School Exclusion and Reintegration:

An Exploration of Pupils', Parents' and Teachers' Experiences

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2013

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the University of East London for the degree of Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology

Abstract

School exclusion is experienced by some of the most vulnerable children in society, and challenges to sustained reintegration and consequent 'inclusive' educational issues are well documented. The literature in this area has primarily focussed on exclusion or reintegration in isolation; however few studies have explored both phenomena, and those that do often focus on experiences of one set of actors at the expense of another. This research aims to contribute to these identified gaps by exploring the lived experiences (through the voices) of pupils, parents and teachers; those actors most intimately involved in both processes.

This study focuses on four secondary aged pupils who had experienced multiple fixed-term exclusions, followed by sustained and successful reintegration. Using a qualitative design and a preventative approach to establish 'what works' in sustaining reintegration, data was collected via semi-structured interviews with pupils, parents and teachers to obtain their multiple perspectives.

Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis participants' experiences of exclusion and reintegration were captured through emerging themes of security. Three interacting super-ordinate themes representing participants accounts were identified as: 'Threats to Security', the 'Search for Security', and the 'Re-establishing of Security'. Themes were interpreted to explore how potential risk and protective factors are mediated within the pupil's ecological system, and how these precipitated the emergence of vulnerability and resilience for young people.

With a primary focus on how preventative practices can enhance protective factors leading to successful reintegration, the implications of these findings for Educational Psychologists and professionals working with pupils, parents and teachers are discussed in relation to the resources within the child's system. It is proposed that strengthening these resources may promote resilience and facilitate positive social, emotional and educational wellbeing.

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List of Abbreviations

BESD   Behaviour Emotional and Social Difficulties

BIP   Behaviour Improvement Programme

BPS   British Psychological Society

CAF   Common Assessment Framework

CYPP   Children and Young Peoples Plan

DCSF   Department for Children Schools and Families

DfE   Department for Education

DfES   Department for Education and Skills

EBD   Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties

ECM   Every Child Matters

EP   Educational Psychologist

EPS   Educational Psychology Service

IPA   Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

KS4   Key Stage 4

LA   Local Authority

LAC   Looked After Children

NHS   National Health Service

OCC   Office of the Children's Commissioner

OFSTED   Office for Standards in Education

OPSI   Office for Public Sector Information

PRU   Pupil Referral Unit

PSA   Parent Support Advisor

PSP   Pastoral Support Programme

SEN   Special Educational Needs

TAC   Team Around the Child

TAMHS   Targeted Mental Health in Schools

UNESCO   United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation

UNICEF   United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research is to explore pupils', parents' and teachers' experiences of the process of school exclusion and reintegration. This study aims to add to previous literature in this area by developing an in-depth understanding of the dynamics contributing to both school exclusion and sustained reintegration from the perspectives of those involved. Secondary aged pupils who have experienced fixed-term exclusions will be the focus of this research, and as such a preventative approach is adopted to elicit factors that may preclude further exclusion and sustain secure reintegration. This research thus aims to evolve current understandings of the risk and protective factors associated with these processes that can be utilised by professionals (i.e. Educational Psychologists) working with vulnerable groups to promote educational inclusion and positive social and emotional outcomes.

1.2 School Exclusion and Reintegration

The Every Child Matters (DfES, 2004a) agenda placed emphasis on the responsibility of schools and Local Authorities (LAs) to ensure measures are in place to support 'every child' in achieving positive outcomes.

> "*Children are entitled to receive, with a suitable peer group, a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, in the least restrictive environment. Wherever possible, this should be in a mainstream school, recognising that appropriate support, advice and resources may be necessary to achieve this*"
> (House of Commons Education and Skills Committee, 2006, p.392).

There remain, however, groups of children in society who are particularly vulnerable to negative outcomes. Those children who are at risk of exclusion or who have been excluded from school are frequently identified within this category (Vulliamy & Webb, 2000). In the UK, school exclusion is defined as a "*disciplinary sanction that prevents pupils from attending school either for a fixed period or permanently*" (Gazeley, 2010, p.451). School exclusions were first introduced in the 1944 Education Act (Education

Act, 1944) as a measure that can be invoked by the Head Teacher as a counteractive response to inappropriate or challenging pupil behaviour (Daniels, 2011). The process of school exclusion can either be for a fixed term or permanent.

A fixed term exclusion from school is a disciplinary measure that Head Teachers can use to deal with incidents of serious misbehaviour (Barker, 2010), breaches of the school behaviour policy and persistent disruptive behaviour. Legislation indicates that a pupil can be excluded for one or more fixed periods which when combined do not surpass a total of 45 days in any one school year (DfE, 2012c). Where children have been excluded for six school days or longer the school has a duty to arrange suitable full time educational provision from and including the sixth day of provision (DfE, 2012c); the fixed term exclusion does not have to be for a continuous period. Responsibility is placed on parents and carers to ensure the young person is not present in public settings during school hours and that work sent home is completed.

Where exclusion is permanent the Head Teacher has a statutory duty to inform the school governing body, the Local Authority and the pupil's parents. Parents are provided with a letter within one day of the exclusion stating the reason for exclusion, inviting their views and detailing rights to appeal to an independent committee (Morgan & McDonald, 1998). Following permanent exclusion in the UK pupils may attend a number of different provisions, i.e. a PRU (Pupil Referral Unit), receive home tuition, attend a special school or an alternative setting (Hayden, 2002). Due to the negative outcomes associated with exclusion, Clegg (2009) stresses that this measure should be implemented only as a last resort where other alternatives, interventions or strategies have proved unsuccessful, followed by efficient reintegration for pupils out of school (DfE, 2012a).

Reintegration refers to longer term planning for a pupil to re-join the existing school community (after fixed term exclusion) or other suitable full time education (after permanent exclusion) (DfES, 2008b). Schools are recommended to work together to share responsibility for excluded pupils and those at risk of exclusion so that children are not out of education (DfES, 2008b). There appear, however, to be considerable

challenges to school reintegration for young people who have experienced exclusions (Blyth & Milner, 1993). Reintegration into mainstream secondary school in particular has been highlighted as posing particular challenges (Parsons & Howlett, 2000) and placements can often fail following the withdrawal of support.

1.3 Consequences of Exclusion

In the short term school exclusion has been linked with feelings of rejection, stigmatisation and shame (Harris, Vincent, Thomson & Toalster, 2006) and in the long term with 'going missing from education' (Gazeley, 2010) risk of future unemployment (Kaplan & McArdle, 2004), involvement in crime (Vulliamy & Webb, 2000) and social exclusion from society (Daniels, 2011). Education policies propose that high levels of school attendance are a prerequisite for improvements in attainment (DfES, 2005a); however pupils involved in school exclusion processes are more likely to have unstable patterns of attendance and spend time out of education, placing them at further disadvantage. Morgan & McDonald (1998) have highlighted links between truancy, school exclusion and future offending.

The exclusion of a pupil often requires use of extra resources, provisions and involvement from a range of agencies, and hence results in an increase in financial costs to society in comparison to remaining in mainstream education (Parsons, 1999). Scott, Knapp, Henderson & Maughan (2001) suggest that those children displaying antisocial behaviour at school age are likely to have poorer social functioning in adulthood and are subsequently at a higher risk of social exclusion. The costs incurred in transition to adulthood are predicted to be ten times higher for those children than for those whose early behaviour is not a concern.

Prevention of social exclusion is therefore a major concern, not only in light of reported financial costs (Scott et al, 2001), but more worryingly when considering levels of children's wellbeing and mental health difficulties in the UK (NHS Advisory Service, 1995). UNICEF (2007) recently reported that of the world's richest countries, children in the UK have the lowest quality of life and sense of wellbeing. Such information raises questions about the links between the levels of wellbeing of pupils

excluded from school (both pre and post exclusion), and the possible causes of the challenging behaviour, which often result in exclusionary measures.

> *"Exclusion can be the result of disciplinary procedures, but it can also occur through feelings of isolation, disaffection, unresolved personal, family or emotional problems, bullying, withdrawal or truancy. These experiences may be as significant as formal disciplinary exclusion procedures if they deny or restrict an individual's access to education and lead to a more general social exclusion"*
> (Osler, Street, Lall & Vincent, 2002, p.2).

Social exclusion is described as encompassing not only issues of poverty and poor material means, but also the inability to participate effectively in social, political, economic and cultural life, sometimes involving alienation and marginalisation from society (Parsons, 1999; Paskell, 2005). Statistics show that children who experience school exclusion or who leave with no qualifications are at greater risk in later life of negative outcomes (Visser, 2000) i.e. unemployment, crime, homelessness and poor mental health (Social Exclusion Unit, 1998). Parsons (1999) asserts that pupils already experiencing some social exclusion are more likely to experience school exclusion, i.e. many children excluded from schools come from families living on incomes below the minimum wage. School exclusion could thus be interpreted as either a causal or consequent factor of wider social exclusion (Parsons, 1999).

The outcomes and associated consequences of school exclusion are well recognised (Parsons, 1999), and it is therefore unsurprising that the high numbers of pupils experiencing exclusion present a challenge to government agendas that serve to promote educational and social inclusion.

1.4 Historical and Political Context

Reducing rates of school exclusion have frequently featured as a priority in government policy and are not a recent trend. In 1990-1991 the UK exclusions reporting system was set up, prior to which there was no official data collected on school exclusions nationally (Morgan & McDonald, 1998). The numbers of children excluded from school in the UK increased significantly during this time (1990's)

(Hallam, 2001), a rise which has since been associated a number of complex factors both social and educational.

It is suggested that 'social' factors included greater levels of social deprivation, more single parent families (Parsons, 1999), and increasing child mental health problems. In education, increasing pressure to raise standards was placed on schools by the Education Reform Act (OPSI, 1988) and New Labour's 'Standards Agenda' (Parsons, 1996). Imich (1996) argues that the introduction of the National Curriculum, School League Tables and Inspections invoked a shift in school culture to an emphasis on academic outcomes at the expense of emotional wellbeing and pastoral care.

The aim to decrease the number of exclusions in UK was reflected in government initiatives such as the introduction of the 'Social Exclusion Unit' (1998). The Labour government made commitments to reducing school exclusion through financing schemes to provide alternatives to exclusion, setting targets and delivering annual data on school exclusion figures to be used as performance indicators (Blyth & Milner, 1996). Blyth & Milner (1996) report however that there was resistance to using exclusion data as performance indicators, based on acknowledgement of the increased pressure league tables put on schools and recognition that exclusion often resulted from complex combinations of factors not always within the control of school. More recent publications i.e. The White Paper: Back on Track (DCSF, 2008a) provides advice to schools to intervene as early as possible to address emerging behaviour problems including those masking underlying learning difficulties or disabilities

1.5 Prevalence and Trends

Fig 1.1 No. of UK Permanent & Fixed Term Exclusions: 2006/07 - 2011/12 (DfE, 2012b)
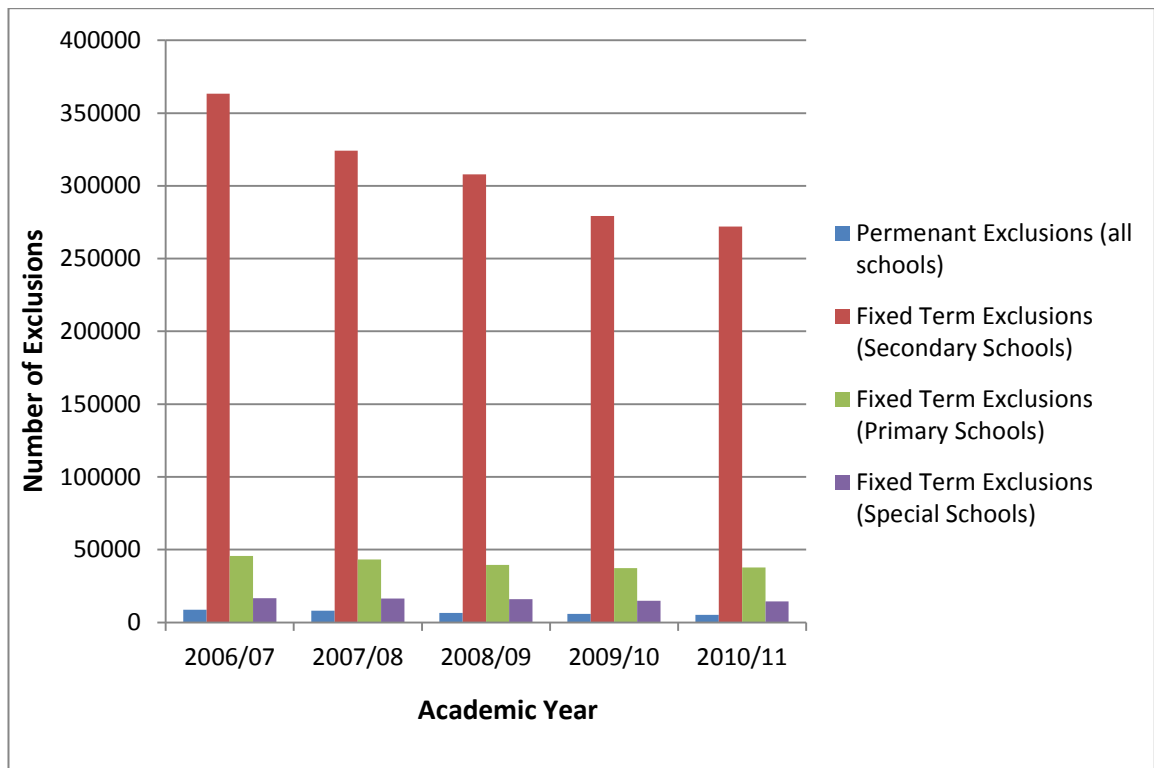
Despite various initiatives, pupil exclusion across mainstream schools in the UK continues to be a concern (Daniels, 2011). Whilst statistics reported in Figure 1.1 indicate a reduction in rates from previous years of both fixed term and permanent exclusions, secondary school fixed term exclusion rates continue to be persistently high in comparison to other settings. The 2009 Statistical First Release (DCSF, 2009) states that the majority of pupils excluded from school in the UK or at risk of exclusion are from mainstream secondary schools. Historically, primary school exclusions are reported to form a small proportion of the overall total of exclusion data, a trend which Parsons (1999) suggests may be due to the pastoral quality of early education settings (e.g. greater levels of home-school interaction and daily contact with pupils) resulting in greater opportunity for intervention and containment of needs.

Although figures suggest that numbers of permanent exclusions have fallen over the last ten years (perhaps in response to initiatives and guidance), Steer (2009) asserts that the range of possible outcomes experienced by pupils involved in the exclusion

process has increased, meaning, that in reality, official data may provide an incomplete account of exclusion rates. Accurate figures of school exclusion are reported to be difficult to obtain and often mask unofficial school exclusionary practices (Eslea, 1999). Performance indicators and political pressure to raise educational standards of attainment are suggested by Parsons (1999) to be a motivator for schools to under-record and cause higher levels of hidden or unreported exclusion (Munn, 2000). Daniels (2011) proposes that fixed term exclusions, managed moves and internal exclusions are often utilised as alternative means of managing situations which may have invoked a permanent exclusion in the past.

1.6 Who is excluded from school?

Statistics on exclusion indicate certain groups of children tend to be disproportionately represented within exclusion data. Secondary aged pupils (Blyth & Milner, 1996), boys (Hayden, 2003), black African-Caribbean boys (Blyth & Milner, 1996), Looked After Children (DfE, 2010), children with special educational needs (SEN) (Warnock, 2006), pupils eligible for Free School Meals (Munn & Lloyd, 2005), children from traveller families, school-aged mothers and children who have experienced more ill health, trauma and bereavement than the norm all have an increased chance of experiencing exclusion (McCluskey, 2008).

Concerns about disparity in data are not just historical trends, and can be seen to persist today. Most recent figures from DfE (2012b) First Statistical Release show that fixed term and permanent exclusion rates for boys in 2010/2011 were approximately 3 times higher than that for girls. Pupils with SEN with statements were around 9 times more likely to be permanently excluded than pupils with no SEN and children who were eligible for free school meals were nearly 4 times more likely to receive a permanent exclusion and around 3 times more likely to receive a fixed period exclusion than children who are not eligible for free school meals.

It is clear from the literature that those children experiencing school exclusion are often those already identified as vulnerable and at risk of not meeting Every Child Matters outcomes (DfES, 2003). Fergus & Zimmerman (2005) define vulnerability as

the "*increased likelihood of a negative outcome typically as a result of exposure to risk*" (p.400). 'Risk factors' for school exclusion are well documented (Bynner, 2001) and by their nature are located within the individual, family or wider social context, rarely acting in isolation (Rutter, 1990). Children involved in the exclusion process may therefore find themselves located on a 'risk trajectory', whereby one risk factor reinforces the other, leading to increased vulnerability and restricted outcomes (Rutter, 1990).

1.7 Local Authority Context

According to Parsons (1999), London local authorities have historically excluded at much higher rates, with inner city London boroughs having double the exclusion rates for non-London authorities and counties. Inner cities in London have some of the greatest levels of deprivation, highest concentrations of ethnic minority pupils and an over representation of black African-Caribbean pupils, a cohort who are over five times more likely to be excluded than white pupils (Clegg, 2009).

Within the context of the local authority in which the research will take place, the DfE (2012b) Statistical First Release which compares exclusion rates for UK and London LAs between 2010/11 found for state funded primary, secondary and special schools that this borough is one of the highest nationally and locally (within London) for numbers of Fixed Term Exclusions. Whilst numbers of children permanently excluded in this borough have decreased (perhaps for reasons stated previously), rates of Fixed Term Exclusions for state funded secondary schools have increased between 2009/10 to 2010/11.

The borough's Children and Young Peoples Plan (CYPP) and Educational Psychology Service (EPS) objectives reflect the need to address these figures by prioritising 'better behaviour in schools' and 'fewer children and young people to be at risk of exclusion from school' as primary objectives for change.

1.8 Researcher's Position

This research has been undertaken with consideration of the existing literature on school exclusions and reintegration, but also driven in part by the researcher's professional experiences and beliefs. The British Psychological Society (BPS) (2002) stipulates that "*Educational and Child Psychologists will be aware of the impact of their own belief systems and attitudes on assessment practice*" (p.25).   As such the researcher's professional background and implications on the direction of this research will be briefly explored.

Earlier professional experiences evoked a personal interest in school exclusion, the causes, consequences and particular perspectives of those involved. The researcher previously worked with excluded children identified as having emotional and behavioural difficulties and as a Community Parent Support Advisor with parents whose children had been identified as at risk of not achieving one or more of their five Every Child Matters outcomes. Much of this experience prompted a belief "*that children and young people develop as a result of an interaction between themselves and their environment*" (BPS, 2002, p.24) and that a disadvantaged start in life should not be a barrier in preventing a child or young person from achieving their potential.

Kelly, Woolfson & Boyle (2008) describe the purpose of educational psychology practice as that which aims to limit the effects of barriers to learning and to promote the inclusion of the child or young person. As a Trainee Educational Psychologist, working in a diverse inner city London borough, it is recognised that there are significant challenges posed by reintegration to an 'inclusive' school ethos and conflicting pressures on staff expected to support children's' educational and social development. Children excluded from school or at risk of exclusion are frequently encountered and work with 'at risk' children often involves uncovering factors predisposing the child to vulnerability to exclusion, leading to interventions promoting change to achieve positive outcomes. Listening to and understanding the views of the child is often a crucial part of assessment, and it is felt that understanding the child's experiences and perspectives is a crucial step towards creating sustainable change.

1.9 Chapter Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide key background and contextual information to school exclusion and reintegration. It has outlined the historical and political context in which these processes are situated, the latest figures and trends and the detrimental consequences to those involved both in the short and long term. The following chapter will explore the literature on school exclusion and reintegration, focussing on the risk and protective factors purported to impact these processes and specifically on the existing literature outlining the experiences of those involved in exclusion and reintegration: pupils, parents and teachers.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines reasons for school exclusion (2.2), considers different theoretical perspectives on the causes of school exclusion and reintegration (2.3) and reviews these phenomena within an ecological framework (2.4). The challenge school exclusion poses to inclusive education is examined (2.5), and alternatives to exclusion discussed (2.6), with a particular focus on the role of reintegration (2.7). Studies which explore the perspectives of those who have experienced school exclusion and reintegration (namely pupils, parents and teachers) are critically reviewed (2.8). This is followed by a chapter summary (2.9) and an explanation of the aims and rationale for undertaking this piece of research (2.10).

A systematic approach to reviewing the literature was conducted to identify relevant publications specific to the areas of school exclusion and reintegration. Online literature searches of EBSCO Host databases [ERIC, Psych INFO, British Education Index, Education Line, Child Data and Psych Articles] were carried out in August – October 2012 using Boolean Search Logic. A combination of search terms, descriptors and keywords were used, i.e. "school", "exclusion", "reintegration", "pupils", "parents", "teachers", "views", "perspectives" (see Appendix 1 for full list of search terms, combinations, dates and inclusion/exclusion criteria). Following identification of the most relevant literature, abstracts were read and selected or discarded using specific inclusion and exclusion criteria. Full texts were obtained where possible, studied in depth and critically reviewed. A manual search was subsequently completed in order to enhance coverage of the relevant literature.

2.2 Reasons for School Exclusion

Concerns about children's behaviour in school have and continue to be widely reported and debated (Grieve, 2009). The most common reason for exclusion from school (both fixed term and permanent) in 2010/2011 was persistent disruptive behaviour, accounting for 33.7% of permanent exclusions and 24.8% of fixed period

exclusions from all schools (DfE, 2012b). Exclusions from school in the UK are typically the result of uncooperative, aggressive or disruptive behaviour towards staff or peers, a pattern which is consistent within literature dating back over the past 20 years (Clegg, 2009).

Children who display challenging behaviour in school are often labelled as having behaviour, emotional and social difficulties (BESD) and represent a large proportion of individuals who are involved in the process of school exclusion. Frederickson & Cline (2009) suggest that the debate surrounding conceptualisation of BESD is more widespread than any other special need and one which has "*persisted through many generations*" (p.408).

Prior to the 1981 Education Act (HMSO, 1981) which restructured special education, 'disruptive behaviour' was pathologised as 'maladjustment' on the part of the child and practical responses were conceptualised through treatment, i.e. medication or removal of the child to a special school (Jones, 2003). Munn & Lloyd (2005) suggest that much of the early literature on pupil exclusion "*locates responsibility for behaviour and therefore for exclusion with the individual child and increasingly attaches medical diagnoses to such behaviour, thereby removing blame from the child or family or school*" (p.208).

The movement from 'maladjusted' to those with 'Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD)' and most recently 'Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD)' could be interpreted as reflecting change in recognition of the causes of challenging behaviour and greater acknowledgement of the role of social and environmental factors impacting on wellbeing (SEN Code of Practice, DfES, 2001).

The DFE Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs (2001) stress that children with BESD have special educational needs because they are facing barriers which cause them to have significantly greater difficulty in learning than their peers. Correlations between school exclusion, educational difficulties and 'social deprivation' are now well established and it is known that there

are children who are at a greater risk of experiencing school exclusion as a result of certain sets of circumstances:

> "…the behaviour of pupils at risk of exclusion is sometimes driven by complex combinations of social, emotional and health problems"
> (DCSF, 2008b).

2.3 Theoretical Perspectives: School Exclusion and Reintegration

Daniels (2011) proposes that there is a need to establish the risk factors and triggers that precipitate or enhance individual vulnerability to exclusion to ensure the correct support is in place for young people. Children's vulnerability to adverse social and economic circumstances is well established; however not all children are reported to be vulnerable to background factors in the same way. Bynner (2001) suggests:

> "how a child responds to risk is a function of personal attributes, part socially determined and part biologically based" (p. 286).

The response of the child to risk is often conceptualised in terms of vulnerability and resilience. Grotberg (1997) defines resilience as:

> "a universal capacity that allows a person, group or community to prevent, minimise or overcome the damaging effects of adversity" (p.6).

Protective factors are linked with 'resilience' and reflect the different kinds of resources that my help the child to resist adversity (Bynner, 2001). Garmezy (1985) identifies three types of protectors: 1. Child-based, concerned with individual characteristics such as autonomy, positive self-esteem, internal locus of control and positive social orientation, 2. Family based; such as cohesion, warmth and absence of discord, and 3. Community based, linked with the availability of external support systems (i.e. school) that encourage and re-enforce a child's coping efforts. Bynner (2001) proposes that through understanding risk factors to vulnerability for the individual child, areas for intervention can be identified, and protective factors used to plan the form that intervention needs to take. In this next section I will explore

individual, family and community factors identified within the literature as precipitating vulnerability to school exclusion.

2.3.1 Individual Factors

It is well documented that children displaying challenging behaviour (including those excluded from school) often have associated difficulties or special educational needs which pose challenges to learning (Warnock, 2006). Behaviour difficulties have been linked with underlying literacy difficulties (OFSTED, 2006), cognitive impairments (Fisher & Blair, 1998) and language disorders (Lindsay & Dockrell, 2000; Ripley & Yuill, 2005; Clegg, 2009). Lindsay, Dockrell & Strand (2007) propose that children with language difficulties can struggle with meaningful communicative exchanges which can limit social opportunities and affect social and behavioural development. Such difficulties may present challenges to accessing the curriculum, and cause frustration and disengagement from learning, particularly where needs are not recognised or supported.

Difficulties may reciprocally be linked with 'self-efficacy'; the belief the child has in their capability to achieve set goals (Bandura, 1977). This is thought to change in response to experience (i.e. success or failure), social modelling, seeing someone perceived as similar succeed by sustained effort, and through social persuasion, encouragement to overcome self-doubt (Bandura, 1997). Therefore, where a child's school experience is characterised by failure they are likely to focus on failings and negative outcomes and believe that tasks are beyond their capabilities (Bandura, 1977). This links with 'locus of control'; the extent to which the child believes they are in control of these events (Rotter, 1966).

Motivational beliefs and additionally goal orientation can be seen to impact on children's self-regulation of both learning and behaviour. In relation to exclusionary processes these factors are often implicated 'within child'; however research suggests that motivation and self-efficacy are inextricably linked to social contextual factors (Daniels, 2011). For example, school is the platform where children are confronted with society's values and norms and learn about how others experience them and their

position in different social groups. Howarth (2004) suggests that these experiences can become a self-fulfilling prophecy, whereby young people "*embody the positions they are offered*" (p.371), i.e. negative expectations elicit negative responses.

2.3.2. Family, Social and Economic Factors

Research has demonstrated that family circumstances can be influential in the exclusion of young people. A Stationery Office publication (2009) proposes that:

"[gaps] *arise principally from what happens outside school, and before a child reaches school. They reflect a variety of factors including the aspirations and support of parents, of social peers and local communities*" (p.47).

MacCrae, Maguire & Milbourne (2003) identify correlations between social disadvantage, emotional disruption, high levels of family stress and exclusion from school. The role of the family is suggested by Trommsdorff (2000) to be critical, both as creator of the conditions for later social exclusion and the means by which it can be resisted. Research findings relate early disturbances in parent-child relationships to later behavioural difficulties (Ziegenhain, 2004). From a biological perspective, during the child's first year of life, brain development is known to be extensive and particularly vulnerable to environmental influence (Bynner, 2001). Consequently early childhood stress has shown to have a negative impact on brain function. Bowlby (1969) links development of insecure attachments with primary caregivers with the development of a 'fragile sense of self' and difficulties with establishing consistent, stable relationships in later life, particularly in school. Harris et al (2006) propose that teacher-child relationships, peer group roles and pressures can exacerbate insecure attachment patterns, resulting in pupils 'acting out' to experience attention, status and self-esteem. Family conflict at a particular stage of childhood may not only hold a child back educationally relative to peers, but may also see the child regress to earlier levels of cognitive performance and behaviour (Bergman & Magnusson, 1991). Children who are looked after are an obvious example of those who may be vulnerable due to familial disruption and early stress.

Research suggests that the capacity of parents to secure positive educational outcomes for their children is closely linked to the experiences and quality of their own education (Gazeley, 2010). Bynner (2001) asserts that risk factors adversely affecting school performance include limited parental education experience, low interest, support or aspiration for their child's education. Absence of preschool preparation can be a risk factor according to Bynner & Steedman (1995), particularly where families own educational resources are limited. However, there is evidence that strong parental aspirations and commitment to achievement may mitigate the worst effects of disadvantage on academic outcomes (Pilling, 1990).

Social and economic disadvantage is proposed by Bynner (2001) to be one of a number of predictors of cognitive development underpinning educational achievement. There is a strong intergenerational connection between levels of achievement and poverty (Parsons, 2009) and studies have demonstrated that pupils at risk of low attainment are at an increased risk of involvement in disciplinary processes (Gazeley, 2010).

There is evidence demonstrating that the quality of parent-teacher relationships may influence children's academic success (Compher, 1982); i.e. where parent-teacher relationships are defined by conflict, children may experience increased academic and behavioural difficulties (Vickers & Minke, 1995). Pupils' home circumstances can be seen as having a key influences on pupils; however Vincent, Harris, Thomson & Toalster (2007) argue that this can draw attention away from the ways in which the *"structural, organisational and interpersonal realities of schools play an important role in producing or reducing 'problem behaviour'"* (p295).

2.3.3 School and Educational Factors

Behaviour is often reported to be more or less problematic depending on certain contexts (Barkley, 2006), indicating that there are factors exclusive to school which may influence rates of exclusion. The concept of 'goodness of fit' evaluates "*the degree to which the capacities, motivations and style of behaving of an organism (the child) are compatible with properties, expectations and demands of the environment*

(the teacher and classroom)" (Greene, 1995, p.1). Discordance between teachers' standards of acceptable behaviour, pedagogical style and behaviours of the child will inevitably influence 'teacher-student compatibility' (Barkley, 2006). Knowledge, beliefs and attitudes of teachers may shape these reciprocal interactions; i.e. teacher's knowledge about the child is likely to impact attitudes and beliefs about the nature of a child's behaviour as volitional or unintentional.

Attribution Theory (Weiner, 1974) outlines how the interpretations individuals have about their own and others behaviour influences motivation. Some research has indicated that where teachers believe the cause of children's misbehaviour is 'within-child' or outside of their responsibility, unsuccessful behaviour management is more likely to be attributed to beyond their control (Gibbs & Gardiner, 2008). Ravenette (1988) proposes that where an adult does not understand a child's actions, they become a threat to the adult's sense of knowingness, resulting in perceptions of child as negative.

Gibbs & Powell (2012) investigated the impact of teachers' beliefs about their efficacy in managing behaviour. In schools where the typical belief of staff was that it is possible to address adverse influences of home and community fewer children were excluded as a consequence of behaviour. Conversely, teachers with low self-efficacy are reported to be less tolerant of problematic behaviours and more likely to seek exclusion of challenging students (Jordan & Stanovich, 2003).

The relationship between individual (i.e. teacher) and collective (i.e. all staff) efficacy beliefs may be mediated by individual's view of themselves as members of the organisation (i.e. school) (Friedman & Kass, 2002; Miller, 2003). It can therefore be argued that 'whole school' management, attitudes and discourses towards challenging behaviour will have a significant impact at the individual level, depending on how individuals perceive themselves as part of the school culture (Bandura, 1997). At the child level, studies have shown that where school ethos places emphasis on attainment and competition, low attaining children display poorer responses and are at greater risk of disengaging with learning (Gazeley, 2010), a response arguably linked

with feelings of low self-efficacy. Brine (2006) identified a similar negative impact of 'setting by ability'.

'Teacher-setting compatibility' (i.e. teaching satisfaction, student population preference, and general school environment) and 'child-setting compatibility' (size of class, seating arrangements, open vs. closed class environments) are other factors which may impact attitudes towards and management of children with challenging behaviour (Greene, 1995). Evidence of classroom gender bias suggests that the frequency of school exclusion may also be skewed to children whose difficulties are overt and impact most immediately upon others (Connor, Epting, Freeland, Halliwell & Cameron, 1997) i.e. higher rates of exclusions for male as opposed to female pupils who may internalise emotional difficulties

A 1995-1996 OFSTED report on 'Exclusions from Secondary Schools' (OFSTED, 1996) found that one of the significant differences between high and low excluding schools was the presence of a good behaviour policy. Where schools implement effective behaviour management policies providing consistent and predictable boundaries, pupils (particularly those experiencing difficult circumstances) may be better able to develop a secure base and manage anxiety and fear. Harris et al (2006) suggest without this external support, anxious children may be unable to maintain a state of 'equilibrium'. Rutter (1991) proposes that positive "*school experiences of both academic and non-academic kinds can have a protective effect for children under stress and living otherwise unrewarding lives*" (p.9).

The literature reviewed suggests that school exclusion and related challenging behaviour can be seen as inextricably linked to individual, social and educational processes and therefore when investigating exclusion it is necessary to explore systemic influences as well as those directly relating to individual children.

2.4 An Ecological Framework

The literature on exclusion implicates multiple factors contributing to behaviour that could impact on a child's likelihood of experiencing school placement breakdown.

Rendall & Stuart (2005) propose that children do not exist in a vacuum but within complex interrelating systems, and therefore behaviour can only be fully understood when considered in the context in which it occurs. Parsons (1999) argues that:

"…[whilst] *individual choice, determination, responsibility and other attributes of the person inevitably play a role in how individuals function within societal institutions…this occurs within a structure of access to resources, opportunities, pressures and life chances"* (p.37).

Exploring factors from an eco-systemic perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) can be advantageous as it recognises human development to be a product of interactions, that social environments impact differently on different groups, and that perceptions of interactions are best understood by the individual (Pierson, 2002). Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model emphasises the importance different systems have on human behaviour and outlines four interdependent mutually influential systems.

- *The Micro-system* has the most direct impact on the child's development, i.e. parents, family, peers, school and local community. Interactions within the Micro-system are bi-directional, for example parental attitudes and behaviours can impact on upon the child and vice versa.

- *The Meso-system* refers to relationships within the micro-systems. I.e. connections between family experiences to school experiences and family experiences to peer experiences. For example, those children whose early caregiver experiences involved rejection may have difficulty developing later positive relationships with peers or teachers.

- *The Exo-system* refers to the wider social systems the child does not have active interactions with, but which may influence the child indirectly. For example, a child's difficult experience at home may be influenced by a parent losing their job (as a result of poor economic climates) resulting in fractured parent-child interactions due to increased familial stress.

- The *Macro-system* refers to the cultural context in which the child lives, compromising socioeconomic status, poverty, and ethnicity. This system can influence interactions within both the micro-system and exo-system.

As can be seen in section 2.3, risk factors for exclusion are both complex and interrelating and therefore a reductionist model, attributing cause to only individual 'within-child' factors cannot be used to account for these experiences. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) model, however, accounts for both social structures and individual influences and acknowledges that there is interaction between factors at each level of the ecological system, some which can be viewed as causal and some as consequent factors in the process of exclusion (Parsons, 1999). This model is thus proposed to be an appropriate framework to adopt to explore experiences of exclusion and reintegration, and will be used to structure discussions around the complexities of these processes.

The literature discussed suggests children who experience school exclusion are often those who have complex needs linked to difficult circumstances and social disadvantage (Gazeley, 2010). We know that macro-system cultural contexts can "*limit access and opportunity for some*" (p.36) and often make up the conditions that have the greatest impact on the child. Despite this, Parsons (1999) argues that the focus on addressing behaviour is often at the individual (micro-system) level. This next section will explore some of the inequalities that exist at the cultural level of the child's system.

2.5 Inclusion vs. Exclusion

Pupils identified as having BESD are often those cited as posing the most significant challenge to the concept of 'inclusive education' (Visser, 2000). The Salamanca World Statement (1994) proposes that "*the fundamental principle of the inclusive school is that all children should learn together, where possible, and that ordinary schools must recognise and respond to the diverse needs of their students*" (UNESCO, 1994, p.11).

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The latest national statistics on outcomes for Children Looked After (DfE, 2010) showed that of the 44,400 school aged children who were looked after continuously for 12 months at 31 March 2010, 73 per cent had some form of special educational need and only 12 per cent of this group achieved 5 or more GCSEs at grades A* to C. Looked After Children (LAC) are among the most vulnerable groups in society, and yet, as a group, they are more likely to be at risk of exclusion than those not looked after.

Parsons (1999) argues that:

"many of these excluded pupils need more, not less time with professionals, usually to address problems of low educational attainment and basic skills but also to resolve social and emotional problems" (p. 30)

The exclusion of pupils who display persistently challenging behaviour is often justified by arguments which highlight the rights of other children to a 'disruption free' education (Vincent et al, 2007). Berkeley (1999) argues that exclusion may be used by schools to protect academic track records through the removal of students most likely to negatively impact achievement statistics. There appear to be competing demands for schools from government guidance which on one hand advocates the moral importance of social inclusion, yet on the other invokes legislation encouraging competition between schools and the raising of educational attainment (Wakefield, 2004).

The overrepresentation of vulnerable cohorts within exclusion statistics suggest that a positive approach to diversity is often superseded by "*the tendency to push vulnerable and difficult individuals into the least popular places, furthest away from our common aspirations*" (Power, 2000). The exclusion of children with SEN can be seen to challenge the concept of 'inclusive education', intended to ensure that every child irrespective of need has the opportunity to participate fully.

2.6 Preventing Exclusion

"Successful interventions depend upon the capacity for a flexible response by professionals who share an understanding of the ecological context of the child".
(Mawhinney, 1994, p.37)

2.6.1 School Intervention

According to government guidance a range of strategies should be put in place to address behaviours which may lead to exclusion; "*reasonable prior steps would include alternative sanctions; interviewing the pupil and parent; issuing a formal warning: withdrawing from class; or involving social services or the police*" (DfE, 1994, p.3). Schools are expected to have whole school behaviour policies that emphasise consistency and reward for good behaviour and are widely publicised so parents, children and staff are aware of standards and sanctions (Hayden & Martin, 1998).

In recent years schools, rather than LAs have been given discretion to use funding to support pupils with additional needs through devolved funding (Wakefield, 2004), offering greater flexibility to target pupils based on their needs. Interventions to support pupils at risk may include utilising resources such as: Learning Mentors, Pastoral Teachers and Learning Support Assistants in preventative activities and setting up Behaviour Support Units or Inclusion/Seclusion Rooms (Gilmore, 2012). Barker (2010) proposes that "*an increasing number of secondary schools offer internal fixed term exclusions so that temporary removal from school is not seen as 'time off' for students*" (p.378).

Eslea (1999) proposes that those schools most successful at preventing exclusions have policies which tackle underlying causes of poor behaviour with strategies such as pastoral support programs and intervention from behaviour specialists. DfE moderation of Key Stage 4 national curriculum requirements to allow for more vocational training options for pupils is another means of flexibility schools have when devising intervention measures to meet individual needs (Wakefield 2004). Where within-school support does not sustain improvement, schools are advised to employ the resources of external services, which may lead to multi-agency intervention.

2.6.2 Multi-agency Intervention

"If children's mental health needs are to be promoted rather than undermined through their experience of school, then systemic as well as individual support is needed to address behavioural difficulties." (Baxter, 2000, p.33).

Government guidelines acknowledge *"the need to bring specialist services together working in multi-disciplinary teams to focus on the needs of the child"* (DfES, 2004b, p.25). The Children's Act (2004) expresses the need for children's services to address joined up problems with joined up solutions and subsequently a number of government initiatives targeting multiagency intervention to reduce exclusion and support those with social, emotional and behaviour difficulties have been introduced (Vincent et al, 2007). Examples include: Every Child Matters Green Paper (DfES, 2003), Behaviour Improvement Programme (BIP) (DfES, 2005b), Connexions services (DfEE, 2000), Targeted Mental Health in Schools initiative (TAMHS) (DCSF, 2010), the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and Team Around the Child (TAC) processes (DfES, 2004a), Pastoral Support Programs (PSP) (DCSF, 2008a) and the funding of Parent Support Adviser (PSA) services in schools to provide linked up support to families where children are experiencing difficulties (DCSF, 2008c).

Studies by Gilmore (2012) and Vulliamy & Webb (2003) report successful reductions in exclusion rates through interventions facilitating links between home, school and supporting agencies. Gilmore (2012) reports on how through increased pastoral support and use of an 'Inclusion Room' fixed term exclusion rates were reduced over a five year period (2004—2009) from 10% to less than 0.1%, whilst concurrently improving numbers of students attaining grades A-C from 43% to 73%. Teachers interviewed indicated that the Inclusion Room enabled discipline to be addressed within school which allowed students to remain part of the community and access the curriculum. The emphasis on social and emotional learning resulted in greater consistency between staff in addressing behavioural concerns and increased communication with parents, leading to better understanding of home factors effecting pupils.

Similarly, Vulliamy & Webb (2003) found that where social work trained home-school support workers were placed in schools with the target of reducing school exclusions, fixed term exclusions were reduced over a three year period. Teachers (86), parents (22) and pupils (25) reported that home-school workers facilitated better communication between families, teachers and external agencies and promoted better understanding of psychosocial factors causing challenging behaviour. Although only teachers were interviewed in Gilmore's study and there were disproportionate numbers of participants in Vulliamy & Webb's (2003) report (with low numbers of parents and pupils interviewed) the studies are supported by Harris et al (2006) who propose that vulnerable children can feel supported by initiatives which build community between schools and involve the LA and parents. Research from Kinder & Wilkin (1998) into parental perspectives on measures to counteract pupil disruption is also supportive, with parents identifying 'parent–school' partnerships as a key factor associated with change.

Successful interventions clearly exist; however they are not always implemented or succeed, evidenced by numbers of children excluded from mainstream schools in the UK. The literature focussing on preventing exclusion identifies multiple barriers to interagency working, which Parsons (1999) suggests has resulted in a lack of service coordination for disadvantaged children and families. Fragmented delivery is reported to be caused by lack of time to develop working relationships, differences in statue and pay and in underpinning structural and ideological differences between services (Parsons, 1999). Hodgkin & Newell (1996) propose that "*unless children's or families' needs are addressed as a whole a preventative strategy can be sabotaged by one area of deficiency*" (p.35).

2.6.3 Managed Moves and Illegal Exclusions

UK Government guidance encourages schools to work in groups to assume collective responsibility for excluded pupils. Vincent et al (2007) report that 'managed moves' are one method authorities are using to implement this guidance. A 'managed move' is the process whereby "*a collaborating school agrees to accept a pupil at risk of exclusion from another collaborating school with the aim of providing a 'fresh start' for*

the child" (p.284). Where successful, managed moves may avoid the rejection and stigma associated with permanent exclusion; however, there is no official regulation of this process and unlike exclusions, schools are not obliged to report managed moves to LAs. There is, therefore, little evidence about the success of managed moves and it can be questioned as to whether school engagement in this process is motivated by the needs of the child or by the option of reducing exclusion figures.

Informal exclusions, whereby the young person is sent home from school without officially recording, is another alternative known to be used by schools, despite being considered illegal (OCC, 2013). Gordon (2001) proposes that the extent to which reductions in permanent exclusions are being compensated for by an increase in illegal or unofficial exclusions remains uncertain. Children at risk of permanent exclusion may be placed on part time timetables, receive home tuition or be dual registered at both mainstream, special schools and/or Pupil Referral Units. PRUs account for the provision for a large number of pupils excluded from mainstream school (DCSF, 2008a). Although PRUs are considered to have a key role in improving behaviour, attendance and future learning, concerns are identified within the literature about the use of these settings as 'dumping grounds' for schools dealing with challenging behaviour (Curtis, 2009).

Many 'alternatives' to exclusion discussed present with challenges for the young person and in some cases could be viewed as exclusion but via the 'back door'. Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide education for all school aged children; however Morgan & McDonald (1998) suggest that some schools are failing in this respect through using processes likely to reduce the amount and quality of education input these children receive (Gray & Panter, 2000). Parsons (1999) asserts that "*the withdrawal of opportunities for learning takes the form of a punishment*" (p.30) and an *Excellence in Schools Summary (2002)* indicated that nearly a third of schools and half of LAs in an OFSTED survey failed to comply with the law when it came to providing education for excluded pupils.

Giving pupils a fresh start may be positive depending on the nature of the breakdown in placement; however it may also represent another form of rejection for children

already at risk of vulnerable outcomes. Exclusion from school (both fixed term and permanent) is usually followed by the process of reintegration for the child or young person. Reintegration by definition is to "*amalgamate with an existing community*" or "*to be made into a whole again*" (Collins Online Dictionary, 2013), suggesting a process of restoration leading to positive outcomes. This next section will discuss the process of reintegration as an alternative to further exclusion.

2.7 Reintegration

Reintegration can be defined as the "*efforts made by LEAs, schools, and other partners to return pupils who are absent, excluded or otherwise missing from mainstream education provision*" (DfES, 2004c, p.5). For the purpose of this research reintegration will be defined as attempts made to support pupils in re-joining the existing school community (after fixed term exclusion) or other suitable full time education (after permanent exclusion or managed move) (DCSF, 2008a).

Government guidance recommends that where a pupil has been excluded a 'reintegration interview' take place, attended by pupils, parents and teaching staff with the aim of addressing and exploring any circumstances affecting the child's behaviour (DfES, 2004c). The purpose of the interview is to assist reintegration by initiating early intervention to address behaviour problems, facilitate productive relationships with parents and consider pastoral and educational support. Schools are advised to only give fixed term exclusions that last for short periods of time, and for children to be reintegrated with speed (Parsons, 1999), as studies suggest that successful reintegration into mainstream school is less likely to be achieved once pupils have spent long periods of time away (Gray & Panter, 2000).

The rate of reintegration of pupils into mainstream education, once they have been out of school for some time, is low in Great Britain (England and Scotland) (Blyth & Milner, 1993) and it has been suggested that the systems which initially resulted in exclusion can be the same barriers to inclusion on return (Lloyd & Padfield, 1996). Reintegration into mainstream secondary school has been highlighted as posing particular challenges (Parsons & Howlett, 2000) and placements can often fail

following the withdrawal of support, indicating a need for explicit awareness of the factors supporting successful reintegration. Lown (2005) defines reintegration as "sustained" only when a child had remained in school following the reintegration for a period of at least three school terms, based on rationale that support systems would have typically reduced by this time.

A 2004 DfES publication reports on a 14 month mixed methods study (comprising of a postal survey with 87 LAs and case studies with 14 LAs, professionals, pupils and parents) which examined factors perceived as supporting and hindering pupils' reintegration (DfES, 2004c). Supporting factors were: 1. Environmental, i.e. an 'inclusive' school culture, commitment to meeting the needs of individual pupils and the accessibility of appropriate services, effective multi-agency working, involvement of parents and pupils; and 2. Practical, i.e. effective planning, monitoring, tailored support to meet individual needs and the involvement of a key worker as a single point of contact.

Blocks to reintegration were predictably contrasting, and were categorised into: 1. School Barriers, i.e. lack of resources, school reluctance to accept pupils, limited awareness of the needs of pupils and inflexibility to adapt the curriculum to the child's needs; 2. Contact and Communication Barriers, i.e. lack of clarity and communication between agencies about the individual needs of the child and 3. External Barriers i.e. lack of parental involvement, limited access to external agencies and poor timing for reintegration. Despite providing a broad picture of reintegration, quantitative results were reported to be subject to a degree of both under and over-reporting and less than half of the LAs taking part in the study provided numbers of pupils' successfully reintegrated following exclusion (DfES, 2004c).

Research into the area of exclusion has primarily focussed on negative experiences, i.e. what leads to the breakdown in school placements for young people (Pomeroy, 1999). There is limited literature exploring the process of successful reintegration into education following exclusion from school (Parsons & Howlett, 2000).

Lown (2005) suggests that it is important to learn from:

"*the experiences of those who have returned, in order to inform evolving understandings and shape future developments in educational policy and practice in relation to these pupils, their families, support services and receiving schools*" (p.45).

This research aims to add to this gap in the literature.

2.8 Exclusion and Reintegration: 'A Lived Experience'

Although the quantity of literature on exclusion from school is increasing, the focus is often on policy, data and legislation, rather than that which seeks to deliver a "*glimpse of the lives behind some of the statistics*" (Munn & Lloyd, 2005, p.211). Howarth (2004) proposes that critical research can challenge society's norms and "*support silenced or marginalised voices*" (p.360). The challenge school exclusion poses to some of the most vulnerable children in society and to an inclusive education system suggests there is a need to question many of the assumptions made about school exclusion, nonattendance and disruptive behaviour (McCluskey, 2008).

Pupil experiences are infrequently the focus of exclusion literature and little has been reported on the experiences of parents of excluded children (Gordon, 2001, McDonald & Thomas, 2003). Smith (2009) states that studying responses in isolation is unlikely to be effective, as in any complex, emotive set of circumstances (such as exclusion) there are likely to be different, yet equally valid perspectives to be gathered. Understanding the stories and experiences of those at the centre of the exclusion process (i.e. pupils, parents and teachers) could provide greater insight into the "*lived realities of those who experience it, challenge it and find ways out of it*" (Howarth, 2004, p.360).

This next section will review the existing literature on experiences of school exclusion and reintegration of secondary aged pupils from the perspectives of pupils, parents and teachers.

2.8.1 School Exclusion: Pupil Perspectives

"Students have a lot to tell us about their experiences of learning; they are observant, analytic, and on the whole their voices are constructive and not oppositional"
(Rudduck, 2001, p. 7).

Although there has been a growing trend to increase the involvement of pupils in educational processes (Gersch & Nolan, 1994), encouraged by government guidance requiring pupils' views to be accounted for (i.e. Children's Act, 2004; Education Act, 1981) there is still an absence of studies exploring experiences of exclusion from the pupil's perspective (Lee & Breen 2007) and a seeming "*reluctance about consulting pupils*" (McCluskey, 2008, p.451). As "*recipients of policy in practice*" (Pomeroy, 1999, p.466) perceptions of excluded pupils are important because they can provide a unique set of perspectives about the way the school system operates and an insight into educational disaffection (Gordon, 2001; Munn & Lloyd, 2005). Brown (2007) argues that "*effectively addressing these issues requires an understanding of what actually happens to students in the wake of school exclusion, some of which can only be learned from the young people themselves*" (p. 434). Particularly within the debate about exclusion it is recommended that listening to children's voices before imposing adult solutions is critical (Lewis & Lindsay, 2000).

Gersch & Nolan (1994) interviewed 6 pupils who had been permanently excluded about their perspectives of school and school exclusion. Interviews highlighted that prior to exclusion children experienced; difficulties with school work, with behaviour and peer relationships (often beginning at primary school), frequent change of primary school, poor teacher relationships and adverse family circumstances. Although the findings from this study cannot be deemed representative of all excluded children due to the small sample of pupils used, they provide an insight into some of the difficulties and risk factors children may be faced with (and themselves aware of) when entering the school system.

Excluded pupils interviewed by Munn & Lloyd (2005) in three separate projects similarly reported experiencing difficulties at home (i.e. parental substance misuse, domestic violence) and difficulties with peer relationships. Rejection from friendship

groups was experienced by some pupils as a 'ripple effect' or consequence of school exclusion, indicating strong links between social and educational exclusion for young people. Pupils in Munn & Lloyd's (2005) study reported behaving differently in different classes, based on teachers' attitudes towards and expectations of them, sometimes felt to be influenced by reputations generated by previous behaviours of siblings or family. This links with the risk factors for exclusion previously discussed, i.e. how disruption can present a public challenge "*to a teacher's authority and sense of self efficacy*" (Munn & Lloyd, 2005, p.213). Although findings are congruent with those of Gersch & Nolan (1994) results are acknowledged by the authors to have 'no statistical provenance' and should be interpreted within the context in which the studies were undertaken.

Following interviews with 12 young people in Western Australia about their experiences of leaving school early, Lee & Breen (2007) proposed that pupils' experiences were characterised by either 'explicit' exclusion (i.e. asked to leave school for not meeting behavioural or academic expectations) or 'implicit' exclusion (i.e. bullying, inability to access curriculum, leading to isolation or disillusionment). Factors leading to implicit and explicit exclusion were highlighted by pupils as lack of peer acceptance or friendships, perceived unfair treatment by teachers, poor relationships with teachers, perceptions of school work as irrelevant or unconnected to real life, and the physical oppressiveness of the school.

Similar to the other studies it appears that school practices have the opportunity to "*promote or not a sense of belonging*" (Munn & Lloyd, 2005, p. 214) and where children do not experience a sense of belonging in school, they are more likely to experience explicit or implicit exclusion (Lee & Breen, 2007). Williams & Downing (1998) report that the connectedness young people feel towards school is related to positive academic, psychological and behavioural outcomes during adolescence. Where the security of the young person's family (as an organisation) is compromised (i.e. due to adverse circumstances) young people are increasingly reliant on the school context to fulfil their sense of belonging (Lee & Breen, 2007). Although this study was conducted outside of UK contexts and experiences recounted by pupils were retrospective (between 6 months and 4 years after leaving school) hence possibly

clouded by time, the accounts support those cited in other studies, and reiterate the significant influence school practices can have on young peoples' sense of belonging and subsequent experience of inclusion.

Daniels (2011) conducted a study where pupils previously permanently excluded from school were interviewed two years later to identify both positive and negative factors contributing to outcomes. School factors contributing to positive outcomes were identified as the presence and strength of relationship between the young person and a significant other in school (i.e. pastoral support worker, teacher), particularly the degree of commitment shown by staff to challenge barriers to success. Gersch & Nolan (1994) similarly found positive relationships with a staff member to be a key influence pupils felt would support them when reintegrating following exclusion.

2.8.2 School Exclusion: Parent Perspectives

Smith (2009) proposes that although interest in international literature on the exclusion of pupils from school is increasing "*studies that give voice to parents' views are few*" (p.89) and their stories are rarely heard (McDonald & Thomas 2003). Literature on school exclusion clearly indicates that precipitating or causal factors extend well beyond the individual child and involve a complex interplay of family, social and economic influences. Understanding the experiences of parents and their influence within the exclusion process is therefore of vital importance.

McDonald & Thomas (2003) interviewed 8 parents about their experiences of their child's exclusion from mainstream secondary school. Similar to pupil experiences (Gersch & Nolan, 1994, Munn & Lloyd, 2005), parents felt the attitude of some teachers had a significant negative impact on behaviour, citing cases where children felt disliked or treated differently because of reputations of associated siblings or family. The experience of their child's exclusion was reported by McDonald & Thomas (2003) to have left parent's feeling 'angry and powerless'. Parents also "*found the authoritarian nature of the mainstream schools restrictive and prohibitive*" (p.116) and exclusion meetings designed to develop an action plan to meet the child's needs were experienced as negative.

Guidance on pupil exclusion makes it clear that school retains responsibility for supporting pupils' education until they are back in full time provision. However parents in this study reported being unclear about their child's educational rights and provision options and unsupported in making decisions. Gordon (2001) similarly found from reviews of studies focussing on the impact of exclusion that lack of communication from school, parental uncertainty around exclusion appeal processes and lack of educational provision for the child after exclusion typified experiences.

In interviews with 8 parents of secondary aged pupils excluded from school Smith (2009) found parents reported significant negative emotional and practical impacts of the exclusion. Inconsistent communication with school or with any one member of staff and parental lack of knowledge around exclusion processes and time frames was reported to have resulted in feelings of powerlessness. Parents felt school staff failed to make allowances for challenging circumstances at home, which exacerbated already stressful situations and did not recognise the disruptive impact exclusion could have on family routine, employment and financial income.

Similar to McDonald & Thomas (2003) who found parents often felt "*judged and criticised for their child's actions*" (p.116), parent's in Smith's (2009) study reported feeling blamed for the pupils behaviour, and labelled and treated in the same way as their children, i.e. bad student, bad parent. Smith (2009) reports that the language used by parents indicated that there was a discourse of "*them*" and "*us*" with parents feeling they were perceived as either "*problems*" or "*partners*" (p.96). Cullingford (1999) proposes that the consequences of this are that parents "*can feel not only confused but actually humiliated, and in turn feel themselves to be psychologically excluded from the school system*" (p.58).

Although all of these studies can be critiqued, i.e. for small sample size (McDonald & Thomas, 2003) and lack of generalisability due to data being drawn from a non UK sample (Smith, 2009) there are clear similarities in the experiences of parents, particularly the pervading sense of powerlessness and lack of parental voice in the exclusion process. Lee & Breen (2007) talk about the debilitating effect a lack of power

and control can have on self-esteem, wellbeing and coping mechanisms. When considering this, depriving pupils and parents of a voice can therefore be seen as only contributing further to a sense of alienation and isolation from society.

2.8.3 Experiences of School Reintegration

Toothill & Spalding (2000) evaluated the success of a reintegration project for 26 secondary aged pupils from a UK special school back into mainstream school between 1994 – 1998 through interviews with pupils, parents and teachers. Factors supporting reintegration were identified as: continued support for the pupil following reintegration from a familiar support worker from the special school, and a welcoming ethos, where children felt they had been accepted into a 'normal' school again. Perceived barriers to reintegration were: pupil poor self-efficacy, forming friendships and being accepted by peers; "*the majority of pupils saw their greatest anxieties as being their ability to do work and fit in socially*" (Toothill & Spalding, 2000, p.115). Parents reported that expectations of staff in new schools had a significant impact; "*some were understanding; others wary – expecting the worst*" (p.115). Where children were expected to succeed outcomes were reported to be more positive; however negative expectations were a barrier to success.

Similarly, Munn & Lloyd (2005) found from analysis of interviews with teachers of excluded students from three separate projects (2000-2001) that some "*teachers operate a construct of worthiness in relation to disruptive pupils*" (p. 213), where some pupils perceived 'nice' or 'worthy' were viewed worth saving and others unworthy of professional efforts. There are clearly identifiable links between these findings and those perspectives reported from children and parents on factors leading to school exclusion. Of the 26 pupils interviewed 21 were reported to successfully remain in mainstream education following reintegration, suggesting the factors perceived as contributing to success have a positive influence in this process. It should be noted however that Toothill & Spalding (2000) do not clarify what is defined as 'successful' or 'sustained' reintegration in this study, suggesting caution should be taken when generalising success of this intervention to a wider population.

Lown (2005) interviewed pupils, families, school staff and local authority support staff to discover the factors perceived as important to successful school reintegration following permanent exclusion. The study identified three core dimensions supporting reintegration: 1.) Positive relationships (between teacher-parent, teacher-pupil and pupil-pupil); 2.) Support for academic processes; and 3.) Perceived pupil characteristics. These themes can be found throughout literature on pupils' views and it is proposed that the psychological and social processes reported in Lown's (2005) paper have direct relevance for professionals working to affect inclusive practice (i.e. Educational Psychologists).

The successful reintegration of some pupils as identified in these studies is suggested by Toothill & Spalding (2000) to indicate that there are pupils "*currently in special schools whose needs could be met within mainstream*" (p.112), and subsequently that there may be pupils within mainstream whose needs could be met in the first instance, preventing exclusion, if given early appropriate support. The existing literature in the area of reintegration has not typically reflected the views of pupils and families and given the importance of 'relationships' to successful reintegration as identified in Lown's (2005) study there is a clear need for further understandings to be developed.

2.9 Chapter Summary

The majority of the literature in this area focussed on the processes of exclusion or reintegration in isolation, very few explored experiences of both phenomena. Those studies that did (i.e. Lown, 2005) considered experiences of pupils, parents and teachers within the context of permanent exclusion and reintegration into new settings. No studies were identified that focussed on the perspectives of pupils who had experienced fixed term exclusion followed by successful and sustained reintegration into the same school.

Permanent exclusion from school is often followed by placement in alternative provision (i.e. special school or a PRU). There are therefore strong educational, as well as social and moral grounds for educating children with additional needs (e.g. those labelled as having social, emotional and behavioural difficulties) with their peers.

Future outcomes following permanent exclusion are poor (Parsons, 1999) and Toothill & Spalding (2000) propose that as all children will *"take their place in the wider society in the future….it could be argued that by being segregated, categorised and labelled in their education, they are not acquiring the knowledge and skills to do this, instead [they are] becoming further removed and alienated"* (p.112).

Multiple fixed term exclusions from school can be seen a precursor to permanent exclusion for young people (Bynner, 2001). Studies exploring exclusion corroborate this, i.e. 5 of the 6 pupils interviewed in Gersch & Nolan's (1994) study had received a number of fixed term exclusions before being permanently excluded, and of the sample of excluded pupils interviewed in Munn & Lloyd's (2005) report (61 pupils), most young people had been excluded on more than one occasion prior to the study.

Toothill & Spalding (2000) propose that those pupils labelled as having *"emotional and behavioural difficulties would not benefit from 'another failure' (as they might interpret it)"* (p. 117), or rejection in the form of permanent exclusion. To move towards greater inclusion of pupils implies a series of preventative measures need to be in place in mainstream school (Toothill & Spalding, 2000). In order to investigate what preventative measures work and/or intervene at an early enough stage to preclude permanent exclusion, it is felt necessary to interview those young people who have experienced fixed term exclusion, but who have then been successfully and securely reintegrated back into the same school. Secondary aged pupils are among those groups most likely to have attendance difficulties and to become officially excluded from school (Munn & Lloyd, 2005; Gersch & Nolan, 1994; McCluskey, 2008). This study will therefore focus on this cohort of young people.

Those studies which did investigate both exclusion and reintegration (with the exception of Lown, 2005) did not explore or compare the experiences of pupils, parents and teachers, the 'actors' most thoroughly immersed in the dynamics of these processes. Most studies in this area have focussed on the views of one group (i.e. teachers) at the expense of another (e.g. parents and pupils). Gersch & Nolan (1994) propose that *"qualitative studies of pupil and parental attitudes, teacher styles and attitudes and school systems are more likely to reveal meaningful findings than*

quantitative data alone" (p.36). Studying responses in isolation is unlikely to be effective, as in any complex set of circumstances there are likely to be different, yet equally valid perspectives or 'multiple truths' (Smith, 2009). This research thus aims to elicit the views and experiences of pupils, parents and teachers in accordance with an eco-systemic perspective, triangulating the similarities and mismatches between the interacting systems around the child to uncover factors precipitating and protecting children from negative outcomes.

2.10 Aims and Rationale

In order to build on the previous literature, this research will therefore explore the experiences of both fixed term exclusion and reintegration from the perspectives of pupils, parents and teachers. Previous literature has investigated exclusion and reintegration processes with permanently excluded children. This research aims to focus on those children who have experienced fixed-term exclusion and followed by sustained/successful reintegration in order to draw on factors that can preclude further exclusion and positively support pupils' within their current learning environment.

Fixed term exclusion rates far exceed rates of permanent exclusion in the UK and are a priority for action both nationally and locally. It is anticipated that findings will develop an in-depth understanding of the 'lived experience' of those involved in exclusion and reintegration processes and may elicit risk and protective factors which can be shared with professionals working with this vulnerable group to prevent exclusionary processes and increase positive outcomes for children and young people.

Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided an overview of the literature, aims and rationale for undertaking this piece of research. This next section will outline the methodology used. Research purpose (3.2) and questions (3.3) will firstly be presented, followed by an overview of the ontological and epistemological positions adopted (3.4). Research design (3.5), participant recruitment (3.6) and data collection processes (3.7) will be then be described, including selection of instruments and technique. Following this ethical concerns (3.8) and issues relating to validity and trustworthiness will be addressed (3.9) and finally the procedure and process adopted in data analysis explored (3.10).

3.2 Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research is exploratory, with the aim of better understanding an area that has not been clearly defined (Robson, 2002). In order to build on previous literature, experiences of both fixed term exclusion and reintegration from the perspectives of pupils, parents and teachers will be explored. Previous literature has investigated exclusion and reintegration processes with permanently excluded children. This research aims to focus on those children who have experienced fixed-term exclusion and sustained reintegration in order to draw on factors that can preclude further exclusion and positively support pupils in current environments.

The experience of sustained reintegration and factors contributing to this process have been acknowledged as an area that requires further exploration and understanding from multiple perspectives (Lown, 2005). Many studies documenting factors contributing to exclusion have taken place in isolation focussing on single aspects of the process i.e. school variables or family circumstances (Rendall & Stuart, 2005). This research intends to seek new insights by understanding both social phenomena (exclusion and reintegration) from the perspectives of all key stakeholders. By

providing a voice to pupils, parents and teachers it is felt that there is also an emancipatory role for this research, through the empowerment of those whose views are not often heard (Robson, 2002).

3.3 Research Questions

This research will focus on the central question:

What are pupils', parents' and teachers' experiences of school exclusion and reintegration?

In order to answer the central question, the following sub questions will also be considered from the perspective of pupils, parents and teachers:

1. *What are the risk factors experienced as influencing school exclusion?*

2. *What are the protective factors experienced as influencing sustained reintegration?*

Subsidiary questions stemmed from an interest in the multiple factors implicated within the literature as contributing to behaviour. Much literature suggests that exclusion and reintegration are inextricably linked to individual, social and educational processes and this research will therefore question what are the perceived risk and protective factors from participants' experiences that contribute to both phenomena.

3.4 Ontological and Epistemological Framework

Willis (2007) defines a research paradigm as:

"…a complex belief system, world view or framework that guides research and practice within a field" (p.9).

Understanding the researcher's 'philosophical world view' in conceptualising this research is necessary, based on the assumption that one's "*basic set of beliefs...guide action*" (Guba, 1990, p. 17). Research paradigms reflect the researcher's ontological position (philosophical assumptions held about the nature and orientation of the world) (Crotty, 1998), and epistemological position (how knowledge about the world is understood) (Bryman, 2004). Issues evident when discussing ontology and epistemology seemingly overlap and it has been noted that there can be difficulty in separating the two concepts (Crotty, 1998). There are three main paradigms acknowledged within the context of social research: positivism, constructivism and realism. This next section will consider these approaches and their appropriateness for this research.

3.4.1 Research Paradigms

Early educational and social research was traditionally influenced by positivist paradigms (Robson, 2002), which holds that there is only one fixed reality and observable objective truth. Positivist epistemology is traditionally linked with fixed design experimental studies where a formal hypothesis is tested with the aim of establishing cause and effect or 'constant conjunction', whereby two or more things appear together in some kind of sequence (Robson, 2002, p.21). In the social world however, "*where people are the focus of the study…'constant conjunction' in a strict sense is so rare as to be virtually non-existent*" (Robson, 2002, p.21). The emphasis a positivist paradigm places on quantitative measurement (Sarantakos, 1998) is therefore not felt to be suitable for capturing the meaning of behaviours located in this research in complex real world contexts.

Constructivist or relativist paradigms reject the idea of objectivism and conceptualise reality as socially constructed, represented only "*in the minds of people and their interpretations*" (Sarantakos, 1998, p.43-45). Typically, through use of qualitative methodology, the task of the researcher is to understand an individual's constructions of meaning and knowledge about their world. Critiques of this paradigm propose, however, that "*if the world itself was a product or construction of our knowledge, then our knowledge would surely be infallible*" (Sayer, 2000, p.2). Although this research

seeks to understand multiple experiences, views explored are of exclusion and reintegration, observable events grounded in reality and as such constructivism is not felt to be an appropriate paradigm for this area of study.

A third paradigm, 'realism' is proposed to "*provide a model of scientific explanation which avoids both positivism and relativism*" (Robson, 2002, p.29). This perspective acknowledges that there is a reality which exists independent of our subjective experience or awareness of it (Robson, 2002). Realists hold knowledge to be a "*social and historical product that can be specific to a particular time, culture or situation*" (Robson, 2002, p.34). It assumes that human actions (i.e. behaviour) can only be understood in terms of their place within layers of reality, i.e. micro, macro, group and organisational levels, congruent with the eco-systemic perspective recognised within this research.

'Critical realism', a variant of realism, is adopted as the appropriate paradigm for this research. This approach permits the researcher to be critical of the social practices under study (Sayer, 2000), proposed by Robson (2002) to provide a platform for using research to initiate emancipatory change (House, 1991), particularly where the perspectives of participants are accounted for with the aim of promoting social justice.

3.4.2 A Critical Realist Paradigm

Whereas a positivist paradigm would be concerned with cause and effect, critical realists are interested in if an action (i.e. behaviour) causes an outcome (i.e. exclusion/reintegration), then what are the possible mechanisms that explain this process (Matthews, 2003). Robson (2002) defines a mechanism as an "*arrangement and action by which a result is produced*" (p.33). As well as assuming a position between traditional positivist and constructionist approaches, critical realism focuses on the mediating mechanisms rather than the events themselves (Matthews, 2003). The task of the researcher within this paradigm, congruent with the aims of this research, is to obtain evidence about the existence of these hypothesised mechanisms (i.e. risk / protective factors) (Robson, 2002) in order to explore the ideal contexts and conditions that trigger their action.

Figure 3.1: A Critical Realist Representation (adapted from Robson, 2002)
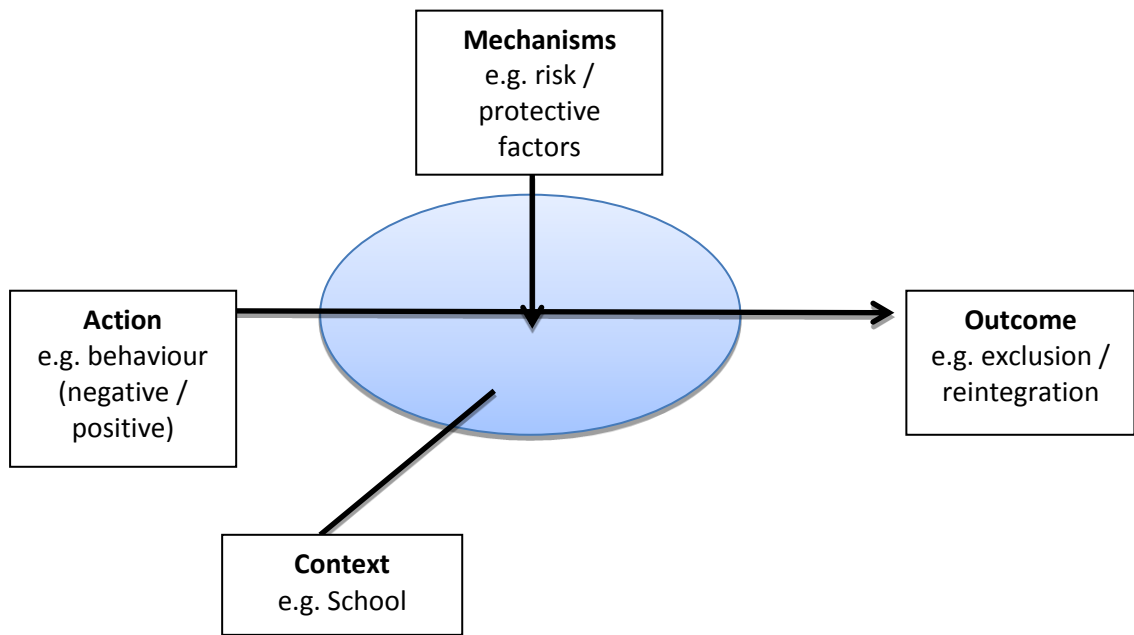
A critical realist perspective acknowledges that events (i.e. school exclusion and reintegration) exist in reality independent of subjective interpretations or experiences of these processes. Events that take place in these 'real world' contexts, such as schools, with social actors (i.e. people) form part of and are inseparable from the complex open systems in which they operate. Therefore, forming hypotheses in accordance with perspectives of stakeholders, i.e. the views of pupils, parents and teachers and then testing in reality can subsequently be seen to be an effective approach for practitioners working within value based professions (i.e. Educational Psychology) and in complex 'open systems' like schools (Fletcher, 1996; Robson, 2002).

"…understanding the mechanisms at work and the contexts in which they operate provides a theoretical understanding of what is going on which can then be used to optimise the effects of the innovation by appropriate contextual changes, or by changing the innovation itself so that it is more in tune with some if the contexts where positive change has not been achieved"
(Robson, 2002, p.39).

This research aims to develop knowledge about "…*what works best for whom under what circumstances*" (Robson 2002, p.39), specifically the mechanisms through which behaviour causes exclusion or supports reintegration and/or blocks these processes, and about the context which provides the ideal conditions for this to take place.

3.5 Research Design

3.5.1 Qualitative Design

A research design is defined by Bryman (2004, p.27) as "*a framework for collection and analysis of data*". As this research is interested in the experiences of members of particular social groups, a qualitative strategy that is sensitive to how participants interpret their social world is felt to be appropriate. By asking individuals to reflect on processes leading up to or following on from events this research aims to gain a sense of how different elements of a social system are perceived to interconnect and provide a 'deeper' understanding of social phenomena than would be obtained from purely quantitative methods (Silverman, 2005).

Whereas quantitative research involves a deductive approach to the relationship between theory and research (i.e. where theories are tested), qualitative research is generally inductive, and emphasis is placed on the generation of theory from data. A qualitative approach, where structure is kept to a minimum, also fits with critical realist perspectives which have "…*no problems with flexible research*" (Anastas & McDonald, 1994, p.60) and suit an exploratory stance, typically associated with generating rather than testing theory (Bryman 2004).

3.5.2 Introducing Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is the approach to qualitative inquiry adopted by this research. Congruent with critical realist ontology, IPA is interested in "*psychology in the real world*" (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009, p.5) and is concerned with how people make sense of their major life experiences. Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009) suggest that, as IPA has a broadly 'realist' ontology, it has the ability to contribute to a bio-psycho-social perspective (Elliott, Fischer & Rennie, 1999) and can provide a meaningful analysis of psychosocial issues, in this case the experiences of school exclusion and reintegration.

IPA is phenomenological and assumes a "*philosophical approach to the study of experience*" (Smith et al, 2009, p.11). It acknowledges that 'lived experience' is complex, and is concerned with examining how events can take on particular significance for individuals. Smith et al (2009) propose that "*experience can be understood via an examination of the meanings which people impress on it*" (p.34), rather than by fitting experience into a set of predefined categories.

IPA attempts to understand an individual's relationship to the world through interpretation, focusing on how individuals make meaning of events, known as hermeneutics "*the theory of interpretation*" (Smith et al, 2009, p.21). It is a dynamic process with an active role for the researcher in identifying and interpreting the relevant meanings used by the participant to make sense of the topic (Smith & Osborn, 2003), whilst simultaneously accounting for context, and the dynamic relationship between the 'part' and the 'whole'. Consistent with a qualitative design, IPA is inductive and thus, whilst not testing predetermined hypotheses, it acknowledges that inferences and interpretations can be drawn from theoretical perspectives provided they are developed from participants' experiences. Through this interpretation the researcher is consciously engaged in a 'double hermeneutic' "*…trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of what is happening to them*" (Smith et al, 2009, p.3). In contrast to many 'nomothetic' psychological approaches, IPA is 'idiographic', concerned with the particular and unique perspective an individual can provide on their relationship to or involvement with specific phenomena (i.e. exclusion / reintegration) (Smith & Osborne, 2003). It is felt that the sensitive and complex nature of the events explored within this research warrants this phenomenological, interpretative and idiographic approach as advocated by Smith et al (2009):

> "*…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).

3.6 Research Participants

3.6.1 Sampling

In order to maintain theoretical consistency with the paradigm adopted, a non-probability purposive sample was employed, whereby participants were selected according to specific criteria in order to meet the needs of the research question.

The participants required for this study were:

- **Pupils** enrolled in mainstream secondary schools that had experienced multiple fixed term exclusions from school (amounting to greater than 5 days) and had since been reintegrated into the same school for a minimum of three school terms without receiving further fixed term exclusions.
- **Parents** (or main caregivers) of children who meet the 'pupils' criteria.
- **Teachers** of children meeting the 'pupils' criteria.

Participants were chosen on the basis that they had experienced (within their role as pupil, parent or teacher) the same processes (i.e. exclusion and reintegration) and could therefore provide a particular perspective on the phenomena under study, forming a homogenous group. Homogeneity is a prerequisite for use of IPA as a method of data analysis, as it enables the researcher to "*examine in detail psychological variability within the group, by analysing the pattern of convergence and divergence that arises*" (Smith et al, 2009, p.50).

3.6.2 Sample Size

This study is interested in exploring how:

> "…*particular experiential phenomena (an event, process or relationship) have been understood from the perspective of particular people, in a particular context*"
> (Smith et al, 2009, p. 29).

Congruent with qualitative research, the idiographic nature of IPA lends itself towards using "*small, purposively-selected and carefully-situated samples*" (Smith et al, 2009, p.29) to ensure that detailed accounts of individual experience can be gathered. Robson (2002) suggests that it is difficult to pre-specify the number of interviews required in a flexible design study, and that data should continue to be collected until "*saturation*" is reached, i.e. "*when further data collection appears to add little or nothing to what you have already learned*" (p.199).

As this research focusses on exploring multiple perspectives in order to "*develop a more detailed and multifaceted account of that phenomenon*" (Smith et al, 2009, p.52), the sample was divided so that the events could be understood from more than one view point. Participants were organised into case studies, consisting of triads of three participants: a parent, a teacher and a pupil. Case studies enable the world to be perceived as an integrated system that does not allow for parts (i.e. pupils, parents, teachers) to be studied in isolation. Smith et al (2009) advocate this approach when using IPA and propose that case studies have "*important and powerful contributions to make*" (p.38), by focussing on phenomena in context (Robson, 2002) and through their idiographic nature, concerned with the unique and complex features of the case (Bryman, 2004; Stake, 1995). Four triads were therefore chosen to provide multiple dimensions of each process and enrich the data, enabling triangulation.

Figure 3.2: Example Triad of Participants
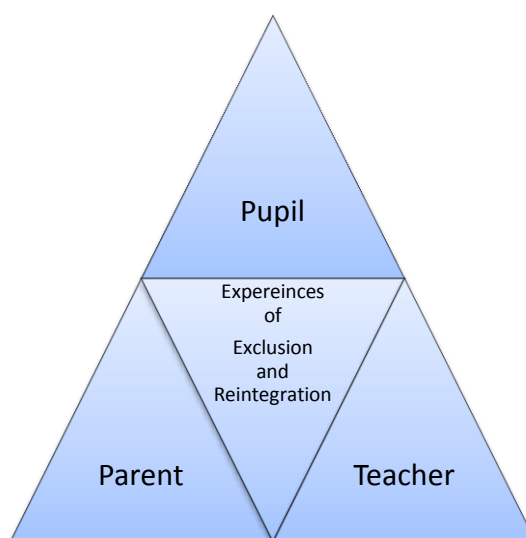
3.6.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Table 3.1: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for Participant Involvement

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Secondary aged pupils	Primary or post-secondary aged pupils
Pupil has experienced multiple (more than 5) fixed term exclusions from current secondary school	Pupil has had fewer than 5 fixed term exclusions from current secondary school
Pupil has been reintegrated back into current secondary school and has had no further fixed term exclusions for at least three school terms	Pupil has experienced further fixed term exclusions during the last three school terms
Informed consent obtained from pupils, parents and teachers to take part in the study	No informed consent from pupils, parents or teachers
Pupil has no known speech, language and/or communication difficulties which would prevent them from expressing their views	Pupil has speech, language and/or communication difficulties which would prevent them from expressing their views

Secondary Aged Pupils

Young people attending mainstream secondary school were selected for this research. As an approach to analysis IPA requires rich data, and secondary aged pupils were felt to be more likely to be at a level of development where they would be able to articulate, reason and reflect on their experiences of exclusion and reintegration in greater depth. National statistics indicate that the majority of pupils excluded from school in the UK or 'at risk of exclusion' are from mainstream secondary schools (DfE, 2012b). This pattern is reflected within the authority in which the research was

conducted, and it was therefore felt appropriate that pupils at Key stage 3 and 4 were the focus of this study.

Multiple Fixed Term Exclusions

There are significant negative outcomes associated with exclusion and multiple fixed term exclusions from school can be seen as a precursor to permanent exclusion for some young people (Bynner, 2001). By focusing on fixed term exclusion rather than permanent processes this research aimed to be preventative, exploring what can prevent further exclusions and support pupils within current learning environments. Addressing high levels of fixed-term exclusion rates are also a key priority for the local authority in which this research was undertaken.

Fixed-term exclusion for duration of greater than five days was specified as criteria for pupil participation to ensure that the exclusion experience was of significant duration (i.e. 5 days or more), or was of such frequency (i.e. 5 individual days) that an in-depth view from multiple perspectives could be gathered of the factors perceived as leading to placement breakdown and successful reintegration.

Reintegration

Lown (2005) proposes that reintegration is only secure when a child has been reintegrated for a period of three terms. This length of time is specified to ensure that ongoing inclusion practices and interventions supporting the child will have ceased, based on studies of reintegration following permanent exclusion. For this reason three terms where no further exclusionary processes have been employed has been adopted as a definition of 'sustained reintegration' and considered not likely to be at a time where the interview will interfere with on-going inclusion processes. (See Appendix 2 for a description of participants).

3.6.4 Recruitment of Participants

The sample of participants was identified via a multistage process.

- An initial meeting was held with the Principal Educational Psychologist to discuss appropriate schools for the research to take place in. Schools currently undergoing significant changes, i.e. in special measures, closing down or under active assessment by OFSTED were not selected as appropriate for research to be undertaken in.

- Contact was made via email with Inclusion Managers in three secondary schools. Emails included a letter for the Head Teacher outlining the nature of the research and a request for school's participation (see Appendix 3). Follow up phone calls were made to arrange face-to-face meetings.

- Meetings took place with school contacts (Inclusion Manager) in two schools following the return of signed Head Teacher consent forms (see Appendix 4). One school committed to the research process.

- In the consenting school, inclusion criteria for pupil, parent and teacher involvement and specified numbers of participants were discussed (see Table 3.1). Once numbers of children meeting the inclusion criteria were established, pupil and parent information letters (see Appendix 5 and 7) and consent forms (see Appendix 6 and 8) were sent home to parents, including stamped addressed envelopes for ease of response.

- Follow up phone calls were made to parents in order to provide information about the nature of the research and establish their interest in both them and their child taking part. Verbal consent from parents was obtained on the phone. Times and dates were subsequently arranged for interviews to be conducted.

- Discussions took place with the school contact to determine who the appropriate teacher would be to interview. I.e. the teacher best placed to comment on the

young person's school exclusion and reintegration. Information letters and consent forms were subsequently sent to teachers (see Appendix 9 - 10) and interviews arranged.

3.7 Data Collection

3.7.1 Instruments for Gathering Data

In order to elicit the rich and diverse voices of all participants, individual interviews were selected as the method of data collection. One to one interviews allow greater opportunities for rapport and trust established between interviewer and interviewee, and are "*well suited to in depth and personal discussion*" where topics may require sensitivity and personal reflection (Smith et al, 2009, p.57). Interviews are often carried out individually but can take place within a larger group (e.g. Focus Groups) which tend to take the form of a group interview concentrated on a specific area of interest (Robson, 2002). Although Focus Groups can be an inexpensive and efficient method of data collection, owing to the personal and sensitive nature of exclusion and reintegration it was felt participants may have resisted expressing their true views or have be influenced by the presence of the others in the group, hierarchies or dominating dynamics. IPA focuses on detailed exploration of individual experience, and following up the views of individuals would be limited in this setting. Considering the nature of the research, individual interviews were therefore felt to be the most appropriate method of data collection.

3.7.2 Semi Structured Interviews

Robson (2002) proposes that the difference between types of interview (i.e. structured, semi structured and unstructured) is the "*'depth' of response sought" by the researcher*" (p. 269). Semi structured interviews are widely used in flexible designs (Robson, 2002) and are described as having the potential to provide "*rich and highly illuminating material*" (Robson, 2002, p.273), fitting for a critical realist ontological perspective, as it allows for the acquisition of multiple perspectives of phenomena within a real world context (Willig, 2001; Robson, 2002).

The aim of IPA is to elicit detailed accounts, thoughts and feelings, and "*semi structured, one-to-one interviews have tended to be the preferred means for collecting such data*" (Smith et al 2009, p.57). Participants can be asked to reflect on the processes leading up to or following on from an event (i.e. exclusion and reintegration), which can support with gaining a sense of how events develop over time and how different elements of the social system interconnect (Bryman, 2004, p.281). Although interviews were 'non-directive', predetermined questions functioned as triggers that encouraged the participants to talk (Willig, 2001) and allowed the interviewer to obtain data relevant to the research question. The interview schedules (see Appendix 11 – 13) consisted of a number of open ended questions which allowed for flexibility, depth and detail of response (Robson, 2002). Semi structured interviews enabled the researcher to enter into a dialogue, whereby initial questions could be modified and followed up in light of response (Smith et al, 2009).

In contrast, structured interviews or surveys where questions are pre-determined, have fixed wording and a pre-decided order may inhibit this process by limiting opportunity for participant reflection, constraining the depth of data (Robson, 2002). In flexible semi structured interviews participants have the opportunity to "*speak freely and reflectively, and to develop their ideas and express their concerns at some length*" (Smith et al, 2009, p.56). Although unstructured approaches equally allow the interviewee "*much more flexibility of response*" (Miller & Crabtree, 1999), the informal, conversational nature of fully open ended interviews can often fail to address critical aspects of the topic under exploration, and is therefore a "*less easy option for a novice*" researcher (Robson, 2002, p. 278).

Although there are significant advantages for using semi structured interviews, it is acknowledged that there are also limitations to their use. Interviews can be time consuming, and there is less control over the direction for the interviewer when open ended questions are used. Data can consequently be more complex and difficult to analyse (Robson, 2002). The lack of standardisation when using interviews can mean reliability of data can be questioned and subsequently the potential for bias to occur was carefully considered when carrying out interviews, particularly the possibility of

interviewer bias, where the interviewer influences participants' responses through verbal or non-verbal cues.

3.7.3 Interview Process

Owing to the small number of participants who met the criteria for taking part in the research, it was not possible to carry out a full pilot study. The very specific inclusion criteria for the research meant there was difficulty in accessing a similar population. Instead, interview schedules were peer reviewed by a Senior and Trainee Educational Psychologist (on separate occasions), in order to support with evaluating the fidelity of the questions and to provide comment on the interviewer's facilitation skill. Questions were reviewed for transparency and simplicity, to ensure they were age appropriate for pupils, were related to research questions and were not leading, but open ended to allow for flexible responses.

Four triads of participants were interviewed for this research. The same 'interview agenda' was used for each participant, however wording and structure of the questions were tailored and certain questions omitted based on the researcher's perspective of what was most appropriate for individual participants (see Appendix 11 – 13). Semi structured interviews lasted between 30 – 60 minutes and, prior to undertaking interviews, the researcher referred to guidance on delivering questions provided by Robson (2002) and Smith et al (2009).

Prior to beginning the interview time was allowed for further introductions and rapport to be built. The information sheet (see Appendix 5, 7 and 9) was re-read and discussed with the participant to ensure comfort with the process (i.e. use of dictaphone), details of confidentiality and anonymity and explanation for how the data would be used. Written consent was obtained (see Appendix 6, 8 and 10) and the participants' right to withdraw explained (see section 3.8.2 for further evidence of Informed Consent). In beginning the interview 'warm up' or 'non-threatening' questions (Robson, 2002) were used to encourage cooperation, which focussed on gathering background information about perceptions of previous primary school experiences. Participants were asked to reflect on experiences of exclusion and

reintegration and perceptions of the processes leading up to and following on from these events. To complete the interview, straightforward questions (Robson, 2002) were used to defuse any tension and bring the interview to a close, followed by an opportunity for the interviewee to ask any questions and a period of time to debrief.

Wetton & Williams (2000) recommend that, in working with children, emancipatory approaches to eliciting views are employed, which enable children's authentic representations to be expressed. For this reason, when interviewing pupils, in addition to the use of the semi-structured interview agenda 'illuminative' tools (such as pens, paper etc.) were available should verbal interviews have proved unsuccessful. Tools were not used however, due to the positive engagement of the pupils. Interviews were followed by a period of debriefing to allow participants an opportunity to express their views on the process.

All interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim. Handwritten notes were not taken during interviews, to prevent interference with eye contact, non-verbal communication and the development of rapport (Willig, 2001). Access to pupils' school files was additionally requested in order to complement interview data with descriptive information (Willig, 2001). This data consisted of official documents, exclusion and attendance records, referrals to external agencies, details of any special educational needs and support provided (see Appendix 2 for participant descriptions).

3.8 Ethical Considerations

3.8.1 Ethical Approval

Ethical considerations for undertaking this research were informed and guided by the British Psychological Society (BPS) Code of Ethics and Conduct (2009). The proposal for this research was awarded full ethical approval by the University Of East London School Of Psychology on 18.01.12. A letter outlining ethical approval for this research can be viewed in Appendix 14.

3.8.2 Informed Consent

Valid, voluntary and informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to beginning the interview process. An information sheet and corresponding consent form was provided in advance of meeting with the researcher to enable time for participants to consider their potential involvement (see Appendix 5 - 10). The language used in the information sheet and consent form was free from professional and/or technical language and adapted to the relevant audience (i.e. differentiated for pupils). During face to face meetings all participants were given a second opportunity to review the information sheet and verbally discuss details prior to signing the consent form so that further clarification and information could be offered.

The information sheet outlined the purpose of the research, what would be involved and the areas to be covered in the interview. Participants were informed of what would happen to the data they provided (how long it would be stored for and who would have access to it) as well as their rights to withdraw and to confidentiality and anonymity. Participants were assured that they had the right not to answer any questions and complaint procedures were verbally outlined. One parent was not available to take part in the process, resulting in one incomplete triad of two participants (pupil and teacher); however none of the participants who were interviewed requested to withdraw at any time. In all cases consent for the participation of young people was obtained from parents before the interview took place. The parental consent forms requested permission for the researcher to have access to the child's school file for descriptive statistics to be obtained (see Appendix 8).

3.8.3 Confidentiality and Data Protection

This research was carried out in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). All participants were made fully aware of their rights to confidentiality and anonymity, and this was outlined in the information letter provided to each participant. Participants were given an additional opportunity to meet with the researcher to discuss confidentiality and anonymity before signing consent, and were reminded of

these rights prior to beginning the interview process. For pupils, this information was explained at a level appropriate to age and stage.

The data provided by consenting participants was anonymised. Although interviews were discussed with academic and professional supervisors and eventually shared in the findings section of the research, identities were protected throughout. Participants' real names and identifying features were omitted, and pseudonyms and replacement terms for schools and places used instead. Data was stored in password protected data files and any hard copies of data (i.e. physical paper notes or audio recordings) were kept in a locked filing cabinet in the Educational Psychology Service to avoid inadvertent disclosure. Identifiable data (i.e. names and addresses) were stored separately from other data collected (i.e. audio recordings, transcripts or school reports, attendance records) and participants were informed of these procedures.

Limits to confidentiality and anonymity were made clear to participants both verbally and within the information sheets provided to participants prior to the interview. In line with BPS ethical guidelines, confidentiality (i.e. anonymity of identities) would have only been breached in exceptional circumstances where there was sufficient evidence to raise serious concern about the safety of participants or the safety of others put at risk by the participant's behaviour.

3.8.4 Protection of Participants

Conducting ethical research involves adhering to codes of conduct, designed to ensure that the interests of those who take part in the research are safeguarded (Robson, 2002). Fox, Martin & Green (2007) asserts that it is the responsibility of the researcher to safeguard the interests of individuals involved in research and to ensure that the physical and psychological well-being of participants is not adversely affected.

Smith et al (2009) suggest that researchers need to consider the extent to which "*simply talking about sensitive issues might constitute 'harm' for any particular participant group*" (p.53). The researcher was aware that some interview questions may be areas of potential sensitivity for participants (i.e. questions about previous

school placement breakdown) and remained conscious that this may have evoked negative emotions. All participants were fully briefed about the nature of the research and areas that questions would cover prior to beginning and obtaining informed consent. In order to further protect from potential harm this research only interviewed pupils who were not considered by school to be at risk of exclusion, and whose reintegration was judged to be both successful and secure, so that interference with any on-going reintegration processes (which may have negatively impacted the child) was avoided. Additionally, children were not included in this research if they were actively involved in child protection or on-going social care investigations.

It is acknowledged that "*qualitative researchers are guests in the private spaces*" of the participant's world (Stake, 1994, p.244) and should participants have become distressed during the interview, the interview would have been stopped, participants given the opportunity to talk and the option as to whether they would like to continue.

Participants were provided with space and time for debriefing following interviews and given an opportunity to ask further questions and highlight any concerns they may have about the issues discussed. Although the aim of the research and the participant's role was explained in the information letter and prior to conducting the interview, a further opportunity for re-clarifying research objectives and reiteration about the use of participant's data (i.e. issues of anonymity and confidentiality) was provided. At this stage should any unforeseen concerns have been identified, information and support was pre-prepared to be provided to participants about additional services as deemed necessary. Additionally, if information had been identified which suggested a risk of significant harm to the participant (or others), the researcher would have made referrals to appropriate authorities (Robson, 2002). Supervision was sought from academic and professional tutors prior to interviews to discuss management of ethical issues and potential scenarios.

3.8.5 Researcher Safety

Parents were provided with the opportunity to indicate a preference for whether they would like to be interviewed at home or at school. As all parents chose to be

interviewed at home, the researcher adhered to both the University of East London Fieldwork Policy and Code of Practice guidelines, and the Educational Psychology Service Home Visiting Personal Safety Policy. When undertaking interviews the researcher ensured that the EPS administrative team were aware of the visit location, time and expected length of the interview. The team were contacted once visits were completed and mobile phone charged in advance to ensure calls could be made. Prior to the visit information was gathered about the family from current records held by the service (i.e. regarding potential hazards to the researcher which could be caused by visiting). Risk assessments did not indicate any potential hazards associated with visiting homes of the participating families.

3.9 Validity and Trustworthiness

In conducting 'quality' research, Silverman (2005) asserts that there must be a commitment on the part of the researcher to demonstrate to the reader that the procedures used to obtain results were reliable and the conclusions drawn from research valid. Hammersley (1992) defines research validity as "*the extent to which an account accurately represents the social phenomena to which it refers*" (p.57). This section will discuss the extent to which the findings of this research can be regarded as trustworthy and examine the frameworks applied to this process.

3.9.1 Frameworks for Validity in Qualitative Research

There is a history of quantitative research methods dominating the field of psychology and as a result there has been a "*tendency to assume that the criteria for validity that are relevant to quantitative studies can also be applied to qualitative studies*" (Yardley, 2008, p.236). Yardley (2008) argues that the variable and diverse nature of qualitative research means that there is a need for a different but specific criterion to assess quality. Specifically, by choosing to use IPA, known to be a "*creative process*" (Smith et al, 2009 p. 184) the criteria for validity need to be able to be flexibly rather than rigidly applied. Yardley (2008) presents a framework for evaluating the validity of qualitative research under four broad principles. This section will attempt to demonstrate how these have been achieved.

1.   Sensitivity to Context

Firstly this principle was applied to the research area, and was achieved through engaging in a comprehensive and detailed systematic review of the literature, outlining existing studies and views on exclusion and reintegration and formulating a unique research question from a position not previously explored. In relation to participants, sensitivity was ensured though the voluntary and informed participation of individuals. A choice of interview location was provided to participants (e.g. at home or school) and interviews conducted on a one to one basis to maximise privacy and comfort. Empathy and rapport was established with participants and open ended questions used to encourage free response. Additionally, by adopting a positive perspective, i.e. interviewing those who were successfully reintegrated into school, this research was sensitive to the experience of the interview, and hoped to empower participants through exploring 'what worked'.

2.   Commitment and Rigour

Commitment was demonstrated in a number of ways. Firstly by the degree of attentiveness to the recruitment of a purposive and homogenous sample (yet who equally represented a diversity of ethnicities, genders and socioeconomic backgrounds) and who were difficult to source due to the sensitive nature of the phenomena experienced. Commitment was also established through development of necessary interview skills to obtain in depth data, and in the adoption of IPA as a method of data analysis which required thorough and systematic analysis and an idiographic and interpretative focus.

In this study thoroughness was shown through 'triangulation' of experiences, not as a means of corroborating accounts, but to enrich understandings of the phenomena (exclusion and reintegration) by viewing events from different perspectives. Additionally, in analysis, for an emergent or subordinate theme to be classified as recurrent it was decided it needed to be present in over half of the participants' accounts, a method considered by Smith et al (2009) to increase the validity of findings

in a larger IPA sample. Inter-rater comparison of the data was also employed, i.e. discussing the analysis with others (supervisor) in order to ensure conclusions drawn 'made sense' and that there was consistency in identification of themes. It is recognised that there may be a tendency to seek information within interviews that corroborate themes already identified (Yardley, 2008). To counter this potential bias, themes identified from previous transcripts were "*bracketed*" (i.e. mentally put aside) whilst analysing data from the next participant in order to not influence new analyses (Smith et al, 2009, p.100) and ensure alternative explanations were explored.

3.   *Transparency and Coherence*

Transparency refers to "*how well the reader can see exactly what was done, and why*" (Yardley, 2008, p.250). Detailed descriptions were provided of how information was gathered, analysed, modified, grouped and presented (see section 3.10). Documentation was filed in a way that demonstrated an explicit and chronological chain of evidence leading from initial notes on the topic to the final report so that an 'Independent Audit' (Yin, 1989) of research could be conducted by the reader (Robson, 2002; Yardley, 2008; Smith et al, 2009). In addition, to ensure 'descriptive validity', all interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim and sample transcripts included (Robson, 2002).

Reflexivity is defined as the "*explicit consideration of specific ways in which it is likely that the study was influenced by the researcher*" (Yardley, 2008, p.250) and is an important feature of transparency in qualitative research. Willig (2001) describes two types of reflexivity: personal and epistemological. Personal reflexivity is awareness of how "*values, experiences, interests, beliefs, political commitments, wider aims in life and social identities have shaped the research*" (Willig, 2001, p.10). Epistemological reflexivity involves reflecting how assumptions about the nature and orientation of the world (ontology) and beliefs about how knowledge is understood (epistemology) can influence research and findings. Maintaining reflexivity involved conscious awareness of how the researcher's value and belief systems may have influenced decisions and phases of the research (i.e. recognition of the researchers influence in the interview process and how this may have contributed to the construction and interpretation of

the phenomena) (Willig, 2001). As recommended by Robson (2002) a research diary was kept to support the researcher in reflecting on how use of different positions and methodologies may have influenced data collection and analysis.

Coherence in research refers to "*the extent to which it makes sense as a consistent whole*" (Yardley, 2008, p.248). This study has attempted to ensure a level of constancy between the research design and the underlying theoretical assumptions of the approaches being implemented and aimed to demonstrate this through clarity of write up, detailing each stage clearly and with logical reasons for action. The iterative nature of IPA equally required constant shifting between the part and whole, developing an understanding of the broader representations emerging whilst retaining focus on individual accounts.

4.   Impact and Importance

Smith et al (2009) note that the true measure of validity is the extent to which the research can communicate something "*interesting, important or useful*" (p.183). The small number of participants typically used in qualitative research (as in this study) means that statistical generalizability across populations cannot be attained. Theoretical generalizability however can be achieved, which this study aims to realise by ensuring that insights drawn from the findings can be applied and utilised in similar contexts which may contribute to better understandings of the phenomena or lead to "*practical, real-world change*" (Yardley, 2008, p.250).

3.10 Data Analysis

3.10.1 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was considered an appropriate analysis tool to meaningfully explore exclusion and reintegration. It involves detailed examination of personal perceptions of phenomena and offers an interpretative account of experiences within context (Smith, 1996). IPA has a dynamic and active role for the researcher in identifying and interpreting the relevant meanings used by the

participant to make sense of their experiences (Smith & Osborn, 2003). IPA is 'idiographic' and therefore the analytic process undertaken in this research focussed initially on identifying what was particular and distinct to individuals, followed by identification of commonalities across groups. By engaging in a descriptive and then interpretative relationship with each individual transcript, followed by an assessment of connections and differences across cases "*fine grained accounts of patterns of meaning for participants reflecting upon a shared experience*" were uncovered (Smith et al, 2009, p.38).

Although IPA is acknowledged to be largely a subjective process (Smith et al, 2009), by being "*systematic and rigorous*" (p.80) in application of the analysis stages, results can be methodically reviewed and checked by the reader for fidelity. Smith et al (2009) propose that the subjective nature of IPA means "*…one will not be aware of all one's preconceptions in advance*" and recommend regular reflective practices, supervision and an approach incorporating "*open-mindedness; flexibility; patience; empathy; and the willingness to enter into, and respond to, the participants world*" (p.55). These strategies were employed to increase the likelihood of reliable and valid analyses.

3.10.2 IPA Data Analysis: Steps 1 - 4

This section provides a comprehensive overview of the IPA data analysis process adopted within this research. The initial steps utilised are those provided by Smith et al (2009) which outline a framework for analysis, drawing upon many of the common processes and strategies employed by IPA researchers. The authors make the caveat however, that "*there is no right or wrong way of conducting this sort of analysis*" and "*encourage IPA researchers to be innovative in the ways they approach it*" (p.80).
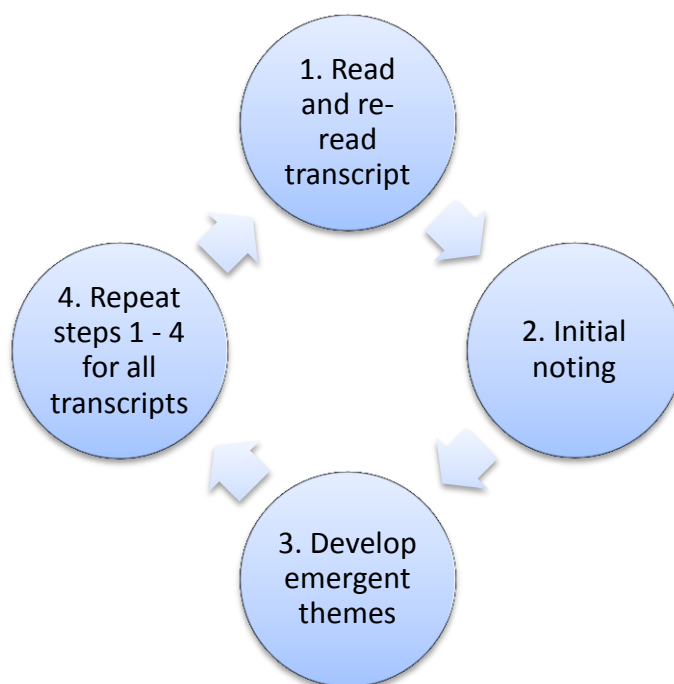
Step 1: Read and re-read transcript

All interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim. IPA aims to interpret the meaning of the narrative content as shared by the participant, and therefore "*requires a semantic record of the interview…a transcript showing all the words that are spoken by everyone who is present*" (Smith et al 2009, p. 74). Transcripts were saved as landscape word documents and given line and page numbers. The page was divided into three columns, with the 'original transcript' placed in the centre, with space for 'exploratory comments' to be recorded on the right and 'emergent themes' on the left (see Appendix 15 for a sample transcript excerpt). In step one the transcript was read and re-read and the audio-recording listened to simultaneously to support active engagement with the data and direct focus towards the participant.

Step 2: Initial noting

During this stage, the transcript was read three times, each reading taking a different exploratory focus. During the first reading 'Descriptive Comments' were made detailing phenomenological content and responses of the participant. Keywords, phrases and explanations were recorded to develop understandings of events and

experiences of importance. The second reading highlighted 'Linguistic Features', particularly language used, pauses, laughter, tone, repetition and use of metaphor. The third reading assumed an 'Interpretative' focus, questioning meaning within the text and identifying concepts perceived to make sense of participants understanding of their experience. Exploratory comments were recorded on the same transcript so links and connections could be made and different coloured pens used to differentiate between the three sets of notes (see Appendix 16 for a sample of initial noting).

Step 3: Develop emergent themes

In order to develop emerging themes the transcript was re-examined to establish patterns and relationships between the initial notes created in Step 2. Themes were expressed as phrases which aimed to succinctly capture the participants' words, thoughts and underlying psychological meaning. Themes were copied and pasted into a new word document alongside related transcript excerpts (see Appendix 17 for example emergent theme table). Smith et al (2009) propose emergent themes should have *"enough particularity to be grounded and enough abstraction to be conceptual"* (p.92).

Stage 4: Repeat steps 1 – 3 for all transcripts

Steps 1 to 4 were subsequently repeated for each of the 11 transcripts. Each new case was approached on its own terms to account for individuality. In keeping with the idiographic nature of IPA, the researcher was mindful to '*bracket*' themes which had emerged from previous transcripts (i.e. mentally put aside) whilst analysing data from the next participant in order to not influence new analyses (Smith et al, 2009, p.100).

3.10.3 IPA Data Analysis: Steps 5 – 7

This next phase involved identifying patterns between emerging themes, and clustering these together as Sub-Ordinate Themes (i.e. represented by phrases capturing experiences and meanings of groups of emerging themes).

Figure 3.4: Steps 5 – 7 of IPA Data Analysis: Identifying Sub-Ordinate Themes

NB: '-' represents the absence of a parent participant.
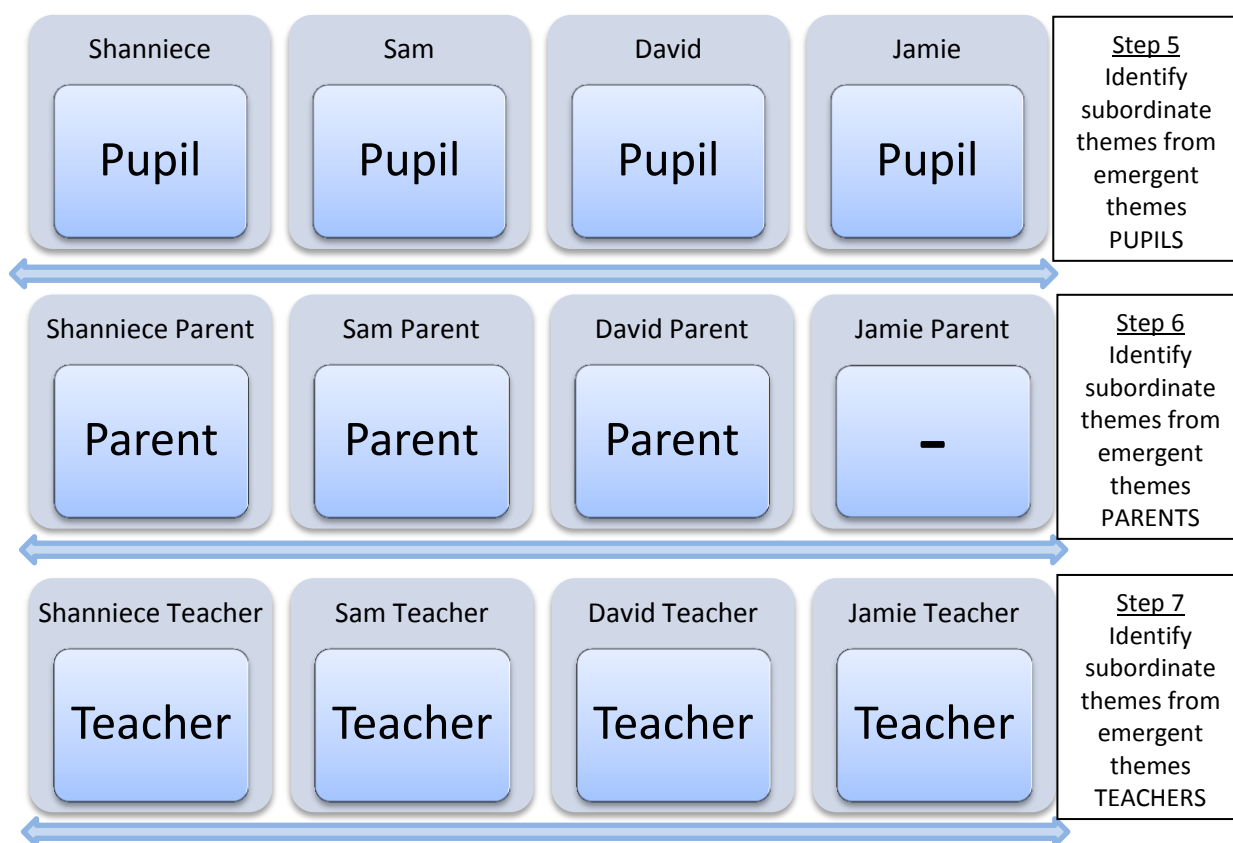
In this stage the emerging themes identified in Step 3 were connected, ordered and clustered to form sub-ordinate themes (Smith & Osborne, 2003) (see Figure 3.4). This was carried out across type of participant, i.e. emerging themes identified for pupils were clustered to form sub-ordinate themes (Step 5 – see Appendix 18), followed by parents (Step 6 – see Appendix 19) and teachers (Step 7 – see Appendix 20). To support the process of identifying connections, the list of emergent themes were typed, printed and cut out so they were represented as individual pieces. Themes were subsequently laid out to allow space to explore how they related to each other and tentative clusters were created by identifying connections and patterns between them (see Appendix 21).

Different methods of grouping were experimented with, as recommended by Smith et al (2009, p.96-97), such as 'Abstraction', identifying patterns and putting alike themes together under a sub-ordinate name; 'Subsumption', giving an emergent theme sub-ordinate status based on its nature to connect a series of similar themes; and through 'Polarisation', clustering themes according to oppositional relationships instead of

similarities. Further techniques for forming sub-ordinate themes were drawn upon, such as 'Contextualisation' (identifying connections on a contextual or temporal basis), 'Numeration' (identifying theme by its frequency) and 'Function' (organising themes according to their presentation, i.e. positive or negative and how this positions the participant within the narrative).

This step was iterative and involved referencing back and forth to verify that emergent themes were accurately represented by the participant's narrative and subsequently captured within the interpretation and sub-ordinate themes. The process continued until saturation occurred, and it was felt that relationships had been explored to a point that sub-ordinate groups appropriately represented clusters of emergent themes. Emergent themes which were not relevant to the research question or did not clearly fit within any sub-ordinate grouping were discarded.

3.10.4 IPA Data Analysis: Step 8

Figure 3.5: Step 8 of IPA Data Analysis: Identifying Super-Ordinate Themes
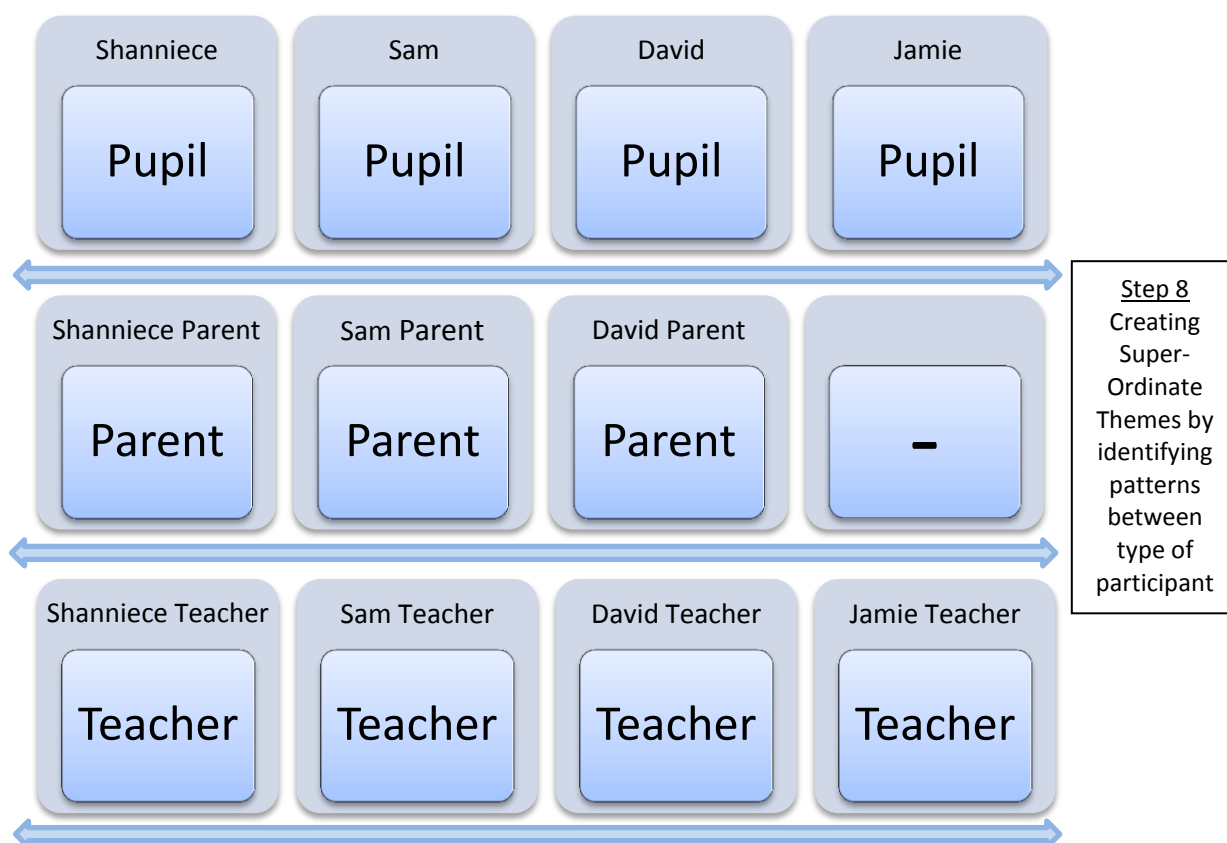
In order to compare and contrast the lived experiences of all participants (i.e. pupils, parents and teachers) (see Figure 3.5), the same strategies used to identify, connect, order and cluster emergent themes into sub-ordinate themes were again utilised, this time with the aim of creating overarching super-ordinate themes. Super-ordinate themes can be understood as overarching themes within which sub categories of sub-ordinate and emerging themes are contained. For example, each of the previously identified sub-ordinate themes (and corresponding emergent themes) for the individual pupil, parent and teacher were presented visually and laid out on a large surface. These themes were re-organised to identify both connections and differences between participants' experience of exclusion and reintegration (See Appendix 21).

Smith et al (2009) propose that analysis is a fluid process which is only fixed through writing up. Following the analysis described findings were presented in a narrative format supported by participants' verbatim extracts (see Chapter Four).

3.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter aimed to provide an overview of the methodology used within this research. It began by introducing the research questions and purpose followed by the research paradigm adopted. The overarching design, recruitment of participants and data collection processes was outlined, followed by procedures and approaches used for data analysis. Ethical concerns were highlighted and issues relating to validity and trustworthiness discussed. The next chapter will present the findings of the research.

Chapter Four: Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the findings generated by interpretative phenomenological analysis of the interviews conducted with pupils, parents and teachers about their experiences of school exclusion and reintegration. Firstly, the presentation of findings is outlined (4.2), followed by a note about the description of participants (4.3). The overarching theme of Security is then described (4.4), after which key super-ordinate themes are addressed in turn: Threat to Security (4.5), Search for Security (4.6) and finally, Re-Establishing Security (4.7). The chapter concludes with an overview and summary (4.8).

4.2 Presentation of Findings

Themes are defined as the word based labels given to represent clusters of meaning arising from participants' transcripts. Findings are presented at three levels (see Figure 4.1):

1. *Super-ordinate Themes*: overarching themes within which sub categories of Sub-ordinate and Emerging Themes are contained.
2. *Sub-ordinate Themes*: core themes which make-up and feed into the principle super-ordinate theme (representing the layers of the overarching theme).
3. *Emerging Themes*: sub themes depicting the finer details of subordinate theme categories.

Table 4.1: Presentation of Themes

Super-Ordinate Theme: Threat to Security		
Sub-ordinate Themes		
Negative Life Events	*Negative Learning Experiences*	*Lack of Belonging*
Emerging Themes		
Loss and Absence Risk to Self Response to Risk	Irrelevance & Un-relatedness of Work Un-met Learning Needs Poor Self-Efficacy	Social Acceptance School Acceptance Lack of Support
Super-Ordinate Theme: Search for Security		
Sub-ordinate Themes		
Seeking Acceptance	*Emerging Identities and New Labels*	*Loss of Control & Identity Confusion*
Emerging Themes		
Negative Social Influences	Negative Self-fulfilling Prophecy	Pupils Parents Teachers
Super-Ordinate Theme: Re-establishing Security		
Sub-ordinate Themes		
School Support	*Parental Support*	*Child-Based Factors*
Emerging Themes		
Supportive Relationships Support & Understanding of Needs Positive Expectations	Rules, Boundaries and Consequences Direction and Guidance Parental Persistence and Dedication Positive Home-School Relationship	Motivation to Change Positive Self-Efficacy Self-Awareness Positive Social Orientations

Findings are presented in a narrative format supported by diagrams to illustrate relationships between themes. Super-ordinate themes and descriptions are initially presented, followed by sub-ordinate themes, corresponding emerging themes and extracts from the text*. Using extracts to evidence how individual views interlink with group themes ensured an idiographic focus was maintained and that the participants' voice was clearly represented whilst making claims for the larger group. The narrative aims to portray "*a dialogue between participant and researcher that is reflected in the interweaving of analytic commentary and raw extracts*" (Smith et al, 2009, p.110).

As an inductive process the analytic commentaries were developed from participants' accounts of their experiences; however, they also drew upon theoretical perspectives and the researcher's experiential knowledge. Particular attention was given to identifying areas of commonality and divergence, as it was clear from analysis that there were a variety of experiences.

Research questions were not referred to during data analysis or when writing up findings in order to maintain an inductive approach and avoid influencing interpretation of experiences. Research questions will not be referred to in this chapter and will be explicitly addressed in the discussion, where findings will be reflected upon in relation to extant literature and theoretical frameworks.

Data extracts will feature in their original form and therefore may contain grammatical errors. Any identifying features within participants' experiences have been adapted to ensure anonymity. Features changed do not impact research content. Full transcripts can be found on the attached CD (Appendix 24).

4.3 Description of Participants

Detailed descriptions of participants are included in Appendix 2. Descriptions provide context about the individuals whose voices make up this study and can be referred to alongside extracts from the text.

4.4 Super-Ordinate Themes

Figure 4.1: Over-arching Themes of Security

4.4.1 Sense of Security

Figure 4.2 depicts the three super-ordinate themes developed from analysis of participants' interviews. Security can be defined as "*the state of being secure"* and is linked with "*safety", "protection"* and *"freedom from danger"* (Collins Online Dictionary, 2013).   From all participants' accounts of school exclusion and reintegration, there emerged a sense of movement from an initial state of instability to current stability. In psychological terms security is recognised as a basic human need, and one which plays a key role in motivating behaviour. Maslow (1970) interprets 'security' as a deficiency need, one which arises due to deprivation, and requires

fulfilment to prevent experiencing difficult emotions or consequences. The cyclical change in experiences of safety (as depicted in Figure 4.2) is represented by super-ordinate theme titles which will subsequently be explored and related to accounts of exclusion and reintegration.

4.4.2 Adolescent Development

"I think that's part of, you know, the hormones, the growing up"
(Sam's Parent, 739-740)

The above quote depicts views shared by the majority of parents and teachers when reflecting on pupils' exclusion and reintegration. Adolescent development, interwoven with other factors (explored during this chapter), was experienced as a key influence for parents and teachers on both positive and negative behaviour changes. As quoted by David's Teacher:

"…it also ties in nicely with hormones, doesn't it…?" (389-390)

Figure 4.1 presents adolescent development as encircling super-ordinate themes of security. Whilst pupils themselves did not explicitly cite developmental stages, experiences of growing up were highlighted through increased self-awareness, explored further in section (4.7.3.3). Adolescence as a developmental stage will be reflected upon in further detail in Chapter Five.

4.5 Super-Ordinate Theme: Threat to Security

Figure 4.2: Super-Ordinate Theme: Threat to Security
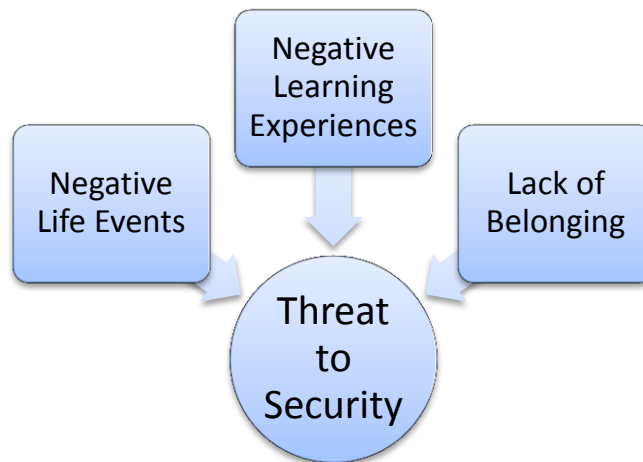
Within the context of the responses provided by participants, there appeared to be certain risks or threats to pupils' security which were felt to have impacted or contributed to school exclusion.

4.5.1 Sub-Ordinate Theme: Negative Life Events

"…a lot of the kids are going through a rough year, you know aren't they…but some of them are naughtier than others, 'cause they've obviously got other things, as well as their normal hormones, they've also got other things going on"
(Shanniece's Teacher, 677-682)

A strongly emerging theme from the data was the presence of 'negative life events'. This broad term was used to encapsulate the differing negative social experiences drawn upon by participants which appeared to have affected pupils. The majority of pupils did not share these experiences in interviews; it was parents and teachers who highlighted these events as significant.

4.5.1.1 Loss and Absence
There was a clear theme of loss through absence of father figures and/or significant male role models for all pupils. This was through separation, death, imprisonment or prevention of contact.

Shanniece's Teacher: *There are some issue, err, I felt her father's not around* (8-9)

Shanniece's Parent: *he [Shanniece's brother] was arrested and he was away* (302-303)

Sam's Parent: w*e moved house…um, and my Dad got cancer and then died and that certainly didn't, he was very close to my father, and that certainly didn't help* (177-180)

Jamie's Teacher: *…at the beginning, there was no contact with Dad whatsoever…None at all (367-369)*

David spoke personally of the deep impact losing his father had on being excluded, and clarified that, although he receives support from female family members, there is a void left by his father that cannot be filled by others. David's mother shared her experience of her son's 'stress' in response to loss.

David: *Um, if my Dad was here, I wouldn't have probably been excluded*. (542-543)
I am still getting the boost and the help that I need from my Mum and my sisters, but it's not enough without my Dad, not getting a lot (410-413)

David's Parent: *I know he was stressed because he lost his Dad and it's not easy* (82-83)

4.5.1.2 Risk to Self

Experiences shared by teachers and parents implied a sense of threat to wellbeing for some pupils. Two teachers cited involvement of social care and child protection processes, leading to periods of transition, instability and uncertainty for those pupils.

Jamie's Teacher: *there were issues, you know, child protection issues, that kind of led to him being withdrawn from the primary school for a period of about three or four months (9-13)*

Shanniece's Teacher: *…'cause there was an allegation made against someone in her family and Social Services got involved for a bit (118-120)…I think it affected her quite a lot (188)*

Risk as a result of interactions with peers was a concern shared by both Sam and David's Parents.

Sam: *they'd see us on the way home and start chasing us and start trying to beat us up and stuff (9-11)....all his brothers, his cousins...then all his family started saying that they were going to beat me up (330-332)*

David's Parent: *Sometimes he say people are troubling him at school* (307-308)

Shanniece's mother spoke about her daughter's engagement in early sexual relationships, others' subsequent negative responses and treatment and Shanniece's distress in response to this.

Shanniece's Parent: *I said, why are you afraid to go there? One of the boys she was sleeping with was going to the school down there and she said, everyone down there just look at her different (340-344)...so she, she was scared to go, that's when I start going to school with her* (404-406)

4.5.1.3 Response to Risk

Pupils' responses to risks described appeared to differ somewhat, particularly between Sam and others perceptions of Shanniece's reactions. Sam spoke of his need to protect or defend himself from physical harm, which manifested in seeking out weapons.

Sam: *I'll try to act like nothing was bothering me at all but in fact it was...so I thought alright I need to sort of have something to protect myself, so that's why I had the weapon sort of thing* (339-344)

This was shown in both teacher and parent accounts, particularly powerfully from his mother, evidenced in her strong use of language to describe the level of vulnerability she felt he experienced in response to a hostile environment.

Sam's Parent: *...it freaked him out, really freaked him out and he just thought people are in the streets with these weapons, I'm going to get hurt, you know, someone's going to attack me, and that, I think, was the start of it* (451-454)

Sam's Teacher: *I think it was...maybe done for self-defence, because the sorts of people he was mixing with, you know, it was likely he was going to get into some sort of physical trouble* (351-356)

Contrastingly, Shanniece was described by her teacher as withdrawing physically (not attending school) and socially (disengaging from contact with others) in response to relational aggression.

> **Shanniece's Teacher**:…*the issues weren't the fact that she was being rude to people, she just didn't want to come to school, and didn't really want to sort of engage with people, you know and obviously kids were saying stuff…people had heard rumours and things like that…*(109-115)

Shanniece's perceived desire to 'flee' from threat contrasted with Sam's externalised 'fight' response, drawing attention to differences in types of risk experienced by males and females (physical vs. relational) and associated reactivity (fight vs. flight).

Jamie's response to perceived threat was inferred by his teacher to be an effect triggered by past experiences.

> **Jamie's Teacher:** *I think because of what he's been through he's sensitive to things like, you know, the raising of the voice, um, pointing, um, proximity when you're talking to him* (614-617)

4.5.2 Sub-Ordinate Theme: Negative Learning Experiences

Pupils' experiences of learning in school and connections between success/failure and self-belief emerged from the data as contributing to perceptions of security.

4.5.2.1 Irrelevance and Un-relatedness of Work

When asked about experiences of learning, all pupils gave accounts of school work as being irrelevant or unrelated to them, leading to disengagement. Shanniece specifically suggests a disconnection with learning owing to lack of applicability to her future, whereas other pupils experienced work that was either pitched at inappropriate levels, unchallenging or of little interest, impacting motivation to learn.

> **Shanniece**: *So if it ain't relevant, then I ain't going to listen* (562-563)
> *Why am I sitting here learning something what I don't need, ain't going to need in the future* (552-554)

Sam: *If I've already been taught it, I don't see the need of being taught it again. If I know it, I'll just go, yeah, I don't care* (1056-1058)

David: *Because the class was boring or it would just be a joke* (500-501)

Jamie: *… [the work was] easy* (175). *They would just say get on with it or they'll just tell you the answers* (483-484)*… but if people tell you the answers, you don't really learn it for yourself* (489-491)

Jamie's teacher reflected that the disruptive behaviours he displayed may have been a consequence of the lack of stimulation he experienced where work did not match his levels of learning. She touches on the difficulties experienced with meeting pupils' academic and social needs.

Jamie's Teacher: *we'd have hoped the smaller classes would have helped him…(496-498)…perhaps if we'd moved him out of that nurture group stream much earlier he would have been able to kind of create a different environment for himself, different reputation for himself, 'cause the work would have been more challenging and therefore he wouldn't have been disruptive in lesson, 'cause he should have been engaged in the work* (500-508)

4.5.2.2 Un-met Learning Needs

Parents of Sam and Shanniece spoke about the relationship between difficulties their children experienced with learning and pupils' feelings of frustration and anger. Sam's Mother in particular attributed blame for Sam's disengagement to lack of support from school.

Sam's Parent: *I think they should have supported him more with the dyslexia, 'cause I think that played a massive part in how frustrated he got, and I think that stopped him, he just disengaged with school, and once his grades started to drop, he just couldn't be bothered. Oh, I'm stupid, so I'm not going to bother* (589-596)

Shanniece's Parent: *'cause she was doing the dyslexia thing at primary school* (635-636)*…she'll get angry when it comes to reading or taking up the book* (650-652)

Shanniece's Parent: *I can't remember if she get supported in secondary school. I don't think, I can't remember if she get it* (670-672)

Shanniece's mother's uncertainty about the support her daughter received for Dyslexia in secondary school was reflected in Shanniece's teacher's unawareness of her literacy difficulties.

Shanniece's Teacher: *…like she's not dyslexic or, you know, there's nothing, she, she's not got a learning difficulty, so to speak, or a special need* (252-255)

David's teacher similarly linked his task avoidance and disruptive behaviour to difficulties with accessing learning.

David's Teacher: *he's in most of the bottom sets, um, and probably where some of his behaviour started coming from as well* (12-14)*…avoiding work, and trying to cover up the fact that he can't do it…text book* (20-21)

4.5.2.3 Poor Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to the extent to which one believes in their capabilities to do something (Bandura, 1997) and is closely linked with levels of motivation. Shanniece reflected that where she perceived work to be too difficult or unachievable she would not try, a view echoed in both teacher and parent accounts.

Shanniece: *so I'm just like, if I can't do it, I ain't going to try and do it. I used to think that a lot* (881-882)*…I was always like a negative person…I used to think, oh, I can't do it, so what's the point of me doing it… like I never used to try it* (920-924)

Shanniece's Teacher: *it's almost as though she doesn't try and study 'cause she thinks she's going to fail and she'd rather just not try, and try and fail…it's a bit of a classic, isn't it (214-217)*

Shanniece's Parent: *She said, Mum, I don't think I can draw this one; I don't think we can get far with the drawing* (568-570)

Sam's Mother also reflected on her perceptions of Sam's low sense of self belief.

Sam's Parent: …*knowing the sort of child he is. If he thinks he can't do it, he just won't try* (599-600)

4.5.3 Sub-Ordinate Theme: Lack of Belonging

All participants made reference to a need to belong. This was the case in both social terms, either at home or with peers, and in the school setting, and was felt to be linked to pupils' overall experience of 'security'.

4.5.3.1 Social Acceptance

Most pupils expressed anxiety about 'fitting in' and being accepted by others in their relationships.

Shanniece: *I obviously had that heartbeat of thinking, oh gosh, what's everyone going to think about me (83-85)…at secondary school, everyone's like, urgh Shanniece, who's she, it's just not really the same thing you used to have [at primary school] (116-119)*

David: *I was a bit shy because I never knew anyone…I never knew anyone in the school, so I was going to be shy (66-68)*

This was reiterated by parents and teachers.

David's Parent: *Sometimes he say it's no good, they don't like me (449-450)*

Jamie's Teacher: *I think Jamie desperately wants to be liked. I think he just wants to be accepted for who he is and liked (126-128)*

Views shared by Shanniece's parent and David's teacher linked pupils' risky behaviours (as a means of gaining attention) with low self-esteem and an underlying desire for acceptance.

Shanniece's Parent: *she was saying the reason why she do these things was to get attention, and especially boys' attention 'cause she thought all her friend was prettier than her and everything (748-752)*

David's Teacher: *he's got mates, but I don't think that, I don't, David doesn't have a particular friend. Yeah and most students have a friend (143-145) …it's obviously for the attention, I think (713)*

Sam's experiences of belonging were linked to his feeling 'different' and 'unrelated' to his family, reflected in his parent's perceptions of being rejected by her son.

Sam: *I felt different, I felt quite, like I was sort of letting them, my family sort of down (833-835) No-one else in my family is like me…me and my cousin have sort of felt like the outcasts of the family (798-801)*

Sam's Parent: *he was very much against what he saw as our sort of middle class background, you're posh and stupid and he didn't want to have anything to do with us (263-266)*

4.5.3.2 School Acceptance

A significant aspect of lack of belonging was the sense that pupils did not feel cared for by adults in the school context. This was particularly evident when pupils spoke about their relationships with certain teachers.

Sam: *I would sit at the back of the class in the corner, with no-one in front or next to me at all and they'd just sit me there, would not acknowledge me at all. I'd just sit there, if I didn't do the work, didn't matter. If I did, didn't make a difference. (677-682)*

Shanniece: *like, you had them teachers who didn't care (670-671)*

David: *[It made me think] that the teacher doesn't care (156)*

Jamie: *Some teachers, they just don't listen, they just don't care (78-79)*

Jamie's teacher reflects on how inclusion in the nurture group as a means to support Jamie's perceived social and behaviour needs resulted in him feeling excluded rather than included in the school community.

Jamie's Teacher: *[inclusion in the nurture stream] actually had a negative effect on him, 'cause he felt, you know, very segregated from the mainstream school (498-500)*

4.5.3.3 Lack of Support

Lack of adult support within school also played an important role in pupils' experience of belonging. Some young people relayed negative feelings about being treated unfairly by adults, disliked or singled out.

> **David:** *I think 'til the end of year seven [I felt like teachers were being unfair]* (248)
> *[I was] angry, because it wasn't my fault* (184)

> **Jamie:** *'Cause she just accused you for stuff that you hadn't been doing, just agitates you, she gets you in trouble, one teacher says one thing; she says another* (400-403)

Jamie's teacher felt this lack of consistency resulted in him experiencing a poor sense of security within school.

> **Jamie's Teacher:** *him not having a consistent adult in school that he could see every morning, so he didn't really get that safe school environment* (379-381)

Lack of support from school during exclusion periods was also raised by the majority of the pupils.

> **Sam***: when there's a long exclusion like you should give the person work to do. I didn't get any work at all (590-592)*

> **David**: *No [the school sent no work home when I was excluded]* (210)

> **Jamie**: *None [amount of support given before or during exclusions from school]* (573)

4.5.4 Summary

Pupils' experiences of security were described by participants as threatened by certain events or risk factors perceived as influencing fixed term exclusion. These included: family loss and absence, risk of harm from self and others, negative or unsuccessful learning experiences and poor perceptions of belongingness in relationships out of school and through lack of support and recognition for needs in school.

4.6 Super-Ordinate Theme: Search for Security

Figure 4.3: Super-Ordinate Theme: Search for Security
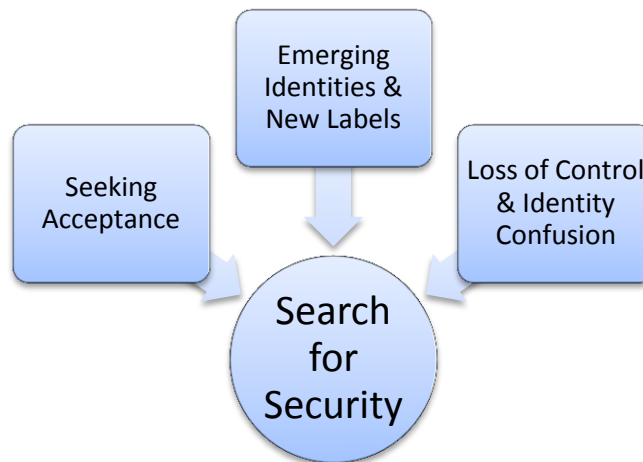
The second super-ordinate theme 'Search for Security' presents participants' experiences of responding to and negotiating the effects of threatened security.

4.6.1 Sub-Ordinate Theme: Seeking Acceptance

4.6.1.1 Negative Social Influences

Validation by peers was an important aspect of this theme. Pupils, parents and teachers shared experiences outlining the impact of social influences on behaviours. Shanniece describes modelling the negative behaviour of others as a means to gain recognition and friendship in school.

Shanniece: *like you see what people do and so you think, okay, everyone's doing it and they're friends, so you think, okay, I'm making new friends like this, so you do it, copy them* (105-109)

She illustrates how peers influenced her behaviour in class.

Shanniece*: They would be like, trust me…that teacher really needs someone to stand up to them…they're like, Shanniece you're really brave or something, you know what I mean* (246-251)

This was expanded by Shanniece's mother to include peer influences outside of school.

Shanniece's Parent: *Shanniece was like, all my friends can go to those, that house and sleep, why, why can't I? All my friends have got a boyfriend, why can't I? (84-87)*

Shanniece's teacher spoke about the destructive impact she felt modelling others' behaviours had on Shanniece's self-esteem and self-worth.

Shanniece's Teacher: *[she] was sleeping with other, boys, 'cause, she was just like, oh, I've done it now, not going to make any difference to me (433-435) …self-esteem, I think, is part of that though, I don't, I don't think Shanniece really cares about her body (419-422)*

Sam described his friendship choices to be related to not being judged for who he is but rather for his actions, and linked this sense of equality to social status (i.e. 'working class'), implying that other 'classes' may be less accepting of him. He reflected on his previous associations with gangs and on the nature of his actions whilst in this company.

Sam: *I hang around with quite working class people…They don't care who you are, as long as you're nice to them, they'll treat you nicely (953-957) [I was] like chilling with gang people, and that, just doing really dumb things (406-407)*

Sam's teacher intimates that his actions (leading to exclusion) were to impress his peers in his gang or group in order to include or ingratiate himself.

Sam's Teacher: *We had suspicions that he may be on the periphery of maybe some gang involvement outside of school (15-18) I think it was the sort of person that he was hanging around with and it was partly done to impress (351-353)*

David's teacher and parent both inferred his behaviour to be a means of gaining peer approval.

David's Teacher: *…it's obviously for the attention, I think (713)*

David's Parent: *…sometimes I think, is it your friend you're following? (497-498)*

David reflected on how peers negatively influenced his behaviours in school and can be seen to question whether his actions obtained the desired impact.

> **David**: *[Friends were] telling me to do stuff that I shouldn't be doing* (488-489) *Sometimes I'd feel good about it, sometimes I think about, what are they laughing at, are they laughing at the joke or are they laughing at me?* (510-512)

Jamie was the only pupil where gaining adult attention as opposed to peer recognition was described as driving his negative behaviours.

> **Jamie's Teacher:** *And he likes adults listening he craves that adult attention* (131-132)…*And that's how he gets it [through negative attention seeking]* (135)

Achieving social validation was illustrated as a key motivator for some pupils' actions, which culminated in school exclusion.

4.6.2 Sub-Ordinate Theme: Emerging Identities and New Labels

4.6.2.1 Negative self-fulfilling prophecy

A self-fulfilling prophecy is the process by which individuals "*embody the positions they are offered*" (Howarth, 2004, p.371). Participants' experiences suggested that how pupils were treated or labelled by adults in school played an important role in how pupils responded and had a subsequent impact on their self-perceptions and the identities they assumed.

Sam likened his treatment in the classroom to a 'wild animal' and described the negative impact this had on his behaviour.

> **Sam**: *I had a lot of other teachers who'd treat me like a little, like a wild animal, sort of thing, in the class* (675-677)… *it made me think, hang on, if they're going to take, like treat me like this, I might as well act how they're treating me, I'm going to act worse so I started acting worse* (686-689)

Jamie similarly proposed that regardless of how he behaved he was negatively labelled and judged, particularly by some teachers.

Jamie: *…it was mostly me that got in trouble anyway, even if I didn't encourage someone, I would still get in trouble.* (596-598)*…teachers still think I'm bad, certain teachers* (717-718)

The negative expectations Jamie felt staff members had of him and his behaviour were confirmed by his teacher.

Jamie's Teacher: *Um, disruptive, trouble maker, yeah, definitely (*558-559)

David implies that his reputation with staff changed when he started being excluded and he described how his behaviour differed depending on how they treated him.

David: *…I think it put my reputation down* (226)*…some teachers would ask me why [I'd been excluded]… but other teachers would just shout at me all the time because I'd been excluded (469-471) [If teachers shouted at me I] just left them* (474) *[If they didn't shout I] just did my work (478)*

New labels and identities extended beyond school staff to peers. Both Sam and Shanniece spoke about reputations they had established amongst other young people and the expectations peers had of them as a result.

Sam*: I got sort of a reputation that I had to keep up* (206-207) *if someone said anything, just the tiniest little thing wrong, they would say, oh, are you going to take that…so obviously I had to do something about it to not look like a fool (752-756)*

Shanniece*: 'cause I was like top, everyone had to know things about me (705-707)…who I go out with, what am I doing, who am I seeing, what am I wearing, what's my next look, well, you know what I mean, that's what everyone's business wanted to be (710-713)*

Jamie's teacher described how reputations generated by previous behaviours of his family may have influenced him.

Jamie's Teacher*: … [the family] were already known in the area... his older brother, um, was known to be quite aggressive, um, and can be physically violent, so I think, you know, he, he ended up trading on that reputation* (33-36)

4.6.3 Sub-Ordinate Theme: Loss of Control and Identity Confusion

Participants' accounts of school exclusion communicated a sense of helplessness over the extent to which they could affect positive change. Parents and teachers in particular highlighted the influence this had on role and identity.

4.6.3.1 Pupils

For some pupils the ability to make positive choices appeared to be closely matched to the beliefs they attributed to themselves, and their perceived lack of control in affecting change.

> **Shanniece**: *[my teacher] he's like Shanniece… why do you act like this and I was like, what, it's just how I am, and that's how I used to thought I was, like just being bad and that* (795-799)

> **Shanniece's Parent: …***she was going down that road and she don't think she's nice, sleep with a boy and be rude to a teacher and be nasty to anyone* (755-758)

Jamie's teacher attributed some of the difficulties Jamie experienced to having an uncertain sense of self, and linked this to his desire for belonging. Identity confusion is a recognised part of adolescent development, and Erikson (1968) describes this state to manifest in "*conflicted young people whose sense of confusion is due…to a war within themselves*" (p.17).

> **Jamie's Teacher**: *I'm not sure he knows who he is… but he likes acceptance* (128-129)

4.6.3.2 Parents

Parents spoke about the impact pupils' behaviour had on their sense of competence and control.

> **Shanniece's Parent:** *What more can I do, I can't do nothing more* (183-184)

> **Sam's Parent**: *That was the first time I felt out of control as a parent* (747-748)

Jamie's Teacher: *…she [Jamie's Mother] was disappointed…but her response was, I'm not sure what else I can do (423-426)*

For Sam's mother this loss of control extended to frustrations she experienced in interactions with school management about the conditions of her son's exclusion.

Sam's Parent: *the fact that they'd already decided they were going to permanently exclude him and not follow the procedures, I felt was, was wrong* (308-310)

Tensions in parental role were expressed by Shanniece's mother as she described managing her daughter's behaviour in response to her independence seeking and limit testing.

Shanniece's Parent: *I tried to be her friend and when I get too close with her she forgot that I'm her Mum as well, you get where I'm coming from?* (156-159)

The emotional impact of these experiences on parents was expressed though changes in wellbeing, fear for their child's future and through questioning of themselves as parents.

Shanniece's Parent: *It wasn't a nice experience. It was heart breaking, it break me down, stressed a lot, like days, I would just cry, cry, cry…*(705-709) *…always wondering if she's going to get pregnant at age of 13 or 14* (715-716)

Sam's Parent:…*I was thinking he was going to be excluded, he was going to go to some awful school somewhere, that he was going to end in some unit and his life was over* (1076-1080)

Sam's Parent*: I couldn't relate to it, I couldn't understand where it was coming from…had we done something wrong, what had we done to make him behave like this*? (1207-1210)

4.6.3.3 Teachers

Teachers' responses also conveyed a sense of helplessness in the limitations they perceived their influence to have on pupil experiences outside school contexts.

Jamie's Teacher: *you don't know what he's doing when he's not here… so there's loads of things that still need to be addressed around what he does outside of school* (910-912)

Shanniece's Teacher: *…it was heart breaking* (475-476) *but…I didn't really know what more I could do either 'cause you're kind of stuck, your hands are tied in terms of, you can't take them home with you unfortunately* (526-530)

Shanniece's teacher expressed the conflict she experienced in trying to meet pupils' educational and social needs within the remit of her role.

Shanniece's Teacher: *each year group should have someone attached who's like [a guidance counsellor], I know that's part of my job, but I can't do that all the time, 'cause I've got to teach as well* (612-615)

She proposed that until priorities shift in allocation of resources, her power to affect change for certain children remains beyond her control.

Shanniece's Teacher: *…if we had more time with the kids, I guess, really and if we had more time, more resources* (503-505) *I suppose there's nothing we can do about these kids until we've got more resources* (564-566)

The conflict in managing teaching and pastoral responsibilities was reflected in the lack of knowledge some teachers felt they had about pupils in their care.

David's Teacher: *I don't know really how to say it…I don't know enough about him, you know, as an individual* (497-499)*…I really don't have a clue what he wants to do* (560-561)*…I don't know much about his home life* (395)

4.6.4 Summary

Participants' experiences of searching for security were expressed through three interlinked sub-ordinate themes. Social and peer persuasions were highlighted as important influences on young people and the negative labels pupils acquired as a result of validation-seeking behaviours and subsequent adult and peer responses were felt to have contributed to new negative identities. Participants expressed a loss of control over their abilities to affect change and there was a clear negative impact on identity and role.

4.7 Super-Ordinate Theme: Re-establishing Security

Figure 4.4: Super-Ordinate Theme: Re-establishing Security
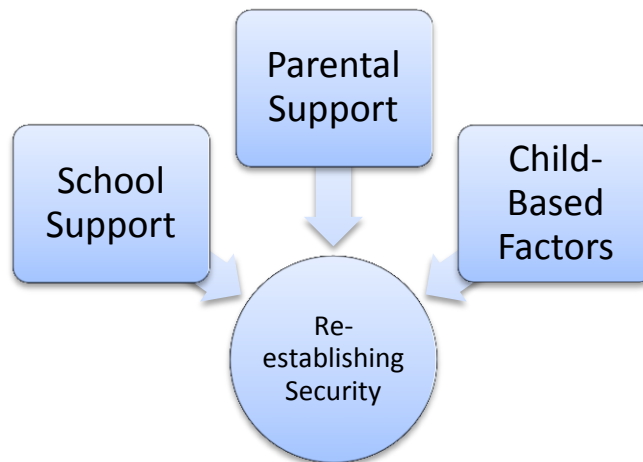
There were three key themes that emerged from participants accounts interpreted as contributing towards a re-established sense of security.

4.7.1 Sub-Ordinate Theme: School Support

School Support was identified as encouraging and reinforcing pupil coping efforts leading to positive reintegration. This was experienced through Supportive Relationships, Support for Needs and Positive Expectations and Belief.

4.7.1.1 Supportive Relationships

The majority of young people referred to an adult within the school setting who they had established a personal relationship with and perceived as being there to help them. Factors pupils described as supporting relationships were the reliability, consistency and approachableness of the adult, feeling understood, listened to and cared for.

Shanniece: *I actually talked, like sat down and talked to her and like when I've been through a situation, she was always there, so I thought, wow, that is actually a really good teacher* (277-280)

Sam: *I think the person who helped me the most probably was Mr X (657-658)…the main thing, it was just that he was actually quite friendly…instead of being really, really formal like a lot of other teachers (669-675)*

Jamie: *Miss X… she helped (661-662)…she realised that some of the teachers would just get people in trouble for no reason (665-667) …when I was getting in trouble, they would just pull me away, so I wouldn't argue with the teacher, stuff like that (656-659)*

Teachers described relationships where pupils already had a sense of familiarity and rapport with the adult as a reinforcing factor in building positive connections. Support provided by some teachers was informal and operated via an open door policy.

Jamie's Teacher: *you know, he, he did make the links with the staff that he felt comfortable speaking to (473-475) he gets on really well with the seclusion officer because she has time to have those one to one discussions with him (161-163)*

Sam's Teacher: *It was an informal thing (151) …we had another Deputy Head based on this side who formed a really good relationship with Sam and he would…mentor him and you know, talk to him about growing up and being a young man, and the way you behave and that, I think, helped him significantly (142-148)*

Parents drew on the importance of pupils' awareness that the teacher held a positive view of them as significant factor in establishing trust in relationships.

Sam's Parent: *these two particular teachers…they both like him, you can tell they like him, and I think he knew that deep down (1136-1138)*

Shanniece's Parent: *she get along with lots of teacher down there (498-499) …anything happen to her and they go to her and if she can trust that person, she's going to speak (502-503)*

David's Parent: *Some of them, they say they like David and David is very good with the subject…they want him to have a good life (436-440)*

4.7.1.2 Support and Understanding of Needs

Some support provided for pupils was described by teachers as related to learning; however the majority of interventions targeted social, emotional and behavioural needs.

David's Teacher: *so if he's had a lot of Numeracy and Literacy support, that could be what's also helped him improve* (739-741)

Shanniece's Teacher: *[I] referred for her counselling and stuff and she's had some counselling…* (195-197)

Sam's Teacher: *he has had support, he's had, I believe, input from either the counsellor or a learning mentor* (153-155)

Jamie's Teacher: *He had, you know, mentor support, he had transition support… So he had people that he could talk to* (471-473)

Parent accounts reflected the positive impact interventions provided by school were perceived to have on pupils.

Sam's Parent: *he was given him as a mentor as well and that seemed to have some effect* (675-676)

Shanniece's Parent: *…pushing her with her work and they chat with her and she go and she have a little talk with them. I think that did help* (488-490)

David's Parent: *… they're quite supportive, definitely 100%, some of them, they support him. They want him to be good* (444-446)

However Sam's parent indicated that the support provided by school (although currently meeting his needs) was reactive rather than proactive, and was in response to parental persistence rather than his needs.

Sam's Parent: *The school didn't give him enough support, I had to really kick up a fuss for them to give him any dyslexia support (58-60) but to their credit…they've really stepped up since then and…they've really supported us in in turning things around (1232-1235)*

Some parents drew on the positive impact of recognising pupils' positive behaviour or work through rewards and praise.

David's Parent: *if David is good, they give me a letter or like sticker or anything. You know, it's good (26-28)*

Sam's Parent: *They're very quick to reward him when they're pleased with him...a couple of teachers have sent him a little card thing saying how pleased they are that he's really turned a corner* (1046-1050)

Use of clear, consistent boundaries and expectations were reported by teachers to support pupils' behavioural responses.

Sam's Teacher: *[he responded better to] people who had very clear expectations, consistent approach, um, fair with him* (322-324)

Jamie's Teacher: *We're all quite consistent in our, our boundaries and our expectations and that really helped (806-808)*

Where pupil needs were perceived as extending beyond the level of intervention school could provide, support from outside agencies was sought. Jamie spent two terms part time in a behaviour support centre, and the necessity of this intervention was reflected in his teacher's understanding of his need for containment and the approaches required to support him.

Jamie's Teacher: *you have to manage his behaviour very specifically, to get the best out of him (620-621)...he needs to have that, that time with an adult where he's got more attention, you know, than anybody else and...he really could only get that at the centre (754-757)*

Jamie's positive description of the individualised support and fair treatment he received, and his desire to stay at the provision suggested that his basic needs for safety and security were being met.

Jamie: *[the centre] was helping me (448)...just like say you got stuck on one sort of piece of work, they would actually sit down and explain it to you, instead of telling you what it is and stuff (475-478)...they was actually fair. If someone did something wrong, or they didn't do nothing wrong and they got accused for it, they'd actually look into it and not just straight away try and shout at them (454-459)...they said to me, do you want to come back and I said, yeah... (441-442)*

Multi-agency approaches to intervention and consistent communication and sharing accounts of progress between services were also highlighted as factors supporting change.

Jamie's Teacher: *We eventually did get a family support worker to work with the family, and that helped for a period (486-488) …they worked really well with us, in terms of the school and with the social worker, to make sure that, you know, everything, everybody was kept in the loop and everybody knew…the positives of how much progress he was making (713-718)*

4.7.1.3 Positive Expectations

Encouragement from significant adults played an important role in increasing pupils' beliefs in their capabilities. By being given a 'fresh start', not pre-judged on previous behaviour and knowledge that staff had belief in him created positive conditions for Sam to make changes.

Sam: *I had more support from the teachers, 'cause they knew I was actually, I could actually change (533-535)…they didn't sort of hold what I had done against me, which sort of gave me the opportunity to change (1204-1206)*

For Shanniece, support and encouragement from teachers in subjects she perceived as relevant to her (i.e. design) and recognition from adults for her work in these classes appeared to foster her motivation.

Shanniece: *he's like Shanniece you've got really good potential…you've got potentials, you should be better (795-800)… like he started to help me and then I started to get projects done and everything (802-803)…[now] when I do things, people actually comment and actually notice it, so I think if…you lot's going to notice it, then I think I can make everyone else notice my work, yeah (940-944)*

These descriptions were reflected in parents' accounts of pupils' reactions to experiences of success in school.

Shanniece's Parent: *she do the work and she'll rush home to show me (562-563)…she was so proud to show anything she do (567-568)*

David's Parent …*sometimes [he] come home and say, Mummy, I was very good, my teacher say I'm good (58-59)*

Although support and belief from staff was an important factor for young people, some participants described teachers' attitudes towards pupils to only be positive after pupils altered their behaviours. This could suggest the onus was on young people

rather than staff to initiate change and may highlight a 'within-child' deficit model where responsibility for behaviour lies solely with the child.

Shanniece: *when you started caring about your work, then you noticed that teachers do care about you* (761-763)

Sam's Teacher: *maybe because people aren't on his back all the time, because things are going better…So people aren't on his back and therefore things go better* (528-531)

Jamie: *Because when I started behaving, um, teachers wouldn't actually say I'd done something, they would actually look into it to see who'd done it* (606-609)

Jamie's Teacher: *people don't go, 'oh, Jamie', any more. It's not that kind of 'ugh, deep breath' before you go into the classroom, because he's now misbehaving in the minority, as it were* (545-548)

4.7.2 Sub-Ordinate Theme: Parental Support

…'Cause a lot of kids like that do get thrown out, 'cause they haven't got supportive parents who don't fight their battles who don't stay by them, that's why they get kicked out...their parents need to get involved, and actually back them up and then it's a lot more likely that they will stay in the school, but they don't. They just let them sort of do their own thing, whatever happens happens (Sam, 1028-1039)

Parental support emerged from the data as a key contributor to pupils' re-established security and sustained reintegration. The extract from Sam described the level of impact he perceives parents can have in supporting young people at risk of exclusion and the potential for negative consequences when this support is not present. This was echoed in experiences of other participants.

4.7.2.1 Rules, Boundaries and Consequences

In the majority of cases parents could be seen to play a significant role in making exclusion from school an unpleasant experience for pupils, particularly by implementing consequences at home during fixed term exclusions.

Shanniece: *I was annoyed 'cause I was thinking…I'm missing out…I was like being home and then just hear my Mum like moaning at us and that, just like, come on, I need to get out of this house* (574-579)

Sam: *When I was excluded, I realised how horrible it was. I wasn't allowed out obviously, my Mum said, right; you're grounded* (1071-1074) *I hated it, I found it so boring and then I realised…I don't want this to happen again* (1086-1088)

David: *I wished it had never happened* (550)

Jamie: *I didn't feel good about it* (224)

Parents outlined some of the consequences they implemented.

Shanniece's Parent: *…you're not sleeping while everyone is at school and so at exactly 7 o'clock, I wake her out the bed, go and do the dishes, go and do the front room and I wouldn't stop her until 3, 3 o'clock, school is over*. (256-261)

David's Parent: *I told him to go and sleep, no TV. Breakfast, bath and go to bed. I say…when it's time for these kids that are going to school I say, get up, David* (379-382)

Some parents and teachers relayed the positive impact they perceived fixed term exclusions to have had on pupils.

Shanniece's Parent: *Yeah, so I think…the exclusions were good for her* (765-766)

Sam's Parent: *he was devastated* (401) *he didn't want to, didn't want to be excluded, didn't want to leave, desperate to stay in the school* (425-427)

Sam's Teacher: *I think it was a positive impact. Um, it's a, a strange thing to say, but I think it was. I think it really brought him up short and I think he had to examine how he had been behaving and what he had done which had brought about that exclusion* (473-478)

Jamie's teacher however proposed that exclusion did not have the same influence for Jamie, and described a negative impact on behaviour.

Jamie's Teacher: *he was quite happy. He's at home for three days, doesn't have to get up in the morning…his day to day behaviour didn't improve…he actually just became more defiant, to be quite honest with you* (312-320)

School implemented additional interventions for Jamie to support his feelings of safety and security (i.e. part time enrolment at a behavioural support centre). His teacher indicates that although Jamie's Mother did what she could within her capacity to support her son, there were additional pressures on her and the family which may have impacted this process.

> **Jamie's Teacher:** *…she was very overwhelmed by the whole kind of process that she was going through (357-359)…so it wasn't that she wasn't doing anything…I firmly believe that she was, you know, doing everything that she could…(438-441)*

4.7.2.2 Direction and Guidance

Guidance emerged as a key function of parental support. Pupils shared differing accounts of how this support was experienced.

> **Sam:** *Mum and Dad always told me how…all that sort of stuff was wrong, which also quite helped me (1257-1261)…the lessons that I've been taught by them sort of stuck with me. Sort of helped me through the bad part (1268-1271)*

> **David**: *Basically just the words from my Mum (625) That you're the only man in the house and…in the future, you, you could be helping me, your sister…just your family, basically (629-632) [She told me teachers are] just trying to help you to become a better person (646-647)*

> **Jamie**: *She said I need to start being good in school and listening and try not to get in trouble (619-620) So I have to be good to get a job and my Mum explained it to me and stuff like that (633-635)*

> **Shanniece**: *My Mum is a big motivation, and a big thing in my life (377-378)…I will never forget the things what Mum said, like you're my only daughter, please do good for me (357-359)*

> **Shanniece's Teacher:** *…her Mum saying…I want you to knuckle down and not get into trouble at school, etc, etc, I think that probably her Mum is probably the biggest influence on her (796-801)*

This theme was also reflected through parental messages about the value of education.

David's Parent: *School is the key of your life. It's your life. When you have good education, you have your good job…* (640-642)

Shanniece's Parent: *If you drop out of school…what would you be doing, living on the dole, huh? What would you be doing, nothing* (775-779)

Sam's Parent: *he knows how important I think education is, um, and he knew that he was really, you know, letting me down* (778-780)

4.7.2.3 Parental Persistence and Dedication

There was a sense of depth and dedication demonstrated through parents of accounts of the ways in which they supported their children. Shanniece's Mother described how she walked her teenage daughter to and from school to protect her from perceived harm. This act starkly contrasted her daughter's engagement in adult-like behaviours and highlighted Shanniece's child-like vulnerability and need for parental containment.

Shanniece's Parent: *I did, yeah, walk her to school and when I came and pick her up, don't care how big she was, I hold her hand and…I wait at the school gate and I start her to trust me again, to show her what I'm saying is right* (206-210) *I haven't give up on you…don't care what it is, we'll fight it together* (355-357)

Sam's mother's account demonstrated the advantages of social capital when challenging school as a system. She described how her own educational resources and understandings of exclusion procedures and legislation supported her with advocating on behalf of her son.

Sam's Parent: *I'm pretty articulate and I knew what…I felt was the right course of action (295-297) …they're supposed to treat each child as an individual and I was going to insist that they did (667-669) I met with the Head and the Chair of Governors separately (313-314)…[and] I was up the school on and off every other week probably, just trying to get them to, you know, this isn't working, we need to do this instead, can we try that instead (659-662)*

David's Mother described teaching her son values important to her, and illustrated how she supported him with understanding others actions.

David's Parent:…*you don't want anybody to disrespect me, so you respect everybody, if you're young or big or old, colour black or white, respect (116-120)…when you are upset, I told David, don't put it on teachers because they are helping you (97-100) I say the teachers, they have a lot of things to do, some of the teachers, there's the headmistress is shouting at them…they have a lot on their plate (698-700)*

For Jamie's teacher, the increased stability and absence of parental discord was a significant out-of school factor perceived as supporting change.

Jamie's Teacher:…*a stable home environment where, you know, there's no issues with the landlord (761-763)…the situation between Mum and Dad being, you know, resolved as far as it can be, so there's not that tension any more (765-768)*

4.7.2.4 Positive Home-School Relationship

The majority of teachers and parents described a positive level of engagement between home and school.

Shanniece's Teacher: *if Shanniece was in the wrong, Mum's always been supportive of like, you know, the school (628-630)*

David's Teacher: *she's quite supportive of the school. Yeah, quite supportive of the school (221-224)*

Shanniece's Parent: *the school did get involved, tried to help me (82-83)…if there was a problem, I would go there (457-458)*

David's Parent: *Teacher call me complaining… telling me he's very rude in class, I told the teacher, I give you 100% right, when he is rude, to tell him there (341-345)*

Some home-school relationships were described as more challenging. Jamie's teacher relayed the difficulties school experienced with getting in touch with and engaging Jamie's mother.

Jamie's Teacher: *certainly the first term was quite tricky. Um, we couldn't always contact her (420-422)*

Sam's mother's anxieties about his exclusions and the level support he received were not eased by school contact and this was reflected in both parent and teacher accounts.

Sam's Parent: *[support from school] was inadequate. It just didn't, it didn't do what he needed and what we needed* (642-644)

Sam's Teacher: *she was sort of obviously devastated, but then she became…quite aggressive and quite difficult in dealing with us* (41-44)

Sam's mother's accounts of present day interactions with school suggested her needs were now being met or managed. She described a mutually beneficial home-school relationship whereby she and school equally benefited from each other's input in providing support for Sam.

Sam's Parent: *to get a direct contact with them has really helped me and helped them as well, I think, because it's meant that I'm engaged with them, you know, to help him, um, so that they can help him too* (1114-1118)

This case in particular highlighted the needs parents may have from contact with school.

4.7.3 Sub-Ordinate Theme: Child-Based Factors

"I think it was actually from herself, and she thought, actually, I'm going to make the change, and it's got to come from the child really, hasn't it?"
(Shanniece's Teacher, 707-710)

As identified in the extract, in addition to school and parental support, pupil characteristics were also described to contribute towards re-established security.

4.7.3.1 Motivation to Change

Some pupils described their motivations to change to be related to avoiding negative outcomes, including permanent exclusion from school, reduced educational and future opportunities, and a lack of benefit or gain from current behaviours.

Sam: *I was starting to realise that if I carried on how I was going I was going to have no education, I was going to end up getting kicked out of school, I was going to end up having serious problems with people* (390-394)

Jamie: *I don't want to be like that [my brother] I don't want to get permanently excluded from a school* (649-650)*…it's made me think that I need to start being good in school, even if I don't like certain teachers, I just have to get on in their lesson, to get an education* (624-627)

Shanniece: *…what am I gaining out of it, what am I actually really gaining out of it* (733-736)*…it just eventually just felt, I felt my body was tired* (730-731)

Motivation was also reflected in goals and aspirations for the future. Pupils' responses portrayed a degree of confidence and belief in their abilities to reach goals they had set for themselves.

Shanniece: *[I'm] ambitious…that's just the word…ambitious* (849-850)*…like next year, I want a job, I want to be part time college, and have my half, part time job and I think if I have those two, I'm going to get there* (1034-1037)

Sam: *I still don't know what I'll do for when I'm older. I have no idea what I'm going to do…no idea where I'm heading, but that's why my options are sort of open. So when I do decide what I want to do, I can do whatever.* (1217-1223)

David: *[My aim for the future is] to play football* (706) *It's going to be hard but I have to put a lot of hard work into it.* (717-718)

Jamie: *Because like I want to get a job in the future. So I have to be good to get a job (633-634)*

Parents and teachers commented on the importance pupils attributed to education.

Sam's Teacher: *…he wants to do well so there's that whole thing about aspirations* (566-568)

Sam's Parent: *He's realised education matters, he can't leave school without any qualifications* (786-788)

Jamie's Teacher: *I think he sees himself, you know, getting, staying on at school till year eleven, I don't think he sees himself leaving* (834-836)

Shanniece described her mother's hard work and progress to be a key motivator for her.

> **Shanniece:** *I saw Mum, like working in silly little cafés and everything...like she's a carer, I also thought that, that inspires me because from a café to a carer like, that is what I want, to do that (426-430)*

4.7.3.2 Positive Self-Efficacy

One pupil expressed a new sense of confidence and self-belief following experiences of success.

> **Shanniece***: I sat there thinking, okay, machine, you ain't going to beat me, I'm going to beat you. So I sat there and I started practising...and like now, [clicks fingers], I can use the machine like that and I think, to me, for a person that who'd never like do nothing, I felt, wow, I actually can use the machine (896-903)*

Shanniece's sense of achievement in an area of learning she felt was relevant to her future (fashion) was reflected in feelings of satisfaction and desire to share her success with others.

> **Shanniece:***...like I felt happy, it was just really a nice feeling, to know that I can do something (914-915)...so I was feeling proud, going home, saying, yeah, Mum, look what I've done (803-807)*

This experience could be seen to foster her motivation to succeed in future tasks.

> **Shanniece:** *I was beginning to think that I can achieve something, like if I really put my mind to it (907-909)...I think I know what I want to do...and if I believe...if I think I can do it, I know I will do it (1017-1020)*

However, future accomplishments for Shanniece depended not only on herself, but support from her mother, an indication that within-child, parental and school influences are acutely interrelated.

> **Shanniece:** *she's there, like anything goes wrong, she's there to catch me, but like, you know, I just want that little push, one push to say, Shanniece, get up and go (968-971) I think if she pushes me harder, I think I'll get there (977-978)*

4.7.3.3 Self-Awareness

Teachers commented on the increased level of self-awareness they felt some pupils developed.

Sam's Teacher: *he's able, I think, to rationalise and understand things and…respond appropriately. He's more able to do that* (538-542)

Shanniece's Teacher: *She's quite reflective of her own self* (805)

Some responses indicated that pupils experienced a degree of guilt or regret about how their behaviours had affected their families (reiterated in parents' accounts). Extracts suggested young people did not want to disappoint parents in the future, which may have been a driving force in sustaining reintegration.

Sam: *Mum was devastated* (578) *I felt really bad at the time, 'cause of my Mum sort of and my Dad like…they're not sort of like bad parents at all* (562-565)

Shanniece: *like just seeing my Mum getting hurt and everything* (729-730)
I saw Mum disappointed with me (594-595)

Sam's Parent: *I don't think it had even entered into his head how his behaviour was affecting us, and I think that was the point where he realised, and that might have been part of the turning point* (1185-1189)

Shanniece's Parent: *She started to open up and I think when, more she's seen my pain and I've been arguing with her* (358-360)

David: *she acted like she was okay, that she was okay with it, but she wasn't okay, she was, she said that I shouldn't, I shouldn't be getting excluded* (387-390)

4.7.3.4 Positive Social Orientations

Pupils' active change in friendships emerged as important in ensuring sustained reintegration and reflected an increased sense of autonomy and belongingness on the part of the young people.

David: *I've stopped listening to my friends (618)…they've told me to shout stuff out but I said no, there's no reason, there's no point (621-622)*

Shanniece: *I've learned not, not to be something you're not. Not to like, not to be what everyone wants you to be (836-838)*

Sam: *I moved away from all of that group completely and I started hanging round with sort of my girlfriends group who are a lot more calm…like they weren't always having fights with people they weren't always getting into trouble (372-378) I loved it. I didn't have to act like a, like the idiot like the hard guy (759-760)…I could just say anything and they wouldn't laugh at it (783-784)*

Parents and teachers described the impact positive peer groups had on young people.

Shanniece's Parent: *… she's not in the company that she was in before (592-593)*

Sam's Teacher: *…in terms of the people he hangs around with, yeah, he's not, he's not running with the bad boys, or he doesn't appear to be (586-588)*

Sam's Parent: *he spends virtually all of his time with her [his girlfriend] and had that not been the case, you know, he could have got into other trouble (901-904)*

Similarly, Jamie's self-reliance was reflected on by his teacher who identified 'resilience' as his inner strength.

Jamie's Teacher: *whereas you've got other kids who kind of forge the wrong path and don't quite know how to get out of that pattern of behaviour. Jamie hasn't done that because he's been the leader, he's just actively decided, oh, I'm going to do something different (650-656)…to kind of go through that process and still be here and very positively here in year eight…just shows how resilient he is (780-783)*

4.7.4 Summary

Supportive relationships, boundaries, positive expectations and support for needs were all experiences identified (both within the school context and paralleled at home) as positively influencing pupils' sense of security. Whilst other experiences were described as 'child-based' (i.e. motivations to change, self-belief, increased self-awareness, positive peer relationships and an increased sense of control) these factors were interpreted to be interdependent on external influences from home and school.

4.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter aimed to provide an overview of the findings generated by IPA. Key findings were presented within the super-ordinate themes: Threat to Security, Search for Security and Re-establishing Security. Further analytical considerations and the relevance of the findings in relation to the existing literature will be explored in detail in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter revisits the aims and associated research questions presented in the methodology section (5.2) and considers how themes generated by IPA address these in relation to the extant literature (5.3 – 5.6). Findings are conceptualised within theoretical frameworks (5.7) and possible strengths and limitations of the research explored (5.8) followed by a chapter summary (5.9).

5.2 Aims and Research Questions

This research set out to explore pupils', parents' and teachers' experiences of school exclusion and reintegration. By capturing the multiple perspectives of individuals most intimately involved, this research aimed to evolve current understandings of the interacting mechanisms influencing both processes, in particular 'what works' in securing positive outcomes for young people. The primary research question and sub-questions capturing these aims were:

What are pupils', parents' and teachers' experiences of school exclusion and reintegration?

3. *What are the risk factors experienced as influencing school exclusion?*

4. *What are the protective factors experienced as influencing sustained reintegration?*

Research questions will now be addressed in detail, in relation to and in the order of themes generated by IPA, and discussed in the context of the extant literature and emergent theory. To avoid narrowing interpretation of participants' experiences and to maintain an inductive approach, research questions were not referred to during the process of analysis or in writing up findings. As this research is limited by available

space, decisions about what to include in this chapter are governed by the researcher's choice of theoretical and conceptual frameworks, based inductively on data produced from participants' experiences.

5.3 Addressing Findings in Relation to the Literature

Figure 5.1: Over-arching Themes of Security
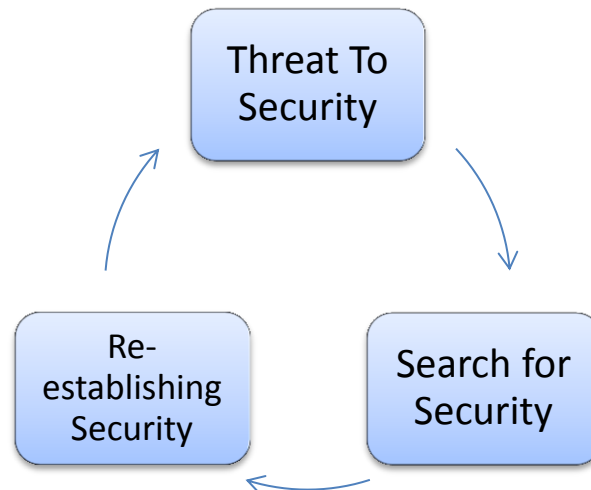
5.3.1 Risk and Protective Factors

Whilst experiences of exclusion and reintegration are discussed throughout this section, participants' responses within themes of 'Threat to Security' (5.4) and 'Re-establishing Security' (5.6) tended to focus on factors influencing these processes, rather than the events themselves. These factors were interpreted by the researcher to represent 'risk' and 'protective' factors contributing to exclusion and reintegration respectively.

As highlighted in the literature review, the response of the child to risk (i.e. 'Threat to Security') is often conceptualised in terms of vulnerability and resilience. While 'vulnerability' is defined as:

> *"the state of susceptibility to harm from exposure to stresses associated with environmental and social change and from the absence of capacity to adapt"*
>
> (Adger, 2006, p.268)

Resilience is thought to be:

"*…a universal capacity that allows a person, group or community to prevent, minimise or overcome the damaging effects of adversity*"
(Grotberg, 1997, p.6).

Knight (2007) proposed a three dimensional model of how resilience is conceptualised and used by educators:

- **'As a State'**, where resilience is internal to the individual and is associated with a set of "*personal characteristics associated with healthy development*" (p.546), involving emotional competence (i.e. positive self-concept, internal locus of control) and social competence (i.e. relationships, empathy).
- **'As a Condition'**, where resilience involves an inter-play between the individual and environment and varies according to context and exposure to adverse conditions.
- **'As Practice'**, concerned with what families, schools and communities can do to promote and nurture resilience.

This three dimensional model can be seen to parallel an ecological and interactionist framework and supports the notion that "*how a child responds to risk is a function of personal attributes, part socially determined and part biologically based*" (Bynner, 2001, p.286). By using phenomenology to understand possible risk factors precipitating vulnerability to exclusion and protective factors supporting resilience and reintegration, this chapter identifies areas of intervention for practitioners, revealed through the voice of participants. The implications of this will be explored further in Chapter Six.

The following sections address how themes identified through IPA answer the primary and sub research questions.

5.4 Threat to Security

Sub Question 1: What are the risk factors experienced as influencing school exclusion?

A number of potential risk factors to exclusion were identified through interviews with participants represented in the theme 'Threat to Security'. Literature on school exclusion indicates that pupils involved in this process are often already vulnerable, and are at an "*increased likelihood of a negative outcome typically as a result of exposure to risk*" (Fergus & Zimmerman (2005, p.400). Risk was summarised through: Negative Life Events, Negative Learning Experiences and Lack of Belonging.

5.4.1 Negative Life Events

Some negative life events included loss and absence and experiences of social care involvement, all conveying a threat to stability and wellbeing. Attachment theory stresses the instinctive needs children have for emotional and physical containment from caregivers (Bowlby 1969; Ziegenhain, 2004) and disruptions experienced by some pupils to important relationships and familial stability could be seen as risks relating to later school exclusion, reflected in studies by Munn & Lloyd (2005) and Gersch & Nolan (1994). It was mainly parents and teachers, rather than pupils who raised these events as significant, perhaps reflecting pupils' developmental level, the sensitive nature of the experiences (i.e. too personal to share with a relatively unfamiliar adult), or that such events were not considered by young people to have influenced school exclusion.

Threat and/or bullying from peers were prevalent in participants' experiences and Osler et al (2002) propose that exclusion can also occur through "*bullying, withdrawal or truancy*" (p.3). Implicit exclusion can precipitate separation and segregation from others, enhancing vulnerability to explicit exclusion, and similar to studies by Lee & Breen (2007) and Munn & Lloyd (2005), experiences of pupils in this research can be seen to reflect this.

Participants' accounts exposed differences in type of possible risk posed to male and female pupils i.e. physical vs. relational and different responses to threat between

genders, i.e. fight vs. flight (e.g. Sam's externalised response to defend from harm by seeking weapons versus Shanniece's internalised withdrawal, disengagement and intimacy seeking). Some literature indicates that frequency of exclusion can be skewed to pupils whose difficulties are overt and impact most immediately on others, resulting in higher rates of exclusion for male versus female pupils who may internalise emotional difficulties (Connor et al, 1997). Findings draw new attention to how differences in reactivity to risk may manifest between genders, particularly in response to experiences of implicit exclusion and how (due to a less explicit nature) female pupils' needs may be overlooked.

5.4.2 Negative Learning Experiences

Within the context of learning experiences all pupils gave accounts of school work as being irrelevant or unrelated, interpreted to act as a risk factor leading to subsequent disengagement from work. Pupils described disconnecting with school work owing to lack of relatedness and applicability they perceived lessons to have to their future, whereas others cited work pitched either well above or below pupils' ability levels, impacting competence and motivation. It appeared that learning for some young people was not within their 'Zone of Proximal Development' "*matched in some manner with the child's developmental status*" (Vygotsky, 1978, p.85).

Some parents commented on the negative impact literacy difficulties had on pupils' feelings of competence, specifically where needs were perceived as un-supported. Studies by Lown (2005) and DfES (2004c) corroborate these outcomes and links between special educational needs, frustration, disengagement and challenging behaviour are well recognised in the literature (Warnock, 2006). Parents also commented on the difference in level of support provided between primary and secondary school, highlighted in Shanniece's case where her teacher showed no awareness of the literacy difficulties described by her mother. Variation in amount and type of information sent from primary to secondary schools and the way information is used during transition have been linked to lack of school resources (Schagen & Kerr, 1999), and findings here suggest a risk to exclusion as a consequence of poor transition processes, resulting in unidentified and unsupported needs.

Accounts indicated that where some pupils perceived work to be beyond their level of capability they tended to avoid tasks (engage in disruptive behaviours to mask difficulties) and focus on personal failures and negative outcomes. These experiences were interpreted to depict low self-efficacy (the belief one has in their capability to do something; Bandura, 1997), posing a further risk to exclusion.

5.4.3 Lack of Belonging

Belongingness converges with positive attachment and during adolescence attachment behaviour becomes increasingly directed "*towards peers and other persons and institutions outside of the family*" (Bowlby, 1987, p.207). Pupils' accounts reflected this, focussing primarily on experiences of belonging and anxiety about 'fitting in' with peers and school staff (also identified by Toothill & Spalding, 2000). Some risky and attention seeking behaviours (i.e. engaging in underage sexual relationships and disruptive behaviours) were linked by adults to pupils' low self-esteem and desire for acceptance.

A significant aspect of this theme was the sense that pupils did not feel cared for by adults in the school context, particularly by certain teachers, resulting in feelings of isolation and ineffectuality. This supports research by Williams & Downing (1998), Lee & Breen (2007) and Munn & Lloyd (2005) which suggests schools can "*promote or not a sense of belonging*" (p. 214). Lower levels of intrinsic motivation have been reported in students who experience their teachers as cold and uncaring (Ryan and Grolnick, 1986) and combined findings indicate that where pupils lack belongingness to school, motivation to learn is reduced, negatively affecting academic performance. Young people also described being treated unfairly by adults, and absence of consistent behaviour management from some staff was interpreted by one teacher as having provided pupils with a poor sense of security and safe base within school. This reinforces the important role school has in acting 'in locus parentis', and the need (particularly vulnerable) children have for an affective as well pedagogic curriculum (Geddes, 2006).

Homework provided by school based staff during exclusion ensures an attempt at continuous education for young people and sustained connection with the school community; however, both pupils' and parents' experiences reflected a clear absence of this form of support, also identified by Gordon (2001). Interventions provided by school were questioned by one teacher who indicated that practices intended to help pupils' additional needs (e.g. inclusion in a nurture group) actually increased this pupil's sense of rejection and segregation, reducing belongingness, which raises questions about how pupils' views are accounted for when making decisions about support for their needs.

5.5 Search for Security

'Search for Security' presented participants' experiences of responding to and negotiating the effects of threatened or lost security. This theme was felt to primarily reflect experiential and emotive responses to events as described by the 'participants' voice' and was interpreted as illuminating mediating factors influencing risk and protective factors impacting on both processes, thus answering the primary research question:

What are pupils, parents and teachers experiences of school exclusion and

reintegration?

5.5.1 Seeking Acceptance

Pupils described how they modelled others' negative behaviours as a means to gain peer recognition in school. This is explained through Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory, which posits that people learn from others via observation, imitation and modelling, particularly in circumstances where individuals observed are perceived as similar and the outcome achieved is desirable. Some young people shared experiences of being influenced by peer persuasions to engage in behaviours which led to exclusion. Others described their actions to be motivated by observing others 'getting away' with disruptive behaviours and gaining credit from peers, which when

replicated, resulted in punishment. This relates back to issues of inconsistency in behaviour management (section 5.4.3).

For one pupil, associating with gangs and 'working class people' who accepted him for who he was appeared to support his security which was perceived to be unsatisfied in home and school contexts. Harris et al (2006) propose that poor teacher-child relationships can exacerbate insecure attachment patterns resulting in pupils 'acting out' to experience attention, status and self-esteem.

Whilst new 'friendships', peer recognition and negative adult attention acquired through behaviours appeared to satisfy a sense of belonging for pupils, consequences of these actions and associations were interpreted by teachers as having a destructive impact on self-esteem and contributed towards young peoples' negative reputations and labels.

5.5.2 Emerging Identities and New Labels

Similar to studies by Munn & Lloyd (2005) and McDonald & Thomas (2003) who interviewed pupils and parents respectively, experiences indicated that how pupils were treated or labelled by staff influenced how pupils responded and directly impacted self-perceptions and identity. This self-fulfilling prophecy (Howarth, 2004) was evidenced in a quote from Sam:

…it made me think, hang on, if they're going to take, like treat me like this, I might as well act how they're treating me, I'm going to act worse so I started acting worse

(686-689)

Munn & Lloyd (2005) found that teacher expectations of pupils were influenced by reputations generated by previous family behaviours, which parallels experiences shared in this research by Jamie's teacher. One pupil perceived school exclusion to have had a negative impact on his reputation with staff, and described how this worsened his behaviour with these teachers, adding to Toothill & Spalding's (2000) finding that negative expectations from teachers were a barrier to reintegration. Some

pupils felt that regardless of how they behaved they would be perceived as 'bad', suggesting a "*construct of worthiness*" (Munn & Lloyd, 2005, p.213) may have been applied by staff for some pupils, influencing their motivation to change.

5.5.3 Loss of Control and Identity

The extent to which participants felt they could impact or affect positive change appeared to be closely linked to feelings of role/identity security. Experiences indicated that some pupils, in relation to behaviour and particularly learning, had an external 'locus of control', where they attributed failure to factors outside their capabilities and perceived themselves to have little control over success (Rotter, 1966). Daniels (2011) similarly found in interviews with excluded pupils that those with poorer outcomes had low self-esteem and thought the direction of their lives was beyond their control.

Identity formation is a recognised part of adolescent development, and experiences suggested some pupils had an uncertain sense of self or identity. Erikson's (1968) Psychosocial Theory posits that successful negotiation of adolescent development leads to positive identity formation, whereas failure results in role confusion and a weak sense of self. It could be inferred from participants' reflections on exclusion that at this stage pupils' sense of self was poor, perhaps caused or contributed to by events perceived to pose a threat to their sense of security and wellbeing.

For most parents, loss of control related directly to the minimal impact they perceived themselves to have over their child's behaviour and related outcomes, i.e. exclusion from school. The extension of emotional bonds from parents (vertical relationships) to peers (horizontal relationships) during adolescence can evoke parent-adolescent conflict (MacKay, Reynolds & Kearney, 2010; Collins & Steinberg, 2006). This was reflected in feelings of rejection (e.g. Sam's parent) and in the tension Shanniece's Mother described in positioning herself as both a parent and friend in response to her daughter's autonomy seeking. The impact these experiences had on parents was expressed though changes in wellbeing (i.e. increased stress), fear for their child's future (i.e. helplessness) and through questioning identities as parents.

Loss of control, for one parent, extended to frustrations experienced in interactions with school management. Smith (2009) found that parents of excluded pupils felt they were perceived as either "*problems*" or "*partners*" in dealing with school (p.96). This was reflected in the language used by Sam's mother who experienced a discourse of 'them' (the school) versus 'us' (his parents), indicating that parents (as well as pupils, found in Lee & Breen, 2007) can feel excluded from the school system.

The multifaceted influences on pupils at risk of school exclusion were reemphasised by two staff members who spoke about the perceived boundaries to their role to effect change, supported by Parsons (1999) who suggests that addressing issues of exclusion and disaffection are beyond the power of the school system alone. The detrimental impact of a school culture focussed on academic outcomes at the expense of emotional wellbeing and pastoral care is well documented (Imich, 1996; Rendall & Stuart, 2005) and this was highlighted by one teacher's description of the conflict she experienced in trying to satisfy pupils' educational and social needs within the limits of her role. It should be noted, however, that this view was not espoused by all teachers, and it could be interpreted that because the staff who elected to take part in this research (based on their knowledge of the pupil) had differing levels of responsibility and roles within school (i.e. Inclusion Manager vs. Head of Year), the time they had available to provide pastoral care for pupils would have differed, possibly impacting experiences shared.

The lack of knowledge some teachers felt they had about pupils in their care (i.e. regarding learning difficulties or negative home experiences) was attributed to limited time provided for pastoral responsibilities. Ravenette (1988) proposes that where behaviour is not understood, it can become a threat to an individual's sense of knowingness, resulting in perceptions of the child as negative. Fully understanding the nature and causes of behaviour can therefore be seen as vital to formulating appropriate interventions for young people; however, this research suggests that where teachers do not have time to focus on wellbeing issues due to the precedence of teaching demands, power to effect change may be perceived as low (i.e. Gibbs & Gardiner, 2008) potentially resulting in poorer outcomes for pupils.

5.6 Re-establishing Security

Sub Question 2: What are the protective factors experienced as influencing sustained reintegration?

Protective factors are linked with 'resilience' and reflect the different kinds of resources that may help the child resist adversity (Bynner, 2001). A number of factors identified from participants' experiences were interpreted as protective in supporting sustained school reintegration. These factors were felt to foster resilience through re-establishing pupils' sense of security.

5.6.1 School Support

"School experiences of both academic and non-academic kinds can have a protective effect for children under stress and living otherwise unrewarding lives"
(Rutter, 1991, p.9)

Most young people in this research experienced disruptions to their sense of security (5.4), and the development of containing relationships, which met needs of belonging, could be seen as an important factor in sustaining reintegration (also identified in studies by Daniels, 2011; Lown, 2005; Gersch & Nolan, 1994). 'Belongingness' can be fulfilled through *"regular social contact with those to whom one feels connected"* (Baumeister & Leary, 1995, p.501) and pupils' experiences reflected feeling understood and cared for though reciprocal relationships with key adults who were reliable, consistent and approachable. Teachers described implementing key adult support through building on pre-established pupil-teacher connections. This communicated a sense of inclusion on the part of the school, adapting to meet the needs of the child by ensuring current attachments remained intact. An example of this was the importance Sam's teacher placed on Sam having time with a positive male role model who he could relate to, an area felt lacking in other contexts.

Trust in the adult was raised by parents as a supporting factor and was felt to be facilitated where the young person was aware that the teacher held a positive view of

them. Teachers' descriptions suggested that through these relationships young peoples' emotional intelligence was supported, described by Goleman (2005) as the ability to read, understand and respond appropriately to one's own and others' emotions.

Teacher-pupil relationships appeared to be one medium through which young peoples' needs were better understood and supported. Teachers drew attention to the use of clear, consistent boundaries and expectations which were felt to support pupils' perceptions of school as a 'safe base' (described as a fundamental building block to resilience, Gilligan, 2000). Parents commented on the positive impact of using reward and praise to recognise pupils' behaviour or work, perceived as reinforcing positive future outcomes. All parents interviewed described school support as having a positive influence; however, one parent stressed that this was reactive and implemented as a result of her son's exclusion and her persistence, rather than being proactive and initiated prior to exclusion and in response to need. This draws attention to the importance of identifying pre-exclusion risk factors in informing early intervention, i.e. experiences of 'implicit exclusion' (discussed in section 5.4).

For one pupil whose needs were perceived as extending beyond the level of intervention school could provide, support from outside agencies was sought (i.e. through a part-time placement in a behaviour support centre). Vincent et al (2007) suggest that more inclusive schools are able to "*sensitively attune to the needs of the pupil rather than trying to fit the pupil into a rigid environment*" (p.296). By understanding pupil behaviour to signify unmet needs of security, school was felt to demonstrate attunement, reflected in the pupil's positive evaluation of the provision and desire to stay. These experiences suggest that where teachers are aware of adverse family circumstances understanding of behaviour is increased and reactions towards the child more positive (Caspari, 1976).

Multi-agency approaches to intervention (characterised by consistent communication and positive information sharing) were highlighted as key factors supporting reintegration for one pupil (also reported in studies by Vulliamy & Webb, 2003 and DfES, 2004c). Harris et al (2006) suggest that vulnerable children can feel supported by

initiatives which build community between schools, parents and professionals, an approach advocated by significant legislation (Children's Act, 2004; Every Child Matters Green Paper, DfES, 2003).

Encouragement from significant adults played an important role in increasing pupils' beliefs in their own capabilities, particularly in approaches to behaviour and learning. Environmental feedback can be seen to mediate self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) and for Shanniece, support and encouragement from specific teachers and recognition from adults for her work was described to foster motivation, self-belief and pride in learning. In terms of behaviour, pupils cited the importance of being given a 'fresh start' and not pre-judged on past behaviours. Awareness of teachers' positive expectations could be seen to positively influence future behaviours (i.e. positive self-fulfilling prophecy), linking with findings from Toothill & Spalding (2000) that where children were expected to succeed outcomes were reported to be more positive.

Support and belief from staff was an important protective factor for sustained reintegration; however some participants highlighted that teachers' perceptions and attitudes towards pupils were only experienced as positive after pupils altered their behaviours, indicating that responsibility in initiating change lay with pupils, again suggesting reactive rather than proactive responses from school.

School support could be interpreted as promoting resilience by addressing 'state' features of emotional and social competence (Knight 2007). Support provided by teachers was felt to mirror qualities found in an 'Authoritative Parenting Style' (Baumrind, 1966). For example, participants' accounts suggested pupils experienced warmth and security through a supportive adult who understood their learning and behaviour needs, who provided control through consistent behaviour management and who maintained high expectations and belief in the child.

5.6.2 Parental Support

The psychological goal of security is primarily achieved through the attachment system (Bowlby, 1969), and the role of the family can therefore be seen as critical, both in

creating conditions for exclusion and the means by which it can be resisted (Trommsdorff, 2000). 'Family Resilience' is a concept describing the "*path a family follows as it adapts and prospers in the face of stress*" (Hawley & DeHann, 1996, p.293) and accounts shared by participants suggested that resilience was not limited to pupils, but was additionally demonstrated through the problem solving/coping mechanisms utilised by parents.

Lessons parents shared were seen to support young people's socialisation skills and emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2005) and tended to avoid a culture of blame. All parents were described as communicating the importance of education to their children, and the protective effect of this is reiterated by Bynner (2001) and Pilling (1990) who outline how parental aspirations, encouragement and commitment to pupil achievement can mitigate the worst effects of disadvantage on academic outcomes.

Most parents and teachers described positive home-school engagement which was considered a protective factor in supporting reintegration (identified in studies by Lown, 2005; Vickers & Minke, 1995; Compher, 1982) As highlighted in section (5.6.2) knowledge and understanding of home factors can be seen as important in promoting resilience, and therefore "*the boundary between home and school needs to be permeable for this knowledge and consequent understanding to develop*" (Rendall & Stewart, 2005, p.78). Only one parent shared experiences of challenging the school system (in relation to her son's exclusion). This was not reflected in others' accounts, and could indicate either agreement with/support for school actions or perhaps uncertainty around exclusion processes and a perceived lack of power to challenge an authoritarian school, as found in studies by McDonald & Thomas (2003) and Gordon (2001).

The role of parents in this research can be seen to extend beyond that described in government guidance to include responsibility for implementing school consequences, ensuring exclusion is not experienced as 'time off' and for occupying time designed to be filled with school work. Where parents implemented consequences at home, pupils were described to benefit from fixed term exclusions. However, for Jamie, whose

parent was reported to be unable (at this time) to apply such rules, exclusion was experienced as a break from school and resulted in worse behaviour. These findings raise questions about the unwritten level of responsibility parents may have in making exclusion work as a successful intervention, and it may be the case that where parents are unable to fulfil this role, the use of exclusion (a further threat to belonging) is of little benefit and only increases risk to pupil wellbeing.

5.6.3 Child-Based Factors

There were a number of perceived child-based factors described in participants' experiences as contributing towards sustained reintegration. Motivation was reflected through pupils' aspirations and belief in themselves to achieve set goals. Although goals were communicated as self-driven, some pupils referred to adult role models who positively motivated them (e.g. Shanniece described her mother's hard work and progress as a personal inspiration). Motivations to change behaviour were related to avoiding negative outcomes, which also were related back to words of guidance from parents and from observational learning of outcomes experienced by those perceived as similar (Bandura, 1977) e.g. Jamie described not wanting to end up like his brother who was permanently excluded. Experiences suggested that whilst change originated within the pupil, motivation was intimately linked to social and contextual factors (Daniels, 2011).

Some pupils' expressed a new sense of confidence and self-belief for future challenges following experiences of success, which could be seen as reflecting both positive self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) and an internal locus of control (Rotter, 1966). An internal locus of control is identified by Garmezy (1985) to be a protective factor closely linked with resilience and Rendall & Stewart (2005) suggest: "*it seems logical that the belief that one's own efforts can produce change is an important ingredient in getting people to better their own lives*" (p.50). Sense of achievement for one pupil was reflected in feelings of satisfaction and desire to share success with others, and in subsequent positive feedback from adults. Future accomplishments were cited as dependent not just on personal efforts but also on parental support, indicating (similar to motivation)

that the social context and interactions around the young person may have created conditions for this to develop.

Increased self-awareness (intimately linked with emotional intelligence, motivation and self-efficacy) was interpreted as another protective factor supporting reintegration. Some young people described experiencing guilt or regret about how their behaviours had impacted their families (reiterated in parents' accounts) and reflected on how their understanding of the effect this had on others directly impacted future actions. Direction and guidance from parents and supportive teacher relationships which focussed on developing pupils' understanding of their own and other's emotions may have been an influence in facilitating positive outcomes.

Positive peer relationships were cited by participants as having a helpful influence on pupils' behaviour and corroborate findings from Lown (2005) that where these are positive, pupil-pupil relationships can support sustained reintegration. Adolescent development involves developing a sense of self and personal identify (Erikson, 1968). Whereas a weak sense of self was seen to contribute to pupils' displaying risky behaviours in order to be accepted, pupils' accounts of present day relationships demonstrated a positive self-concept and a sense of control in making friendship related decisions. One teacher described this positive sense of self as 'resilience'.

5.7 Summarising Findings through an Eco-Systemic Framework

This research has emphasised the central importance of individuals' phenomenological experiences of exclusion and reintegration in understanding interactional processes leading to both outcomes. The findings from this research are conceptualised within Bronfenbremmer's (1979) eco-systemic and interactionist model.

From an eco-systemic perspective:

"human behaviour is the product of on-going interaction between environmental influences and internal motivations which derive from prior (mainly social) experience"
(Cooper & Upton, 1990, p.3).

5.7.1 The Micro-System

The 'micro-system' involves bi-directional interactions between parents, family, peers, school and community, and is conceptualised as having the most direct and immediate impact on the child's development. Findings from this research highlighted a number of interacting factors impacting on exclusion from school; some were 'child orientated', such as specific learning needs and poor self-efficacy; some were 'within-home factors', such as experiences of loss and absence (particularly of male role models) and family instability and disruption, and others were 'within-school factors', including a poor sense of belonging, inconsistent behaviour management, un-relatedness of work provided, unmet learning needs and experiences promoting implicit exclusion.

In terms of reintegration, interacting protective factors were identified from home and school through the provision of a safe base, reliable attachment figures, consistent rules and boundaries, and positive expectations and belief. A consistent feature for all children was the role of a significant adult. Parental aspirations and school support (including the presence of resilient, emotionally intelligent adults) can be seen to interact with child based factors such as an internal locus of control, positive self-worth and self-efficacy and pupils' increased autonomy and determinism. These factors link with protectors highlighted by Garmezy (1985) which were 1.) Child-based, such as autonomy, positive self-esteem, internal locus of control and positive social orientation; and 2.) 'Family based', including cohesion, warmth and absence of discord. As a condition, resilience is conceptualised by Knight (2007) as "*interplay between the individual and the environment*" (p.549) and within this, personal traits (such as those child-based factors identified) can be seen to interact with other protective mechanisms to act as buffers to adverse conditions.

5.7.2 The Meso-System

The Meso-System refers to relationships within the micro-systems, represented in this study by connections between family, school, peer and child experiences. For school exclusion, these could be seen as represented though experiences of seeking

belonging through modelling negative behaviours or joining a gang. The lack of a secure base provided in school could be seen to exacerbate potentially insecure attachment patterns and behaviours resulting from interactions within the Micro-System interpreted as creating negative labels, reputations and identities. Other areas impacted by such interactions were the sense of control pupils felt they had to effect change, and parents perceived they had over their child's behaviour and school as a system. Teachers' perceptions of control over change were related both to their limited impact outside of school and factors within the Macro System (section 5.7.3) whereby, as a result of performative pressures, pastoral and educational roles were felt to be competing, leading to lack of knowledge and understanding of pupils' needs and a depersonalised approach to pupil-teacher relationships. Peformative pressures can additionally be considered to result in the use of 'un-engaging' classroom pedagogic practices (Hayes, 2010) further perpetuating implicit exclusion.

In terms of reintegration to school, protective factors acting within the Meso-System were interpreted to include the open-systems approach adopted by school resulting in positive home-school relationships, the initiation of multiagency work (i.e. through use of a behaviour support centre to provide containment) and through the availability of staff to promote well-being, pastoral care and support. These echo Garmezy's (1985) third level of 'community based' protectors which relate to external support systems that encourage and re-enforce positive behaviours. Resilience in practice is "*concerned with what families, schools and communities can do to promote resilience*" (Knight, 2007, p.550) and by conceptualising resilience within a systemic framework there can be seen to be an increasingly important role for teachers as 'mental health promoters' within schools.

5.7.3 The Exo-System

The Exo-System refers to the wider social systems the child does not have active interactions with, but which may influence the child indirectly, such as government policy and legislation and the corresponding impact on educational practices. For some teachers it appeared that competition between academic outcomes and pastoral responsibilities resulted in a perceived loss of control in ability to affect change. This is

reflected in much of the literature (Watson et al, 2012; Hayes, 2010; Imich, 1996; Parsons, 1996) which highlights the conflict of values schools can be subject to, caused by educational policies versus values of social justice and inclusion. Watkins (2010) proposes that an 'evidenced based' performative culture is oppositional to a child centred learning culture, which Hayes (2010) postulates can reduce agency and deprofessionalise teachers who become compliant in delivering curriculum related outcomes.

5.7.4 The Macro-System

The Macro-system represents the cultural context in which the child lives, compromising socioeconomic status, poverty and ethnicity. These areas were not communicated (within participants' experiences) to be influencing factors, and can only be commented on in the context of descriptive information gathered from pupils' school files. Three of four pupils interviewed were eligible for free school meals and were from single parent families and two pupils had identified special educational needs. The majority of the pupils were male and there was an equal split in terms of ethnicity, with two pupils of white British backgrounds and two of black African and black Caribbean ethnicity. Whilst this is a small sample whose experiences cannot be generalised to represent 'excluded' populations, there are observable similarities between this cohort and groups of pupils disproportionally represented in exclusion statistics (Munn & Lloyd, 2005). The Macro-System can influence interactions within both micro and exo-systems and this research adds to literature indicating that school exclusion can be either a causal or consequent factor of wider social exclusion (Parsons, 1999).

5.8 Research Strengths and Limitations

The advantages of this research in relation to the contribution of findings to existing literature have been discussed in section 5.3. This following section will reflect on some of the strengths and limitations of this research.

5.8.1 Sampling

Owing to the nature of this study, gaining access to participants proved challenging and necessitated convenience sampling of a small number of participants from one school. Consequently statistical generalisation to further populations is not appropriate, as it not possible to specify the probability that any individual would be included (Robson, 2002). Findings, however, can be conceptualised in terms of "*theoretical transferability*" (Smith et al, 2009, p.51), whereby insights drawn from these results can be applied and utilised in similar contexts which may contribute to better understandings of the phenomena or lead to "*practical, real-world change*" (Yardley, 2008, p.250).

It could be speculated that exploring aspects of exclusion and reintegration (although positively framed) may be perceived as threatening, and require reflection of the methods used to gain access to schools. Identifying participants who had been reintegrated for three terms following five or more days of fixed term school exclusions was also a challenge, and may reflect the low numbers of pupils who successfully reintegrate into school following fixed term exclusion versus those who are instead permanently excluded. Despite this, the small sample of pupils in this study was felt to be representative of some of the characteristics of pupils often included in exclusion statistics (see section 5.7.4). It was not within the context of this research to identify socio-economic status; however this is clearly an important variable, based on literature which indicates that many families of excluded pupils are situated within lower socioeconomic groups. Future research may therefore seek to incorporate such descriptive statistics to triangulate with participants experiences.

Parents included in this research did not respond to letters sent home, and were contacted individually via the school to seek consent for their participation and their child's. One parent did not make herself available for interview despite initially agreeing to take part, resulting in one incomplete case study. It could be interpreted from the findings that those parents more willing to take part in the research are those more likely to engage with school. The nature of how to include those parents who

could be termed 'hard to reach' could be a vital area for exploration in future research, based on the positive protective role parents were perceived to play.

Teachers were selected to take part in this research based on their knowledge of the pupil, and within their experiences there was some divergence (particularly around issues of time given to pastoral care). Although they were a homogenous group (i.e. were all teachers with the greatest contact with the target pupil during exclusion and reintegration) their positions within school and levels of responsibility differed (i.e. Inclusion Manager vs. Head of Year) which may have impacted experiences shared. It may be the basis of future research to interview teachers of the same position to establish whether there is convergence of experiences of this nature.

The importance of gathering multiple perspectives was highlighted by some of the differences in experience shared within participant triads. It became clear that in some cases what was salient and relevant for the pupil was not shared by the teacher, and vice versa, suggesting a mismatch in perceptions of events and the need for case study research in triangulating information from multiple perspectives. The space limitations of this research meant a decision was made during analysis to not present findings exclusively one case at a time, but instead to relay experiences by theme so readers could gain an impression of how exclusion and reintegration were experienced across cases, i.e. for pupils, parents and teachers. Future research could perhaps focus specifically on exploring differences and similarities within case studies.

5.8.2 Data Gathering

In using IPA, the idiographic nature of the interview facilitated an inductive bottom-up approach, where analysis was driven by participants' responses rather than particular theoretical perspectives. Although semi structured interviews were felt to yield rich detailed information about the experiences of pupils, parents and teachers, they were not without their limitations. Questions used were open ended and areas explored generated from responses given by participants to ensure that interview content was participant led. However, where some pupils provided shorter and more limited answers, prompting and interviewer led questions were employed, which may have

meant that areas explored were not as relevant or true to participants' experiences. Short responses may have reflected pupils' difficulties with accessing more abstract thinking or a reluctance to share personal information with a new adult.

Whereas one meeting in the school context was sufficient to glean detailed experiential information for some pupils, for others, meeting over a number of occasions to build a relationship and break down any perceived affiliations of the researcher to school may have been beneficial. Whilst interviews at home may have countered this issue and supported dialogues with pupils, issues of safeguarding and the lack of guarantee of a private space to conduct interviews necessitated their location within school. The researcher therefore remains aware that whilst such accounts may represent experiences most salient and important to the individual, they may also have been influenced by context (the school setting) or confounded by time and more recent experiences.

As the researcher was affiliated to the school through the role of the EP, there was awareness that staff in particular may have been inclined to frame answers so school and their practices were well reflected. However, as only one of the teachers interviewed knew the researcher in the EP role, and because the research was presented positively (with a focus on 'what works' in promoting sustained reintegration) it was felt that this threat was limited.

5.8.3 Reflexivity

"Research cannot be value free"

(Bryman, 2004, p.22)

Reflexivity has previously been explored in relation to ontology (researcher positionality) and epistemology (research design) in the methodology section. It will now be considered in relation to the interpretation of findings.

Despite taking an iterative approach to IPA and being mindful of the 'hermeneutic circle', the large quantity of data obtained from interviews meant reducing

experiences into themes naturally conferred some researcher bias through interpretation and selection of salient information. It is acknowledged that interpretation of data is achieved by logical reasoning which fit particular theories and world views (Blair, 1998). However, to ensure the impact of the researcher was minimal, a diary was kept to maintain awareness of any preconceived biases and presuppositions in order to separate them out from participants' descriptions (Robson, 2002; Colaizzi, 1973).

Anastas & McDonald (1994) assert that:

"*all methods of study can only produce approximations of reality and incomplete understandings of the phenomena of interest as they exist in the real world*" (p.60)

Therefore, by being committed to "*viewing events and the social world through the eyes of the people that they study*" (Robson, 2002, p.279), (in this case pupils, parents and teachers) and through being both reflective and reflexive throughout this research, it is felt that further insights have been gained into experiences of sustained reintegration following fixed term exclusion. Smith et al (2009) note that the true measure of validity is the extent to which something "*interesting, important or useful*" (p.183) is communicated, which, it is felt, can only truly be determined by the reader.

5.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed the research findings in relation to the questions posed at the start of this thesis. The next chapter will conclude by exploring research implications, considering alternative explanations for findings and discussing areas for further research.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the main findings of this research in relation to the research questions. This chapter will explore the implications of these findings for Educational Psychologists and professionals whose roles include working to support young people in exclusion and reintegration processes (6.2). Methods for feeding back results to participants will be outlined (6.3) and alternative explanations for the findings discussed (6.4). Potential areas for further research will be explored (6.4) followed by final reflections and concluding comments (6.5).

6.2 Implications for Educational Psychology Practice

By conceptualising resilience using an eco-systemic model (see section 5.7) it can be postulated that if resilience arises from ordinary human adaptive processes it may be possible to provide conditions conducive to sustaining resilience (Masten, 2001). Participants' accounts highlighted a number of risk and protective factors functioning as mechanisms both within and outside of school in promoting outcomes for pupils. This has direct implications for Educational Psychologists seeking to promote positive outcomes of social, emotional and educational wellbeing by working within the child's system, particularly understanding "…*what works best for whom under what circumstances*" (Robson 2002, p.39). When considering these findings within a critical realist paradigm this process may look like figure 6.1 below (adapted from Robson, 2002).

Figure 6.1: A Critical Realist Representation (adapted from Robson, 2002)

Mechanisms

Risk Factors   Protective Factors

Positive Outcome
Sustained Reintegration

Action
e.g. behaviour
(negative /
positive)

Negative Outcome
School Exclusion

Context
Mediation within the child's ecological system
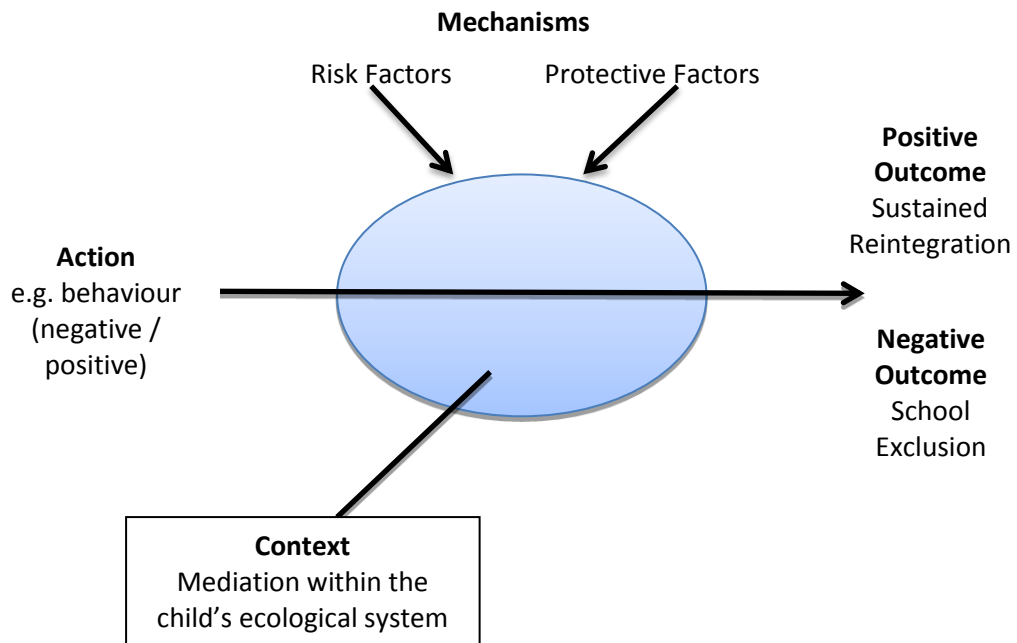
6.2.1 Areas for Consideration:

- EPs are well placed to support schools with understanding young peoples' behaviour though processes of consultation, assessment and training. **Knowledge of psychological models of resilience, attachment, belonging, and motivation** can be seen as important in supporting staff with understanding reasons why some pupils present with particular behaviours. Using such frameworks can positively shift conceptualisations of behaviour from within child to within-system and raise awareness of actions which can be taken by school and those around the child to support feelings of belonging and security which may not have been satisfied in other areas.

- This research highlighted the impact experiences of **implicit exclusion** may have on pupils, i.e. through "*bullying, withdrawal or truancy*", (Osler et al 2002, p.3) and how such events may act as precursors to explicit exclusion. Differences in reactivity to risk between genders, particularly in presentation of need (i.e. some female pupils' less overt and internalised reactions) have

important implications for EPs working preventatively with staff members to identify needs early to limit exclusionary experiences.

- Links between learning difficulties, frustration, disaffection and challenging behaviour were identified in participants' experiences, reiterating the importance of the EP role in supporting early identification of special needs and working with schools to plan interventions which **ensure work is both relevant and accessible to pupils**, (pitched within their zone of proximal development). How information about pupils with SEN is used during and post transition was another area of concern, and assisting schools with implementing processes where **information is appropriately communicated and utilised** may take the form of organisational change work for EPs to ensure needs do not go unrecognised and unmet. Some responses from parents and pupils communicated a sense of reactivity rather than proactivity from school in supporting the needs of the young person, which indicates a need for preventative action and/or a need to investigate blocks to initiating change on the part of the school.

- **Positive pupil-teacher relationships** were a key protective factor for participants within this study, and EPs have a role in supporting school in understanding the vital therapeutic nature and difference such connections can have to sustained reintegration. Relationships were interpreted as reciprocal, consistent and genuine, communicated positive expectations of the pupil, provided a 'fresh start', supported emotional intelligence and were inclusive, based around pupils' needs rather than school availability. Relationships were perceived to convey features of authoritative parenting (high on warmth and high on control) (Baumrind, 1966) reinforcing **the role school staff can have acting 'in loco parentis'** (particularly where attachment figures are unavailable in other settings) and a place for EPs in delivering training and support. The importance of feeling cared for by adults was apparent for pupils and work sent home during exclusion periods can act as a continued link between home and school to ensure the child feels 'kept in mind' and a sense of belonging is maintained (Baumeister & Leary, 1995).

- The majority of pupils in this research had **authoritative parents** who set clear boundaries and consequences, provided guidance, a moral compass and communicated the importance of education to pupils' futures. These parents additionally appeared to take on an unwritten level of responsibility during their child's school exclusion, acting as **the enforcer of school consequences at home**, ensuring exclusion experiences were unwelcome. Not all parents had the capacity to undertake this role, and where this was the case fixed term exclusions was reported to have a negative impact. School understanding of home circumstances and the level of support parents can provide can therefore be seen as essential, and underlines the need for open and reciprocal home-school relationships and the ability of school to act 'in loco parentis' where this is not possible.

- Parents and teachers share the complex task of educating and socialising children (Vickers & Minke, 1995) and those parents who did take on this role still communicated the toll these experiences had on their own emotional wellbeing and sense of control. Exclusion appeared to be a shared home-school sanction, yet government guidance does not make parents role in this explicit or of equal magnitude. Such findings indicate **the need for greater support for parents around exclusion** by school and/or external professionals (if they are significant to the success of this process as intimated in this research).

- **Multi-agency joined up working**, characterised by regular communication and sharing of positive progress played a key role for one pupil in this research in **bridging the gap between home and school**. Utilising key resources such as Family Support Workers to join systems together and ensure there is a flow of information between home and school can be seen to provide context to behaviour for staff and engage parents (who may be reluctant to connect) in communication with school. By their nature schools are powerful systems which can be perceived as intimidating and inaccessible for parents and promote a culture of 'them' and 'us'. There can be seen a role for EPs in supporting schools (particularly secondary settings where immediate home-

school contact is reduced) to present as 'open systems', where parents are perceived as partners and power is shared. Mechanisms such as the Common Assessment Framework, Team Around the Child meetings and systemic approaches to consultation (Wagner, 2000) may additionally support holistic conceptualisations of provision for young people undergoing reintegration.

- Whilst there was an apparent need for teachers to assume a more holistic role both educational and pastoral, there appeared to be boundaries to this adaptation due to macro-system policies and influences. For example, lack of time and resources available to support at risk pupils combined with the conflict teachers are faced with in meeting performative and academic targets could result in many of the above interventions and protective factors perceived as supporting resilience being met with resistance. There is currently little preparation for promoting resilience in Initial Teacher Training programs (ITT) and although, over the past decade in primary schools, resilience has been promoted through 'SEAL' (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning), 'PATHS' packages (Positive Alternative Thinking Strategies), and Social and Emotional Behavioural Skills (SEBS) (Smith, et al 2007) there is less evidence for uptake of these practices in secondary schools and still a need for research to investigate the extent of their implementation and success (Stallard, 2010; Weare & Gray, 2003).

6.3 Feedback to Participants

A key aim of this research was to develop an in-depth understanding of the 'lived experiences' of those involved in exclusion and reintegration processes and elicit potential risk and protective factors which could subsequently be shared with professionals working with these groups. This is reiterated by the researcher in discussing implications for EPs (6.2). For these reasons it was felt important, particularly from an ethical perspective to feedback findings to those who had shared their experiences, the participating school and the Educational Psychology Service in the LA in which this research was carried out.

Findings will be shared with participants and school (specifically the Head Teacher and Inclusion Manager) through letters summarising the key themes generated by IPA. A particular emphasis will be placed on 'what worked' to support sustained reintegration, and letters will be differentiated for audience (i.e. in use of terminology and language). Feedback will take place during the 2013 summer term, and will include a report of outcomes and implications to the Educational Psychology Service.

6.4 Alternative Explanations

By conceptualising the child within an ecological system (Bronfenbremmer, 1979), and acknowledging the interpretative and inductive nature of the methodology adopted, it cannot be definitively asserted that these findings are not a result of other factors as opposed to those stated.

Pupils' sustained reintegration could be interpreted to be a part of typical/normal maturational development. Additionally, instead of attributing positive change to external factors (e.g. key supportive adults), the pupils in this research could instead be considered pro-active within their system (evidenced in circumstances whereby psychological needs, not met through home or school, were actively sought from alternative, sometimes negative sources). By adopting such an interpretation, school could be conceptualised as being unresponsive to individual needs, and it could therefore be that pupils were not successfully reintegrated as this research suggests, but instead conformed (i.e. changed their behaviour) to 'fit in' with the norms of the school environment.

This alternative view necessitates reflection on how this research conceptualised sustained reintegration (i.e. 3 terms, based on Lown, 2005) and whether this is an accurate measurement of success, based on the premise that 'sustained' is also a construct. Reintegration into school without further exclusion is positive, but the nature of some school experiences (marked by 'implicit' exclusion) suggest pupils' views are needed to provide context to whether this term also accurately represents the experience of 'inclusion'.

6.5 Future Research

Although possible risk and protective factors that may influence school exclusion and sustained reintegration have been identified within this research, additional research can be seen as essential in exploring the relevance of these factors for samples beyond those included here. Particular findings on areas of significance, outlined below, also prompted further questions which may be important to investigate in future studies.

Supportive relationships were highlighted as contributing towards pupils' sustained reintegration. As key actors in reintegration, teachers' conceptualisations of their role are significant. How do they experience their multifaceted responsibilities (i.e. educational and pastoral '*in loco parentis*'), do they feel able and prepared to perform both duties, and how does this influence their practice? Further research with teachers of the same role and responsibility could provide context to inform the function and best practice of the 'significant adult' in school, whether this is through additional training for teachers, support from external agencies, school counsellors, and/or EPs.

The role of the parent, as the other key relationship is also felt necessary to explore. Parents who engaged with this research were also reported to be engaged and proactive in their relationships with school. Home-school relationships can be seen as essential based on the positive protective role parents were perceived to play for pupils, and it is therefore felt significant to understand how consistency/congruence between school and home vertical relationships can be achieved and maintained. Further, research with both parents and teachers into who is perceived as hard to reach for who (and how this is experienced) may give some insight into possible barriers to building these vital partnerships and how these blocks can be overcome.

Finally, by privileging the 'voice of the pupil' this research uncovered possible mechanisms supporting sustained reintegration. However issues raised in section 6.5 indicate that understanding how sustained re-integration is experienced or constructed by pupils and at what point is it considered successful is essential. Future

longitudinal research could extend this and additionally consider whether and how 'reintegration' is experienced as 're-inclusion', and if so, what are the conditions that support this.

6.6 Concluding Thoughts

This research has endeavoured to contribute to gaps identified in the literature by providing further insight into exclusion and reintegration through the "*lived realities of those who experience it, challenge it and find ways out of it*" (Howarth, 2004, p.360). By adopting a phenomenological approach to capturing multiple perspectives, this research has aimed to extend understandings of mechanisms influencing these processes, in particular, 'what works' in securing positive outcomes for young people. A number of potential risk and protective factors that may precipitate vulnerability and resilience for young people were identified within three interacting themes of security:

1.) **Threat to Security**: including Negative Life Events, Negative Learning Experiences and Lack of Belonging

2.) **Search for Security**: incorporating experiences of Seeking Acceptance, Emerging Identities and New Labels, Loss of Control and Identity Confusion.

3.) **Re-Establishing Security**: identified through School Support, Parental Support and Child-based factors.

This research conceptualised security within an eco-systemic framework, shifting implications for interventions away from a 'within-child deficit' model towards a focus on enhancing resources in the environment around the child, primarily through identifying conditions conducive to sustaining resilience.

Recent UK government policy and DfE pilot schemes propose that schools retain responsibility for the outcomes of children they permanently exclude (OCC, 2012). If excluded pupils are no longer "*out of sight, out of mind*" (Maddern, 2011) there may be a greater impetus from schools to engage in preventative measures, which, as advocated in this research, would be well placed to begin by understanding the

powerful, sometimes "*silenced or marginalised voices*" (Howarth, 2004, p.360) of those at the heart of these interactive processes.

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Appendix 1: Systematic Literature Review

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

	Inclusion Criteria	**Exclusion Criteria**
Scope	- Studies focussing on the process of school exclusion - Studies focussing on the process of school reintegration - Studies seeking the view of children, parents and/or staff - Studies of secondary aged pupils (broadened to include primary age and non-mainstream provisions if not many articles derived) - Any gender	- Studies not focussing on the process of school exclusion - Studies not focussing on the process of school reintegration - Studies not seeking the view of children, parents and/or staff - Studies of children not of secondary age and not in mainstream school
Time & Place	- Written in English - UK based studies / articles (broadened to include worldwide studies if not many articles derived) - Studies produced / published after 1990	- Not written in English - Not UK based studies / articles - Studies produced / published before 1990
Study Type	- Qualitative or mixed methods based studies seeking the views of children, parents or staff in relation to exclusion and/or reintegration. - Relevance to Educational Psychology theory or practice - Full text	- Quantitative studies not seeking the views of children, parents or staff in relation to exclusion and/or reintegration. - No relevance to Educational Psychology theory or practice - Not full text

Stages of Screening Process

1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to titles and abstracts
2. If inclusion criteria were satisfied then full report was obtained
3. If exclusion criteria satisfied article was discarded
4. Inclusion and exclusion criteria applied to full report
5. If inclusion criteria satisfied article was critically reviewed in depth

EBSCO Host Databases Searched

- ERIC (the Educational Research Information Centre)
- Psych INFO
- British Education Index
- Education Line
- Child Data
- Psych Articles
- Wiley Online Library

Search Date	Search Terms	No. Found (Inclusion & Exclusion criteria applied to abstracts)	No. Selected for in depth review of full article
15.08.12	*school* *exclusion*	86	34
15.08.12	*school* *reintegration*	152	1
03.10.12	*exclusion* *school* *parents* *views*	29	1
03.10.12	*exclusion* *school* *pupils* *views*	28	0
03.10.12	*exclusion* *school* *children's* *views*	82	0
03.10.12	*exclusion* *school* *teachers* *views*	32	3
03.10.12	*reintegration* *school* *parents* *views*	2	0
03.10.12	*reintegration* *school* *parents**perspectives*	1	0
03.10.12	*reintegration* *school* *pupils* *views*	1	0
03.10.12	*reintegration* *school* *children's* *views*	3	0
03.10.12	*reintegration* *school* *teachers* *views*	0	0

Following identification of relevant literature from the searches, abstracts were read and selected or discarded using specific inclusion and exclusion criteria. Full texts of those abstracts selected were obtained where possible. Those relevant were studied in depth and critically reviewed.

Further Sources of Reference
- Policy documents, legislative papers, government guidance (e.g. DfE, DCSF).
- Further references relating to exclusion and reintegration were explored through references identified within key texts selected from literature reviews.
- Manual/hand searches of relevant articles were also undertaken.

Appendix 2: Description of Participants

The following descriptions of participants (at the time of interview) are provided to offer some context about the individuals whose voices make up this study. During analysis participants' narratives are fragmented through the process of identifying and forming themes, and as there is a risk that the sense of the person behind the words can be lost (Smith et al, 2009), these portraits aim to provide a reminder to the reader of the participant as a 'whole being' which can be referred to alongside extracts from the text.

Shanniece

Shanniece is a 15 year old Black-Caribbean female. She lives with her Mother and younger sibling. Shanniece had three separate fixed term exclusions which culminated in 5.5 days of exclusions from school. Her exclusions were for damage to school property, verbal abuse / threatening behaviour against an adult and for persistent disruptive behaviour. Since her last fixed term exclusion she has been reintegrated into school and has had no further exclusions for at least 3 school terms. Shanniece is eligible for free school meals and has no identified special educational need. Shanniece's Mother and Head of Year at school were also interviewed. Her teacher is responsible for teaching a full timetable and has pastoral responsibilities for pupils in the year.

Sam

Sam is a 14 year old White-British male. He lives with his parents and two younger siblings. Sam had two separate fixed term exclusions from school, one for 10 days for physical assault against another pupil and for bringing a weapon into school and another for 2 days for an undisclosed reason. Since his last exclusion he has been reintegrated back into school for three terms without further exclusion. Sam has a diagnosis of Dyslexia and he is not identified as eligible for free school meals. Sam's Mother and the school Deputy Head Teacher were also interviewed. The Deputy Head teaches a part time timetable and assumes senior management and some pastoral responsibilities.

David

David is a 15 year old Black-African male. He lives with his Mother, one older and one younger sibling. David had three separate fixed term exclusions from school, twice for physical assault against a pupil and once for persistent disruptive behaviour, totalling 10 days. Since his last exclusion he has been reintegrated back into school for three terms without any further exclusions. David has no identified special educational needs and is eligible for free school meals. David's Mother and Head of Year were also interviewed. The Head of Year teaches a full timetable and has some pastoral responsibilities for pupils in the year group.

Jamie

Jamie is a 13 year old White-British male. He lives with his Mother, two older siblings and two younger siblings. In Jamie's school file he is identified as having 'behaviour, social and emotional difficulties'. He is also eligible for free school meals. Jamie was excluded for 6.5 days in total, for physical assault against a pupil, for verbal abuse / threatening behaviour against an adult and for an undisclosed reason. After his last exclusion Jamie attended a Behaviour Support Centre for two school terms on a part time basis (3 days per week at the centre and 2 days at school) as a form of intervention. Since his last exclusion and reintegration into school he has had no further exclusions for three terms. The school Inclusion Manager was also interviewed as part of this study; however Jamie's mother did not make herself available to take part. The Inclusion Manager manages the inclusion team within the school and assumes other senior management responsibilities. She does not teach a timetable.

Appendix 3: Head Teacher Information Letter

Dear Head Teacher,

My name is Stephanie Lally and I am currently studying on the Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology at the University of East London. I am also working as a Trainee Educational and Child Psychologist for X Educational Psychology Service. As part of my training I am researching school exclusion and reintegration processes. I am particularly interested in exploring the experience of fixed term exclusion and reintegration from the perspectives of pupils, parents and teachers.

Consent to Participate in a Research Study
The purpose of this letter is to request your permission for the school to participate in this study and to provide you with additional information about the purpose and nature of the research.

Project Description
The title of this research is:

School Exclusion and Reintegration: An exploration of pupils', parents' and teachers' experiences.

The aim of this research is to explore the experiences of fixed term exclusion and reintegration from the perspective of pupils, parents and teachers. I am particularly interested in the risk factors/influences which participants perceive as contributing to Fixed Term Exclusion and the protective factors perceived as supporting sustained reintegration following the exclusion.

I would like to recruit pupils, parents and teachers for this study who meet the following research criteria:

- Pupils currently enrolled in mainstream secondary schools (KS3 or 4) that have experienced school exclusion for a fixed period of time amounting to greater than five days. They will have since been reintegrated into the same school for a minimum of three school terms without further exclusionary measures having been used.
- Parents (or main caregiver) of children who meet the 'pupils' criteria.
- School Teachers of children meeting the 'pupils' criteria. The school teacher will ideally be the person in the school setting who knows the pupil the best.

Participants will be asked to take part in a semi-structured interview about their individual perceptions and experiences of exclusion and reintegration.

Why is this research being done?
The risk of negative outcomes for children excluded from school both short and long term are well documented (Daniels, 2011), as are the financial implications for society for this group in transition to adulthood (Scott et al, 2001). Reduction in rates of exclusion at both local and national level are viewed as a priority, and fundamental to the wellbeing of these children and their families.

Previous studies into these processes have not typically investigated both exclusion and reintegration or the perspectives of pupils, parents and teachers. Given the interactional nature of school exclusion, and the importance of 'relationships' to successful school

reintegration (Lown, 2005) it is felt that investigating this area from multiple perspectives is essential.

Confidentiality of the Data
Names and school data will be coded and anonymised, and participants will receive a pseudo-name to protect their identity. All data including transcription records of interviews will be destroyed after the research has been completed (estimated date - September 2013).

What does the study involve?
An information letter will be sent to pupils, parents and teachers which will outline the purpose of the study and what their role in the research would entail. Participants will be offered an opportunity to meet with me in person to discuss the research and to ask any further questions they may have about their involvement.

If the young person, parent and teacher **all** consent to participating in the study, I will arrange a time to meet with each of them individually. Pupils, parents and teachers will then take part in an interview lasting for around 30 minutes to 1 hour. The interview will be recorded using a dictaphone. The information communicated during the interview will be kept confidential; the only circumstance in which I would break this confidentiality would be if the participant tells me something that means either themselves or somebody else is in danger.

Location
With your permission, it is anticipated that the interviews for teachers and children will take place within the school setting. Parents will be given an opportunity to choose whether they would prefer to be interviewed at home or in school. All information during the study will be kept confidential, and stored in a secure location within X Educational Psychology Service.

Disclaimer
You are not obliged to take part in this study, and are free to withdraw at any time during data collection. Should you choose to withdraw from the programme you may do so without disadvantage to yourself and without any obligation to give a reason.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. If you would like to give permission for the school to participate in this research or would like to discuss the nature of the research further, please contact me on the details provided below.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards,

Stephanie Lally
Educational Psychologist in training

Appendix 4: Head Teacher Consent Form

UEL Doctorate in Professional

Educational and Child Psychology

Head Teacher Research Consent Form

I have the read the information leaflet relating to the above programme of research in which this school has been asked to participate and I have been given a copy to keep. The nature and purpose of the research have been explained to me, and I have had the opportunity to discuss the details and ask questions about this information. I understand what is being proposed and the procedures in which the school will be involved.

I understand that the school's involvement in this study and particular data from this research will remain strictly confidential. Only the researchers involved in the study will have access to the data. It has been explained to me what will happen once the experimental programme has been completed.

I consent for the school to participate in the study which has been fully explained to me

Having given this consent I understand that I have the right to withdraw the school from the programme at any time without disadvantage to the school and without being obliged to give any reason

Head Teacher's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)...

Head Teacher's Signature...

Date..

Thank you!

Appendix 5: Pupil Information Letter

UEL Doctorate in Professional

Educational and Child Psychology

Pupil Participant Information Sheet

Hi! My name is Stephanie, and I am training to become an Educational and Child Psychologist (somebody who tries to help schools get better at working with children and young people). I work as an Educational Psychologist in Training in X and I am also a student at the University of East London.

Why is this research being done?

As part of my training I am doing a project about the experiences of young people who have experienced fixed term exclusion from school and have been reintegrated back into school successfully.

With your help I want to find out about:

- **Experiences of fixed term school exclusion**
  - What you think could have helped to prevent the exclusion

- **Experiences of reintegration after fixed term school exclusion**
  - What you think has helped to support your reintegration

I hope that this project will help anyone working with young people to know what kind of things can be done to help prevent the school exclusion from happening and what things support young people's reintegration back into school after exclusion. What you tell me might help other young people in the future.

Who will be in this project?

As part of my project I would also like to ask your parent/guardian and a teacher in your school who knows you well the same questions. I would like to find out what they felt could have helped prevent the fixed-term school exclusion and what they thought supported your successful reintegration back into school. Interviewing parents and teachers as well as young people might help to give me a richer picture of experiences of exclusion and reintegration.

If you want to be part of this project, what will happen?

1.) I will arrange to meet you for a short chat for about 20 minutes to answer any questions you have about what it is I am doing. I will also talk with you about getting your written permission to include you in this project.

2.) If you agree to talk with me about your experiences of exclusion and reintegration then I could meet with you for a chat, lasting approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour. I want to find out what things you think could have helped to prevent the fixed term exclusions, and what supported your successful reintegration back into school.

When we talk I will record our conversation using a tape recorder. This is so that I can remember what you have told me. No one else will listen to the tape or read the notes I have made. If you are not sure about this then you can chat to me about it in our first meeting.

What you say will be kept between us. The only time that I would have to speak to someone else would be if you tell me something that means either yourself or somebody else is in danger. If you get upset by talking about any of the things I want to find out then we can stop straight away.

Who will know you have been in the research?

The only people who will know that you have decided to take part in the research will be you, your parent/guardian and the SENCO/Inclusion Manager in school. If anyone else might need to know then I will speak to you first to check this is OK and let you know why.

When I have talked to all of the young people, parents/guardians and teachers who agree to take part in the project I will write a report for professionals who work with children. I will not use your name or any of your personal information in any reports I write, so nobody will know that it was you who said it. I will keep all of the tape recording and notes in a safe place and when I have finished with the information I will destroy the tapes and notes.

What happens next?

1. If you are interested in taking part in this research then let the SENCO/Inclusion Manager know. I can then arrange to meet with you.
2. If you want to know more before you make a choice, then you can ask me any questions you like at our first meeting.
3. REMEMBER you don't have to take part in this study if you don't want to.

Thank you!

Appendix 6: Pupil Consent Form

UEL Doctorate in Professional

Educational and Child Psychology

Pupil Research Consent Form

If you want to take part in the study and talk with me about your experiences of fixed term school exclusion and reintegration, then please complete this form. All you need to do is tick the boxes that apply to you.

1. I have looked at any information about the project and I understand what it is about

YES   NO

2. I understand that I can stop talking about something if I want to

YES   NO

3. I understand that I do not have to answer any questions if I do not want to

YES   NO

4. I understand that my answers to questions will be recorded on audio tape

YES   NO

5. I understand that what I say will be kept private and only shared after it has had my name and any other details that could identify me taken out. The only time that Stephanie can tell anybody else my name or any details, is if I say something which means that me or someone else is getting hurt.

YES ☐   NO ☐

6. I understand that I can change my mind about taking part at any time. It will not affect the way I am supported.

YES ☐   NO ☐

7. I agree to take part in the research project

YES ☐   NO ☐

Participants Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)...

Participant's Signature: ....

Date..

Researcher's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)...

Researcher's Signature..

Date..

Thank you!

Appendix 7: Parent Information Letter

UEL Doctorate in Professional

Educational and Child Psychology

Parent/Carer Participant Information Sheet

My name is Stephanie Lally and I am training to become an Educational and Child Psychologist. I work as an Educational Psychologist in Training within X, and I am also studying at the University of East London. As part of my training I am doing a project which aims to explore pupils', parents'/ carers' and teachers' experiences of fixed term exclusion and reintegration.

You and your child have been invited to take part in this research. Before you decide whether you would like to participate, please take some time to read the information below. This explains why the research is being done and what it will involve.

If you would like you and your child to take part in this research please sign the attached consent form and return it to the address provided or to the school Inclusion Manager/SENCO. If you consent to your child's involvement I will also give them their own consent form so they can confirm if they want to participate.

Why is this research being done?
As part of my training I am researching into the experiences of fixed term exclusions and reintegration from the perspectives of children, parents/carers and teachers.

With your help I want to find out:
- **Your experience of your child's fixed term school exclusions**
  - What you think could have helped to prevent the exclusions

- **Your experience of your child's reintegration into school**
  - What you think has helped to support successful reintegration

I hope that this project will help anyone working with young people to know what kind of things can be done to prevent school exclusion and support young people's reintegration and learning in school. What you and your child tell me might be able to help other young people and their families in the future.

Who will be in this project?
As well as asking you and your child about your experiences, I would also like to ask a teacher in school who knows your child well the same questions. I want to find out what they think could have helped prevent the fixed term exclusion and what they felt has supported your child's successful reintegration into school. By interviewing young people, parents/carers and teachers about their experiences, I hope to find out what is the best support that can be put in place for young people in school and help to prevent exclusions.

If you and your child want to be part of this project, what will happen?
1. I will arrange to meet with your child at school for a short chat (around 20 minutes) to answer any questions they may have about the research and what is involved. I will also talk with them about getting their written permission to include them in the project.
2. If your child agrees to take part then I will speak with them about their experiences of exclusion and reintegration for approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour outside of their learning time.
3. I will contact you to arrange a suitable time to meet and to also find out where you would like the interview to take place; at school or in your home. If you would like to meet with me before the interview so I can answer any questions about the research, then we can arrange a time to do this or I can answer any questions on the phone. If you agree to take part then I will ask you some questions about your experiences of your child's fixed term exclusions and reintegration. The interview will also last for approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour.

The conversations I have with you and your child will be recorded using a tape recorder, so I can accurately recall what has been said. No one else will listen to the tape or read the notes I have made. If you are not sure about this then you will have an opportunity to speak with me about it before the interview.

Whatever is said in the interview will remain private and confidential. The only time I would have to speak to someone else would be if you or your child told me something that means you or someone else is in danger. If you or your child became upset during the interview then we can stop the interview straight away.

Who will know you and your child have been part of the research?
The only people who will know that you and your child have decided to take part in the research will be you, your child and the school. The school will know who has been involved but they will not know who said what. If anyone else might need to know then I will speak to you first to check this is OK and let you know why.

When I have talked to all of the young people, parents/carers and teachers who agree to take part in the project I will write a report. The responses given will not be linked to names, school or any personal details. Nobody will be able to identify you or your child from the report. I will keep all of the tape recording and notes in a safe place during the research and when I have finished the project these will be destroyed.

What if I have more questions?

If you have any questions or you want to discuss this further then please contact me on the details below:

Stephanie Lally
Educational Psychologist in training

Appendix 8: Parent Consent Form

UEL Doctorate in Professional

Educational and Child Psychology

Parent/Carer Research Consent Form

I have the read the information leaflet relating to the above programme of research in which I and my child have been asked to participate and have been given a copy to keep. The nature and purpose of the research have been explained to me, and I have had the opportunity to discuss the details and ask questions about this information. I understand what is being proposed and the procedures in which I will be involved in have been explained to me.

I understand that my/or my child's involvement in this study, and particular data from this research, will remain strictly confidential. Only the researchers involved in the study will have access to the data. It has been explained to me what will happen once the experimental programme has been completed.

I hereby freely and fully consent to participate in the study which has been fully explained to me ☐

I hereby freely and fully consent to my child taking part in this study ☐

I additionally consent for my child's school file and professional reports to be shared with the researcher ☐

Having given this consent I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the programme at any time without disadvantage to myself and without being obliged to give any reason. ☐

Participant's Name (parent) (BLOCK CAPITALS)...

Participant's (parent) Signature..

Child's name...

Date..

Thank you!

Appendix 9: Teacher Information Letter

UEL Doctorate in Professional

Educational and Child Psychology

School Staff Participant Information Sheet

My name is Stephanie Lally and I am training to become an Educational and Child Psychologist. I work as an Educational Psychologist in Training in X and I am also studying at the University of East London. As part of my training I am doing a project which aims to explore pupils', parents' and teachers' experiences of fixed term exclusion and reintegration.

You have been invited to take part in this research. Before you decide whether you would like to participate, please take some time to read the information below. This explains why the research is being done and what it will involve. If you would like to take part in this research please sign the attached consent form and return it to the address provided or to the school Inclusion Manager/SENCO.

Why is this research being done?
The risk of negative outcomes for children excluded from school both short and long term are well documented, and reduction in rates of exclusion at both local and national level are viewed as a priority. With your help I want to find out:

- **Your experience of the pupil's fixed term school exclusion**
  - What you think could have helped to prevent the exclusion

- **Your experience of the pupil's reintegration into school**
  - What you think has helped to support successful reintegration

I hope that this project will help anyone working with young people to know what kind of things can be done to prevent school exclusion and support young people's reintegration and learning in school. The information you provide might be able to help other young people, their families and professionals in the future.

Who will be in this project?
As well as asking about your experiences, I will also be interviewing the pupil and parent about their experiences. I want to find out what they think could have helped prevent the fixed term exclusion and what they felt has supported the pupil's successful reintegration back into school. By interviewing young people, parents and teachers about their experiences, I hope to find out what is the best support that can be put in place for young people in school to help prevent exclusions.

If you consent to be part of this project, what will happen?

I will contact you to arrange a convenient time for us to meet. If you would like to meet with me before the interview so I can answer any questions about the research, then we can arrange a time to do this or I can answer any questions on the phone. If you agree to take part then I will ask you some questions about your experiences of the child's fixed term exclusion and reintegration. The interview will last for approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour.

The conversations we have will be recorded using a tape recorder. No one else will listen to the tape or read the notes I have made. Whatever is said in the interview will remain private and confidential. The only time I would have to speak to someone else would be if you told me something that means you or someone else is in danger. You are entitled to stop the interview at any time.

Who will know you have been part of the research?

The only people who will know you have decided to take part in the research will be you, the school management, the pupil and the parent. They will know who has been involved but they will not know who said what. When all of the interviews have taken place I will write a report. Any responses to questions included in the report will not be linked to names, schools or any personal details. Nobody will be able to identify you, pupils or parents from the report. I will keep all of the tape recording and notes in a safe place during the research and when I have finished the project these will be destroyed.

What if I have more questions?

If you have any questions or you want to discuss this further then please contact me on the details below:

Stephanie Lally
Educational Psychologist in training

Thank you for taking the time to consider this study. If you would like to take part then please complete the consent form.

Appendix 10: Teacher Consent Form

UEL Doctorate in Professional

Educational and Child Psychology

School Staff Research Consent Form

I have the read the information leaflet relating to the above programme of research in which I have been asked to participate and have been given a copy to keep. The nature and purpose of the research have been explained to me, and I have had the opportunity to discuss the details and ask questions about this information. I understand what is being proposed and the procedures in which I will be involved in have been explained to me.

I understand that my involvement in this study and particular data from this research will remain strictly confidential. Only the researchers involved in the study will have access to the data. It has been explained to me what will happen once the experimental programme has been completed.

I hereby freely and fully consent to participate in the study which has been fully explained to me ☐

Having given this consent I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the programme at any time without disadvantage to myself and without being obliged to give any reason ☐

Participant's Name (teacher) (BLOCK CAPITALS)..

Participant's Signature (teacher)..

Date...

Thank you!

Appendix 11: Pupil Interview Schedule

Can you tell me a bit about what school has been like for you so far?

What was your experience of primary school?

How did you feel before you started secondary school?

Can you tell me about a typical day at school before you had your first exclusion?

Can you tell me about the exclusions you had from school?

What do you think other people thought/felt about your exclusions from school?

What do you think led to you being excluded?

What do you think might have helped stop you from being excluded?

What do you think about the whole experience now, looking back on it?

How would you describe yourself as a person now?

How would you have described yourself around the time you were excluded?

Can you tell me what happened when you came back into school after the exclusion?

What has been different for you since your last exclusion?

What have you done/how have you changed in order to stay in school?

What are the positive qualities you have/good things about you that have meant you have been able to stay in school?

Is there anyone else / anything else which has made a difference or helped you to stay in school?

What has made the biggest difference to you?

What do you think others feel made the biggest difference?

How are you feeling about your life at the moment (now exclusions are in the past)?

What does it mean for you to be back in school and to have had no more exclusions?

What have you learnt from this experience?

What's the biggest difference in your life now?

Do you have any thoughts about your future?

Is there anything else you think is important for me to know about your views?

Is there anything I didn't ask you today that you thought I would?

Were you surprised by anything I asked you during the interview?

Additional prompts
How?
Why?
Can you tell me more about that?
Can you tell me what you were thinking?
How did you feel?

Appendix 12: Parent Interview Schedule

Can you tell me a bit about what you think school has been like for X so far?

What was his/her experience of primary school?

How do you think he/she felt before they started secondary school?

Can you tell me about a typical day at school before X had his/her first exclusion?

Can you tell me about the exclusions X had from school?

What did other people think/feel about his/her exclusions from school?

What do you think led to X being excluded?

What do you think might have helped X from being excluded?

What do you think he/she thinks about the whole experience now, looking back on it?

How would you describe X as a person now?

How would you have described X around the time he/she was excluded?

Can you tell me what happened when X came back into school after the exclusion?

What has been different for X since his/her last exclusion?

What has X done/how has he/she changed in order to stay in school?

What are the positive qualities X has/good things about X that have meant he/she has been able to stay in school?

Is there anyone else / anything else which you think has made a difference or helped X to stay in school?

What do you think has made the biggest difference to X?

What do you think others feel made the biggest difference?

How do you think X feels about their life now the exclusions are in the past?

What do you think it means to X for him/her to be back in school and to have had no more exclusions?

What do you think he/she has learnt from this experience?

What do you think is the biggest difference in his/her life now?

Do you think he/she has any thoughts about their future?

Is there anything else you think is important for me to know about your views?

Is there anything I didn't ask you today that you thought I would?

Were you surprised by anything I asked you during the interview?

Additional prompts

How?

Why?

Can you tell me more about that?

Can you tell me what you were thinking?

How did you feel?

Appendix 13: Teacher Interview Schedule

Can you tell me a bit about what you think school has been like for X so far?

What was his/her experience of primary school?

How do you think he/she felt before they started secondary school?

Can you tell me about a typical day at school before X had his/her first exclusion?

Can you tell me about the exclusions X had from school?

What did other people think/feel about his/her exclusions from school?

What do you think led to X being excluded?

What do you think might have helped X from being excluded?

What do you think he/she thinks about the whole experience now, looking back on it?

How would you describe X as a person now?

How would you have described X around the time he/she was excluded?

Can you tell me what happened when X came back into school after the exclusion?

What has been different for X since his/her last exclusion?

What has X done/how has he/she changed in order to stay in school?

What are the positive qualities X has/good things about X that have meant he/she has been able to stay in school?

Is there anyone else / anything else which you think has made a difference or helped X to stay in school?

What do you think has made the biggest difference to X?

What do you think others feel made the biggest difference?

How do you think X feels about their life now the exclusions are in the past?

What do you think it means to X for him/her to be back in school and to have had no more exclusions?

What do you think he/she has learnt from this experience?

What do you think is the biggest difference in his/her life now?

Do you think he/she has any thoughts about their future?

Is there anything else you think is important for me to know about your views?

Is there anything I didn't ask you today that you thought I would?

Were you surprised by anything I asked you during the interview?

Additional prompts

How?

Why?

Can you tell me more about that?

Can you tell me what you were thinking?

How did you feel?

Appendix 14: Ethical Approval Letter

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

Dean: Professor Mark N. O. Davies, PhD, CPsychol, CBiol.

UEL
University of
East London

www.uel.ac.uk

School of Psychology

Professional Doctorate Programmes

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to confirm that the Professional Doctorate candidate named in the attached ethics approval is conducting research as part of the requirements of the Professional Doctorate programme on which he/she is enrolled.

The Research Ethics Committee of the School of Psychology, University of East London, has approved this candidate's research ethics application and he/she is therefore covered by the University's indemnity insurance policy while conducting the research. This policy should normally cover for any untoward event. The University does not offer 'no fault' cover, so in the event of an untoward occurrence leading to a claim against the institution, the claimant would be obliged to bring an action against the University and seek compensation through the courts.

As the candidate is a student of the University of East London, the University will act as the sponsor of his/her research. UEL will also fund expenses arising from the research, such as photocopying and postage.

Yours faithfully,

Dr. Mark Finn

Chair of the School of Psychology Ethics Sub-Committee

Stratford Campus, Water Lane, Stratford, London E15 4LZ
tel: +44 (0)20 8223 4966   fax: +44 (0)20 8223 4937
e-mail: mno.davies@uel.ac.uk   web: www.uel.ac.uk/psychology

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The Government Standard

The University of East London has campuses at London Docklands and Stratford
If you have any special access or communication requirements for your visit, please let us know. MINICOM 020 8223 2853

POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE

Appendix 15: Sample Transcript Excerpt

Transcription Ref: 2.2 – Jamie Teacher

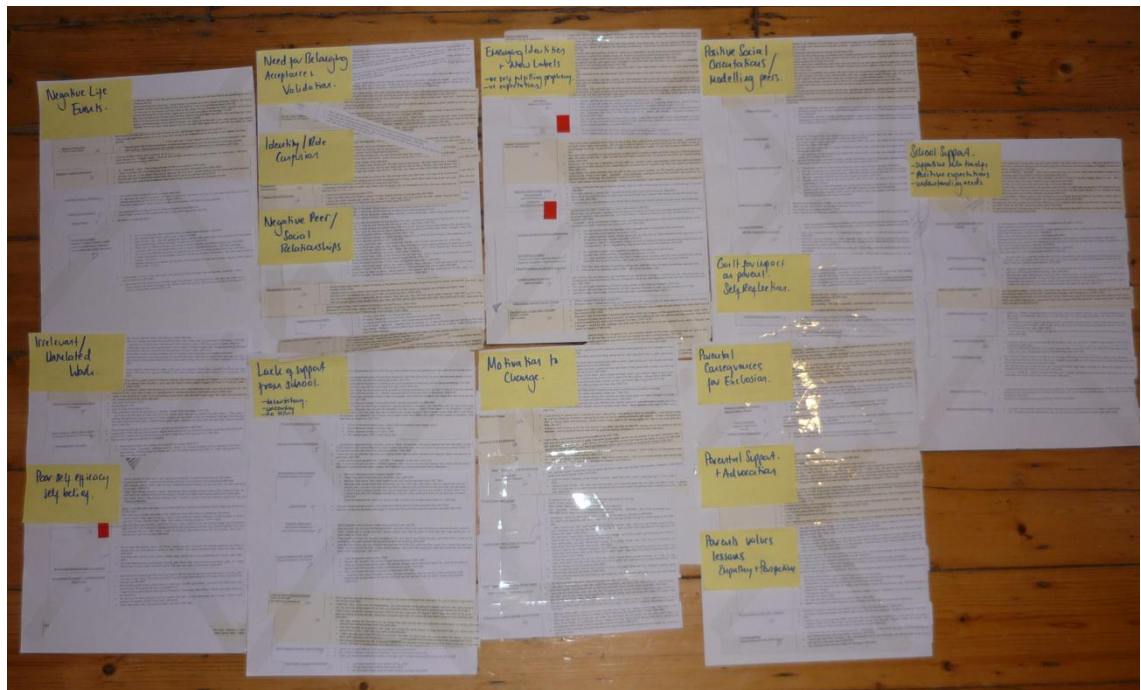| Emergent Themes	No.	Original Transcript	Exploratory Comments
	1	I: So, what's your experience of having Jamie	
	2	in school so far?	
	3	P: In terms of his daily behaviour?	
	4	I: Yeah, I suppose when he first came to the	
	5	school, just looking back.	
	6	P: Um, when he first came to school, he didn't	
	7	come with much of a history of behaviour	
	8	actually, he came with quite a positive report	
	9	from primary school. So he was, um, there were	
	10	issues, you know, child protection issues, that	
	11	kind of led to him being withdrawn from the	
	12	primary school for a period of about three or four	
	13	months. Um, and then going out of borough and	
	14	coming back in, so he had had quite an	
	15	unsettled time prior to his arrival, which I think,	
	16	you know, contributed to his unsettled behaviour	
	17	during the beginning of year seven, certainly.	
	18	Um, he can be quite disruptive, in lessons. He's	
	19	a bit of a jack the lad, likes to be the most	
	20	popular person in the class, likes to have a	
	21	reputation, um, for being, you know, quite funny.	
	22	Liked, but also having that sort of dodgy,	
	23	wheeler dealer side. Um, he'll, you know, ask	
	24	for people's dinner money/tokens, he'll be a little	
	25	bit of a bully in, in terms of how he will go around	
	26	getting the stuff from other students, but he	
	27	trades more on his reputation, so I can't	
	28	remember a time where there's been, you know,	

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Appendix 16: Sample of Initial Noting

Left margin notes	Line	Transcript	Right margin notes
Positive approach to working with school.	759	because being both teachers, they said, well, if	Parent adopted true approach to working with school – needing to build links.
	760	that was me dealing with a child like that, I would	
	761	do this, this and this, um, and so I went to the	Sense of change
Impact on parents. Parental Control.	762	school and rather than just saying, I'm not happy	Parent regained control – OFM PARENTAL.
	763	I suggested things and, to try and make things	Hurt – Ostracy
	764	better which worked, you know and he, he's	
	765	better now, I mean, he still doesn't want to do,	
	766	you know, he's still painful, um, but generally	
	767	speaking, he, you know, he, he will tow the line.	
	768	**I: And what, what do you think it is about**	
	769	**Sam that's meant he's been able to, to make**	
	770	**this shift in behaviour or attitude?**	
Not within child?!	771	P: [sighs] Well, I don't, I, I just don't think he was	Asking of character. Behaviour not report whether he is?!
	772	that kid to start with. I think it's a, it's as much a	
	773	character thing. You know, he was, he was	
	774	always wanting to please us. He, he was, well,	
Self Awareness/Reflection. Guilt?	775	a Mummy's boy, to know that, um, he never	"Mummy's boy"
	776	wanted to, he never wants to hurt me, he never,	Doesn't want to come – loss to family – values. Want family thing.
	777	and he knew how much it hurt me, how he	
	778	behaved. He, you know, he knows how	
Family Values – Importance of Education	779	important I think education is, um, and he knew	Family values education = important.
	780	that he was really, you know, letting me down	Family "hurt + let down by him".
	781	and he didn't want to do that. I don't think that	Importance of Education
	782	probably played a massive part in it, but it, it	Sense PART.
	783	certainly played some part in it, for why he did	
	784	care, and I think now he's just, he's, I just think	
Adolescence – Maturity.	785	he's grown up a bit, as my husband has said, I	Matured – part of development.
	786	think he's just grown up a bit. He's realised	
	787	education matters, he can't leave school without	Instilling importance of education in him!!!
Family Values – Importance of Education.	788	any qualifications, you know, he, he's realised	
	789	and particularly in this current economic climate,	
	790	if he wants to, make something of him, of	There is any are option.
	791	himself, he needs to do well, or certainly better	
Parental Control.	792	than he was. It's not an option to leave school	
	793	without qualifications.	

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Appendix 17: Example of Emergent Theme Table

|	Shanniece Emergent Themes
Staff Giving Up Time for Child	• ...as I got older and I actually talked, like sat down and talked to her and like when I've been through a situation, she was always there, so I thought, wow, that is actually a really good teacher, so like, to me, that's what you call like a good teacher. (276-282)
Staff Teaching Lessons / Values	• don't be a person who you're not and like. Friends come and go now, do not let a friend like change your way, who you are and everything, yeah (289-292) • she said like, look, like stepped back and said, really and truly, do you need to see that like fight, like what makes you to be like, all you're doing is just causing more trouble (303-307) • things that she says and you think, woah, that she right but like. You actually look at, you think, that's actually so right and then you follow what she does, like yeah. So be that. (309-313)
Support for Work from Staff	• lessons went on and everything, like he started to help me and then I started to get projects done and everything (800-803) • like, you had them teachers who didn't care but then eventually, when you started caring about your work, then you noticed that teachers do care about you (760-763)
Teacher's Belief in child's potential	• One day in lesson, I was like, tried to be civilised, I done my work in for him, he's like Shanniece you've got really good potential, why do you act like this and, no, you've got potentials, you should be better (794-797) • I think Miss X knows I want to get somewhere, my fashion teacher knows I want to get somewhere and my design teacher knows I want to get somewhere and my health and social teachers know I want to get somewhere and yeah. (995-1000) • I think like eight of them think I will get somewhere, and then the rest think like she's just going to get bored (991-993)
Impact of Parental Reaction on Child	• like just seeing my Mum getting hurt and everything (729-730) • It was a meeting that... [pauses]...I learned a lot in there, like I think that, that meeting was the first, I think, well, the first time I saw Mum disappointed with me (592-595) • she'd probably think like, oh, just teenager, you know, stage teenager, you're just always getting phone calls and letters, so I thought it didn't really too bother her, but then when she came to the meeting, she thought, okay, you're taking it too far (598-604)
Responsibility as 'Only Girl' / Identity	• My Mum's reaction was she was always, don't do that, my only daughter. (356-357) • I will never forget the things what Mum said, like you're my only daughter, please do good for me (357-

Appendix 18: Example of Step 5: Identifying sub-ordinate themes across pupils

Appendix 19: Example of Step 6: Identifying sub-ordinate themes across parents

Appendix 20: Example of Step 7: Identifying sub-ordinate themes across teachers
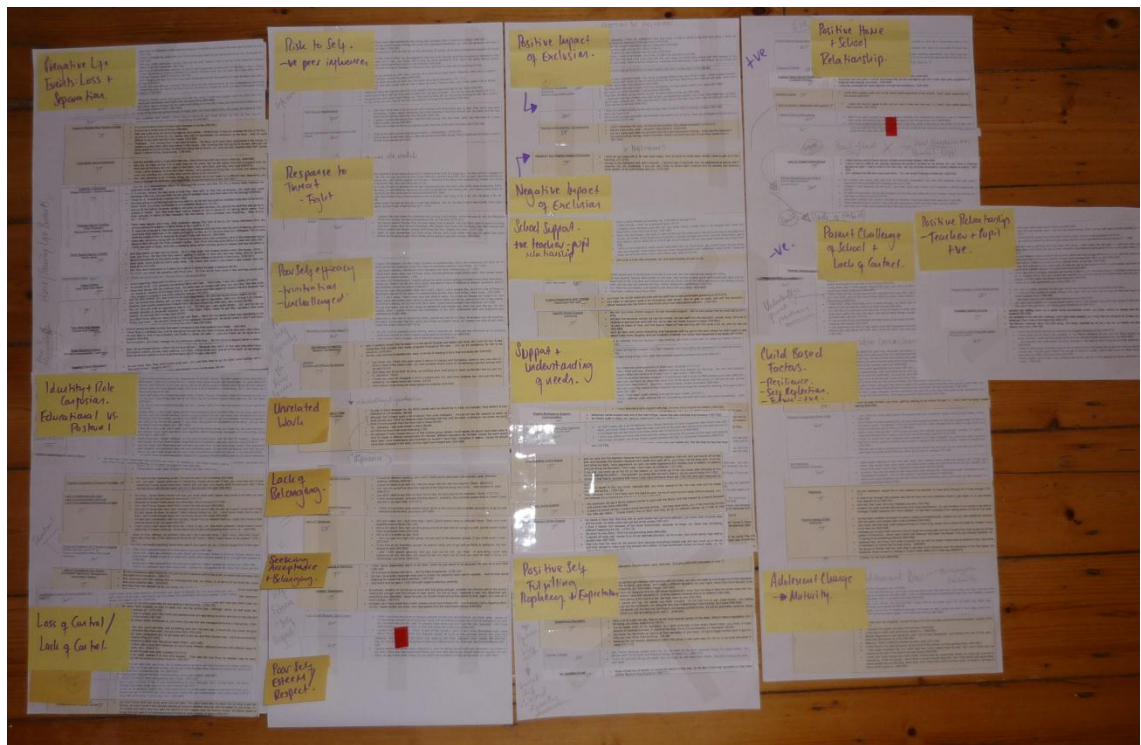
Appendix 21: Clustering to create sub-ordinate themes

Appendix 22: Example of Step 8: Identifying super-ordinate themes