factors (including some of the external attributions highlighted above). It also encourages professionals to consider the bi-directionality of the influence between systems, providing a framework to explore the observed connections between identified themes.

The figure below illustrates how the current findings can be considered within an eco-systemic model for SE (adapted from Bronfenbrenner's original model), depicting how the chronosystem, macrosystem, exosystem, mesosystem and microsystem can influence a child's behavioural presentation, and subsequent exclusion.

Figure 13: Eco-systemic Model for School Exclusion

CHRONOSYSTEM

It is helpful to consider the temporal nature of the pupils lived experience. For example, in the current research, one pupil noted the cumulative effect of peer behaviours was a trigger for their own reactive behaviours. The chronosystem allows for consideration of experiences over time, reminding professionals to be mindful about where CYPs exclusion experiences are punctuated. The current findings suggest that to understand exclusion, what came before the exclusion, the exclusion itself, and what came after the exclusion must be considered.

MACROSYSTEM

Although the children did not talk explicitly on the factors affecting their behaviour at the macrosystem level, it is argued that their experiences illustrate a ripple effect from political, social and cultural influences. The below factors were identified by the pupils to impact upon the way in which they behaved and their subsequent exclusion:

- The lack of practical support identified by participants could be indicative of government financial restrictions impacting upon school staffing levels.
- The increasing demands of teachers to raise attainment, at the governmental and local level is argued to be evident in pupil discussions about an overemphasis on academic work.
- Some pupils discussed the difficulty they experienced completing the work expected of them, which is likely an impacted by the increased difficulty level of the national curriculum.
- A number of pupil discussed a lengthy period of non-attendance following their exclusion; the researcher considered if this was illustrative of 'unofficial exclusions' (McClusky, Ridell, Weedon & Fordyce, 2016), resulting from the national and local pressures to reduce permanent exclusion rates. This will be discussed further in part 3.

EXOSYSTEM

Connections were made between the findings and social structures that impacted upon the mesosystem and microsystems. Pupils implicitly referred to the influence of school structures and systems on their behaviour. Arguably, a school's inclusive ethos was an influential factor in the pupil's school and SE experiences. For some pupils, there was a sense of being unwanted by staff at school based upon their identified SEND. One pupil constructed his exclusion as a means of school 'getting rid of him' and reported how this exacerbated his behaviours. Pupils reported when they felt wanted, cared for and supported they were better able to cope in school, reducing their vulnerability to exclusion.

The '*behavior management*' that the pupils described was influenced by their respective school's behavior management policy. Pupils who constructed their exclusion as unfair, suggested that teachers were targeting them or hypervigilant to their behaviours. It is possible that limited adaptations had been made in the way in which the pupils identified with SEBD had been supported. This is of relevance within educational psychology practice as EPs are well positioned to advise schools about adaptations that can be made to behaviour management policies using alternative psychological perspectives. For example advising behaviour management approached underpinned by humanistic psychology rather than behaviouristic approaches, which it is possible to infer from the pupil discourse that this may exacerbate the behaviours of a pupil with SEMH.

CHRONOSYSTEM

MACROSYSTEM

Local authority systems

Government initiatives

National curriculum

Socio economic factors

EXOSYSTEM

School ethos

Behaviour management policy

SEND policy

MESOSYSTEM
Links within the microsystem

Parents   Peers

MICROSYSTEM

Siblings

School staff

SEND

INDIVIDUAL

Personal constructs

Identity
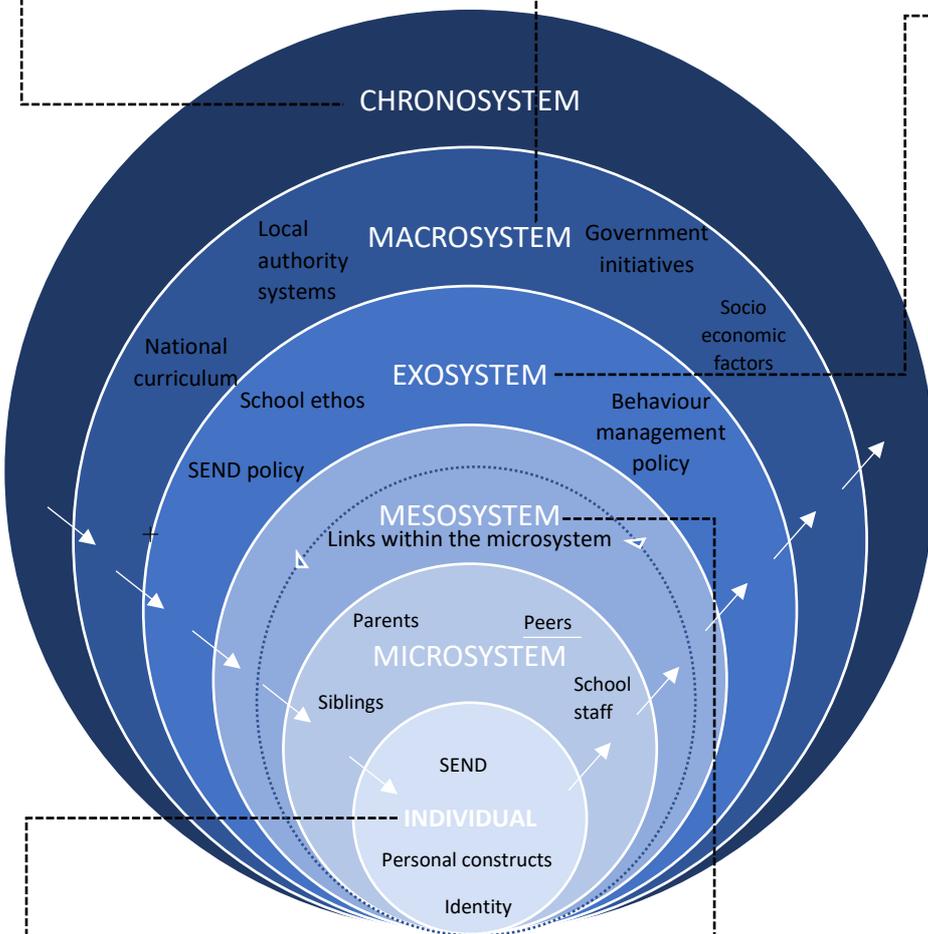
INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

Pupils in the current study, did not hold explicit constructs about their SEMH difficulties, however, many pupils did acknowledge that they got angry often and quickly; arguably, their SEMH difficulties may manifest as difficulties with emotional regulation.it is important to reflect upon the outward influence of such difficulties and consider the response that such behaviour elicits from teachers. For some pupils recollected their teacher's hypervigilance and overly strict behaviour management in comparison to their peers, which may be an example of how staff managed pupils SEMH.

MICROSYSTEM

A superordinate theme identified by pupils as important within their school experience was relationships. Their responses suggested that whether positive or negative, relationships with staff and peers were important in how they experienced and made sense of their exclusion. (Given the importance placed upon relationships, this was a separate meta theme to attributions, yet, it could arguably also qualify as an external attribution). The current findings illustrate that precursors to exclusion, as identified by the children as external attributions, were predominantly linked to interactions involving pupil/pupil (e.g. Peer behaviour) and/or pupil/teacher (e.g. teacher actions).

Returning to the research question*: what is the lived experience of fixed period exclusion, from the perspective of pupils in year 5 and 6 with identified SEMH, who have experienced FPE?* it is argued that the eco-systemic model may provide helpful framework to consider '**what'** pupils constructed their exclusion experience to be, as it allows for consideration of systemic influences that the pupils suggested may be protective or detrimental to the maintenance of their school placement. As illustrated in figure X, the eco-systemic model not only captures the internal and external attributions held by pupils interviewed, but also captures the bidirectional influence of relationships and the pupils' experiences over time.

The current research aimed to explore '**what'** pupils constructed their exclusion experience to be, yet, when further interpreting the findings, the researcher has become curious about how the principles of social constructionism (Burr, 1995) can be brought into contact with the eco-systemic understanding of the pupils' experience, when considering '**how'** pupils make sense of their exclusion experience. In drawing upon social constructionist principles (Burr, 1995), the researcher has considered how pupils' knowledge and understanding of their exclusion experience is sustained by social processes (i.e. the interactions between the individual and the surrounding systems). As it is not directly related to the research question, links with social constructionism will be made in part 3 of this writing.

4.3 Methodological Strengths and Limitations

Table 8: Methodological Strengths and Limitations	
Methodological Strengths and Limitations	
Strengths	By allowing primary aged pupils to express their views, the current research gained valuable insight to the experiences and perspectives of pupils, who's voices appear sparse within the research relating to SE; this is acknowledged to be the researcher's unique contribution to the literature. Although the researcher acknowledges the importance of triangulating information, and gathering a holistic view of exclusion, in resisting the temptation to speak to other key stake holders, (i.e. teachers, headteachers, and parents) this study truly champions the voices of the children; illuminating factors important 'to' and 'for' them. Hence, the researcher contends that by holding on to the pupil voice, experiential knowledge, unique to that of adults, has been shared; this is viewed to be the greatest asset within the research design. The validity of the current research was enhanced through the consideration of core principles outlined in Yardley's (2000, 2008) framework for qualitative research validity, including: • Sensitivity of context; • commitment and rigour; • coherence and transparency; and • impact and importance (Appendix P demonstrates consideration of each principle relating to the current research) The methodology used to elicit the voices of the pupils was also viewed to be a strength, as semi structured interviews, allowed for the phenomenon of exclusion to be explored in a purposeful way, but left space for the pupils to discuss factors that were important in their experiences; thus, allowing the capture of nuances in the individual exclusion experiences. Moreover, the methods of data analysis, are also identified as strength, as much of the analysis within the reviewed literature was criticised to be deductive and descriptive, whereas, IPA allowed for an inductive and interpretive process of analysis.

Limitations	
	Although the adoption of semi structured interviews was viewed to be a strength of the research design, given the structure of the interviews that sought to explore, pre and post exclusion experiences, it would be interesting to explore where the pupils themselves punctuate information relating to their exclusion, as this would give insight to the connections that they make with their exclusion, and pre and post exclusion experiences. With the current interview schedule, it could be suggested that the pupils, did not link certain pre-exclusion factors to their exclusion, but rather explored these factors as the researcher had asked them to explore the time before exclusion.

Although this study aimed to promote pupil voice, limitations lie in the level of participation that the pupils had throughout the research process. For example, the pupils themselves were not consulted about the medium by which they shared their experience or consulted to ensure that the findings accurately captured their experiences

The assumed homogeneity of the group of participants interviewed is also a limitation of the current research, as although each participant had experienced a fixed period exclusion, some pupils had also experienced internal exclusions and it is unclear if they had also experienced permanent exclusions. This was a key limitation when considering the research question initially posed, as due to the lack of certainty about the type of exclusion being discussed, the researcher discussed the findings in relation to school exclusion in its broader sense (i.e. FPE, Permanent exclusion or internal exclusion). Additionally, based upon our interactions, it could be suggested that some pupils may experience a degree of difficulty in the area of social communication; thus, this may have impacted upon how they made sense of their lived experiences. A mixed-methods approach utilising inferential and descriptive statistics may be more appropriate for future research, as in the current study the researcher had limited information to hypothesise about the reasons underpinning the themes identified. Subsequently, the researcher was not able to engage in the depth of interpretation that may have highlighted further nuance in the way that pupils experienced their exclusion that may be related to SEND other than SEMH.

Finally, the generalisability of the current findings could be argued to be limited based on the selected sample, which was small in size and limited in age range (i.e. N=7, pupils in KS2, attending a specialist provision for SEMH). However, as afore mentioned due to the variability in lived experiences of pupils with SEMH, generalisability of findings may not be a suitable aim when conducting qualitative research with this subgroup. It could be suggested that a small sample of pupils is appropriate as Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) suggest that "…only through painstakingly detailed cases…can we produce psychological research which matches and does justice to the complexity of human psychology itself" (p.37-38). |

4.4 Implications for EP practice and recommendations for future research.

As the researcher has made links between the findings and psychological theory (i.e. attachment, attribution and identity), future research may consider exploring SE experiences through a specific psychological lens, to further explore the initial links made within this writing. The pupils in this study provided insight into how various systems may prevent or contribute to exclusion. In considering the findings within an eco-systemic model, links between a variety of contextual, personal and interpersonal factors reported by the pupils are highlighted. Cameron (2006) posits that the unique role of applied psychologists lies in how they attempt "to understand and reconcile the different perspectives which people may bring to a particular problem situation (i.e. SE)" (p.292). Therefore, a larger scale study that allows triangulation of perspectives/experiences of key stakeholders (school staff/parents/pupils) would provide a valuable contribution to the literature, as bringing the experiences together would allow for them to be explored in relation to one another. Yet, the researcher advocates that pupil voice must be given equal weighting in research exploring the experiences of multiple stakeholders.

It would also be enlightening to explore the lived experiences of pupils at risk of exclusion from primary school and those who have been excluded from primary school. As based upon the finding of the current study, it would be interesting to see if pupils are constructing the same factors negatively (i.e. relationships and behaviour management) prior to their exclusion, as it may be the case that such factors have a detrimental impact on a pupil's ability to cope with school and marks the beginning of a negative trajectory towards exclusion.

Although Smith et al (2009) acknowledge that the results of IPA analysis cannot be generalised due to their level of subjectivity, the level of detail that this adds to the limited research base is seen as valuable and it is possible to cautiously apply findings to professional practice using the eco-systemic framework; figure 14 illustrates the implications for EP Practice.

4.5 Final conclusions

It is hoped that the findings from the current research contributes a valuable insight into the gap in the literature relating to how primary aged pupils experience SE. Yet, it is acknowledged that the findings may be most useful when considered as a basis for future research. It is hoped that the sense making of the pupils has provided enlightenment as to the commonality and divergence in how CYP experience SE and demonstrates the benefits of EPs and professionals exploring systemic influences when attempting to understand the pupils lived experiences and consider appropriate support.

Figure 14. Implications for EP practice

The researcher acknowledges that the current research has been punctuated at a particular time in relation to the pupils exclusion experience (i.e. post exclusion). Yet, it is important to stress that the findings from this study are equally applicable to pupils at risk of exclusion. Pupils identified many pre-exclusion experiences and factors that exacerbated their behavioural difficulties, which may be addressed before the point of exclusion. This highlights the importance of early intervention and preventative work by EP's.

The findings that highlight a variability in the process of exclusion, as constructed by the pupils, raises questions as to the systemic work that EPs may engage in. For example, in highlighting the pupil experience, collaborative work at the local authority level may help to ensure exclusion guidance is adhered to. Moreover, the lack of communication and involvement in the exclusion process (and the detrimental emotional impact that this has on the pupils) indicates that professionals (e.g. head teachers) may benefit from reminders of the importance of effective communication throughout the exclusion process; this could potentially be achieved via a steering group where all key stakeholders (Parents/pupils/Headteachers) are present. During the steering group an EP's remit may include; listening to pupil experiences, identifying the negative affective factors and communicating the importance of these to other parties involved using psychological perspectives outlined above.

The current study encourages EPs to utilise an eco-systemic model when considering challenging behaviour and the increasing rates of FPE in primary schools, as it allows for consideration of wider systemic influences that may be exacerbating pupil behaviour or supporting them to maintain their school placement. This research illustrates how this perspective can be used through a bottom up approach of listening to the voices and experiences of CYP, to help identify factors and generate questions relating to the broader systemic factors that are at play in relation to the exclusion experience. A key element of using an eco-systemic model to understand school exclusion experiences, is the emphasis placed upon bidirectional influences between the individual and the wider systems. Given that the reasons for FPE often relate to a undesirable behaviour by the individual pupil (e.g. persistent disruptive behaviour/physical assault/ verbal abuse) it is helpful to reflect with school staff about the ripple effect of other systems that may have impacted upon the pupils thoughts and actions.

This research highlighted that adult- pupil relationships were an important factor in how the pupils made sense of their school and exclusion experience, whether it be in a protective or negative capacity. This is of relevance to EPs who are responsible for facilitating support for pupils who present with challenging behaviour, within a climate of increasing curriculum demands and academic expectations. The findings from this study may justify the need for EP's to complete more training on the development of nurturing classrooms and attachment aware schools (Bomber, 2015) as the pupils interviewed alluded to the benefits that these environments have on their ability to maintain their school placements.

Arguably, if the emotional impact of exclusion is negative emotion, by bracketing of the experience (evident through comments such as "*I don't remember*" and "*don't know*") the pupils may have been protecting themselves from the negative emotions associated with exclusion. Improving *CYP's mental health* outcomes is a national priority, evident through government agendas such as 'Future in mind' (Department of Health, 2012), and an Educational psychologist's role in supporting positive wellbeing of pupils is growing (DCSF, 2008b). Hence, the findings from this study have implications for the role of Educational Psychologists, as they would suggest that children need to be better supported to make sense of their exclusion experience and associated negative emotions.

5. References

Ashworth, P. (2008). Conceptual foundations of qualitative psychology. *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*, *2*, 4-25.

Aston, H., & Lambert, N. (2010). Young people's views about their involvement in decision-making. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 26(1),* 41-51.

Bergin, C., & Bergin, D. (2009). Attachment in the classroom. *Educational Psychology Review*, *21*(2), 141-170.

Blaikie, N. (2007). *Approaches to social enquiry: Advancing knowledge*. Polity.

Bomber, L (2015) *Attachment Aware School Series: Bridging the Gap for Troubled Pupils. Book 1: The Key Adult in School.* Worth Publishing.

British Psychological Society (BPS) (2009a). Code of Ethics and Conduct: Guidance published by the Ethics Committee of the British Psychological Society. Leicester: BPS. Retrieved on 22nd October, 2016, from www.bps.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/data_protection_act.pdf.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and*

design. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bryman, A., & Cramer, D. (2012). *Quantitative data analysis with IBM SPSS 17, 18 & 19: A guide for social scientists*. Routledge.

Burr, V. (1995). *An introduction to social constructionism*. London: Routlegde.

Cameron, R. J. (2006). Educational psychology: The distinctive contribution. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, *22*(4), 289-304.

Chamberlain, T., Golden, S., & Bergeron, C. (2011). Office of the Children's Commissioner: Children and young people's views on education policy.

Cole, T., J. Visser, and H. Daniels (1999). "A Model Explaining Effective EBD Practice in Mainstream Schools." *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties* 4 (1): 12–18.

Cohen, L., & Manion, L. (1994). *Research methods in education.* (4th ed.) London: Routledge.

Cothran, D. J., Kulinna, P. H., & Garrahy, D. A. (2009). Attributions for and consequences of student misbehavior. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, *14*(2), 155-167.

Cook, T., & Hess, E. (2007). What the Camera Sees and from Whose Perspective Fun methodologies for engaging children in enlightening adults. *Childhood*, *14*(1), 29-45.

Cooper, P., Upton, G., & Smith, C. (1991). Ethnic minority and gender distribution among staff and pupils in facilities for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties in England and Wales. *British   Journal of Sociology of Education*, *12*(1), 77-94.

Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2007). Designing and conducting mixed methods research

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.

Crittenden, P. M., & Landini, A. (2011). *Assessing adult attachment: A dynamic-maturational approach to discourse analysis*. WW Norton & Company.

Crittenden, P. M. (2006). A Dynamic Maturational Model of Attachment. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, *27*(2), 105-115.

Department for Education (DfE) (1994). *Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs*. London: DFE.

Department for Education and Skills. (2001a). *Special educational needs: code of practice*. Nottinghamshire: DfES

Department for Education and Skills (DfES) (2003). *Every Child Matters*. London: HMSO

Department for Education. (2010). *The Importance of Teaching. The Schools White Paper.*
London. DfE. Retrieved November 3rd, 2016, from

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachme
nt_data/file/175429/CM-7980.pdf

Department for Education. (2011). *The Education Act 2011: equalities impact assessment.*
Retrieved   November   3rd,   2016,   from

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-education-act-2011-equalities-
impact-assessment

Department for Education. (2011). *National Statistics, Permanent and fixed-period*
exclusions in England: 2010 to 2011. Retrieved November 3rd, 2016, from

https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-
from-schools-in-england-academic-year-2010-to-2011

Department for Education. (2012). *National Statistics, Permanent and fixed-period*
exclusions in England: 2011 to 2012. Retrieved November 3rd, 2016, from

https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-
from-schools-in-england-2011-to-2012-academic-year

Department for Education. (2013). *National Statistics, Permanent and fixed-period*
exclusions in England:2012 to 2013. Retrieved November 3rd, 2016, from

https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-england-2012- to-2013

Department for Education (DfE) & Department for Health (DfH) (2015). *Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities*. Retrieved on, 27th[th] January, 2016, from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf.

Department for Education. (2014). *National Statistics, Permanent and fixed-period exclusions in England: 2013 to 2014*. Retrieved November 3rd, 2016, from https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-england-2013- to-2014

Department for Education. (2015). *Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England Statutory guidance for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion.* Retrieved November 5th[th], 2016, from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/641418/20170831_Exclusion_Stat_guidance_Web_version.pdf

Department for Education. (2015). *National Statistics, Permanent and fixed-period exclusions in England: 2014 to 2015*. Retrieved November 3rd, 2016, from

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/539704
/SFR_26_2016_text.pdf.

Department for Education. (2016). *National Statistics, Permanent and fixed-period exclusions in England: 2015 to 2016*. Retrieved November 3rd, 2016, from https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-england-2015- to-2016

Department for Education. (2016). *Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England Statutory guidance for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion* Retrieved November 3rd, 2016, from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/641418 /20170831_Exclusion_Stat_guidance_Web_version.pdf

Department for Education. (2012). *The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations*. Retrieved November 5th, 2016, from http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/1033/made

Farouk, S. (2017). My life as a pupil: The autobiographical memories of adolescents excluded from school. *Journal of adolescence*, *55*, 16-23.

Geddes, H. (2006). *Attachment in the classroom: The links between children's early experience, emotional well-being and performance in school*. Worth Pub.

Gergen, K. J. (2009). *Realities and relationships: Soundings in social construction*. Harvard university press.

Giorgi, A. P., & Giorgi, B. (2008). Phenomenological psychology. *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research in psychology*, 165-179.

Gilmore, G. (2013). 'What's a fixed term exclusion, Miss?' Students' perspectives on a disciplinary inclusion room in England. *British Journal of Special Education*, *40*(3), 106-113.

Gordon, A. (2001). School Exclusion in England: children's voices and adults solutions? *Educational Studies, 27(1),*69-85.

Grix, J. (2010). *The foundations of research*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. *Handbook of qualitative research*, *2*(163-194), 105.

Hamill, P., & Boyd, B. (2002). Equality, fairness and rights–the young person's voice. *British Journal of Special Education*, *29*(3), 111-117.

Harker, R. M., Dobel Ober, D., Lawrence, J., Berridge, D., & Sinclair, R. (2003). Who takes care of education? Looked after children's perceptions of support for educational progress. *Child & Family Social Work*, *8*(2), 89-100.

Harker, R. M., Dobel Ober, D., Berridge, D., & Sinclair, R. (2004). More than the sum of its parts? interprofessional working in the education of looked after children. *Children & Society*, *18*(3), 179-193.

Harriss, L., Barlow, J., & Moli, P. (2008). Specialist residential education for children with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties: pupil, parent, and staff perspectives. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *13*(1), 31-47.

Harris, B., Vincent, K., Thomson, P., & Toalster, R. (2006). Does every child know they matter? Pupils' views of one alternative to exclusion. *Pastoral Care in Education*, *24*(2), 28-38.

Heider, F. (1958). *The psychology of interpersonal relations*. New York: Wiley

Hilton, Z. (2006). Disaffection and school exclusion: Why are inclusion policies still not working in Scotland?. *Research Papers in Education*, 21(3), 295-314.

Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) (2016). *Standards of conduct, performance and ethics. London: HCPC*. Retrieved on 22nd October, 2016, from www.hpcuk.org/publications/standards/index.asp?id=38.

Haynes, B. (2005). The paradox of the excluded child. *Educational Philosophy and theory*, *37*(3), 333-341.

Ingram, R. (2013). Interpretation of children's views by educational psychologists: dilemmas and solutions. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 29(4),* 335-346.

Kanouse, D. E. , & Hanson, L. R. (1971). Negativity in evaluations. In E. E. Jones, D. E. Kanouse, H. H.   Kelley, R. E. Nisbett, S. Valins, & B. Weiner (Eds.), *Attribution: Perceiving the causes of behavior.* Morristown,   NJ: General   Learning Press.

Mckenzie, N., & Knipe, S. (2006). Research dilemmas: Paradigms, methods and methodology. *Issues in educational research*, *16*(2), 193-205

McCluskey, G., Lloyd, G., Riddell, S., Weedon, E., & Fordyce, M. (2014). Exclusion from School: compounding or tackling inequality. *Discourse: Studies in the cultural politics of education.*

McCluskey, G., Riddell, S., Weedon, E., & Fordyce, M. (2016). Exclusion from school and recognition of difference. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *37*(4), 529-539.

Mertens, D. M. (2014). *Research and evaluation in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods*. Sage publications.

Michael, S., & Frederickson, N. (2013). Improving pupil referral unit outcomes: pupil perspectives. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *18*(4), 407-422.

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Sage Publications.

Munn, P., & Lloyd, G. (2005). Exclusion and excluded pupils. *British Educational Research Journal*, *31*(2), 205-221.

National Children's Bureau. (2017). *Wise up; prioritising wellbeing in schools*. Retrieved on 22nd February, 2018, from https://youngminds.org.uk/media/1428/wise-up-prioritising-wellbeing-in-schools.pdf

O'Connor, M., Hodkinson, A., Burton, D., & Torstensson, G. (2011). Pupil voice: listening to and hearing the educational experiences of young people with behavioural, emotional   and social difficulties (BESD). *Emotional   and   Behavioural Difficulties*, *16*(3), 289-302.

O'Riordan, Z. (2015). Building productive relationships with young people with SEBD in transition: the role of identity. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *20*(4), 415-431.

Osterman, K. F. (2000). Students' need for belonging in the school community. *Review of educational research*, *70*(3), 323-367.

Osler, A. (2006). Excluded girls: interpersonal, institutional and structural violence in schooling. *Gender and education*, *18*(6), 571-589.

Paterson, A. S. (1997). A humanistic framework for interviewer skills.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). Two decades of developments in qualitative inquiry: A personal, experiential perspective. *Qualitative social work*, *1*(3), 261-283.

Parker, C., Paget, A., Ford, T., & Gwernan-Jones, R. (2016). 'he was excluded for the kind of behaviour that we thought he needed support with…'A qualitative analysis of the experiences and perspectives of parents whose children have been excluded from school. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *21*(1), 133-151.

Peek, L., & Fothergill, A. (2009). Using focus groups: lessons from studying daycare centers, 9/11, and Hurricane Katrina. *Qualitative Research*, *9*(1), 31-59.

Pietkiewicz, I., & Smith, J. A. (2012). Praktyczny przewodnik interpretacyjnej analizy fenomenologicznej w badaniach jakościowych wpsychologii. *Czasopismo Psychologiczne*, *18*(2), 361-369.

Robson, C. (2002). The analysis of qualitative data.

Robson, C., & McCartan, K. (2016). *Real world research*. John Wiley & Sons.

Sellman, E. (2009). Lessons learned: Student voice at a school for pupils experiencing social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. *Emotional and behavioural difficulties*, *14*(1), 33-48.

Smith, J. A. , Jarman, M., & Osborn, M. (1999). *Doing interpretative phenomenological analysis*. In M. Murray & K. Chamberlain (Eds.), *Qualitative health psychology* (pp. 218-240). London: Sage.

Smith, J.A., Flowers, P., Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method, research*. London: Sage.

Sochos, A. (2015). Attachment-beyond interpersonal relationships. *PSYCHOLOGIST*, *28*(12), 986-989.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. *The social psychology of intergroup relations*, *33*(47), 74.

Thomas, G. (2009). *A Guide for Students in Education and Applied Social Sciences: How to Do Your Research Project.* Sage: London.

Trotman, D., Tucker, S., & Martyn, M. (2015). Understanding problematic pupil behaviour: perceptions of pupils and behaviour coordinators on secondary school exclusion in an English city. *Educational Research*, *57*(3), 237-253.

Tucker, S. (2013). Pupil vulnerability and school exclusion: developing responsive pastoral policies and practices in secondary education in the UK. *Pastoral Care in Education*, *31*(4), 279-291.

Tucker, S., Trotman, D., & Martyn, M. (2015). Vulnerability: The role of schools in supporting young people exposed to challenging environments and situations. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *41*, 301-306.

United Nations (UN) (1989). *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Brussels: The UN General Assembly

Warshak, R. (2004). Payoffs and pitfalls of listening to children. *Family Relations, 52*, 373-384.

Wengraf, T. (2001). *Qualitative research interviewing: Biographic narrative and semi-structured methods*. Sage.

Willig, C. (2013). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

Yardley, L. (2000). Dilemmas in qualitative health research. *Psychology & Health, 15*, 215-228.

Yardley, L. (2008). *Demonstrating validity in qualitative research. In J. A. Smith (Ed.). Qualitative   Psychology: A practical guide to research methods* (pp. 235-251). London: Sage.

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

Doctorate in Educational Psychology (DedPsy)

PART 3

CRITICAL APPRAISAL

Part 3: Critical Appraisal

1. Critical Account of the Research Process

Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005) posit that a qualitative researcher makes subjective decisions and justifications at each stage of the research process. It is hoped that through a reflexive and reflective account of the research process, increased transparency surrounding decision-making processes will provide insight for the reader (Brocki & Wearden, 2006). This account will be written in the first person as it aims to provide insight to my thoughts and reflections relating to my research journey.

1.1 Researcher Background

In the pursuit of transparency, I believe it is important to state my position in relation to the context and content of this research. I am currently living and completing my fieldwork placement within the local authority in which the research was collected. This is my birth hometown. I do not directly work within the specialist setting (i.e. I am not the allocated EP for this setting), nor have I ever worked within the specialist setting during any role prior to the training programme. Within my Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP) capacity, I have not worked with any of the pupils involved in the research, however, my previous experiences of working with pupils with SEMH has influenced my interest in this research area.

1.2 Research Development/Inception of the Research Topic

My research idea emerged from reflecting upon an underpinning philosophy integral to my work as a TEP, which is that all CYP deserve to have a voice in relation to matters that concern them. To me, this is more than a legal obligation stemming from the United Nations Right of the Child (1989), it is a moral obligation to *listen*. This caused me to reflect upon my previous role coordinating special educational needs provision and current role as a TEP, where I see professionals and parents make decisions *for* CYP, rather than *with* CYP; in my experience, this is particularly evident when working with pupils with special educational needs and/or disability or other vulnerable groups. Professionally, I consider listening to the experiences and perspectives of CYP to be enlightening; a notion that is echoed across a variety of literature advocating the benefits of exploring the perspectives of CYP (e.g. Warshak, 2004). Lloyd-Smith and Tarr (2000) suggest that "*The reality experienced by children and young people in educational settings cannot be fully comprehended by inference and assumption. The meanings they attach to their experiences are not necessarily the meanings that their teachers or parents would ascribe; the subcultures that children inhabit in classrooms or schools are not always visible or accessible to adults*" (p.61). Toynbee (2009) suggests that through sharing their experiences, CYP can offer an insightful appraisal of school systems, which can provide a holistic view of the supportive factors, complexities, and shortcomings of current practice. Moreover, the empowerment

that CYP are reported to experience through having adults take the time to listen, and explore their experience is also evident in the literature (Warshsak, 2004). For me, this provided a foundation for my research knowing that I wished to explore a given phenomenon from the perspective of CYP.

The SEND Code of Practice (DfE, 2015) stipulates a professional duty to elicit the voice of CYP regardless of age or ability. Fielding (2004) argues that in conceptualising pupil voice, a more dialogic model is appropriate; a model that does not focus upon adult silence or dominance, but rather a model through which adults talk *with* CYP instead of *for* them. Clarke, Boorman and Nind, (2011) further suggest in eliciting the voice of CYP it should be an "*active process of hearing, interpreting and giving meaning and value*" to the pupil perspective (P.768) . Arguably, EP's are well positioned to facilitate the involvement of CYP (Ingram, 2013).

When considering the population of CYP that I wished to complete my research with, I strived to give voice to the vulnerable groups, who I perceived to be marginalised within my professional practice. In my experience, teachers and parents were often reluctant to engage in a discussion with CYP who display challenging behaviour, demonstrating discomfort with the proposal of having a transparent discussion about the reasons for, and impact of, their behaviour. Arguably, not only the disaffection demonstrated by CYP with behavioural difficulties makes them hard to reach (Satory, 2013), but an adult reluctance to engage with this group marginalises them further. Fletcher- Campbell, Archer and Tomlinson (2003) encourage us to engage vulnerable and/or hard to reach groups when conducting research, "*otherwise, only those young people to whom access is relatively unproblematic appear in case studies and the 'hard to reach' remain thus"* (p. 11). Thus, engaging a marginalised and hard to reach group was another aim of my research journey.

In my professional practice I was encountering many pupils, who had already been identified to have additional needs in the area of Social Emotional Mental Health yet, were experiencing school exclusion. This presented a number of concerns:

1) By nature of the identification of SEMH needs, an additional level of support should have been implemented to support this subgroup of CYP; despite this, they are more regularly excluded than their peers (DfE,2016).
2) In the case of fixed periods exclusions, most children I encountered experienced multiple exclusions; suggesting to me that this was an ineffective disciplinary mechanism.
3) The 'paradox of school exclusion' Haynes (2005) highlights the discord between the legal requirement for a CYP to attend school when they meet compulsory school age and the process of SE.

4)   An observed lack of discussions with pupils regarding their exclusion.

5)   To me, schools viewed exclusion in terms of a causal disciplinary process, with little regard to the psychological /emotional impact that it may have on CYP.

CYP with identified SEMH are identified as a vulnerable, hard to reach group (Hackett, Theodosiou, Bond, Blackburn, Spicer & Lever, 2010) who present challenge to teachers through the behaviours they can display. This population represent the majority of the SEND exclusion data (DfE, 2016); they themselves report a sense of disengagement from professionals (Clarke et al., 2011) which they attribute to being misunderstood or disliked. Hence, I hoped to provide excluded pupils with an opportunity to communicate their thoughts and feelings about their exclusion experience, through a piece of research in which they felt valued and listened to through their participation. I also hoped to gain a greater insight to the elements of the CYP's lived experience that appeared to positively or negatively impact upon their ability to cope in mainstream school, which may inform professional practice.

1.4 Gap in the literature identified following review

Upon exploring the available literature, it was apparent that research exploring pupil experiences of SE was beginning to grow, however, much of the research appeared to explore pupil experience alongside the experiences of other stakeholders (i.e. parents/teachers), with researchers giving pupil views less weighting when discussing findings (e.g. Harriss, Barlow & Moli, 2008). Although I acknowledge the benefits of triangulating the perspectives of all stakeholders, in my opinion the richness of the pupil data was compromised. Moreover, in my opinion, this felt reflective of shortcomings in professional practice, where professionals intend to explore pupils' perspectives in line with the guidance in the SEND Code of Practice (2015) but this notion of 'pupil voice' can be tokenistic and overshadowed by adult discourse. This observation within professional practice, is arguably supported by research that highlights how pupils experience a sense of tokenism when engaging with professionals, which can result in the impact of their involvement being diminished (Woolfson, Bryce, Mooney, Harker, Lowe and Ferguson, 2008). Thus, the current research aimed to champion only the pupil voice.

When exploring the literature, it was also evident that most of the research exploring the lived experience of SE from the perspective of CYP who had experienced exclusion was completed with secondary aged pupils. It is acknowledged that a focus upon exclusions in secondary school is logical, as most exclusions are issued to pupils in Key stage 3 and 4, however, nationally 1145 children experienced permanent exclusion and 55,740 children have experienced FPE from primary school and

in the 2015/16 academic year (DfE, 2016). Arguably, a moral imperative and legal framework outlining a duty to elicit the voice of CYP regardless of age (DfES, 2015) raises questions as to why primary aged children appear to be offered fewer opportunities to engage in conversations relating to matters that affect them (i.e. exclusion) in comparison to their secondary aged counterparts, within a research arena. This presents a noticeable gap in the literature that the current research aimed to investigate.

1.5 Development of the Research Question

The above considerations contributed to the development of the following research question:

What is the lived experience of fixed period exclusion, from the perspective of pupils in year 5 and 6 with identified SEMH, who have experienced FPE?

This study aimed to add to previous literature in this area, by specifically focusing upon the lived experiences of primary aged pupils in years 5 and 6, As the majority of literature explores the experiences of secondary aged pupils. It is hoped that the experiential knowledge accessed through this research can be utilised by professionals working with vulnerable groups (i.e. pupils with SEND/ SEMH), to promote positive social and emotional outcomes and educational inclusion. This information will be shared anonymously with the Head of Education, the Head teacher of the specialist setting, and the head teachers of mainstream primary schools, to support thinking about the process and experience of school exclusion

1.6 Ethical considerations

An initial concern when choosing to conduct research with excluded pupils with identified SEMH was underpinned by questions such as:

- What emphasis should be placed upon the category of 'SEMH'?
- Was it ethical to ask the pupils to reflect on an experience, which they may have 'moved on' from, and would they feel obliged to engage in such discourse?
- Would there be substantial anonymity within the small-scale nature of the research?
- Would I have the skills to facilitate a therapeutic alliance within the pupils, which would yield a suitable amount of data in order to answer the research question? if not it would be unethical to embark on this research journey?

It was important to openly address my concerns through supervision, through which my anxieties were ameliorated. Still, in accordance with guidelines from the BPS (2009a) and the HCPC (2016) there were fundamental ethical considerations that I was mindful to address during my ethical application,

including: risk to the participant's psychological wellbeing; managing disclosure; anonymity, confidentiality and data protection; and gatekeeper consent, informed assent, right to withdraw and debriefing. (An overview of how each ethical consideration was addressed can be found in Part 2 of this writing).

2.1 Researcher's Positioning

Birks and Mills (2015) highlight the importance of establishing a secure philosophical paradigm as it acts as the foundation of a research design. Grix (2010) highlights the importance of researchers in social science giving careful consideration to the research paradigm that they subscribe to, and the need to share this explicitly with the reader, in order to demonstrate a logical and coherent approach to decision making throughout the research process. Hence, the importance of exploring my ontological and epistemological position was clear from the beginning of the research project.

2.2 Ontological and Epistemological Positioning and Subsequent Research Methodology

Due to the exploratory nature of the research, I believe that it falls within a constructionist-interpretivist paradigm (McKenzie & Knipe, 2006), as this aligned with my intention to understand the "*world of human experience*" (Cohen & Mannion, 1994, p.36). I recognise that constructionist and constructivist is used interchangeably in some literature when discussing philosophical paradigms, which may be explained by the similarity in their philosophical underpinnings as identified by Robson and McCartan (2016). From the available literature, I considered social constructivism as the meaning making of a single mind (Gergan & Gergan, 1984), whilst I viewed conceptualisations of social constructionism to focus upon how meaning is created, negotiated, sustained and modified within societal interactions (Burr, 1995). As I could not underestimate the active role that I would have as researcher in constructing a reality with the participant throughout the data collection and analysis process, I maintained a constructionist-interpretivist position. This is underpinned a relativist ontological position and social constructionist epistemology.

<table>
<tr><td>ONTOLOGY</td><td>Ontology is concerned with the 'nature of the world' and considers the question 'What is there to know?' (Willig, 2013, P.4). A relativist ontology is accepted, as Guba & Lincoln (1994), note that relativism is the view that reality differs from person to person, as the external world only exists as far as our construction of it (Blaikie, 2007); suggesting that multiple realities exist, and each is socially constructed (Mertens, 2014).</td></tr>
</table>

EPISTEMOLOGY — 'Epistemology' relates to the 'theory and nature of knowledge' and contemplates the question, "How, and what, can we know?" (Willig, 2013, p.4). A social constructionist (Burr, 1995) epistemological position is accepted, as the theory of social constructionism posits that knowledge is co-created through social processes and interactions (Burr, 2003; 2015), rather than being generated independently (i.e. uninfluenced by of the wider social world) (Gergen, 2009) Moreover, social constructionism is concerned with understanding the experience of a specific sample, rather than making claims about causation or generalisation (Thomas, 2009). Thus, this epistemological position was viewed to be congruent with the researchers aim to explore how excluded pupils have made sense of their FPE.

Figure 15: Ontological and Epistemological positioning

2.3 Reflection upon the adoption of qualitative research methods

Qualitative research is well suited when exploring lived experiences and individual realities as it places emphasis on asking "*bigger questions about the nature of human experience*" (Shaw & Frost, 2015, p.639). I adopted an exploratory approach and utilised qualitative research methods, which allowed for a comprehensive enquiry of the participant's lived experience of FPE in order to answer the research question. Although I acknowledged that this approach might be subject to criticism, due to its level of subjectivity (Harding & Whitehead, 2013), I felt that it was appropriate when considering the research question. I opted to utilise semi-structured interviews, and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith Flowers and Larkin, 2009), my reasons for which will be discussed later in this writing.

2.4 Recruitment

Turpin, Barley, Beail, Scaife, Slade, Smith and Walsh (1997) recommend the recruitment of 6 participants for an IPA study, as this allows for opportunity to investigate the similarities and differences between participant experiences without compromising on the richness of the data (Pietkiewicz and Smith, 2012). This research used this sample size as a guideline and acknowledged the limited generalisability of findings based on the small sample size. However, I also recognised that

interpretivism is not concerned with making grand claims about generalisation or causation, instead it seeks to highlight the need to better understand the experiences of a specific sample (Barnett-Page and Thomas, 2009). Participants were sampled purposefully, allowing the recruitment of pupils that have the experiential knowledge required to explore the research question (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011), arguably increasing the validity of the data (Yardley, 2000, 2008; see appendix P).

Initially, I aimed to recruit pupils who had experienced a single FPE from a variety of mainstream primary schools, however, I found attaining gatekeeper consent to be a challenge. Upon expanding the participation criteria, 13 gatekeeper consent was sought for 27 pupils; gatekeeper consent from head teachers was obtained for only 4 pupils, from 3 head teachers, following which parents did not provide consent for their child's participation. At this point I considered changing the research questions to explore head teachers' constructions of the exclusion experience, as I found their reluctance to grant access to excluded pupils an intriguing finding. Retrospectively, access to excluded pupils has shed light upon what they construct to be factors within the school system that were detrimental to the maintenance of their school placement. It is possible head teacher's disinclination to engage in this research project may be a reflection of professional reluctance to embrace the "*uncomfortable learnings*" relating to practice within their schools (McIntyre, Pedder and Rudduck, 2005), that may emerge from pupil discourse. Yet, the notion of '*hard to reach groups remaining thus*' (Fletcher-Campbell, Archer & Tomlinson, 2003), caused me to endeavour to access a population of primary aged pupils who had experienced exclusion. I believed that if I withdrew my attempts to engage this subgroup when access became challenging, the voice of younger children experiencing exclusion would remain absent within the literature, and professionals may continue to be unaware of their unique insights.

Subsequently, I sought to access pupils attending a special SEMH provision, as local authority data indicated that the majority of pupils attending this provision had experienced a FPE. Moreover, the schools core ethos is "*together we can achieve*", highlighting the importance of mutual respect and valuing all stakeholders, including CYP; given this ethos I hoped that the current research project would be well received when presented to the head teacher. Following approval of amendments presented to the ethics committee, as I had hoped the head teacher was enthusiastic about the project and the gatekeeper consent was attained. Informed consent from parents was then ascertained following explanation and open discussion about the research project at the weekly 'parent group'. Understanding and support from key stakeholders was vital in overcoming my limited access to this vulnerable group, allowing me to proceed to recruit the current sample (N=7).

It is important to reflect upon the limitations of my recruitment process; although I set out to explore the experience of FPE (which each pupil had experienced), I did not account for the

possibility that pupils may have experienced other forms of school exclusion (i.e. permanent or internal exclusions) or the 'messiness' of exclusion experience, such as the potential 'unofficial' exclusions experienced by the pupils which may be linked to local authority context and procedures. Subsequently, I opted to alter the title of the empirical paper to reflect the ranging exclusion experiences that the pupils alluded to, as the term FPE did not accurately capture the phenomenon of exclusion, as described by the pupils. The broader title of '*School Exclusion: Exploring the Experience of Primary Aged Pupils attending a Specialist Setting'* was used for the empirical paper, whilst the title '*Fixed Period Exclusion: Exploring the Experience of Primary Aged Pupils attending a Specialist Setting'* remained for the literature review, as this reflected the focus of that review.

2.5 <u>Reflections on the Data Collection and Analysis Process</u>

2.5.1 *Data collection*

Focus groups were considered as a data collection method as this approach would provide the researcher with the opportunity to collect data inductively and concurrently, with individuals reacting to and building upon the responses of other group members (Krueger & Casey, 2000). However, I questioned this approach given the potential for one or several group member(s) to dominate the discussion, and concerns that focus groups can suppress or encourage conflicting, contentious and nonnormative views to emerge (Smithson, 2000); I felt that this was in conflict with the aims to capture lived experiences of school exclusions from individual pupil perspectives. Moreover, given the potentially sensitive discourse that may arise when talking about school exclusion, it was believed that the confidential arena provided within individual interviews may be more suitable than focus groups.

When considering interview techniques, Robson (2002) noted that the difference between structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews is the "*'depth of response sought*" by the researcher (p. 269) and described semi-structured interviews as having the potential to provide "*rich and highly illuminating material*" (p.273). Moreover, semi-structured interviews were employed as a means of data collection as Hefferon and Gil-Rodriguez (2011) warn that gathering good quality data for IPA requires a more open-ended interview structure, that maintains a balance between guiding and being guided by the participant. Furthermore, Smith et al (2009) suggests the adoption of semi structured interview schedules may prevent researchers from imposing their understanding or experience of the phenomenon on the pupil's narrative.

In a bid to develop interview questions that would elicit the information necessary to answer the research question, I developed interview schedules through a process of research, supervision and self-reflection. In line with the focus of the research, that aimed to champion the voice of CYP, person

centred concepts (i.e. 'what was working/not working', 'good day/bad day', 'how best to support') (Sanderson, 2000) were used to underpin the questions used within the interview, in a bid to enable a pupil led dialogue about their experiences.

During the interviews, in order to address the power imbalance in pupil adult interactions during research activities (Best, 2007), I sought to establish a therapeutic alliance (Rogers, 1951) as, Paterson (1997) further postulated that the adoption of the attitudinal qualities below, help to diminish a power imbalance that may occur during interviews and subsequent participant discomfort. Hence, I aimed to exude: relatedness/congruence; empathic understanding; and unconditional positive regard towards the participant.

Additionally, through mindful reflection throughout the semi-structured interviews, I was able to consider and address any conscious actions that may have influenced the research findings (e.g. tone, guiding and prompts). I acknowledge that unconscious reflexivity may have influenced the research process and findings (Forshaw, 2007), yet, posit that this is acceptable given "double hermeneutic" (Smith et al., 2009, P.35) accepted in Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) studies.

2.5.2 *Data analysis*

IPA was deemed the most appropriate of data analysis, as it enabled examination of how participants make sense of their individual lived experiences (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). Smith et al., (2009) suggest that "*…only through painstakingly detailed cases…can we produce psychological research which matches and does justice to the complexity of human psychology itself*" (p.37-38). IPA allows for exploration of individual experiences and the experiences of a homogenous group (i.e. pupils who have experienced FPE) meaning this analysis accentuates both convergence and divergence, commonality and nuance (Smith, et al., 2009). Thus, I believed that IPA allowed for a deeper level analysis than is evident in the existing literature in this area, as much of the analysis within the reviewed literature adopted thematic analysis, which I viewed as a limitation based upon its deductive and descriptive nature; arguably, IPA allowed for an inductive and interpretive process of analysis.

Consideration was given to Grounded theory (GT) (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) as an alternative method of analysis, due to the reported similarities in theoretical underpinnings (i.e. phenomenology) and inductive approach to knowledge generation between IPA and GT (Smith et al, 2009). However, key differences were identified between GT and IPA that influenced the methodology of the current study. IPA is argued to *"offer a more detailed and nuanced analysis of a small number of participants with enphahsis on convergence and divergence between participants"* (P.201) in comparison to GT which is geared to the development of a more conceptual explanatory level, where individual accounts are utilised to illustrate a wider theoretical claim. Moreover, Smith et al., (2009) highlight a key

difference between IPA and GT is the speed of generalisation; given the dearth of literature exploring school exclusion experiences of primary aged pupils I believed it was appropriate to begin with a micro level analysis that captured nuance rather than rushing to produce generalisable claims. In line with Smith et al. (2009), I view the adoption of IPA within this study to provide a sound basis for future research that may wish to use the current finding to enrich the development of more macro accounts of school exclusion.

Whilst IPA does not afford a prescribed methodology, as a novice IPA researcher, the guidance provided in the text '*Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research'* (Smith, Larkin and Flowers, 2009) provided a valuable support. A summary of the process is evident in appendix J.

Given IPA's philosophical underpinnings in idiography, each participants' interview transcript was explored in isolation and in turn. It is important to note, that during both the interview and analysis process I remained aware that, a deeper understanding of the pupils' exclusion experiences was generated, as not only does the participant aim to make sense of their experience, but I also attempts to make sense of the participant's account; this is referred to as the "*double hermeneutic*" (Smith et al., 2009, P.35). Thus, the researcher's presence and the bearing this can have upon the research was acknowledged. Throughout the interview and analysis process I was mindful of the need for continued researcher reflexivity, as it is recognised that my prior knowledge, values, beliefs, experience and perceptions are unavoidably present and could influence the research process (Bryman, 2016).

During each individual analysis, in order to stay true to the pupil experience to initially focus upon the linguistic and descriptive comments that may inform the emergent themes; this provides an illustration of how any conceptual comments and emergent themes were grounded in pupil voice.

A further concept in IPA that encourages the researcher to maintain an idiographic commitment is the notion of 'bracketing off' information. This encouraged me to 'bracket off' my own academic and professional knowledge and potential biases, which may have informed my interpretation of the data during the early stages of analysis. Moreover, when progressing to the cross-group analysis, I was mindful to consider each participant's transcript in isolation at this stage and as far as I was able 'bracketed off' ideas emerging from the analysis of the previous participants transcript. This was in a bid to stay true to the idiographic underpinnings of IPA and ascertain the data in relation to individual experiences.

This said, although I aimed to 'bracket off information', I believe it is important to speak to the concerns around this element of the analysis process in the context of real world research. Prior to

commencing the data collection and analysis process, I experienced apprehension about my ability to 'bracket off' previous knowledge, biases, thoughts and interpretations, questioning if this is a fallacy within IPA; surely to expect a researcher to 'bracket off' all other information is a fundamental flaw in the methodology itself? This said, IPA was still believed to be the most appropriate means of data analysis, and the notion of 'bracketing off' encouraged me to be mindful to commit to the data at hand. Additionally, in a bid to address my concerns, a provisional literature review was conducted to familiarise myself with the related research, whereas, deeper engagement with the literature occurred post analysis. Research diaries and supervision were helpful in supporting me to manage the dissonance relating to my ability to hold back previous knowledge and truly capture individual participant experiences (See appendix Q).

3.An Overview of the Research and its Contribution to Knowledge

The findings of this study have been considered in relation to existing literature and psychological theory.

3.1 Links with existing literature

Considering most pupils interviewed in existing literature were in key stage 3 and 4, (see appendix A), the similarity between the findings of the current study exploring the experiences of younger children was an interesting finding in itself. Similarities including: the importance of relationships; pupil-teacher interactions, impact of peers, and environmental factors (i.e. class size, the curriculum), suggest that similar factors impact upon how both primary and secondary aged pupils', experience and make sense of their exclusion, with external attributions dominant in the discourse. In summary, the systemic influences on pupil behaviour and subsequent exclusion appears prominent in their sense making of their SE experience.

3.2 Links with Psychological Theory

Given the perceived limited explicit use of psychology in existing literature exploring pupil experiences of SE, I aimed to express explicit links with psychology in this current research, highlighting connections to attachment theory (Crittenden & Landini, 2011; Sochos, 2015), attribution theory (Heider, 1958) and social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). The current findings also provided further evidence relating to the benefits of adopting an eco-systemic framework (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) when considering SE; supporting the move away from within child conceptualisations of SEBD (Cooper and Upton, 1991; O'riordon, 2015). The eco-systemic model may be viewed as a helpful framework for professionals to use when reflecting upon the systemic influences

that the children have highlighted to have been protective or detrimental to the maintenance of their school placement.

As the above factors were discussed in depth within the empirical paper, I would like to reflect upon a further interpretation of the findings, that is viewed as an extension of the original research question: *what is the lived experience of fixed period exclusion, from the perspective of pupils in year 5 and 6 with identified SEMH, who have experienced FPE?*

3.2.1 Links with Social Constructionist Principles

The current research aimed to explore '**what**' pupils constructed their exclusion experience to be, yet, when further interpreting the findings, the researcher has become curious about how the principles of social constructionism (Burr, 1995) can be brought in to contact with the eco-systemic understanding of the pupils' experience, to consider '**how**' pupils make sense of their exclusion experience. In drawing upon social constructionist principles (Burr, 1995), the researcher has considered how pupils' knowledge and understanding of their exclusion experience is sustained by social processes (i.e. the interactions between the individual and the surrounding systems).

When considering **how** pupils made sense of their exclusion experience, from a social constructionist perspective, "*explanations are to be found neither in the individual psyche nor in social structures, but in the interactive processes that take place routinely between people*" (Burr, 1995, P. 5). The table below illustrates connections I made between the findings and social constructionist principles. I acknowledge that this relates to my interpretation of the data and the reader may make other links; yet, this is viewed as one of the strengths of using social constructionism to consider how pupils make sense of their exclusion experiences.

Table 9: Links with Social Constructionist Principles

Principle	Illustration from my analysis.
A critical stance towards taken-for-granted knowledge	The divergence in the pupils lived experience is illustrative of the need to take a critical stance towards taken for granted knowledge. Each pupil constructed an experiential truth when making sense of their exclusion experience; each truth shared has no more value than another, as it is a result of how each child perceived their experience in line with their perceived social world. This highlights the need to consider each pupils exclusion in a person-centred way.

Cultural specificity	Internal attributions highlighted by pupils illustrated through identified personal constructs may be indicative of lingering within child attributions relating to challenging behaviour. Given the importance of language in the construction of knowledge as subjective truths, personal constructs such as 'naughty' may have been influenced by interactions with other people, which were culturally specific to the individuals surrounding systems.
Knowledge is sustained by social processes:	Pupils' understanding of their exclusion experience "*is not a product of objective observation of the world, but of the social processes and interactions in which people are constantly engaged with each other*" (Burr, 1995, P.3). Through regular interactions with surrounding systems their version of truth is consolidated. E.g. the more times their peers behaviour triggers a reaction, meaning the pupil gets into trouble, the stronger the truth in their external attribution.
Knowledge and social action go together	Burr (1995) states that each construction invites a different type of social action from human beings. Whether, internal attributions, (e.g. constructing oneself as a handful) or external attributions (e.g. constructing the teachers behaviour management as overly strict), both constructions would be sustained by the interaction between the teacher and the pupil. For example, the construction of a teacher as overly strict, would sustain some patterns of social action, (e.g. volatile response to behaviour management) and exclude other patterns of social action (e.g. pupil openness to teacher direction). This would then likely impact the teacher's construction of the pupil behaviour and impact upon negative circular causality in their interaction.

3.3 The pragmatics of school exclusion

The findings also encourage reflection upon the pragmatics relating to school exclusion; this is viewed to be a valuable contribution to knowledge for applied psychologists. The factors below were highlighted by the pupils.

3.3.1 Lack of support

Pupils highlighted a lack of support from staff to be a factor detrimental to their behaviour; this finding was in keeping with existing research findings (e.g. Michael and Fredrickson, 2013). This

finding was strongest in relation to the perceived lack of support with school work. Arguably, the practical support from staff (relating to higher staff to pupil ratios) is an important protective factor, which professionals may consider within the current context of budget cuts and resultant reduced classroom support. To be clear, this is not to suggest that higher levels of 1:1 support is advocated, as research evidence suggests this is not always beneficial (see. Webster, Russell and Blatchford, 2012). This suggestion is not made to contribute to the debate regarding the ambiguity of TA/CT roles; rather, it highlights relational and practical support from adults as a protective factor in relation to school exclusion, as evident from the pupil discourse.

3.3.2 Restraint

In line with existing research (Hamil & Boyd, 2002; Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Osler, 2006), the current findings highlight that behaviour management approaches employed by staff, negatively impacted upon pupil behaviour. Although teachers use of restraint was identified to impact upon the school and exclusion experience of only one participant, the strength of the negative discourse relating to this divergemt theme, warrants further discussion. The extent to which restraint negatively impacted upon how participant 7 behaved, was such a significant factor in his experience, that he warned of the perils of using restraint as a means of behaviour management with CYP, noting:

"anyone can come in and get angry at someone and it's gona get to the point were they really start hurtin teachers. Coz all they do is restrain ya"

This raises questions as to teachers' readiness to use positive handling strategies in managing challenging behaviours. It is accepted that at times this is necessary as a last resort, however, it serves as a reminder that all behaviour management strategies must be exhausted before physical intervention is used, with guidance stressing "*the use of force must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary*" (Team-Teach, 2018). This finding generates questions regarding the level of communication with pupils, prior to, during and following the use of restraint. Moreover, I am curious as to what opportunities are afforded to pupils to discuss their perspective on behaviour management policies, especially restraint; which was regarded in Sellman's (2009) study as '*inseparable issue from the behaviour management policy'* that pupils in the SEBD provision had many thoughts on. Arguably, the impact that restraint had on this pupil's school and exclusion experience, may be grounds to suggest that a working group where children may be able to discuss their experience and perspectives of restraint could be appropriate. This may offer a unique insight for adults and result in the evolution of behaviour management policies, which may reduce the escalation of challenging behaviours.

3.3.3 Process of exclusion

In this current research, the '**emotional impact**' associated with SE was also interpreted to be influenced by the '**exclusion processes**' in the pupil's respective experiences (i.e. lack of involvement/communication and periods of non-attendance).

For some pupils, '*confusion*' and '*anger*' appeared to be dominant emotions associated with exclusion; linking to the lack of communication and pupil/parent involvement in the exclusion process. Conversely, pupils who reported clear communication regarding their exclusion, described it to '*not be a big deal*'; this suggests that the way in which pupils are informed about the exclusion affects the emotional impact resulting from the exclusion process. Thus, communication may be a key factor that can mitigate or exacerbate the negative emotions associated with exclusion, yet, the level of communication with pupils and their families was reported to vary across participants. This suggests that the way in which the exclusion is communicated to the pupils and their families varies significantly across settings.

A number of pupil discussed a lengthy period of non-attendance following their exclusion. I was curious if this was illustrative of 'unofficial exclusions' (McClusky, Ridell, Weedon & Fordyce, 2016), resulting from the national and local pressures to reduce permanent exclusion (PE) rates. Yet, this consideration is tentative, as I am unable to say with certainty that the pupils in the current research did not also receive a PE in addition to a FPE exclusion or if the exclusion was reported as a FPE to avoid a PE on the pupil and local authority records. arguably, regardless of the type of exclusion (i.e FPE or PE) if pupils are experiencing an extended period of non-attendance, which pupils report to result in negative emotions such as loneliness and a sense of disconnection, it is an important point of reflection that would benefit from consideration at the local authority level. Moreover, when considering this reported period of non-attendance within the context of children's rights (UNCRC, 1989), questions are raised about educational opportunities offered by the school and local authority; the pupils reported their time was spent playing games with no mention of education.

3.4 Implications for EP practice and recommendations for future research.

As the researcher has made links between the findings and psychological theory (i.e. attachment, attribution and identity), future research may consider exploring SE experiences through a specific psychological lens, to further explore the initial links made within this writing. The pupils in this study provided insight into how various systems may prevent or contribute to exclusion. In considering the findings within an eco-systemic model, links between a variety of contextual, personal and interpersonal factors reported by the pupils are highlighted. Cameron (2006) posits that the unique role of applied psychologists lies in how they attempt "*to understand and reconcile the different perspectives which people may bring to a particular problem situation* (i.e. SE)" (p.292). Therefore, a larger scale study that allows triangulation of perspectives/experiences of key stakeholders (school

staff/parents/pupils) would provide a valuable contribution to the literature, as bringing the experiences together would allow for them to be explored in relation to one another. Yet, the researcher advocates that pupil voice must be given equal weighting in research exploring the experiences of multiple stakeholders.

It would also be enlightening to explore the lived experiences of pupils at risk of exclusion from primary school and those who have been excluded from primary school. As based upon the finding of the current study, it would be interesting to see if pupils are constructing the same factors negatively (i.e. relationships and behaviour management) prior to their exclusion, as it may be the case that such factors have a detrimental impact on a pupil's ability to cope with school and marks the beginning of a negative trajectory towards exclusion.

Although Smith et al., (2009) acknowledge that the results of IPA analysis cannot be generalised due to their level of subjectivity, the level of detail that this adds to the limited research base is seen as valuable and it is possible to cautiously apply findings to professional practice using the eco-systemic framework; figure 14 illustrates the implications for EP Practice.

The researcher acknowledges that the current research has been punctuated at a particular time in relation to the pupils exclusion experience (i.e. post exclusion). Yet, it is important to stress that the findings from this study are equally applicable to pupils at risk of exclusion. Pupils identified many pre-exclusion experiences and factors that exacerbated their behavioural difficulties, which may be addressed before the point of exclusion. This highlights the importance of early intervention and preventative work by EP's.

The findings that highlight a variability in the process of exclusion, as constructed by the pupils, raises questions as to the systemic work that EPs may engage in. For example, in highlighting the pupil experience, collaborative work at the local authority level may help to ensure exclusion guidance is adhered to. Moreover, the lack of communication and involvement in the exclusion process (and the detrimental emotional impact that this has on the pupils) indicates that professionals (e.g. head teachers) may benefit from reminders of the importance of effective communication throughout the exclusion process; this could potentially be achieved via a steering group where all key stakeholders (Parents/pupils/Headteachers) are present. During the steering group an EP's remit may include; listening to pupil experiences, identifying the negative affective factors and communicating the importance of these to other parties involved using psychological perspectives outlined above.

The current study encourages EPs to utilise an eco-systemic model when considering challenging behaviour and the increasing rates of FPE in primary schools, as it allows for consideration of wider systemic influences that may be exacerbating pupil behaviour or supporting them to maintain their school placement. This research illustrates how this perspective can be used through a bottom up approach of listening to the voices and experiences of CYP, to help identify factors and generate questions relating to the broader systemic factors that are at play in relation to the exclusion experience. A key element of using an eco-systemic model to understand school exclusion experiences, is the emphasis placed upon bidirectional influences between the individual and the wider systems. Given that the reasons for FPE often relate to a undesirable behaviour by the individual pupil (e.g. persistent disruptive behaviour/physical assault/ verbal abuse) it is helpful to reflect with school staff about the ripple effect of other systems that may have impacted upon the pupils thoughts and actions.

This research highlighted that adult- pupil relationships were an important factor in how the pupils made sense of their school and exclusion experience, whether it be in a protective or negative capacity. This is of relevance to EPs who are responsible for facilitating support for pupils who present with challenging behaviour, within a climate of increasing curriculum demands and academic expectations. The findings from this study may justify the need for EP's to complete more training on the development of nurturing classrooms and attachment aware schools (Bomber, 2015) as the pupils interviewed alluded to the benefits that these environments have on their ability to maintain their school placements.

Arguably, if the emotional impact of exclusion is negative emotion, by bracketing of the experience (evident through comments such as "*I don't remember*" and "*don't know*") the pupils may have been protecting themselves from the negative emotions associated with exclusion. Improving *CYP's mental health* outcomes is a national priority, evident through government agendas such as 'Future in mind' (Department of Health, 2012), and an Educational psychologist's role in supporting positive wellbeing of pupils is growing (DCSF, 2008b). Hence, the findings from this study have implications for the role of Educational Psychologists, as they would suggest that children need to be better supported to make sense of their exclusion experience and associated negative emotions.

Figure 14. Implications for EP practice

3.5 The researcher as a professional practitioner.

My final reflection relates the influence that this research has had on my own development as a professional practitioner. In my writing, I have reflected upon many systemic influences that may impact upon a pupil's behaviour in the lead up to their exclusion experience, which may be linked to teacher actions. It may be perceived that I have been unduly unfair to individual teachers who are trying their best to cope under the pressures from their school system and wide political agendas; this is not my intention. I believe this research highlights the crippling ripple effect of wider systemic influences, which for some CYP culminate in their exclusion from school. As a professional practitioner, it has reminded me to consider these wide-ranging influences and engage in dialogue with senior management about policies and school ethos, which may be negatively impacting upon pupils with SEMH.

Moreover, this research has encouraged me to reflect upon my role in relation to pupils who experience school exclusion. At the individual level, I am filled with a need to support excluded pupils to process their exclusion experience and possible negative emotions associated with it (whether this be through individual therapeutic work or in training staff to complete such work). At a systems level, I am eager to discuss the finding with local authority officers and potentially explore the occurrence of 'unofficial' or 'hidden exclusions' and local authority practices in monitoring adherence to exclusion guideline (e.g. the communication with CYP and their families).

On a final note, this research has reinforced the philosophy central to my practice that eliciting pupil voice is invaluable. The findings of the current research demonstrate that children in primary school are able to offer a contribution to knowledge relating to the phenomenon of school exclusion, despite their age or SEND, if professionals are prepared to take the time to listen and embark on the journey of sense making together. I for one, will carry this sentiment with me in my professional practice.

References

Barnett-Page, E., & Thomas, J. (2009). Methods for the synthesis of qualitative research: a critical review. *BMC medical research methodology*, *9*(1), 1.

Best, A. L. (Ed.). (2007). *Representing youth: Methodological issues in critical youth studies*. NYU Press.

Blaikie, N. (2007). *Approaches to social enquiry: Advancing knowledge*. Polity.

British Psychological Society (BPS) (2009a). Code of Ethics and Conduct: Guidance published by the Ethics Committee of the British Psychological Society. Leicester: BPS. Retrieved on 22nd October, 2016, from www.bps.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/data_protection_act.pdf.

Brocki, J. M., & Wearden, A. J. (2006). A critical evaluation of the use of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) in health psychology. *Psychology and health*, *21*(1), 87-108.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bryman, A. (2015). *Social research methods*. Oxford university press.

Burr, V. (1995). *An introduction to social constructionism*. London: Routlegde.

Burr, V. (2003). *Social constructionism*. London and New York: Routeldge.

Burr, V. (2015). *Social constructionism*. London and New York: Routledge.

Cameron, R. J. (2006). Educational psychology: The distinctive contribution. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, *22*(4), 289-304.

Clarke, G., Boorman, G., & Nind, M. (2011). 'If they don't listen I shout, and when I shout they listen': Hearing the voices of girls with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. *British Educational Research Journal*, *37*(5), 765-780.

Cohen, L., & Manion, L. (1994). *Research methods in education.* (4th ed.) London: Routledge.

Cooper, P., Upton, G., & Smith, C. (1991). Ethnic minority and gender distribution among staff and pupils in facilities for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties in England and Wales. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, *12*(1), 77-94.

Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). Choosing a mixed methods design. *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*, 53-106.

Department for Education (DfE) & Department for Health (DfH) (2015). *Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities*. Retrieved on, 27th[th] January, 2016, from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815 /SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf.

Department for Education. (2016). Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England Statutory guidance for those with legal responsibilities in relation to exclusion. Retrieved November 3rd, 2016, from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/641418 /20170831_Exclusion_Stat_guidance_Web_version.pdf

Department for Education. (2016). National Statistics, Permanent and fixed-period exclusions in England: 2015 to 2016. Retrieved November 3rd, 2016, from https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/permanent-and-fixed-period-exclusions-in-england-2015-to-2016

Fletcher-Campbell, F., Archer, T., & Tomlinson, K. (2003). The role of the school in supporting the education of children in public care.

Forshaw, M.J., (2007). Free qualitative research from the shackles of method. *The Psychologist, 20*, (8), 478-497

Frost, N. A., & Shaw, R. L. (2015). Evolving Mixed and Multimethod Approaches in Psychology. In *The Oxford Handbook of Multimethod and Mixed Methods Research Inquiry*.

Gergen, K. J., & Gergen, M. M. (1984). The social construction of narrative accounts.

Gergen, K. J. (2009). *Realities and relationships: Soundings in social construction*. Harvard university press.

Grix, J. (2010). *The foundations of research*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. *Handbook of qualitative research*, *2*(163-194), 105.

Hackett, L., Theodosiou, L., Bond, C., Blackburn, C., Spicer, F., & Lever, R. (2010). Mental health needs in schools for emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. *British Journal of Special Education*, *37*(3), 148-155.

Hamill, P., & Boyd, B. (2002). Equality, fairness and rights–the young person's voice. *British Journal of Special Education*, *29*(3), 111-117.

Harding, T., & Whitehead, D. (2013). Analysing data in qualitative research. *Nursing & midwifery research: methods and appraisal for evidence-based practice*, 141-160.

Harris, B., Vincent, K., Thomson, P., & Toalster, R. (2006). Does every child know they matter? Pupils' views of one alternative to exclusion. *Pastoral Care in Education*, *24*(2), 28-38.

Harriss, L., Barlow, J., & Moli, P. (2008). Specialist residential education for children with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties: pupil, parent, and staff perspectives. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *13*(1), 31-47.

Hefferon, K., & Gil-Rodriguez, E. (2011). Interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Psychologist*, *24* (10), 756- 759.

Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) (2016). Standards of conduct, performance and ethics. London: HCPC. Retrieved on 22nd October, 2016, from www.hpcuk.org/publications/standards/index.asp?id=38.

Heider, F. (1958). *The psychology of interpersonal relations*. New York: Wiley

Haynes, B. (2005). The paradox of the excluded child. *Educational Philosophy and theory*, *37*(3), 333-341.

Ingram, R. (2013). Interpretation of children's views by educational psychologists: dilemmas and solutions. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 29(4),* 335-346.

Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2014). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research*. Sage publications.

Lloyd-Smith, M., & Tarr, J. (2000). Researching children's perspectives: A sociological dimension. *Researching children's perspectives*, 59-70.

Mackenzie, N., & Knipe, S. (2006). Research dilemmas: Paradigms, methods and methodology. *Issues in educational research*, *16* (2), 193-205.

McCluskey, G., Riddell, S., Weedon, E., & Fordyce, M. (2016). Exclusion from school and recognition of difference. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *37*(4), 529-539.

McIntyre, D., Pedder, D., & Rudduck, J. (2005). Pupil voice: comfortable and uncomfortable learnings for teachers. *Research papers in education*, *20*(2), 149-168.

Mertens, D. M. (2014). *Research and evaluation in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods*. Sage publications.

Michael, S., & Frederickson, N. (2013). Improving pupil referral unit outcomes: pupil perspectives. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *18*(4), 407-422.

Munn, P., & Lloyd, G. (2005). Exclusion and excluded pupils. *British Educational Research Journal*, *31*(2), 205-221.

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Leech, N. L. (2005). On becoming a pragmatic researcher: The importance of combining quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. *International journal of social research methodology*, *8*(5), 375-387.

O'Riordan, Z. (2015). Building productive relationships with young people with SEBD in transition: the role of identity. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *20*(4), 415-431.

Osler, A. (2006). Excluded girls: interpersonal, institutional and structural violence in schooling. *Gender and education*, *18*(6), 571-589.

Pietkiewicz, I., & Smith, J. A. (2012). Praktyczny przewodnik interpretacyjnej analizy fenomenologicznej w badaniach jakościowych wpsychologii. *Czasopismo Psychologiczne*, *18*(2), 361-369.

Robson, C. (2002). The analysis of qualitative data. Blackwell.

Robson, C., & McCartan, K. (2016). *Real world research*. John Wiley & Sons.

Rogers, C. R. (1951). *Client-Centered Counselling*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.

Sanderson, H. (2000). Person centred planning: key features and approaches. Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Retrieved on, 4th February, 2016, from Http://www.familiesleadingplanning.co.uk/documents/pcp%20key%20features%20and%20styles.pdf.

Sartory, E. A. (2014). Eliciting and foregrounding the voices of young people at risk of school exclusion: How does this change schools' perceptions of pupil disaffection?. University of Exeter

Sochos, A. (2015). Attachment-beyond interpersonal relationships. *PSYCHOLOGIST*, *28*(12), 986-989.

Sellman, E. (2009). Lessons learned: Student voice at a school for pupils experiencing social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. *Emotional and behavioural difficulties*, *14*(1), 33-48.

Smith, J.A., Flowers, P., Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method, research*. London: Sage.

Smithson, J. (2000). Using and analysing focus groups: limitations and possibilities. *International journal of social research methodology*, *3*(2), 103-119.

Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. *The social psychology of intergroup relations*, *33*(47), 74.

Thomas, G. (2009). A *Guide for Students in Education and Applied Social Sciences: How to Do Your Research Project*. Sage: London.

Toynbee, F. (2009). The perspectives of young people with SEBD about educational provision. *Promoting Emotional Education*, 27-36.

Turpin, G., Barley, V., Beail, N., Scaife, J., Slade, P., Smith, J.A., Walsh, S. (1997). Standards for research projects and theses involving qualitative methods: suggested guidelines for trainees and courses. *Clinical Psychology Forum, 108, 3-7*

United Nations (UN) (1989). *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Brussels: The UN General Assembly

Warshak, R. (2004). Payoffs and pitfalls of listening to children. *Family Relations, 52*, 373-384.

Webster, R., Russell, A., & Blatchford, P. (2012). *Reassessing the impact of teaching assistants: How research challenges practice and policy*. Routledge.

Willig, C. (2013). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).

Woolfson, R., Bryce, D., Mooney, L., Harker, M., Lowe, D., & Ferguson, E. (2008). Improving methods of consulting with young people: Piloting a new model of consultation. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 24(1)*, 55-67.

Yardley, L. (2000). Dilemmas in qualitative health research. *Psychology & Health, 15*, 215-228.

Yardley, L. (2008). *Demonstrating validity in qualitative research. In J. A. Smith (Ed.). Qualitative*

Psychology: A practical guide to research methods (pp. 235-251). London: Sage.

Yin, R. (1989). *Case study research: Design & methods* (2nd Ed.). Beverly Hills: Sage.

Appendix A: Overview of research articles that met the criteria for critical review

Article	Aims	Sample	Data collection method	Data analysis method
Hamill, P., & Boyd, B. (2002). Equality, fairness and rights–the young person's voice. *British Journal of Special Education*, *29*(3), 111-117.	The aim of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of in–school support systems for young people who display challenging behaviour. Action research	11 comprehensive schools 45 participants age (final year of school) 34 boys 11 girls Each pupil had been excluded once or more and accessed a pupil support base	4 focus groups comprised of 4-5 individuals	Descriptive narrative approach
Gilmore, G. (2013). 'What's a fixed term exclusion, Miss?' Students' perspectives on a disciplinary inclusion room in England. *British Journal of Special Education*, *40*(3), 106-113.	This study aimed to explore pupil perceptions of a disciplinary inclusion room.	5 years 8-9 pupils who had participated in a disciplinary inclusion room.	The research spent an average of six hours with each student discussing the ethical aspects of the research, conducting interviews and carrying out a follow-up meeting about each student's own case study.	Document analysis (*data analysis method not specified*)
Osler, A. (2006). Excluded girls: interpersonal, institutional and structural violence in schooling. *Gender and education*, *18*(6), 571-589.	This paper explores the policy context in which girls' exclusion occurs and examines contributory factors, arguing that together they constitute systemic violence.	Professionals working with girls in education, health and social services and voluntary sector agencies; girls judged by their teachers to be doing well at school as well as some who had been formally excluded or considered at risk. 81 girls were interviewed. (The vast majority of those interviewed were being educated in mainstream schools, with smaller numbers attending PRUs or further education (FE) colleges)	Interviews with professionals working with girls in education, health and social services and voluntary sector agencies; Interviews with girls either individually or in groups.	A review of research and of policy development (*data analysis method of interviews not specified*).
Munn, P., & Lloyd, G. (2005). Exclusion and excluded pupils. *British Educational Research Journal*, *31*(2), 205-221.	This article draws together the views of a small sample of pupils, gathered over three separate projects, and identifies common themes.	Project 1- 11 pupils (10 of whom had experienced exclusion more than once) Project 2-30 pupils (25 of whom had experienced exclusion more than once)	Project 1: semi structured interviews within confidential room at school or outside of school at pupil request	Content analysis of key themes and issues

	The pupils' voices are reported in the more general context of the role of schools in promoting social inclusion and in a review of patterns of disciplinary exclusion in Scotland.	Project 3 25 pupils (25 of whom had experienced exclusion more than once)	Project 2: semi structured interviews in home or community setting to promote neutral climate Project 3: semi structured interviews within residential setting	
Trotman, D., Tucker, S., & Martyn, M. (2015). Understanding problematic pupil behaviour: perceptions of pupils and behaviour coordinators on secondary school exclusion in an English city. *Educational Research*, *57*(3), 237-253.	The research was designed to create a better understanding of the factors affecting school exclusion from the perspective of pupils and behaviour coordinators within the consortium's schools	Study participants were 49 pupils in Year 9 (ages 13–14), comprising 23 girls and 26 boys, and eight behaviour coordinators from seven secondary schools and two centres for alternative provision (AP) in an inner-city area of the West Midlands.	individual semi-structured interviews Interviews were conducted over a 12-month period in each of the participating schools and centres for AP.	Qualitative data analysis. ethnographic approach.
McCluskey, G., Riddell, S., & Weedon, E. (2015). Children's rights, school exclusion and alternative educational provision. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *19*(6), 595-607.	The paper focuses on analysis of findings about young people's experiences of exclusion and alternative provision, and how these experiences may be contextualised within a discussion of children's rights.	In total, 15 parents/grandparents were interviewed, 12 face to face and 3 over the telephone. Forty-eight children and young people were interviewed either individually, in pairs or in small groups. Interviews also took place with a range of teachers, head teachers and other professionals such as educational psychologists, social services staff, youth offending teams and voluntary sector workers. Overall, 156 people were involved in the formal interviews for this study	Telephone interviews with local authorities, in-depth face-to-face interviews with key informants, including members of the national school inspectorate, Welsh Government, the Children's Commissioner, voluntary organisations and advocacy groups and eight case studies of young people in alternative provision	Analysis of policy and administrative statistics. 'The qualitative data were then analysed, summarising key themes from each case Study' (*data analysis method not specified).*
Tucker, S. (2013). Pupil vulnerability and school exclusion: developing responsive pastoral policies and practices in secondary education in the UK. *Pastoral Care in Education*, *31*(4), 279-291.	Explore pupil and behaviour coordinators perspectives of how best to support pupils at risk of exclusion in secondary school.	49 year nine pupils, (predominantly in the 13–14 years age group with a small group of young people (five in all) being 15 years. By the end of the project, 26 males and 23 females had been interviewed. Almost 50% of the sample had been either temporarily or permanently excluded from school) and eight behaviour co-ordinators across seven	Data were generated from a series of semi-structured interviews	Adopting a case study methodology, qualitative research methods

		secondary schools and three school managers.		
Hilton, Z. (2006). Disaffection and school exclusion: Why are inclusion policies still not working in Scotland?. *Research Papers in Education*, *21*(3), 295-314.	The article addresses the causes of exclusion by presenting recent research with young people who had been excluded from mainstream schools in Edinburgh and who were contacted within a variety of alternative settings outside the school gates.	17 girls and 23 boys across 6 various institutional settings outside of mainstream 13-17 year old (modal age 15) The study also included 27 background interviews with teachers, youth workers, social workers and a wide range of other professionals involved in pupil support, including at least one adult from each setting.	Extended, individual semi structured interviews with pupils. Background interviews with other stakeholders.	*data analysis method not specified*
Farouk, S. (2017). My life as a pupil: The autobiographical memories of adolescents excluded from school. *Journal of adolescence*, *55*, 16-23.	The aim was to examine how in their narrated depictions of the past, the adolescents explained and justified their position and behaviour at different times in their lives at school. The findings highlight how adolescents	Thirty-five adolescents, aged 15-16 years, who had been excluded from inner-city schools in London. They attended an alternative provision centre for 11-16-year-old students. All participants had been excluded from state secondary schools (for 11-16-year-old students) when they were between 12 and 15 years old.	Narrative interviews	Theory and researched thematic analysis was applied to the transcribed data
Harriss, L., Barlow, J., & Moli, P. (2008). Specialist residential education for children with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties: pupil, parent, and staff perspectives. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *13*(1), 31-47.	This research aimed to explore the perspectives of a range of stakeholders regarding the benefits and disadvantages of attendance at a residential school for children with severe emotional and behavioural problems.	Six pupils (three boys, three girls; age range nine years six months to 11 years eight months; mean age 10 years nine months) comprised the case study participants. Parents/carers (N6), and staff (N12)	Semi-structured interviews	Analysed thematically using QSR N5, according to the principles of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (Smith 1995).
Michael, S., & Frederickson, N. (2013). Improving pupil referral unit outcomes: pupil perspectives. *Emotional and*	Concern has been expressed about the quality of alternative provision for young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, and the poor	6 participants from the KS3 PRU (age range 11–14 years) 10 participants from the KS4 PRU (age range 14–16 years) All pupils had experienced school exclusion	Semi-structured interviews	A primarily deductive approach to thematic analysis was employed in this research because the coding was designed to identify particular

141

Behavioural Difficulties, *18*(4), 407-422.	academic and social outcomes many experience. Little research has sought the views of the young people themselves regarding the enablers and barriers to positive outcomes they have encountered	Of the 16 participants, 62.5% were male and 37.5% were female,		features: perceived enablers and barriers (Braun and Clarke 2006)
O'Connor, M., Hodkinson, A., Burton, D., & Torstensson, G. (2011). **Pupil voice: listening to and hearing the educational experiences of young people with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD).** *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *16*(3), 289-302.from school.	The main aim of this paper is to locate the pupil at the heart of the data collection and to examine how specific turning points can impact upon the educational experiences of young people with BESD.	3pupils took part in the activity sessions. 1 young person took part in additional individual interviews. (His parents and teacher were also invited to interview). Participant was 14 years old and at the time of the study attending the secondary education centre (SEC). The SEC assesses young people once they have been excluded from school .	Activity sessions that involved role play and games in order to facilitate an exploration of pupils' responses to their different experiences of BESD provision. Following on from the activity sessions, interviews were conducted to gain a more detailed insight into pupils' educational experiences. Semi-structured interviews. During the interviews, the young people were asked to fill in a time line. Semi structured interviews with teachers and parents.	Grounded theory

Do you remember last week we talked about how we were going to talk about exclusion from school. And your experience of exclusion. Are we still ok to do that?

I wonder if we can start by thinking about what school exclusion means. What would you say school exclusion is? (e.g. if you were describing it to someone else)

BEFORE EXCLUSION

- To start with I was wondering if you could tell me about your old school? The one you were excluded from…
- Try thinking back in time, just before being excluded from school: Please describe for me how things were at school

EXCLUSION

- Can you tell me a little bit about the day that you were excluded from school?
- What did happen?
- What do you think the reasons were that you were excluded?
- How did you feel when you were excluded?
- What do you think you could do to avoid exclusion?
- What do you think school/teachers needed to do to help you avoid exclusion?

AFTER EXLCUSION

- Did you go back to school after your exclusion? What was it like going back to school after your exclusion? How did it feel?
- What did your friends think?
- Did anything changed to help you stay in school? (did your teachers anyone do anything differently?)

NOW

- What is it like here in {specialist setting name}?
- Have you been excluded since you came here?
- What do they do here that helps you to stay in school? is this different to your old school?
- Are you happy here?

Is there anything else you would like to tell me about your exclusion? Is there any part of your story that we haven't talked about?

Prompts to be used as appropriate

- How?
- Why?
- Can you tell me more about that?
- Can you tell me how that made you feel?
-

Figure 16. Visual prompt used during interviews

EXPERIENCE OF EXCLUSION

BEFORE EXLCUSION — EXCLUSION — AFTER EXLUSION — NOW
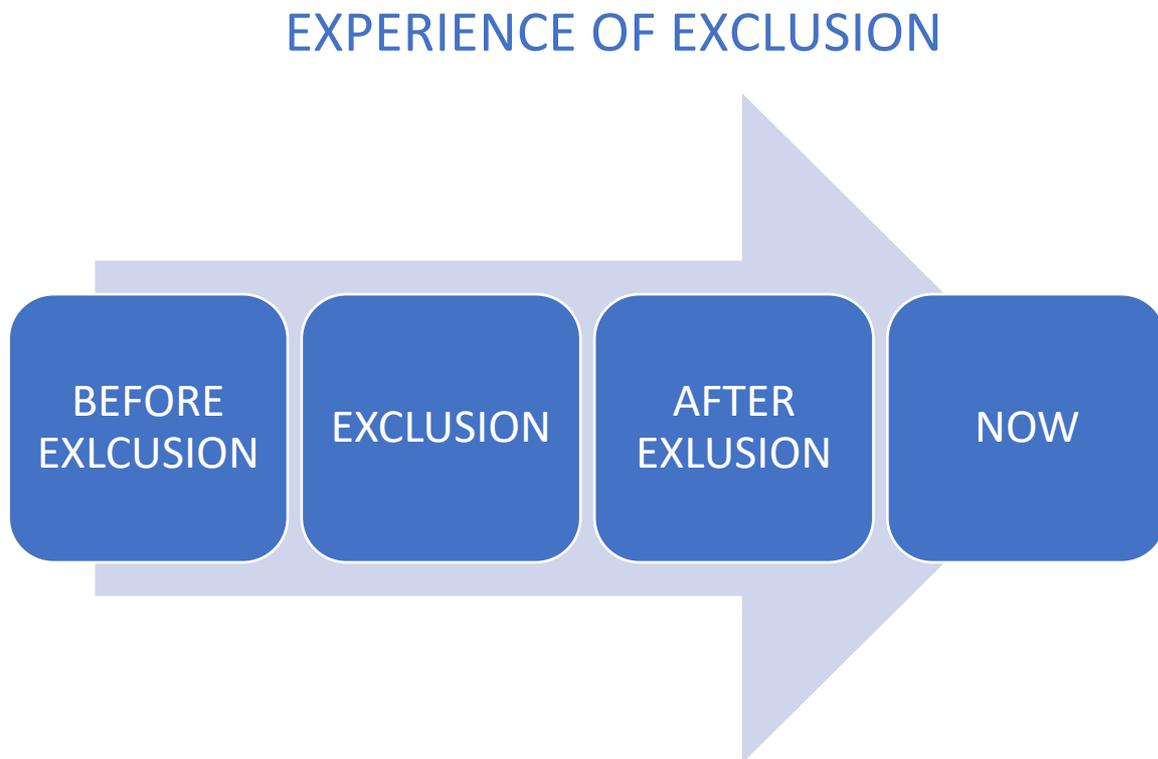
Appendix C.1: Letter to The Head of Education

Cardiff University

Cardiff

CF10 3AT

[Insert Date]

Dear [insert name of Head Education]

I am a postgraduate student in the School of Psychology, Cardiff University. As part of my doctorate, I am currently on placement with [insert educational psychology service name]. The final element of my course is to complete a thesis research project and [insert educational psychology service name] have expressed a desire to explore lived experiences of exclusion from the perspective of primary aged pupils. When completing this research project, I will be working under the supervision of Dr Dale Bartle and Dr Simon Claridge (see contact details below).

I am writing to enquire whether you would be willing for this research to take place within [insert local authority name].

This project aims to champion the voices of Primary Aged Pupils who have experienced fixed period exclusion. It is hoped through foregrounding the voices of these children, insight and understanding of their experience may be developed, that may subsequently impact professional practice.

Please see the information sheet overleaf, providing supplementary information regarding the proposed thesis research project.

Many thanks in advance for your consideration of this project. Please let me know if you require further information.

Regards,

Rachael Kenny

Contact details of researcher (Rachael Kenny): KennyRM@Cardiff.ac.uk

Contact details of Professional Tutors:

Dr Dale Bartle, School of Psychology, Cardiff University, Cubric Building, 30 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3AT. Tel: +44 29225 10002, E-Mail: BartleD@cardiff.ac.uk

Dr Simon Claridge, School of Psychology, Cardiff University, Cubric Building, 30 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3AT.Tel: +44(0)29 2087 6497, E-Mail: ClaridgeS@cardiff.ac.uk

Cardiff University School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee: 02920 874007; psychethics@cf.ac.uk.

Appendix C.2: Information Sheet for The Head of Education

Research Title

Fixed Period Exclusion: Exploring the Experience of Primary Aged Pupils attending a specialist setting.

1. What is the reason for this letter?

You are being asked if you are willing to allow a research project to be conducted within [insert name of local authority] by a student who is currently in her final year on the Educational Psychology Doctorate at Cardiff University. A letter has been sent to you as the responses provided by the pupils will likely relate to services that fall within your remit. Hence, a consent form is attached through which you can grant permission or decline the implementation of the proposed research.

2. What is the purpose of the study/rationale for the project?

Data indicates that within the last 5 years, the number of pupils experiencing fixed period exclusions from primary school have continued to rise. Furthermore, certain pupil characteristics are reported to increase a pupil's vulnerability to exclusion. For example, pupils with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) or statement of SEND were almost 6 times more likely to receive a FPE than pupils not identified to have SEND. Moreover, in the academic year 2014/15, over half FPE issued to pupils with SEND, were issued to pupils identified to have social emotional mental health (SEMH) difficulties (DfE, 2016). For pupils who have experienced school exclusion, the negative impact that it may have on their life can be substantial. Negative outcomes can include feelings of rejection, stigmatisation, loneliness and anger. Furthermore, pupils who have experiencd exclusion are at greater risk of academic underachievement, future unemployment, drug use, anti-social behaviour and crime during adolescence; culminating in subsequent marginalisation and social exclusion in later life. Arguably, one way in which to better understand the phenomenon of increased fixed period exclusion in primary school, and the vulnerability of pupils with identified SEMH to exclusion, is by talking directly to CYP with identified SEMH who have experience fixed period exclusion; as they have experiential knowledge distinct to that of adults, that may provide a unique insight to school exclusion. Moreover, professionals have been urged to listen to pupils in order to gain a unique insight to their experiences that may help to support the maintenance of school placements. The benefits of listening to the views CYP are identified to be two-fold; enlightenment for the adults understanding the CYP's perspective and empowerment for the CYP feeling valued and listened to.

The purpose of the proposed project is exploratory, as it aims to provide a rich account of the lived experience of fixed period exclusion by championing the voices of pupils who have experience fixed period exclusion in primary school. It is hoped through foregrounding the voices of these children, insight and understanding of their experience may be developed, that may subsequently impact professional practice.

3.What the study involves

Pupils participating in a semi structured interviews proposed to take place in October 2017. During which their experience of fixed period exclusion will be explored. The interview should last no more than an hour. Upon completion of the interview, the pupil will be debriefed and offered the opportunity speak to the researcher or familiar member of staff within school if required.

4. How we will use the Information gathered in the interview?

An audio recording of the conversation during the interview will be made and notes will be taken during the interview by the researcher. The data will then be anonymously transcribed. There will be no identifiable information about the pupils, school or staff within the write up of the research i.e. there will be no specific names or locations reported.

5.Limits of confidentiality:

Due to the researcher's ethical duty of care towards the participants, if a participant was to divulge information that would suggest that they or another child or person(s) were at risk of significant harm, or poses a risk of significant harm to others the researcher must disclose this information to a relevant professional.

6. What happens if I do not wish for this research to be completed within {insert local authority name}?

This decision will be respected and the research will not proceed.

7. If you are willing to support the study what happens next?

The researcher will send a letter, information sheet and consent form (Appendix C1, C2 and C3) to the head teacher of the specialist setting to establish if they would be willing for a pupils attending their school to participate. Once gate keeper consent is gained from the school, the researcher will contact the parents of pupils in year 5 or 6, who have experienced fixed period exclusion, via an intermediary. This will be a member of staff who liaises with parents of excluded pupils as part of their role.

Once consent has been gained from parents, the researcher will meet with the pupils within the school setting and provide detailed information (verbally and in writing) about the aims of the study and explain thoroughly what their participation would entail. The researcher would then provide assent forms for the pupil to sign if they wish to participate. If the pupil wishes to participate a date and time for the interview will be arranged.

8. What you need to do to give consent for the study?

Complete the attached consent form. The researcher will be in contact within a week to arrange a time to pick up the consent form. If you do not wish for this research to take place within [insert local authority name], please let the researcher know when they make contact.

Should you have any comments or questions regarding this research, you may contact the researcher: Rachael Kenny: KennyRM@cardiff.ac.uk

If you have any concerns regarding this research, please contact the above researcher. If you are unhappy with any aspect of the research or would like to contact the researcher's supervisor from the school of psychology, please contact one of the professional tutors below.

Contact details of Professional Tutors:

Research supervisor: Dr Dale Bartle, School of Psychology, Cardiff University, Cubric Building, 30 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3AT. Tel: +44 29225 10002, E-Mail: BartleD@cardiff.ac.uk. Research Director: Dr Simon Claridge, School of Psychology, Cardiff University, Cubric Building, 30 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3AT.Tel: +44(0)29 2087 6497, E-Mail: ClaridgeS@cardiff.ac.uk

Alternatively, if you have any complaints, please contact the secretary of the Cardiff University School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee (02920 874007; psychethics@cf.ac.uk).

Appendix C.3: Consent Form for The Head of Education

Name of Researcher: Rachael Kenny

Overview of the Thesis Research Project

An exploration of the experience of fixed period exclusion, from the perspective of pupils in years 5 and 6 who attend one specialist setting. This will be achieved through the facilitation of an individual semi structured interview, exploring their experience.

Please tick to confirm your understanding of the study

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information provided for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, and if necessary, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that participation in the research is voluntary.

3. I understand that any personal information collected during the study will be kept confidential until transcribed, at which point it will be anonymised.

I, _____ (NAME) consent to the implementation of the afore mentioned research project within [insert name of local authority] conducted by Rachael Kenny, Cardiff University under the supervision of both Dr Dale Bartle and Dr Simon Claridge.

Signed:………

Date:……

Appendix D.1: Letter to the Principal Educational Psychologist

Cardiff University

Cardiff

CF10 3AT

[Insert Date]

Dear [insert name of Principal Educational Psychologist]

I am a postgraduate student in the School of Psychology, Cardiff University. As part of my doctorate, I am currently on placement with your educational psychology service. The final element of my course is to complete a thesis research project, and school exclusion has been identified as a research area relevant to [insert local authority name]. When completing this research project, I will be working under the supervision of Dr Dale Bartle and Dr Simon Claridge (see contact details below).

I am writing to enquire whether you would be willing for this research to take place whilst I am working as part of your Educational Psychology team.

This project aims to champion the voices of Primary Aged Pupils who have experienced fixed period exclusion. It is hoped through foregrounding the voices of these children, insight and understanding of their experience may be developed, that may subsequently impact professional practice.

Please see the information sheet overleaf, providing supplementary information regarding the proposed thesis research project.

Many thanks in advance for your consideration of this project. Please let me know if you require further information.

Regards,

Rachael Kenny

Contact details of researcher (Rachael Kenny): KennyRM@Cardiff.ac.uk

Contact details of Professional Tutors:

Dr Dale Bartle, School of Psychology, Cardiff University, Cubric Building, 30 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3AT. Tel: +44 29225 10002, E-Mail: BartleD@cardiff.ac.uk

Dr Simon Claridge, School of Psychology, Cardiff University, Cubric Building, 30 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3AT.Tel: +44(0)29 2087 6497, E-Mail: ClaridgeS@cardiff.ac.uk

Cardiff University School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee: 02920 874007; psychethics@cf.ac.uk.

Appendix D.2: Information Sheet for the Principal Educational Psychologist

Research Title

Fixed Period Exclusion: Exploring the Experience of Primary Aged Pupils attending a specialist setting.

1. What is the reason for this letter?

You are being asked if you are willing to allow a research project to be conducted within [insert name of local authority] by a student who is currently in her final year on the Educational Psychology Doctorate at Cardiff University. A letter has been sent to you as the responses provided by the pupils will likely relate to services that fall within your remit. Hence, a consent form is attached through which you can grant permission or decline the implementation of the proposed research.

2. What is the purpose of the study/rationale for the project? Data indicates that within the last 5 years, the number of pupils experiencing fixed period exclusions from primary school have continued to rise. Furthermore, certain pupil characteristics are reported to increase a pupil's vulnerability to exclusion. For example, pupils with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) or statement of SEND were almost 6 times more likely to receive a FPE than pupils not identified to have SEND. Moreover, in the academic year 2014/15, over half FPE issued to pupils with SEND, were issued to pupils identified to have social emotional mental health (SEMH) difficulties (DfE, 2016).For pupils who have experienced school exclusion, the negative impact that it may have on their life can be substantial. Negative outcomes can include feelings of rejection, stigmatisation, loneliness and anger. Furthermore, pupils who have experiencd exclusion are at greater risk of academic underachievement, future unemployment, drug use, anti-social behaviour and crime during adolescence; culminating in subsequent marginalisation and social exclusion in later life. Arguably, one way in which to better understand the phenomenon of increased fixed period exclusion in primary school, and the vulnerability of pupils with identified SEMH to exclusion, is by talking directly to CYP with identified SEMH who have experience fixed period exclusion; as they have experiential knowledge distinct to that of adults, that may provide a unique insight to school exclusion. Arguably. this approach is particularly relevant in educational psychology practice as educational psychologists to have been identified to have a vital role in gathering and communicating children's views. Moreover, professionals have been urged to listen to pupils in order to gain a unique insight to their experiences that may help to support the maintenance of school placements. The benefits of listening to the views CYP are identified to be two-fold; enlightenment for the adults understanding the CYP's perspective and empowerment for the CYP feeling valued and listened to.

The purpose of the proposed project is exploratory, as it aims to provide a rich account of the lived experience of fixed period exclusion by championing the voices of pupils with identified SEMH who have experience fixed period exclusion in primary school. It is hoped through foregrounding the voices of these children, insight and understanding of their experience may be developed, that may subsequently impact professional practice.

3.What the study involves

Pupils participating in a semi structured interviews proposed to take place in October 2017. During which their experience of fixed period exclusion will be explored. The interview should last no more than an hour. Upon

completion of the interview, the pupil will be debriefed and offered the opportunity speak to the researcher or familiar member of staff within school if required.

4. How we will use the Information gathered in the interview?

An audio recording of the conversation during the interview will be made and notes will be taken during the interview by the researcher. The data will then be anonymously transcribed. There will be no identifiable information about the pupils, school or staff within the write up of the research i.e. there will be no specific names or locations reported.

5.Limits of confidentiality:

Due to the researcher's ethical duty of care towards the participants, if a participant was to divulge information that would suggest that they or another child or person(s) were at risk of significant harm, or poses a risk of significant harm to others the researcher must disclose this information to a relevant professional.

6. What happens if I do not wish for this research to be completed within {insert local authority name}?

This decision will be respected and the research will not proceed.

7. If you are willing to support the study what happens next?

The researcher will send a letter, information sheet and consent form (Appendix C1, C2 and C3) to the head teacher of the specialist setting to establish if they would be willing for a pupils attending their school to participate. Once gate keeper consent is gained from the school, the researcher will contact the parents of pupils in year 5 or 6, who have experienced fixed period exclusion, via an intermediary. This will be a member of staff who liaises with parents of excluded pupils as part of their role.

Once consent has been gained from parents, the researcher will meet with the pupils within the school setting and provide detailed information (verbally and in writing) about the aims of the study and explain thoroughly what their participation would entail. The researcher would then provide assent forms for the pupil to sign if they wish to participate. If the pupil wishes to participate a date and time for the interview will be arranged.

7. What you need to do to give consent for the study?

Complete the attached consent form. The researcher will be in contact within a week to arrange a time to pick up the consent form. If you do not wish for this research to take place within [insert local authority name], please let the researcher know when they make contact.

Should you have any comments or questions regarding this research, you may contact the researcher:

Rachael Kenny: KennyRM@cardiff.ac.uk

If you have any concerns regarding this research, please contact the above researcher. If you are unhappy with any aspect of the research or would like to contact the researcher's supervisor from the school of psychology, please contact one of the professional tutors below.

Contact details of Professional Tutors:

Research supervisor: Dr Dale Bartle, School of Psychology, Cardiff University, Cubric Building, 30 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3AT. Tel: +44 29225 10002, E-Mail: BartleD@cardiff.ac.uk.Research Director: Dr Simon Claridge, School of Psychology, Cardiff University, Cubric Building, 30 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3AT.Tel: +44(0)29 2087 6497, E-Mail: ClaridgeS@cardiff.ac.uk

Alternatively, if you have any complaints, please contact the secretary of the Cardiff University School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee (02920 874007; psychethics@cf.ac.uk).

Appendix D.3: Consent Form for the Principal Educational Psychologist

Name of Researcher: Rachael Kenny

Overview of the Thesis Research Project

An exploration of the experience of fixed period exclusion, from the perspective of pupils in years 5 and 6 who attend one specialist setting. This will be achieved through the facilitation of an individual semi structured interview, exploring their experience.

Please tick to confirm your understanding of the study

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information provided for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, and if necessary, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that participation in the research is voluntary.

3. I understand that any personal information collected during the study will be kept confidential until transcribed, at which point it will be anonymised.

I, _____ (NAME) consent to the implementation of the afore mentioned research project within [insert name of Educational Psychology Service] conducted by Rachael Kenny, Cardiff University under the supervision of both Dr Dale Bartle and Dr Simon Claridge.

Signed:………

Date:……

Appendix E.1: Letter to the Headteacher Of The Specialist Setting

Cardiff University

Cardiff

CF10 3AT

[Insert Date]

Dear [insert name of Head teacher]

I am a postgraduate student in the School of Psychology, Cardiff University. As part of my doctorate, I am currently on placement with [insert educational psychology service name]. The final element of my course is to complete a thesis research project and [insert educational psychology service name] have expressed a desire to explore lived experiences of exclusion from the perspective of primary aged pupils in upper key stage 2 (year 5 and 6). When completing this research project, I will be working under the supervision of Dr Dale Bartle and Dr Simon Claridge (see contact details below).

Local authority data indicates that a number of pupils within your school have experienced fixed period exclusion within the 2 years, and meet the criteria for participation in my research. I am writing to enquire whether you would be willing for this research to take place with pupils in your school.

This project aims to champion the voices of Primary Aged Pupils with identified SEMH who have experienced fixed period exclusion. It is hoped through foregrounding the voices of these children, insight and understanding of their experience may be developed, that may subsequently impact professional practice.

Please see the information sheet overleaf, providing supplementary information regarding the proposed thesis research project.

Many thanks in advance for your consideration of this project. Please let me know if you require further information.

Regards,

Rachael Kenny

Contact details of researcher (Rachael Kenny): KennyRM@Cardiff.ac.uk

Contact details of Professional Tutors:

Dr Dale Bartle, School of Psychology, Cardiff University, Cubric Building, 30 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3AT. Tel: +44 29225 10002, E-Mail: BartleD@cardiff.ac.uk

Dr Simon Claridge, School of Psychology, Cardiff University, Cubric Building, 30 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3AT.Tel: +44(0)29 2087 6497, E-Mail: ClaridgeS@cardiff.ac.uk

Cardiff University School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee: 02920 874007; psychethics@cf.ac.uk.

School of Psychology

Appendix E.2: Information Sheet for the Head teacher of the Specialist Setting

Research Title

Fixed Period Exclusion: Exploring the Experience of Primary Aged Pupils attending a specialist setting.

1. What is the reason for this letter?

You are being asked if you are willing to allow a research project to be conducted with pupils in your school by a student who is currently in her final year on the Educational Psychology Doctorate at Cardiff University. A letter has been sent to you as the responses provided by the pupils will likely relate to your school. Hence, a consent form is attached through which you can grant permission or decline the implementation of the proposed research.

2. What is the purpose of the study/rationale for the project?

Data indicates that within the last 5 years, the number of pupils experiencing fixed period exclusions from primary school have continued to rise. Furthermore, certain pupil characteristics are reported to increase a pupil's vulnerability to exclusion. For example, pupils with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) or statement of SEND were almost 6 times more likely to receive a FPE than pupils not identified to have SEND. Moreover, in the academic year 2014/15, over half FPE issued to pupils with SEND, were issued to pupils identified to have social emotional mental health (SEMH) difficulties (DfE, 2016). For pupils who have experienced school exclusion, the negative impact that it may have on their life can be substantial. Negative outcomes can include feelings of rejection, stigmatisation, loneliness and anger. Furthermore, pupils who have experiencd exclusion are at greater risk of academic underachievement, future unemployment, drug use, anti-social behaviour and crime during adolescence; culminating in subsequent marginalisation and social exclusion in later life. Arguably, one way in which to better understand the phenomenon of increased fixed period exclusion in primary school is by talking directly to CYP who have experience fixed period exclusion; as they have experiential knowledge distinct to that of adults, that may provide a unique insight to school exclusion. Moreover, professionals have been urged to listen to pupils in order to gain a unique insight to their experiences that may help to support the maintenance of school placements. The benefits of listening to the views CYP are identified to be two-fold; enlightenment for the adults understanding the CYP's perspective and empowerment for the CYP feeling valued and listened to.

The purpose of the proposed project is exploratory, as it aims to provide a rich account of the lived experience of fixed period exclusion by championing the voices of pupils with identified SEMH who have experience fixed period exclusion in primary school. It is hoped through foregrounding the voices of these children, insight and understanding of their experience may be developed, that may subsequently impact professional practice.

3.What the study involves

Pupils participating in a semi structured interviews proposed to take place in October 2017. During which their experience of fixed period exclusion will be explored. The interview should last no more than an hour. Upon

completion of the interview, the pupil will be debriefed and offered the opportunity speak to the researcher or familiar member of staff within school if required.

4. How we will use the Information gathered in the interview?

An audio recording of the conversation during the interview will be made and notes will be taken during the interview by the researcher. The data will then be anonymously transcribed. There will be no identifiable information about the pupils, school or staff within the write up of the research i.e. there will be no specific names or locations reported.

5.Limits of confidentiality:

Due to the researcher's ethical duty of care towards the participants, if a participant was to divulge information that would suggest that they or another child or person(s) were at risk of significant harm, or poses a risk of significant harm to others the researcher must disclose this information to a relevant professional. If you are willing to support this study, you will be asked to identify the schools safeguarding officer on the consent form.

6. What happens if I do not wish for this research to be completed within {insert local authority name}?

This decision will be respected and the research will not proceed.

7. If you are willing to support the study what happens next?

It is hoped that you will be able to identify a member of staff in your school who, as part of their role, liaises with parents of pupils who have been excluded. This may be yourself, the special educational needs coordination or a family liaison officer. It is proposed that this staff member would be able to contact the pupils' parent, providing them with a letter, information sheet and consent form for their child participation. These documents would be provided by the researcher.

If parents agree to their child's participation, the researcher will then arrange a time convenient to the school to meet with the pupil within the school setting and provide detailed information (verbally and in writing) about the aims of the study and explain thoroughly what their participation would entail. The researcher would then provide assent forms for the pupil to sign if they wish to participate. If the pupil wishes to participate a date and time for the interview will be arranged.

8. What you need to do to give consent for the study?

Complete the attached consent form. The researcher will be in contact within a week to arrange a time to pick up the consent form. If you do not wish for this research to take place with pupils in your school, please let the researcher know when they make contact.

Should you have any comments or questions regarding this research, you may contact the researcher: Rachael Kenny: KennyRM@cardiff.ac.uk

If you have any concerns regarding this research, please contact the above researcher. If you are unhappy with any aspect of the research or would like to contact the researcher's supervisor from the school of psychology, please contact one of the professional tutors below.

Contact details of Professional Tutors:

Research supervisor: Dr Dale Bartle, School of Psychology, Cardiff University, Cubric Building, 30 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3AT. Tel: +44 29225 10002, E-Mail: BartleD@cardiff.ac.uk, Research Director: Dr Simon Claridge, School of Psychology, Cardiff University, Cubric Building, 30 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3AT.Tel: +44(0)29 2087 6497, E-Mail: ClaridgeS@cardiff.ac.uk

Alternatively, if you have any complaints, please contact the secretary of the Cardiff University School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee (02920 874007; psychethics@cf.ac.uk).

Appendix E.3: Consent Form for the Head teacher of the Specialist Setting

Name of Researcher: Rachael Kenny

Overview of the Thesis Research Project

An exploration of the experience of fixed period exclusion, from the perspective of pupils in years 5 and 6 who attend one specialist setting. This will be achieved through the facilitation of an individual semi structured interview, exploring their experience.

Please tick to confirm your understanding of the study

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information provided for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, and if necessary, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that participation in the research is voluntary.

3. I understand that any personal information collected during the study will be kept confidential until transcribed, at which point it will be anonymised.

I, _____ (NAME) consent to the implementation of the afore mentioned research project within [insert name school] conducted by Rachael Kenny, Cardiff University under the supervision of both Dr Dale Bartle and Dr Simon Claridge.

Signed:……

Date:………

IN ORDER FOR THE RESEARCHER TO BE PREPARED IN THE CASE OF A SAFEGUARDING CONCERN, PLEASE IDENTIFY THE DESIGNATED SAFEGUARDING OFFICER WITIN {SCHOOL NAME] BELOW.

SAFEGUARDING OFFICER NAME: _____

Appendix F.1: Letter to Parents

"Dear Parent and Carers.

{specialist school name} is participating in a research project looking at the experiences of exclusions in young primary aged pupils. We would like to know more about the pupil's view on this, so we can support then both at {specialist school name} and through our outreach work. We feel strongly that the views of your children should be heard, please support us in this research.

The research is aimed at year 5 and 6 and we would be grateful if you would read the attached information sheet and sign the consent form if you agree to your child's involvement.

Yours Sincerely,

{Headteacher name}"

School of Psychology

Appendix F.2: Information Sheet for Parent/Carers

Research Title

Fixed Period Exclusion: Exploring the Experience of Primary Aged Pupils attending a specialist setting.

1. What is the reason for this letter?

You are being asked if you are willing to allow your child to take part in a research project conducted by a student, who is currently in her final year on the Educational Psychology Doctorate at Cardiff University. A consent form is attached through which you can grant permission or decline the opportunity for your child to take part in the research project.

2. What is the purpose of the study/rationale for the project?

Data indicates that within the last 5 years, the number of pupils experiencing fixed period exclusions from primary school have continued to rise. It is recognised that pupils identified to experience social, emotional mental health difficulties are disproportionately represented in the exclusion data. For pupils who have experienced school exclusion, the negative impact that it may have on their life can be substantial. Negative outcomes can include feelings of rejection, stigmatisation, loneliness and anger. Arguably, one way in which to better understand the increased numbers of fixed period exclusion in primary school is by talking directly to children who have experienced fixed period exclusion. Professionals have been urged to listen to pupils in order to gain a unique insight to their experiences, which may help to support the maintenance of school placements. The benefits of listening to the views of children are identified to be two-fold; enlightenment for the adults understanding the child's perspective and empowerment for the child from feeling valued and listened to.

3.What the study involves

A discussion between your child and the researcher; hopefully this would take place in October, 2017. During this conversation, their experience of fixed period exclusion will be explored. The conversation should last no more than an hour. When the discussion is complete, your child will be will be offered the opportunity to talk more to the researcher or familiar member of staff within school if they wish to.

4. How we will use the Information gathered in the interview?

An audio recording of the conversation will be made by the researcher, which will then be turned into a written document. There will be no identifiable information about your child, the school or staff within the write up of the research i.e. there will be no specific names or locations reported.

5.Limits of confidentiality:

Due to the researcher's ethical duty of care towards the participants, if your child was to share information that would suggest that they or another child or person(s) were at risk of significant harm, or poses a risk of significant harm to others, the researcher must disclose this information to the schools safeguarding officer.

6. What happens if I do not wish for my child to take part in this research?

This decision will be respected, and no contact will be made with your child.

7. If you are willing to support the study what happens next?

If you agree to your child taking part, the researcher will then arrange a time convenient to the school to meet with your child within the school setting and provide detailed information (verbally and in writing) about what their participation would involve. The researcher would then provide assent forms for your child to sign if they wish to take part. If your child wishes to take part a date and time when they can meet with the researcher will be arranged.

8. What you need to do to give consent for the study?

Complete the attached consent form and return it back to [insert name of agreed staff member] at school, in the sealed envelope provided. If you do not wish for your child to take part in this research, please let [insert name of agreed staff member] know.

Should you have any comments or questions regarding this research, you may contact the researcher:

Rachael Kenny: KennyRM@cardiff.ac.uk

If you have any concerns regarding this research, please contact the above researcher. If you are unhappy with any aspect of the research or would like to contact the researcher's supervisor from the school of psychology, please contact one of the professional tutors below.

Contact details of Professional Tutors:

Research supervisor: Dr Dale Bartle, School of Psychology, Cardiff University, Cubric Building, 30 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3AT. Tel: +44 29225 10002, E-Mail: BartleD@cardiff.ac.uk

Research Director: Dr Simon Claridge, School of Psychology, Cardiff University, Cubric Building, 30 Park Place, Cardiff, CF10 3AT.Tel: +44(0)29 2087 6497, E-Mail: ClaridgeS@cardiff.ac.uk

Alternatively, if you have any complaints, please contact the secretary of the Cardiff University School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee (02920 874007; psychethics@cf.ac.uk).

Appendix F.3: Consent Form for Parent/Carers

Name of Researcher: Rachael Kenny

Overview of the Thesis Research Project

An exploration of the experience of fixed period exclusion, from the perspective of pupils in years 5 and 6 who attend a specialist setting. This will be explored through a discussion with your child, where they are able to share their experiences.

Please tick to confirm your understanding of the study

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information provided for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, and if necessary, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that participation in the research is voluntary .

3. I understand that any personal information collected during the study will be kept confidential until transcribed, at which point it will be anonymised (i.e. no names or identifiable information with be written up in the report).

4. I understand that my consent does not mean that my child has to participate in the study. It means I understand that they also need to provide consent to participate in the research.

I, _____ (NAME) consent to my child's participation in the afore mentioned research project conducted by Rachael Kenny, Cardiff University under the supervision of both Dr Dale Bartle and Dr Simon Claridge.

Signed:……

Date:………

Hi, my name is Rachael,

I am carrying out some research with children who have been excluded from school for a short amount of time. It is hoped that this research gives you a chance to talk about your experience…

You are invited to be a part of this research, but before you decide I would like for you to fully understand what taking part would involve.

Study title.

Fixed Period Exclusion; Exploring the Experience of Primary Aged Pupils attending a specialist setting.

(This basically means that I want to talk to children who attend your school about what it was like to be excluded from their old school or from {insert specialist provision name).

Why do this research?

I want to hear your views!

You have a special understanding of what it is like to have been excluded and by listening to what you think it may help others to understand what that experience was like for you. It is hoped that the things we learn from talking to you can be shared with other adults working with children.

Do you have to take part?

NO! It is completely **your choice** if you want to take part.

If you **agree** to take part you will need to sign the form that's at the end of this sheet.

If you **do not agree** to take part, this is ok! Remember it is your choice.

What does the research involve?

If you choose to be a part of the research here are some facts that you should know about it…

- It will involve having a chat with me. I hope to talk to you about when you were excluded and what that was like for you.
- This conversation should last no more than an hour.
- If it's ok with you a recording of the conversation will be made on my ipad (this is password protected and only I have access to it).
- After our conversation is finished, there will be a chance for you to talk to me or [familiar member of school staffs name] in case there is anything you would like to talk about more.
- Once the conversation is finished I will go away and turn our conversation from a sound file into a written document and find some key points from the conversation that I hope show your views.

What happens if you change your mind and no longer want to be a part of the research?

You can change your mind about being involved up until 14 days after our conversation. After 14 days I will no longer be able to link the things that you have said to you. This is because when I change our recorded conversation into writing, I will have done this using no names or information that will let me figure out who I spoke to!

If during our conversation , you wish to stop that's not a problem. There will be a red card on the table that you can hand to me on your way out of the room (you don't have to give any reason for wanting to stop). [insert familiar member of school staffs name] come and find you to check that you are ok.

Will people know I was involved?

The head teacher and parents will know that you spoke to me, because they had to say it was ok for me to contact you.

Your name and the names of schools or teachers will be changed in the written report and information will not be linked to you in any way.

What will happen to the results?

The research will involve including quotes from out conversation so the things you have told me may appear in the research. But remember, all names will be changed and information will not be linked to you in any way.

What are the benefits and risks in taking part?

I understand that when you were excluded may have been a hard time for you, and it is possible that talking about it may bring back some bad feelings. Remember that if this happens and you don't want to talk about it anymore this is ok! [insert familiar member of school staffs name] will be available to talk to you and make sure that you are ok.

The findings of the study will help myself and others that help pupils who may be or have been excluded to better understand what exclusion is like from a pupil's point of view. As well as being helpful for me to hear your views, it is hoped that having the chance to be listened to will be a good experience for you too!

Who has checked this study?

 This study has been checked by the school of psychology's Ethics Committee. A Research Ethics Committee is a group of people who make sure that a research project is safe to take part in.

How to become involved?

In this pack, you will find an **assent form**. With some statements that you would need to confirm you understand and a box for you to sign. If you would like a bit more time to decide, that is ok. Just take the forms away with you and have a think (it's also ok to talk through your decision with someone; maybe your parent or teacher?)

Researcher contact details

Name: Rachael Kenny, Email; KennyRM@Cardiff.ac.uk

THANKS FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ THIS INFORMATION SHEET

SORRY, I KNOW IT'S A LOT OF INFORMATION BUT ITS IMPORTANT THAT YOU UNDERSTAND THESE THINGS BEFORE AGREEING TO TAKE PART

Appendix G.2: Pupil Assent Form

Hi,

Please read the Information Sheet and ask any questions you may have before filling in this form.

Please read the statements below and circle your response. At the end of the form please sign your name if you would like to take part in this research.

I confirm that:

- I have read and understood the information sheet and have had the chance to ask any questions that I may have.

  YES/NO

- I understand that being a part of this research is my choice, meaning I can say yes or I can say no.

  YES/NO

- I understand that if it any point during conversation I can stop taking part and that anything that I have shared up until this point will not be included in the research.

  YES/NO

- I understand that the researcher will make an recording of our conversation on her IPad and this will be typed into a written document 14 days after the group takes place.

  YES/NO

- I understand that I can have my input to the research removed up until 14 days after I speak to the researcher. If I change my mind within 14days and decide I don't want to be a part of the study anymore I can tell {insert familiar member of school staffs name}.

  YES/NO

- I understand that any information shared our conversation will not be able to be linked back to me. I know that my name and any other names (e.g school, friends or teacher's names) will be changed when the research is written. This keeps my identity secret.

  YES/NO

- I understand that if I share any information that suggests that I or someone else is at risk of harm, the researcher will share this information with another adult. The researcher will tell me if she has to do this.

YES/NO

If you decide that you do wish to take part in this research please write your name on the line below.	If you decide that you would like to think a bit more about taking part in the research, please take the form with you and [insert relevant staff name] will ask you again in a week.	If you decide that you do not want to be a part of this research, please tick this box

Name of Participant _____

(To be written by the pupil)

Printed Name of Researcher _____

Signature of Researcher _____

Thank you for taking part!

Thank you for taking part in this study. It is important to talk to you so that adults can better understand what you think. **I found your thoughts and ideas very helpful!**

Remember all the things we have talked about today will be **kept private** (no names will be used when talking about or writing this research).

I recorded the conversation on my iPad, and after I turn this into writing I will delete the recording. I will do this in 2 weeks' time (insert date}. Up until this point you can still decide that you don't want to be part of the research. You can tell [insert appropriate adult name within school setting] if you don't want to be a part of the research anymore and they will let me know. You will not be asked for a reason why– and **no one** will be upset if you do this. But after 2weeks I won't be able to tell who has said what anymore, so I won't be able to take out anyone's comments.

If you feel that you would like to talk more about the study or how it has made you feel, myself and [insert name of identified member of staff within school] are here if you want to have a conversation with us. (Your parent/carer also know about the research so you could talk to them if you prefer!)

Thanks again for taking part!

Best wishes, Rachael (The researcher)

278 Participant 7: Yeah no phone call or nothing. No one bothered. They just said no. they could have said
279 come n sit down we need to explain something to ya.

280 Researcher: So after you exclusion you had that time not in school… you mentioned during that time you
281 were lonely.

282 Participant 7: Yeah spent some of the time thinking about if me mates would remember me.

283 Didn't miss me old school tho. Miss was the one who got me kicked out.

284 Researcher: Oh I thought you said before that she was a good part of your experience at your old school.

285 Participant 7: Na there was two. So there was the head yeah. Then the main teacher and then the

286 second teacher. The other one was nice. The main ones was horrible. Didn't miss them.

287 Researcher: What makes you say she was horrible?

288 Participant 7: She was dead selfish.

289 Researcher: Why did you think she was selfish?

290 Participant 7: Coz she just whenever you brought a prize in to show people, she would say not now, and
go and sit down n take it off of you. She needs to calm down. She was angry. she was always having a go. I
wasn't picked on by the kids, never the kids…

291 Researcher: Hhhhmm because your well hard?

292 Participant 7: {laughs} yeah, but the teachers there they had problem.

293 Researcher: What do you mean?

294 Participant 7: Coz only two of them liked me. The other teachers shouted at me- put me in detention for
295 no reason. got into trouble for stuff other kids wouldn't like when I was climbing, other kids do it. They
296 don't get told off. It was annoying. I'd just run of then. Onto the playground where they couldn't catch
me

297 Researcher: Ok so if we think about our discussion today. You just told me a story about when you were
298 excluded, I'm really grateful you shared that with me. are there any bits of your experience or your story
299 that you have missed out?

300 Participant 7: Just that me Mum n dad were mad at me n the school at the time, now I reckon they have
301 forgotten about it. Actually, they were more mad at the school because they should have given me mum
302 a phone call or something or brought us in. and they wouldn't let me say goodbye to me mates. I said
304 can I at least go n say good bye to me mates and they said, 'no you don't go here' and I just thought do
305 you know what one of my best mates mum! {grabbing hands/running hand through hair]

Appendix J: Step by step Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis Process.

The researcher used the guidance provided in the text '*Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research'* (Smith, Larkin and Flowers, 2009). A summary of the process is provided below.

Given IPAs philosophical underpinnings in idiography, stages 1 through 5 were followed at an individual level; meaning each participant's interview transcript was explored in isolation and in turn, before the researcher proceeded to look for patterns across cases.

Stage 1: Reading and Rereading

This stage was essential for the researcher to fully immerse herself in the original data. When first reading the transcription, the researcher also listened to the audio recording of the interview. This supported the researcher to reconnect with the atmosphere of the interview and slowed down the analysis process, reminding the researcher to get alongside the participant, focusing upon their interpretation of their experience whilst bracketing off her own interpretations.

Stage 2: Initial Noting

During this stage of analysis, the researcher considered the semantic content and language use in an open and exploratory way, noting anything of interest. In accordance with guidance provided by smith et al, these exploratory comments were categorised as descriptive, linguistic and conceptual comments.

- **Descriptive comments** focused upon content and highlight the participant's explicit meaning making.
- **Linguistic comments** focused on the participant's specific use of language in relation to their perceptions. This included the use of non-verbal communication (i.e. pauses, laughter).
- **Conceptual comments** go beyond what the participant explicitly says, and provides a more interpretative analysis of the data. This is where the researcher drew upon her own perceptions, experiential and professional knowledge ask critical questions of the data, whilst remaining grounded in the participants words.

Exploratory comments have been color-coded as follows:
- Descriptive comments in **black;**
- Linguistic comments in **red;** and
- Conceptual comments in **green**.

Stage 3: Developing Emergent Themes

During stage 3, the researcher then focused upon the development of emergent themes. Given the extent to which exploratory notes were made during stage 2, an analytic shift was made as the researcher focused primary on the exploratory notes, whilst the transcript remained a secondary focus during stage 3.

When developing emergent themes, the process involved mapping interrelationships, connections and patters between the exploratory notes. The researcher oscillated between specific parts of the exploratory comments/transcript and considered it within the context of the whole. This process is described as the "hermeneutic circle" (p.98). Through this process of developing emergent themes, the researcher aimed to develop themes that not only reflect the participants original words, but the also the researcher's interpretation, ultimately providing insight about what appeared to be important for participants.

Stage 4: Searching for Connections Across the Emergent Themes

During this stage the researcher considered how the identified emergent themes may fit together. To do this the emergent themes were written in chronological order (i.e. the order in which they appeared in the transcript) and the researcher then grouped the themes into clusters; making connections between the themes using the following processes:

Abstraction:
➢ The researcher put 'like with like', and developed a new name for the cluster.

Subsumption
➢ The emergent themes became the superordinate theme, which overarched a series of related themes.

Polarisation
➢ The researcher considered the differences rather than similarities in the themes, thus developing superordinate themes based upon oppositional relationships between emergent themes.

Contextualisation
➢ The researcher identified contextual or narrative elements or key life events that appeared important in the lived experience.

Numeration
➢ The researcher considered the number of times a theme appeared in the analysis, and used this as an indicator of relative importance.

Function
➢ The researcher considered the meaning of a theme for the participant.

Ultimately, the research developed a table of themes for each case in turn.

Stage 5: **move on to the next case**

The researcher then moved on to the next participant's transcript; repeating stages 1 through 4. The researcher was mindful to consider each participants transcript in isolation at this stage and as far as she was able 'bracketed' ideas emerging from the analysis of the previous participants transcript. This was in a bid to stay true to the idiographic commitment underpinning IPA, and this facilitated the emergence of themes true to each participant's lived experience, with each analysis.

Stage 6: look for patterns across cases

Once each transcript had been analysed in isolation, the researcher then sought to look for patters across the participants emergent and superordinate themes. By printing off and considering each table of themes, developed through each individual IPA, the researcher was able to recognise similarities between themes and participant accounts of their experience. Moreover, the divergence within the themes (i.e. the differences noted between individual accounts) supported the development of a more nuanced understanding of the phenomenon of school exclusion. The researcher developed a Thematic map depicting superordinate, subordinate and emergent and divergent themes.(see figure 11)

NB. The researcher did not choose to complete an independent audit (Yin, 1989) of the themes identified as I was accepting of the double hermeneutic and believed IPA was innkeeping with my epistemological position (Robson and McCartan, 2016).

Appendix K: Example of steps 2 & 3 in the IPA process

Transcript	Exploratory notes	Emergent themes
Participant 7: yeah, they were the only two that proper proper helped me, they sat down all the time next to me and helped me with all of me work. Researcher: that sounds good Participant 7: yeah Researcher: So only two teachers helped you?	D-Two teachers that helped him in school. Sat down next to him and helped him with his work. L- repetition of proper- does this indicate the extent to which the teachers provided support? C- a sense that the teachers gave him their time? C- sense that the teachers were available for practical support with his work… L- tone indicates a sense of gratitude towards the teachers. possibly respect?	1. Practical support 2. Relationship with key adults
Participant 7: mmmm, some of them were *horrrrible.* n I mean horrible. They wouldn't even let you sit in the tree area n tha, cz there used to be a big group of trees in the playground yeah…and we all used to just go and group up in there and speak to each other n that. N they were like, boys "na, get out of there now". We weren't even doing anything, and they were always at us. Over tiny tiny things	D- described some of the staff as horrible. L- extension and repetition of the word horrible, c- use of language indicative of the vehemence he felt towards other staff? D-Pupil liked to talk with his friends amongst the trees. D-This was not allowed by staff. Pupils were told to move away from this area of the playground. L- through the use of quotes did the pupil wish to convey how he was spoken to in his previous school C- quote possibly used to imply a 'dictatorial approach' by teachers? L- Use of the word 'us' indicates that at playtime being told off was not in isolation, but rather a part of the group. D-Feels that the teachers were regularly telling him off. Felt that he got into trouble, for no real reason.	3. negative perceptions of adults 4. restrictive behaviour management

Researcher: ok so how did that feel?	L- repetition of the word tiny, illustrative of how he perceived the significance of the things that he was being told off for?	
Participant 7: Just felt like they were moaning at us all the time.	D- feeling as though he was moaned at all the time by teachers. C-possible that the pupil experienced a sense of suffocation and restriction based upon staff behaviours? C-staff as authoritarian?	
Researcher: What about your mates? Did you have many friends?		
Participant 7:{smiled}I had loooooads of mates, loads. {paused- looked saddened}		5. Positive and long lasting connection with peers
	L- smiling D-Expressed a sense of popularity C- fond memories of friendships? L- pause and expression of sadness. C- Verbally placed emphasis on the positive aspect of his friendships and popularity, whilst nonverbally conveyed a sense of loss portrayed a possible sense of loneliness?	
Researcher: Do you miss them?		
	L-indicated that he missed his friends non-verbally (nodded), C- considered what it meant for the pupil to verbalise this- did it make it more real? Did he perceive it as weakness?	

Participant 7: {nodded}. I might ask me mum n dad after school today to go down there n see all of em Researcher: do you do that often? Participant 7: erm na, this will be the first time. Its been a while, they probably won't recognise me {laughs} Researcher: So what's brought that on? Wanting to go and see them? Participant 7: Cz they came up with it, I haven't felt like doing it for a long time but I wana do it now Researcher: So who came up with that idea? Participant 7: me mum n dad Researcher: Well that sounds nice, hopefully they will be able to take you today, or soon maybe? Participant 7: yeah Researcher: hopefully it will be good fun when you are able to go... Participant 7: {pause} Researcher: So tell me a little bit about your mates then, what sort of things did you used to	D- may ask parents if he can go can and see his friends after school. D-He hasn't seen them for a long time and noted they may not recognise him. L- Laughs- nervous laugh? C- curious if he has ever explicitly reflected upon the friendships he had at his previous school prior to his exclusion. Why would his friends not recognise him? Indicates he has seen a change in himself? Physical appearance? behaviour? D- previously reluctant to go and visit his friends, but wishes to visit them now C-Consideration given to the post exclusion experience and transition between schools- why wait until now to go back and visit? D-His mum and dad have suggested visiting his friends. L- pause provided time to think about what that may be like. C- Interesting his didn't expand dialogue relating to friendships independently... why?	6. Playtime as boring

do with them? You've mentioned you used to gather in the trees and have a chat? Participant 7: yeah n Football, n there was a big massive erm playground yer. But they didn't even get one piece of equipment on there. N it was massive n I mean massive. Nearly as big as this school. Researcher: Ok so do you think your time at you old school would have been better if they had stuff for you to do? Participant 7: Yeah it was borin. Researcher: Ok so have a think back to your time in your old school, what sort of things did you do? Participant 7: I was just annoyin Yeah. n I used to be like that{dodging movement}, catch me then if you can to the teachers I was just like waaaaah {mimicked running} ….{head in hands} Researcher: Right ok, you've just gone {mimics body language} what does that mean? Participant 7: Shouldn't have done it should I? I was like that, they had me in a corner and I was just like {dodging n mimincs running quick}	D- described a large playground, but a lack of equipment L- tone of shock/disbelief when discussing equipment D-Described old school as boring C- Playtimes typically seen as a time of fun for children. Playtimes often providing an escape from lessons where children can be stimulated and be creative. Such free time perceived as boring- how much did this influence his experience of school? C- Boredom as an important factor in his sense making? Justification for getting into trouble maybe? D- identified his behaviours as annoying. Described trying to get the teachers to catch him. C- why did he play games with the teachers? Does it link back to boredom? L- holding head in hands after describing his behaviour- why? D- questions the appropriateness /helpfulness of his behaviour. L- rhetorical question-Reflective tone. C- was he trying to gauge the researchers position on his behaviour? C- was he employing the construct of 'annoying to make sense of himself and his behaviours? Where did this come from?	7. Personal construct. Self annoying

Researcher: ok so you think that it was a good thing to do?		
Participant 7: Naaaa.	D- believes his behaviour was not a 'good' way to act C- shows an ability to reflect on his behaviour, is this a sign that he has developed an awareness of his behaviours since being excluded?	
Researcher: Ok what other sort of stuff did you do, other than try n get the teachers to chase you?		
Participant 7: Erm, {pause} erm I used to just run up n down the halls	L- hesitation C- struggling to remember or reluctance to remember? D- other behaviours include running up and down the halls.	
Researcher: Ok so why did you do that?	D- remembers getting bored and walking out. C- boredom a catalyst for misbehaviour?	8. Curriculum/teaching style- Boredom
Participant 7: Just got bored in class, walked out n was like whatever.		
Researcher: so it was boredom? Could it have been anything else?	D- only identifies boredom as the reason underpinning his behaviour.	
Participant 7: Na I was just bored.		
Researcher: Ok so why was it so boring for you?		
Participant 7: Well they weren't even very good. The subjects. N the lessons. Just sittin down, no activities no fun just nothin, just …borin		
Researcher: Ok so you would get bored, you would walk out the class and then what happens?		

Appendix L: Example of step 4 (individual participant emergent theme table)

Positive relationships with adults	Negative relationships with adults	Importance of Peer relationships	Process of exclusion	Emotional response to exclusion process	Contextual factors	Construction of self
Holds certain staff in positive regard	Negative construction of staff	Positive and long lasting connection with peers	CONSTRUCTION OF EXCLUSION: Exclusion as something children have no control	Pupil confusion	Boredom	Feeling unliked
Strength of supportive relationship	Restrictive behaviour management	friendships in new school as positive		Parental confusion and shock	Transitions difficult	Own behaviours as annoying for teachers
Practical support		Sense of togetherness and belonging	Within child attribution for exclusion	Sense of unfairness	Practical support strategies	Teacher vs pupil constructs /Construction of him as bad is unwarranted
Sense of security knowing staff were there for him	Negative responses to behaviour management approaches		Consequence of exclusion specialist provision	Blame	Facilities in new school tailored to meet the pupils needs	Status- as the best fighter
Teacher openness		Similarity between peers at school x		Exclusion as unjustified	Staff attuned to his needs and proactive	
unconditional acceptance regardless of behaviour	Negative emotions towards staff	Fear of being forgotten	Lack of communication regarding the exclusion	Negative emotions		Recognition of oneself as liking new school
			Reason for exclusion unclear	Impact of non-attendance		
Connection with teacher post exclusion	Feeling targeted	Lack of closure-friendships	Lack of pupil voice/involvement			
Honest conversations with pupils about their future.			Period of Nonattendance at school			
feeling understood by staff in new school						

Table of emergent themes and superordinate themes relating to participant 7

SUPERORDINATE THEME: POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH ADULTS		
Emergent Themes	*Page/line number*	*Key words/phrases.*
Holds certain staff in positive regard.	*P.1 lines 30-31*	*"Some of them could be ok, there was this one- two teachers actually, one in me younger school, and one in me juniors one that were nice"*
Strength of supportive relationship	*p.8 line 212*	*"My miss, She was like me mum in school,... She would be good with me."*
Practical support	*P.2 LINES 37-38* *p.8 line 213* *p.8 line 212*	*"Yeah, they were the only two that proper proper helped me, they sat down all the time next to me and helped me with all of me work"* *"She always sat down next to men helped me"* *"If I was good we used to go n play tennis or football"*
Sense of security knowing staff were there for him	*p.4 line 96* *p.4 line 98*	*"Just those two teachers I talked about. They were just there".* *"They just talked to me"*
Connection with teacher post exclusion	*p.8 line 216* *p.8 line 214*	*"Yeah I can imagine her walking round the school like my little buddy has gone"* *"I saw her once (at the shops) and I gave her a big hug"*
Teacher openness	*p.7 lines 173-174*	*"Dya know what miss said to me, right listen, she said your gona try n get yourself kicked out but It's not gona happen for ya {laughing}"*
Unconditional acceptance regardless of behaviour	*p.7 lines 176-177*	*"Yeah coz I was trying to get kicked out at the time, yeah and she just brought me into her office and just went you're tryna get yourself kicked out but that's not going to work…"*

Honest conversations with pupils about their future.	*p.9 lines 228-229*	*"Yeah. And they have just told me straight about {mainstream secondary x} they have said that it won't work out. You will be out of their like that {clicked fingers}"*
Feeling understood by staff in new school	*p.10 line 253*	*"They just get me. They definitely get me"*

SUPERORDINATE THEME: NEGATIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH ADULTS		
Emergent Themes	*Page/line number*	*Key words/phrases.*
negative construction of staff	*p.2 line 42*	*"mmmm, some of them were horrrrible. n I mean horrible".*
	p.11 lines 290-291	*"She was dead selfish… Coz she just whenever you brought a prize in to show people, she would say not now, and go and sit down n take it off of you"*
	p.11 line 292	*"She needs to calm down. She was angry. she was always having a go"*
negative emotion towards staff	*p.11 line 286*	*"The main ones was horrible. Didn't miss them."*
Restrictive behaviour management	*p.2 lines 42-45*	*"They wouldn't even let you sit in the tree area n tha, coz there used to be a big group of trees in the playground yeah…and we all used to just go and group up in there and speak to each other n that. N they were like, boys "na, get out of there now". We weren't even doing anything, and they were always at us. Over tiny tiny things."*
Negative responses to behaviour management approaches	*p.4 lines 89-90*	*"Id leg it. N ya know sometime say horrible stuff. Told them to ya know F off once, n then just pegged it outside and just went n volleyed the door on the way out."*
	p.11 line 298	*"It was annoying. Id just run of then. Onto the playground where they couldn't catch me."*

Feeling targeted	*p.11 lines 296-297*	*"Teachers shouted at me- put me in detention for no reason. I got into trouble for stuff other kids wouldn't …like when I was climbing, other kids do it. They don't get told off."*
	p.11 lines 291	*"she was always having a go. I wasn't picked on by the kids, never the kids…"*

SUPERORDINATE THEME: PEER RELATIONSHIPS		
Emergent Themes	Page/line number	Key words/phrases.
Positive and long lasting connection with peers	*p.2 line 49*	*"{smiled}I had loooooads of mates, loads. {paused- looked saddened}"*
	p.2 line 55	*I haven't felt like doing it (seeing his friends) for a long time but I wana do it now"*
	p.9 line 228	*(when discussing choice of secondary school) "Yeah I wanted (go to mainstream) to see me mates."*
Fear of being forgotten post exclusion	*p.11. line 282*	*"Yeah spent some of the time thinking about if me mates would remember me."*
	p.2 line 53	*"It's been a while, they probably won't recognise me"*
Lack of closure	*p.11 line 304-305*	*"they wouldn't let me say goodbye to me mates. I said can I at least go n say good bye to me mates and they said 'no you don't go here'"*
Friendships in new school as positive	*p.6 line 163*	*"Yeah but when I started to come here I made loads of mates quick"*

Sense of togetherness and belonging	*p.8 192-193*	"N I made loads of mates, all of them always stick up for me now. Dya know what they always say here? one fights, we all fight."
	p.8 lines 199-200	"Yeah wed all probably just bam. Just like 30 hands going (drill noise)... {Pause} They're like me family. It's the same with me tho, if anyone hits them they would get hit back from me".
	p.8 line 196-197	"feel like here I've got a big group of mates, just standing here, feel like I've got a big massive group of people standing with me"
Similarity between peers at school x	*p.8 line 202*	"50 kids in my class. No one else really got up n walked out but here everyone does, that's better"
SUPERORDINATE THEME: PROCESS OF EXCLUSION		
Emergent Themes	**Page/line number**	**Key words/phrases.**
Construction of exclusion *Exclusion as something children have no control over*	*p.1 line 20*	"just getting kicked out of a school"
Within child attribution for exclusion	*p.1 line 22*	"yeah for something that you have done"
Consequence of exclusion as attendance of a specialist provision	*p.1 line 26*	"yeah that's why I'm here" {gestured to school}
Lack of communication regarding the exclusion	*p.4 lines 102-103*	"Well what I done yeah, me n me mum walking up to the front desk were the them people work, n they went er 'you're not a pupil here anymore'"
		"Yeah no phone call or nothing. No one bothered. They just said no. they could have said come n sit down we need to explain something to ya".
	p.11 lines 278-279	

		"they should have given me mum a phone call or something or brought us in."
	p.11 line 303-304	
Lack of Pupil voice/involvement	*p.5 line 130*	*"No one spoke to me."*
	p.5 line 135	*"I came ere after me mum had a meeting at the school".*
	p.5 line 137	*(When asked about the meeting) "Na- I didn't go"*
reason for exclusion unclear	*p.5 line 113*	*I didn't even do anything bad then.*
	p.5 line 126	*I just dunno, I went to walk in and they just went na.bye*
	p.10 line 271	*(reason for exclusion) I know it was that. I was always having fights*
Period of Non attendance at school	*p.6 lines 139-140*	*Na. mum just said I was going to a different school, but I didn't come here for a month or two. N I was haaaapy. I was just like, everyday on my computer.*
	p.6 lines 142-143	*So I get excluded from there. Cz it takes quite a while to get back into a different school doesn't it. So I had some time.*
Transition to new school		
SUPERORDINATE THEME: EMOTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH EXCLUSION		
Emergent Themes	Page/line number	Key words/phrases.
Pupil confusion	*p.4 lines 103-104*	*"n I was just like 'what do you mean I come her every day, I've always come here', n I was just like phhhhhh {shaking head}"*

Parental confusion and shock	*p.4 line 108*	*"She was just like what do you mean!? He's been here nearly all of his life!"*
	p.11 line 302-304	*"Just that me Mum n dad were mad at me n the school at the time, now I reckon they have forgotten about it. Actually, they were more mad at the school because they should have given me mum a phone call or something or brought us in"*
Sense of unfairness	*p.5 line 128*	*"It was unfair. Definitely unfair".*
blame	*p.11 line 283*	*"Miss was the one who got me kicked out".*
Exclusion as unjustified.	*p.5 lines 120-124*	*"They thought I was bad. All I was doing was teaching people how to fight n that… Yeah but I wasn't proper hitting them… Like yeah I was just showing them things, just showing them".*
Negative emotions .	*p.5 line 128*	*"I felt angry and sad"*
	p.11 line 278	*"No one bothered"*
Impact of non-attendance	*p.6 line 147*	*"it was good yeah" (time off)*
	p.6 line 159	*"Yeah I was just getting dead lonely and it stopped being fun"*
	p.6 line 161	*"Just felt all, dead alone inside"*
	p.6 line 157	*"I was just like. Erm I didn't really know what to say. I was quite happy." (when told he would return to a new school)*

SUPERORDINATE THEME: CONTEXTUAL FACTORS		
Emergent Themes	**Page/line number**	**Key words/phrases.**
Boredom	*p.3 line 80*	*"Just got bored in class, walked out n was like whatever."*
	p.3 line 82	*"Na I was just bored."*

	p.3 lines 84-85	*"Well they weren't even very good. The subjects. N the lessons. Just sittin down, no activities no fun just nothin, just …borin"*
	p.3 lines 64-68	*"there was a big massive erm playground yer. But they didn't even get one piece of equipment on there. N it was massive n I mean massive. Nearly as big as this school. …. Yeah it was borin"*
Transitions difficult	*p.4 line 92*	*"Phhhhhh. Erm, probably, mostly on the Mondays n that."*
	p.4 line 94	*"Ya know first days back n tha… just bad {pause}"*
	p.4 line 100	*"Yeah it was a Monday"* (day of exclusion)
	p.7 lines 176-177	(when starting new school)" *Yeah cz I was trying to get kicked out at the time ….*"So I started hanging of me mum n that, hanging off the doors, not wanting to go in"
Practical support strategies	*p.8 line 211*	*"They give me a stress ball n that- never had anything like that in me old school"*
	p.9 lines 238-241	*"They let me go to sleep…Yeah when I was in Mrs y's class, she gave me a pillow a blanket n just let me get me head down behind the screen"*
Facilities in new school tailored to meet the pupils needs	*p.8 line 222*	*"Yeah and there's this room with pure pads in it. That you can just punch and that."*
	p.9 line 224	(use the room) *"when ya need to. If your having a bad time"*

Staff attuned to his needs and proactive	*p.10 lines 257- 261*	*"Cz they know what I like to do and that, they know that I like the outdoors, and running around n they always let me run around on the playground. They always let me do just full laps sprinting…Tires me out. {pause} N they let me stay in the classroom too, instead of going into the hall at lunch time, cz its dead loud. They let me stay in n have the laptop with me so I can watch stuff on that"*
SUPERORDINATE THEME: CONSTRUCTION OF SELF		
Emergent Themes	*Page/line number*	*Key words/phrases.*
Feeling unliked	*p.11 line 296*	*"Coz only two of them liked me. The other teachers shouted at me"*
Own behaviours as annoying for teachers	*p.3 lines 70-71*	*"I was just annoyin Yeah. n I used to be like that{dodging movement}, catch me then if you can to the teachers I was just like waaaaah {mimicked running} ….{head in hands}"*
	p.3 lines 73-74	*"Shouldn't have done it should I? I was like that, they had me in a corner and I was just like {dodging n mimincs running quick}"*
Teacher vs pupil constructs Construction of him as bad is unwarranted	*p.5 line 118*	*"Yeah. {pause} because they thought that I was bad…a bad influence to everyone"*
	p.5 line 120	*"They thought I was bad."*
Status- as the best fighter	*p.10 line 273*	*"Yeah I think I was the best fighter in there".*
Recognition of oneself as liking new school	*p.7 line 189*	*"And then I started liking it. And then I started just walking in"*

Appendix M: Master Table of Super-ordinate and Sub-ordinate Themes

	SUPERORDINATE THEME: NEGATIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH ADULTS	SUPERORDINATE THEME: PROCESS OF EXCLUSION	EMOTIONAL IMPACT OF EXCLUSION	SUPERORDINATE THEME: ATTRIBUTION	SUPERORDINATE THEME: CONTEXTUAL FACTORS	
P. 1	Negative perceptions of teachers (strict/horrible /bossy /annoying Teachers as unsupportive Feeling targeted by teachers Misunderstood	Dialogue with pupil and family about exclusion. Discrepancy in school's readiness to exclude Reason for exclusion Period of non-attendance Experience of internal exclusion Wrongful exclusion based upon identified SEND	Sense of Unfairness Feeling unwanted Need to protect oneself Sense of hope	ADHD Impact of other children's behaviour	School as boring Sense of helplessness Emphasis placed on academic work Importance of social time Rewards system as motivating to an extent Hunger impacting on behaviour Specialist support Sense of belonging Feeling listened to and valued Transport as tiring	

P. 2	SUPERORDINATE THEME: ATTRIBUTION	SUPERORDINATE THEME: ISOLTAION	SUPERORDINATE THEME: CONSEQUENCE OF EXCLUSION	SUPERORDINATE THEME: CONTEXTUAL FACTORS	SUPERORDINATE THEME: IDENTITY
	Competency of teachers (competent in new school- incompetent in old school) Within child attribution	Loneliness Friendships	Exclusion resulting in special school placement Positive experience- new school Self-protective thoughts Sense of acceptance	impact of other pupils behaviours transport food consequences as important	Teachers who shout Self as 'naughty'

P. 3	SUPERORDINATE THEME: ATTRIBUTION	SUPERORDINATE THEME: RELATIONSHIPS WITH ADULTS	SUPERORDINATE THEME: EXCLUSION EXPERIENCE	SUPERORDINATE THEME: CONTEXTUAL FACTORS	
	Detrimental effect of pupil openness Impact of peer behaviour Sensory processing difficulties	Relationship with a key adult as supportive Attention as important feeling unliked Misunderstood Practical support from staff/ availability of staff	Construction of exclusion experience/ acceptance Emotions experienced with school change /sense of unfairness Desire to return Missing friends	Consequences/play as important Engagement with lessons	

	SUPERORDINATE THEME: EXCLUSION PROCESS	SUPERORDINATE THEME: EMOTIONAL IMPACT OF EXCLUSION	SUPERORDINATE THEME: RELATIONSHIPS	SUPERORDINATE THEME: ATTRITBUTION	SUPERORDINATE THEME: COPING MECHANISM	SUPERORDINATE THEME: CONSTRUCTION OF SELF
P.4	Multiple exclusions Accelerated process of exclusion Reason for exclusion	Feeling unwanted by the head teacher Lack of control Negative emotions relating to parental reaction Parental anger	Striving for control Feeling supported Security from familiarity School as more than about traditional learning Classteacher communication Belonging Popularity Feeling understood	Work as too difficult Temperament (easily annoyed)	Self protective processing Maintaining a sense of connection to previous schools Focus on material details Construction of exclusion as a fresh start	A burden on his peers Naughty Kind hearted
	SUPERORDINATE THEME: RELATIONSHIPS	SUPERORDINATE THEME: EXCLUSION	SUPERORDINATE THEME: CONSTRUCTION OF SELF	SUPERORDINATE THEME: COPING MECHANISM		
	key adult influential in maintenance of placement Consistency	Exclusion as positive (means of going home) Emotional impact of exclusion	Maturity Misbehaviour Within child attribution	Self protective processing Denial		

P. 5	Feeling understood	Practical implications of exclusion	Lack of control	Belonging (relationships with adults		
		Experience of multiple exclusions				
		Isolation of internal exclusion				
		Significance of an internal exclusion vs external exclusion				
		Threshold for exclusion different between schools				
	SUPERORDINATE THEME: **PHYSICAL RESTRAINT**	*SUPERORDINATE THEME:* *RELATIONSHIPS PERCEIVED AS POSITIVE*	*SUPERORDINATE THEME:* *NEGATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH ADULTS*	*SUPERORDINATE THEME:* *REFLECTION ON EXCLUSION*	*SUPERORDINATE THEME:* *CONSTRUCTION OF SELF*	*SUPERORDINATE THEME:* *ATTRIBUTION*
P. 6	Discomfort Unprincipled use of restraint Emotional and behavioural response to restraint	Pupil as powerful in control Positive constructions of staff Not shouting as a means of demonstrating caring	Negative constructions of staff Overly strict approach detrimental to relationship Communication style of staff	Insignificance of exclusion Self-protective processing	Intelligence Severity of behaviour	Reaction to restraint ADHD Reaction to school move

	Negative construction of school	Motivating Feeling understood Feeling supported Preference for male teachers	Misunderstood Frequency of restraint				
	SUPERORDINATE THEME: POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH ADULTS	**SUPERORDINATE THEME: NEGATIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH ADULTS**	**SUPERORDINATE THEME: IMPORTANCE OF PEER RELATIONSHIPS**	**SUPERORDINATE THEME: PROCESS OF EXCLUSION**	**SUPERORDINATE THEME: EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO EXCLUSION PROCESS**	**SUPERORDINATE THEME: CONTEXTUAL FACTORS**	**SUPER-ORDINATE THEME: CONSTRUCTION OF SELF**
P.7	Holds certain staff in positive regard Strength of supportive relationship Practical support Sense of security knowing staff were there for him Teacher openness	Negative construction of staff Restrictive behaviour management Negative responses to behaviour management approaches Negative emotions towards staff Feeling targeted	Positive and long-lasting connection with peers friendships in new school as positive Sense of togetherness and belonging Similarity between peers at school x Fear of being forgotten Lack of closure-friendships	Construction of exclusion: Exclusion as something children have no control Within child attribution for exclusion Consequence of exclusion specialist provision	Pupil confusion Parental confusion and shock Sense of unfairness Blame Exclusion as unjustified Negative emotions Impact of non-attendance	Boredom Transitions difficult Practical support strategies Facilities in new school tailored to meet the pupils needs Staff attuned to his needs and proactive	Feeling unliked Own behaviours as annoying for teachers Teacher vs pupil constructs /Construction of him as bad is unwarranted Status- as the best fighter

187

Unconditional acceptance regardless of behaviour

Connection with teacher post exclusion

Honest conversations with pupils about their future.

Feeling understood by staff in new school

Lack of communication regarding the exclusion

Reason for exclusion unclear

Lack of pupil voice/involvement

Period of Nonattendance at school

recognition of oneself as liking new school

Appendix N: Complex Thematic Map

189
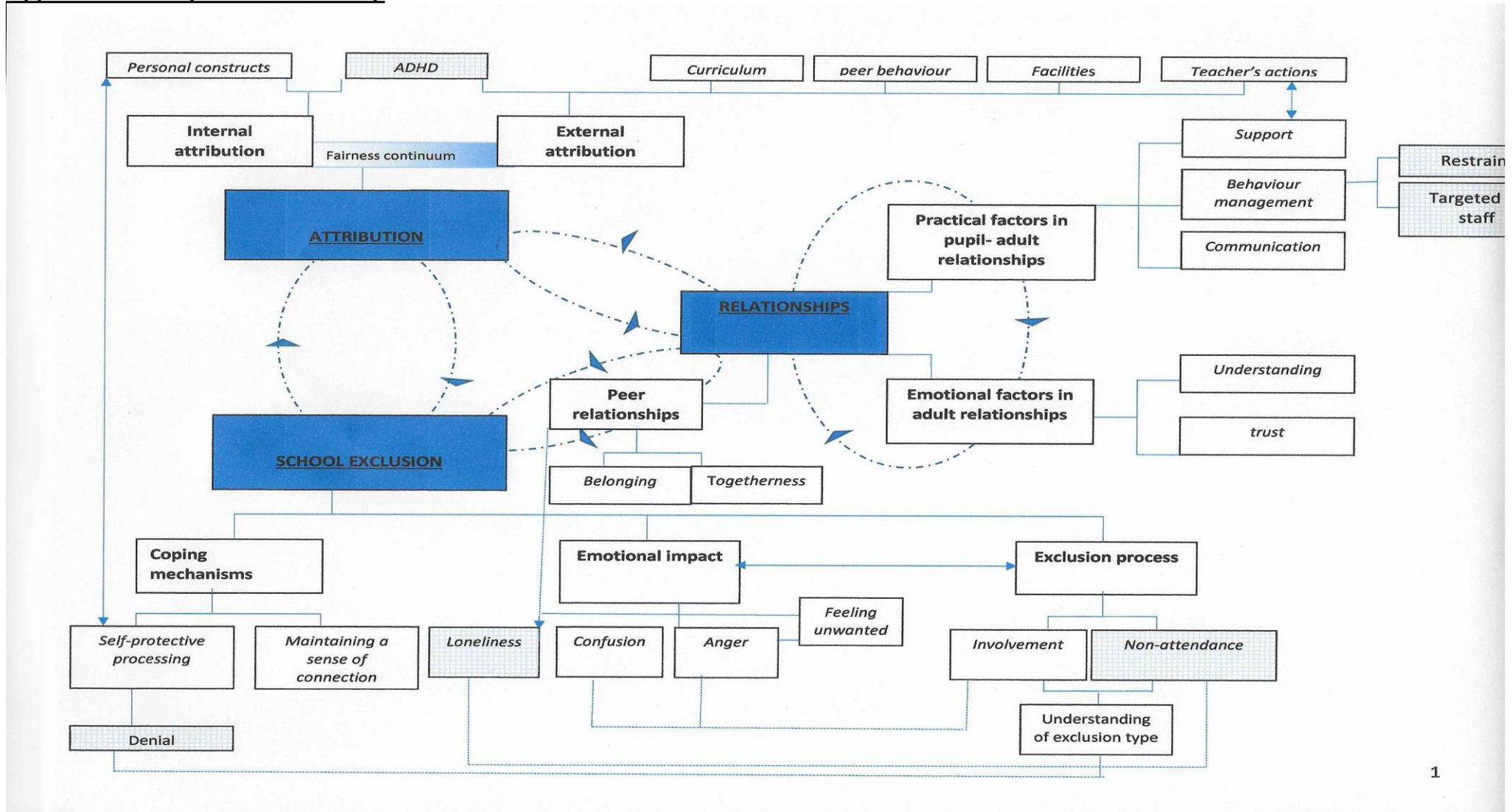
Appendix O: Supplementary Findings

The following emergent themes and initial clusters arose from the pupil discourse. In keeping with the researchers aim to shed light on pupil's lived experience of school exclusion, this document aims to capture themes that were important to individual participants and emergent themes that arose from cross group analysis. This appendix aims to supplement the readers understanding of the factors important in the participants lived experience, which were unable to be articulated within the scope of the main body.

Divergent theme: ADHD (Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder)

An initial cluster was identified as ADHD. Arguably this is a distinct theme within personal constructs as for one pupil having identified ADHD was a critical element in how he processed his exclusion experience. Arguably, the theme 'ADHD' fell under both, internal and external attribution, as whilst the pupils acknowledged a within child difficulty, they spoke to how the teachers responded to this:

"In my old school I just had, I was like the only person with ADHD and anger problems, except me and {other pupil name} they just didn't like us, they would just say 'stop getting so angry' and that's it" (participant 7)

This pupil spoke strongly about the injustice of his exclusion based upon his identified SEND (i.e ADHD), and the lack of support provided by school:

" Mum contacted the ADHD person and like the school person. She said when the head teacher was kicking me out that she's not allowed to do that. And then my mum showed her all the messages the next day, and then she started changing her mind and saying something else. After my mum said that she couldn't kick me out for that. She said that school hadn't helped me enough" (participant 7)

Emergent theme: *Facilities*

Many pupils made reference to practical factors which have been grouped under the emergent theme *'facilities'*, when discussing factors that may have contributed to their challenging behaviour and subsequent exclusion. Factors such as: class size, availability of teacher support, space to calm and availability of snacks, were noted to be important in the pupil experience. Once more, the inconsistency between how the pupils experienced these factors positively or negatively was variable between participants.

Most pupils discussed the impact of a class size and teacher-pupil ratios, on their school experiences. One pupil explicitly discussed the emotional and practical benefits associated with class size. For him, in a larger class there was a sense of disconnect and feeling lost amongst peers. This pupil noted how he had to compete for attention from the class teacher, which may have potentially impacted upon the extent of his behaviours; as it appeared that he longed for the attention from the class teacher:

A practical benefit of high teacher-pupil ratios and small class size identified was the accessibility of support with the work:

> *"Because they didn't really focus on me. because when I was year 2.it was like they didn't know I was there, because they had, well I had a big classroom like really big. And they had to focus on like 20 other children and they didn't really notice me {pause}"* (Participant 3)

> *"Yeah and I had erm, a like a, 3 staff in my room to help the whole class out like with stuff, say like the teacher was busy I would just call for a member of staff and they would like help me with something."* (participant 3)

Divergent theme: *Teacher actions*

'Teachers actions', was also identified as an divergent theme, under '**external attribution**', which links closely to behaviour management and teacher support. For one pupil, his negative constructions of these factors, appeared to be linked to a sense of blame towards the teacher:

> *"It's her fault, she's the one that got me kicked out. She made it worse".* (participant 5, line:)

Appendix P: Qualitative Research Validity Considered (Yardley's 2000, 2008, framework).

Core Principle	Considerations in determining research validity	Evidence of considerations addressed
Sensitivity of Context	• Social context of the relationship between the researcher and participant • Socio cultural and linguistic context of the research • Participant perspectives • Context of theory • Awareness of existing literature in the field.	• Clear statement relating to the researcher's involvement with the research process. Acknowledgement on the 'double hermeneutic' present in data analysis. Consideration of researcher background (both contextual and philosophical). • Recognition the current context of SE and varying conceptualisations of SEMH. Recognition of wider societal influences when in interpreting the data. • Participant perspectives championed. Participants were sampled purposefully, allowing the recruitment of pupils that have the experiential knowledge required to explore the research question. • Limited explicit psychological theory present in reviewed literature. Researcher aimed to make links between existing literature and psychological theory when non were made. • Consideration given to a range of ethical issues from the research inception. Ethical approval sought and gained from the Cardiff University School of Psychology Ethics Committee.
Commitment and Rigour	Depth of engagement with the research topic. Considerations include: • Expertise and skills in the methods employed • Thorough and in-depth analysis • Clear and in-depth reporting of findings	• Prior to data and collection and analysis the researcher engaged in supervision and the exploration of numerous texts to ensure the most appropriate method of data collection and analysis was a conducted, in order to address the research question. • Once methods were decided, the researcher carefully followed guidance relating to analysis processes (see appendix J). • Completeness of data collection and interpretation evidenced through appendices, illustrating thorough IPA. • Extensive quotes used within the results section to illustrate findings grounded in pupil voice.
Coherence and Transparency	• Clarity and power of the argument • Fit between philosophical perspective and method • Transparent methods and data presentation • Reflexivity	• The researcher read extensively about various ontological and epistemological positions and evaluated slight differences in perspectives (e.g. subjectivism and social constructionism), to ensure fit between philosophical underpinnings and methodology. • Methodological decision making has been reflected upon in part 3. The researcher has also reflected upon n the chosen methods and analysis and has considered how these will influence her future practice (Part 3). • Data has been presented in a number of ways (figures, tables and prose) throughout the research and appendices, in order to enhance accessibility. Colour was used to connect illustrative quotes to individual participant discourse
Impact and Importance	Impact and utility through: • Theoretical worth • Practical impact • Socio-cultural impact	• Researcher made clear connections between the findings and psychological theory (i.e. attribution, attachment, ecological systems theory and social identity theory). • Research has practical implications relating to how pupils with SEMH and at risk of exclusion are supported at the individual level and systemic level (e.g. provides reason to consider behaviour management policy) • Potential implications relating to the process of exclusion within the LA were considered (e.g. identification of possible unofficial permanent exclusions and a lack of involvement of CYP and their families in the process).

Appendix Q: Reflective diary excerpt

07.01.18.

Difficulties capturing the difference in experiences between mainstream + specialist settings.
→ sense of polarity → not always the same direction.
eg. participant — positive constructs of mainstream, negative constructs of special

How do I know that I have Bracketed off enough? Where I find commonality is it because of what the previous participant said — Participant vs negative constructs of mainstream, positive constructs of special.

08.01.18
How to decide where themes go. subthemes could go under a variety of super-ordinate themes.
− Must capture the interplay... Smith + Larkin recommend persevering at this point of the analysis. Maybe try different shapes?

13.01.18. talk to Dale
is bracketing off even possible?

12.01.18. How to capture the individual experiences? + the commonality across group experiences? Use colour to highlight the nuances important to lived experience.

'Commonality in experience or my interpretation of experience?'
"

Possible that some pupils had difficulty in the area of social communication/interaction. Don't know definitively. How would this impact how they make sense of their experience? Does it explain the variance observed in the data. Can I talk to this w/out having that descriptive pupil data. How homogenous was the group!?!

↳ important for future research?

may enable the researcher to push the interpretation further.

16.01.18. Thematic map too linear!
(Supervision. must explore ways to illustrate interconnections between themes.

Bronfenbrenner / Systems Theory helpful framework to explore finding − possible way to structure Results.

Relationships
↓
Attribution
↓
Exclusion

Exclusions
Attributions?
Relationships

SPIRAL OUT OF CONTROL

Behaviour by pupil.
strict behaviour management
Teacher attitudes / perceptions / constructs

← TIME →

193