

**An investigation into how girls identified as having Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and staff of one specialist education provision feel pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated.**

A thesis submitted to The University of Manchester for the degree of Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology

**2015**

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## List of Abbreviations

- Appreciative inquiry (AI)
- British Psychological Society (BPS)
- Child or young person (CYP)
- Code of Practice (CoP)
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF)
- Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)
- Department for Education (DfE)
- Department for Education and Skills (DfES)
- Education and Health Care Plan (EHC plan)
- Educational Psychologists (EPs)
- Educational Psychology Service (EPS)
- Fair Access Panel (FAP)
- Health Care Professions Council (HCPC)
- Individual Crisis Management Plan (ICMP)
- Local authorities (LAs)
- Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)
- Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)
- Self- determination theory (SDT)
- Senior Management Team (SMT)
- Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBDs)
- Special educational needs (SEN)

Team Around the Child (TAC)

Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP)

The United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

## Abstract

The University of Manchester

Julie Martin

Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology

An investigation into how girls identified as having Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and staff of one specialist education provision feel pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated.

2015

The Children and Families Act 2014 (DfE, 2014) makes clear that local authorities (LAs) and schools must have regard to: the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person (CYP) with special educational needs (SEN); and highlights the importance of CYP participating as fully as possible in decisions, and of being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions. CYP with SEN in the form of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBDs) continue to be an under researched and underrepresented voice. The views of girls with SEBDs are particularly diminished as, in addition to the barriers faced by CYP with SEBD, they face further obstacles relating to gender and how this influences perceptions of SEBDs.

This thesis aimed to engage with a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) in action research to facilitate development into a special provision for girls with SEBDs by exploring the views of pupils, specifically girls, and staff working with them regarding how pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated. A single embedded case study design was used within an appreciative inquiry (AI) framework to explore the participation of girls with SEBDs in a PRU in decision making regarding their needs.

Participants included five staff members from the PRU and four girls identified as having SEBDs. Data was collected through semi structured interviews, photographs and documentation and analysed using thematic and content analysis. The key themes identified were: Successful Participation Practices; The influence of gender; Pupil Voice; The influence of CYP's views; Understanding of the needs of CYP with SEBD; Relationships; Ethos of the setting and Moving participation forward. Furthermore, it was found that the needs of girls with SEBDs were perceived to be different within their gender group as well as between girls and boys with SEBDs. Findings were explored and future actions agreed and reviewed in workshops with key stakeholders and the researcher.

The findings contribute to the knowledge base regarding how participation is conceptualised by girls with SEBDs and staff supporting them in one specialist provision. The knowledge contributed evidences that there is a role for Educational Psychologists (EPs) in the facilitation of pupil voice in order to identify how pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can be best accelerated in order to support their engagement. Additionally, AI appears to have been an effective method for this participatory research. Implications for EP practice and areas for future research are also considered.



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## Chapter 1 – Introduction

### 1.1 Thesis rationale

Prior to commencing the Doctorate in Child and Educational Psychology, the current researcher was employed as a Counsellor in a secondary school for CYP with a statement of SEBDs, a small percentage of whom were girls. The researcher's interest in this group has subsequently grown, alongside an interest in the distinctive contribution that EPs can make as applied researchers to assist in service development (Ward, 2004).

The context in which this investigation takes place is a PRU for students in Key Stages 3 and 4 who have been excluded from mainstream schools or who are at risk of exclusion. Most students attend the centre for approximately 26 weeks during which time they are assessed and appropriate longer term provision is sought for them. For example, pupils may return to mainstream education, some of whom will receive support through an Education and Health Care (EHC) plan; whilst some pupils may access alternative provision and others may attend special schools either in or out of the borough.

A small number of pupils with an EHC plan or a statement of SEBD in the LA where the PRU is based are girls. However, there is no special SEBD provision for girls in the borough. To fill this gap the LA planned to develop provision at the PRU to provide special SEBD provision for 10 girls in addition to the current mixed PRU provision.

The PRU was therefore going through a process of change to accommodate long stay provision for girls presenting with SEBDs and this research was commissioned by the senior management team (SMT) of the PRU to support the development of this provision. As pupils with SEBD and girls in particular are an under researched and underrepresented voice (Osler & Vincent, 2003), it seemed appropriate to consider development of the provision from the point of view of girls as well as the PRU staff. At the time of writing, and historically, the majority of pupils on roll at the PRU were boys and the practice was to separate the girls and boys for lessons, lunchtimes and break times. The rationale given by staff was that the two groups have different needs and will be a distracting influence on each other.

The research was framed as action research involving staff and girls in developing the provision, specifically as an investigation into how staff and girls perceive participation in decision making regarding their needs can best be facilitated.

A literature review was conducted to explore how pupils, and specifically girls, presenting with SEBDs can best be supported to express their views regarding their SEN and how these views are then used to inform intervention to meet those needs. Literature exploring how perceptions of SEBDs are influenced by gender was also considered. Literature regarding participatory research methods and AI in particular were examined to inform meaningful ways for the girls to construct their views, to provide an equal platform for staff and pupil views and to provide a dynamic and reflective form of staff and provision development.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### 2.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents a detailed review of the literature relevant to an investigation into how girls identified as having SEBDs and staff of one specialist education provision feel pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated. The purpose of the review was to discover what research was available relating to this subject and to develop explicit and pertinent research questions which when answered would contribute unique findings to the already existing knowledge base.

### 2.2 Outline structure of literature review

The Institute for Evidence-Based Health Professions Education (2010) consider a good search strategy to be one that is sensitive so important information is not missed, specific to avoid the need to work through many articles to find the one that meets criteria , and systematic with a carefully defined strategy that can be repeated by others if necessary.

Steps were taken to address these considerations including listing the databases that would be searched; deciding what kind of study designs were acceptable; identifying the key concepts in the research question; and thinking of alternate words that could also be used for these concepts including synonyms and abbreviations in order to increase the sensitivity of the search to avoid missing potentially important information.

Following initial broad evaluations of the literature referring to pupils identified as having SEBDs in order to establish the context and rationale for the study, the following literature review questions were proposed:

1. What is known about meeting the needs of pupils identified as having SEBDs?
2. What is known about how gender influences perceptions of the needs of pupils identified as having SEBDs?

3. What is known about pupils identified as having SEBDs views of their needs?
  - 3.a What is known about girls identified as having SEBDs views of their needs?
4. What is known about how pupils identified as having SEBDs participate in decisions making to meet their needs?
5. What is known about gaining and acting on the views of pupils identified as having SEBDs?

### 2.3 The search strategy used.

A search of five electronic databases (ASSIA, British Education Index, ERIC, Education: A Sage Full Text Collection and ProQuest) was conducted using search terms defined by the literature review questions (see table 1). Relevant papers up to and including 2014 were selected but limited to peer reviewed articles with abstracts in English. Abstracts were selected for retrieval of the paper if they were judged to include data about either pupils with SEBDs, gender and SEBD or the participation of pupils identified as having SEBDs.

**Table 1: Terms used for the literature search**

- Behavioural, emotional, social, difficulties
- BESD
- Emotional, behavioural, difficulties
- EBD
- Social, emotional, behavioural, difficulties
- SEBD
- Participation
- Views
- Voice
- Gender

The terms for search 1 were entered in stages as represented below (figure 1).

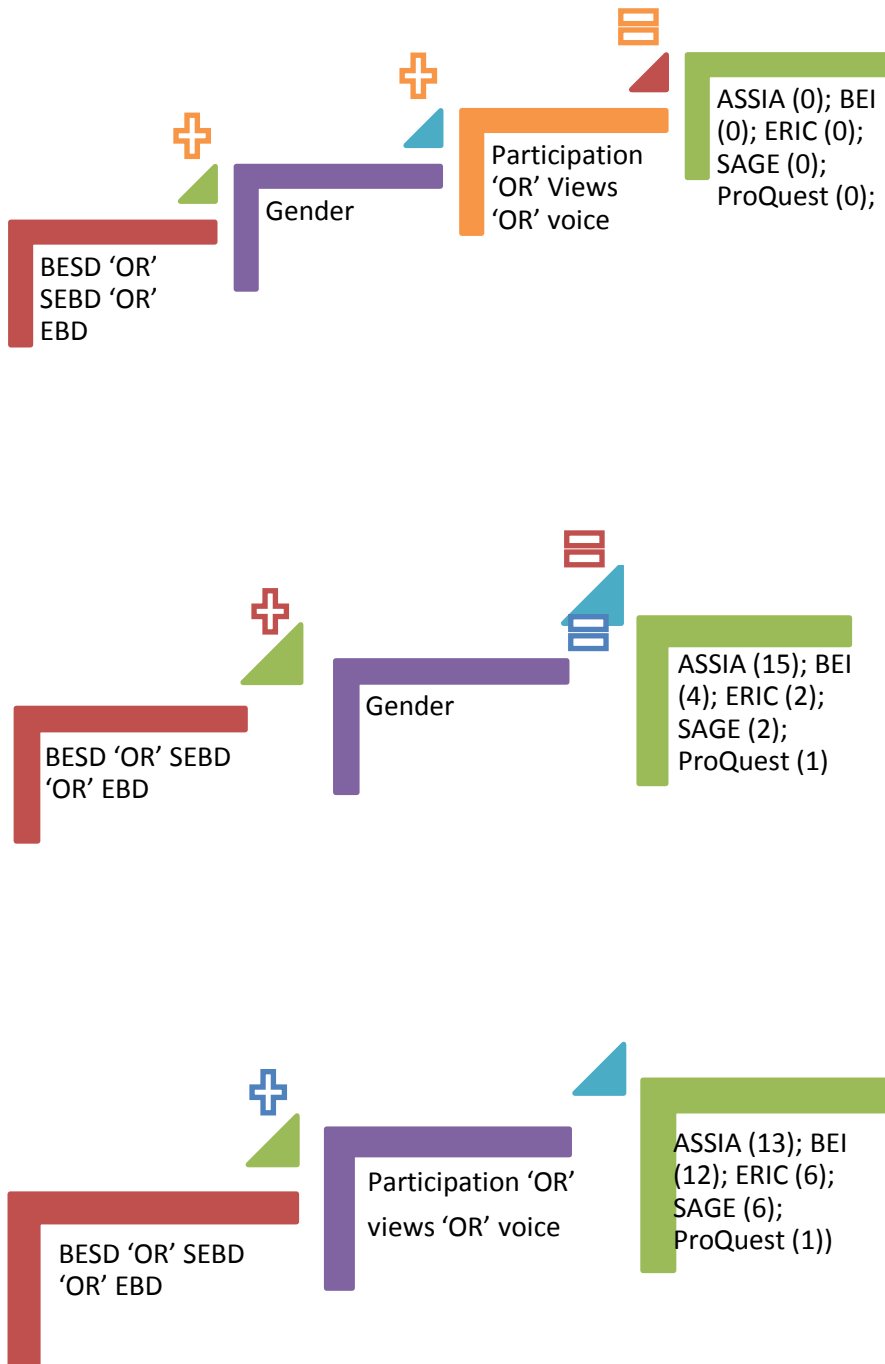


Figure 1: Stages of systematic search



As a consequence of the number of results obtained from the first search illustrated above two other searches were conducted using the terms as stated.

The search was supplemented with hand searching of key journals; and using general search engines on the internet such as 'Google' and 'Google scholar' as although effective, electronic database searching may not locate all research reports, as some may not be referenced in databases, and others may be missed in the searches. Using the terms in table 1, electronic searches revealed 62 findings and 11 further papers were identified from hand searches accessed through Google Scholar. Papers were screened for relevance on the basis of titles and abstracts and inclusion and exclusion criteria (see table 2) were applied.

This left 28 which were nearest hit studies to be included to address literature review questions 1-5 (See Table 21, Appendix 2).

**Table 2: Table to show inclusion and exclusion criteria used in the systematic search process**

	<b>Inclusion criteria</b>	<b>Exclusion criteria</b>
<b>Target population</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studies that refer directly to pupils with SEBD/ EBD/ BESD</li> <li>• Studies that refer to eliciting views of pupils with SEBD/ EBD/ BESD.</li> <li>• Studies that refer to the participation of pupils with SEBD/ EBD/ BESD</li> <li>• Peer reviewed articles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studies that do not refer directly to pupils with SEBD/ EBD/ BESD</li> <li>• Studies that do not refer to eliciting views of pupils with SEBD/ EBD/ BESD.</li> <li>• Studies that do not refer to the participation of pupils with SEBD/ EBD/ BESD</li> <li>• Non- peer reviewed articles</li> </ul>
<b>Language</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studies in the English language.</li> <li>• UK studies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studies not in the English language.</li> <li>• Non UK studies</li> </ul>

## Chapter 3: Evaluation of the literature found

The following evaluation begins with definitions and conceptualisations of SEBDs followed by discussion of literature concerning meeting the needs of pupils identified as having these difficulties. Information regarding how gender influences perceptions of the needs of pupils identified as having SEBDs will then be reviewed. Such pupils' own views of their needs will then be appraised followed by girls' interpretations specifically. How pupils identified as having SEBDs participate in decision making to meet such needs is reviewed. Finally, literature regarding gaining and acting on the views of pupils identified as having SEBDs is evaluated followed by a summary of the work discussed.

### 3.1 Social Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties-Definitions

The term 'SEBD' is used to describe a wide range of SEN including conduct disorders, hyperkinetic disorders and less obvious disorders such as anxiety or depression (DCSF, 2008). Children and young people identified as having SEBDs are often described as being withdrawn or isolated, disruptive and disturbing, hyperactive and lacking concentration; having immature social skills; and as presenting challenging behaviours arising from other complex special needs (Department for Education and Skills (DfES), 2001). However, as Syrnyk (2014) discusses, the wide nature of these criteria can contribute to uncertainty about which children have SEBDs. Furthermore, Daniels, Visser, Cole and De Reybekill (1998a) found that teachers had a shared concept of SEBD but struggled to provide a clear definition of the disorder.

According to Fovet (2011) SEBDs do not encompass pathological disorders and psychiatric issues; they cover a spectrum ranging from unacceptable behaviour to mental illness (DfES, 2005). Chakraborti-Gosh, Mofield and Grellana (2010) consider that displays of what might be considered anti-social behaviours are not rare and are not sufficient to define a child as being affected by SEBD. Indeed, as Fovet (2011) found, 60 to 85% of young people will take part in difficult behaviour before the age of 20, while 40% of youth will display long lasting anti-social behaviour (Moffitt, 1993; Tollan & Guerra, 1994). It is therefore not the behaviour itself that identifies SEBD students but the severity of the behaviour and the length of time during which it manifests itself (Fovet, 2011)

In 1997 SEBDs were estimated to impact on between 10% and 20% of school age children in England and Wales, the experience of which was considered as significantly impairing their social and

educational development (Webber & Sheuermann, 1997). Statistics released by the Department for Education (DfE) (2014) showed that the most common primary type of needs at School Action Plus was SEBDs and speech, language and communication needs (both 23.8%). Furthermore, in 2014 20.3% of pupils identified as having SEBDs received one or more fixed period exclusions (DfE, 2014a). Under the new arrangements set out in the Children and Families Bill and revised SEN Code of Practice (CoP) (DfE, 2014), School Action and School Action Plus have been replaced by the combined EHC plan. However, for CYP who are not eligible for an EHC plan but who would have previously been on School Action or School Action plus LAs have published 'local offers' of provision available for them.

As far back as the 'Butler' Education Act (1944) provision for pupils described as 'maladjusted' began to be formalised by the state (Gillard, 2011). Frederickson and Cline (2002) consider such constructs to change to mirror the evolution of societal attitudes to young people who present with 'problematic' behaviours. Therefore, SEBD may be considered a fluid concept and it is important to take into account the role societal, family and school environments play in creating and ameliorating young people's SEBDs (Evans, Harden, Thomas & Benefield, 2003).

The recognition that behaviour problems may arise from several factors is an important feature of an ecosystemic approach which emanates from the work of Bronfenbrenner (1979). This approach recognises that the child is contextualised within a set of social sub systems which can have an effect on the child at any level (McPhee & Craig, 2009) and is founded on the notion that the origins and purposes of human behaviour are essentially interactional (Cooper & Upton, 1990). Cole (1998) states that "according to this perspective the pupil is part of a web of interconnecting systems: the internal physical and mental systems of the pupil which interact with the classroom system; the school system; the neighbourhood system; and, importantly, the family system" (p. 122).

Similarly Cooper and Upton (1990) consider such ecosystemic approaches to offer alternative ways of conceptualising behaviours which are based on the view that human behaviour is developed and maintained through interactional processes. Collaborative approaches to problem solving are emphasised and the importance of individuals' phenomenological interpretations in the development of solutions are considered as central. Furthermore, difference and individuality including conflicting personal perspectives is appreciated (opp.cit).

SEBD refers to "behaviours or emotions that deviate so much from the norm that they interfere with the child's own growth and development and/or the lives of others" (Woolfolk, Hughes & Walkup, 2010, p. 165). This definition and an ecosystemic approach are used here as the current author

considers systemic interrelationships to exist between individuals rather than causal relationships existing between any one factor and SEBD. However, whilst this is the view held by her, it is important to acknowledge that it is possible that the participants involved in the study may have different opinions regarding the causes of behaviours, both to her and to each other as is often suggested by parents, teachers and pupil's different attributions for pupil behaviour.

Lambert and Miller (2010) explain that a range of studies have examined explicitly the causal attributions for difficult behaviour made by different parties, most notably teachers (Mavropoulou & Padelidiadu, 2002; Miller & Black, 2001), students (de Castro, Veerman, Koops & Bosch, 2002; Miller, Ferguson, & Byrne, 2000; Tony, 2003) and parents (Georgiou, 1999; Miller, Ferguson & Moore, 2002). There is a common finding that teachers attribute the cause of challenging behaviour in schools primarily to home and parent factors (Lambert & Miller, 2010). Phares, Ehrbar and Lum (1996) investigated the perceptions of parents for the development and treatment of pupils classed as having SEBDs. It was found that overall parents and children were viewed as more responsible for the development and treatment of problems than were teachers. However, for younger children, parents and teachers were seen as more responsible (Lambert & Miller, 2010).

Reviewing progress in schools since the Learning behaviour report (DfES, 2005a), the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) (2009) commented on:

the possibly reciprocal nature of the barrier that may separate some parents and school staff when pupils' behaviour is deemed to be difficult to manage at school ... while some parents may be 'hard to reach', that description may on occasions apply equally to schools (p. 54).

Causal attributions held by pupils, teachers, parents, and others for the origins of pupil's challenging behaviour are likely, if in conflict, to be a major constituent of these reported barriers (Lambert & Miller, 2010).

When discussing the implications of the findings of their study Lambert and Miller (2010) suggest that:

in addition, or as an alternative to attribution retraining, carefully conducted 'ecosystemic consultations' (Aponte, 1976; Cooper & Upton, 1990; Miller, 2003) could be utilised to bring together pupils, teachers, and parents with a trained external professional in order to manage safely the potentially inflammatory dynamics caused by conflicting attributions, whilst permitting a more productive search for approaches that meet with the approval of all parties (p. 618).

It is the current author's proposal that AI can act as such an ecosystemic consultation as it recognises the transactional nature between people and their environments, and that individuals function best when their environments are designed to align with their particular characteristics (Pargament, 1986; Seidman, 1990). As Boyd and Bright (2007) explain, consultative environments can be created through generative dialogues and support change interventions which are targeted at various subunit's of an ecological system (e.g., individual, group, organisational), which, in turn, can alter the environment to create a greater fit between people and their surroundings.

### **3.2 Meeting the needs of pupils identified as having SEBDs.**

#### **3.2.1 Legislative requirements**

Many CYP with SEBDs are served by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA, 1995), and duties in the Education Act (1996) require governing bodies to ensure that the necessary provision is made for any pupil who has SEN. However, 'Support and Aspiration: a new approach to special educational needs and disability' (DfE, 2011) states that "opportunities for this population fall short of what they need in order to make a successful transition to adult life" (p. 80).

The SEN CoP (DfE, 2014) emphasises the importance of positive relationships with parents who can support school's work in developing emotional, social and behavioural skills and Mowatt (2010) considers that if developments are to be sustainable and to become integral to the school, it is important that they impact as fully as possible upon the whole school community, including parents.

In Section 19 of the Children and Families Act 2014 (DfE, 2014), it is made clear that LAs, in carrying out their functions under the Act in relation to disabled CYP and those with SEN, must have regard to: the views, wishes and feelings of the CYP, and the child's parents; and the importance of the CYP, and the child's parents, participating as fully as possible in decisions, and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions. It is also stated that LAs should work with CYP and parents to establish the aims of their participation, mark progress and build trust whilst making use of existing organisations and forums which represent the views of parents and CYP directly.

Where such organisations do not exist, it is specified that LAs should consider establishing them as effective participation is described as happening when there are strong feedback mechanisms to ensure that CYP and parents understand the impact their participation is making. LAs therefore have

a strategic leadership role in fulfilling their duties concerning the participation of young people in education and training (DfE, 2014).

### **3.2.2 At the school level**

At the school level, when reflecting on the findings of her investigation regarding the participation of CYP with SEBDs in statutory review processes, Kilroy (2013) concludes that the perception of participation and what this entails in the school setting can have a considerable impact on how CYP are enabled to participate. Therefore, it seems reasonable to assume that in order to have long-term effects, change regarding participation practices needs to impact at the level of values and beliefs of the key stakeholders (MacGilchrist, Myers & Reed, 2004). Furthermore, it is through the development of a community of practice (Sergiovanni, 1994), in which the ways of thinking and of being gradually become internalised, that such change becomes possible (Mowat, 2007).

As experience of previously damaging relationships may impede the capacity of young people to form trusting bonds with others, Mowatt (2010) considers a challenge facing those working with pupils perceived as having SEBDs is being able to work with the young person and persevere through the difficulties, conveying faith in their capacity to effect change. Qualter, Gardner and Whiteley (2007) note that programmes which focus upon intrapersonal and interpersonal cognition can help to develop social–emotional learning in young people. Cooper’s (2011) paper ‘Teacher strategies for effective intervention with students presenting social, emotional and behavioural difficulties: an international review’, explores the available research evidence on approaches to promoting the positive educational engagement of students with SEBD, although it is restricted to research on teachers’ skills and strategies. SEBD provision is described as being often founded upon published good practice advocating firm boundaries, well-organised structures and routines controlled by adults (Cole, Visser & Upton, 1998; Daniels et al. 1998a), where students are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and contribute ideas to community living (Bridgeland, 1971; Cooper, 1993). However, although many pupil empowerment initiatives have been found to face resistance by school staff (Lewis & Burman, 2008; MacBeath, 2006; Sellman, 2003; Tyrell, 2002), when given such opportunities students often surprise adults by repaying trust with fair and realistic feedback (MacBeath, 2006).

### **3.2.3 Challenges to meeting the needs of pupils identified as having SEBDs.**

Nonetheless, according to Davies (2005) it is little wonder that these concerns are exacerbated for those working with more challenging students:

The subjects are often resentful, defensive, alienated and, in some cases, disturbed. Their educational careers have invariably involved individual and family stress, and invitations to discuss them are not always welcomed. This is unfortunate, since a failure to find out what these pupils really think is likely to perpetuate their negative experiences of school. (p. 300)

It is therefore quite likely that students with SEBDs are less likely to experience autonomy in school in comparison to others. All the same, Cooper (1993, 2006) makes the case for all young people, particularly those with SEBDs, to be heard both as an issue of entitlement but also because they have very important things to say. As teaching and learning are transactional processes, this often ignored group will have both useful and challenging messages about what constitutes a relevant curriculum and effective teaching style (Cooper & Shea, 1998). Despite requiring a sometimes difficult shift from viewing children as the objects of education and research to partners in the process (Christensen & James, 2008), and however hard this may be to implement, it is an important and effective step as high levels of poor behaviour have been found in schools where the curriculum is limited and differentiation is lacking, resulting in the decline of pupils' interest, motivation and involvement (Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), 2005).

### **3.2.4 Overcoming challenges**

Myers and Pianta (2008) report an intensification of problem behaviours in children who experience negative relationships with teachers. Conversely, teachers who demonstrate emotional warmth have been shown to improve the well-being of students, not only in engagement with school but also in enabling academic achievement (Cooper, 2011). McDonald Connor, Son, Hindman and Morrison (2005) demonstrate that the positive characteristics of teachers impact strongly on academic outcomes and Cooper and McIntyre (1996), using a qualitative grounded theory approach, found that "a supportive social context designed by the teacher to help pupils feel accepted, cared for and valued" (p. 158) was a quality identified by both teachers and students as being associated with effective teaching leading to high levels of student engagement. Students were most socially and academically engaged when they felt supported and respected by their teachers, and when they expressed a sense of trust in them (opp.cit.)

In Smith, Turner and Worton's (2004) intervention, a support room was set up within a school in which pupils could discuss their emotional and behavioural problems and successes, and where they could learn techniques to manage their own behaviour in order for them to be able to continue to access learning. Above all, it was designed to give them access to a person who was available and

willing to listen to them. From the outset the researchers stressed to staff that this room was not to be considered a punishment or detention room, but rather as a room in which pupils' behavioural difficulties could be addressed in a positive and supportive manner.

Support for the implementation of such interventions is suggested by Nind, Boorman and Clarke's (2012) study which involved asking adults what was important in educating girls identified as having SEBDs. Key themes in the responses included the importance of a personalised approach to students, based on thorough assessment and responsiveness to their interests and voice; and building and maintaining relationships.

Hill (2006) considers that when it comes to supporting pupils who have SEBDs "there is the rhetoric and then there is the reality" (p.28) and examines the impact of one newly opened PRU on pupils, teachers and special needs co-ordinators. Hill interviewed one teacher and five pupils, all of whom were boys as the unit had no girls attending at that time and recommends as a result of the study that consideration should be given to how all parties are included in the consultation process required of policy statements. As Dyson (1993) reminds us:

Like it or not, services are accountable to their clients. They might as well make that accountability explicit and use it to promote the quality of what they do. They should report to their clients on what they do, on what they achieve and on what the loss would be if they disappeared. They should have performance indicators, agreed by clients, and they should gather evidence of their effectiveness against those indicators (p. 21).

Hart's (2012) research aimed to explore the potential protective factors of a PRU through the voices of children and staff through semi-structured interviews supported by the use of tools and techniques to facilitate discussion. Hart considered that it was important to work with this group as pupil exclusion in mainstream primary and secondary schools continues to be a problem in England (DfES, 2007). These children are reported to face some of the worst outcomes (DCSF, 2008a), including isolation and social exclusion (Wright, Weekes, & McGlaughlin, 2000); associated effects of underachievement leading to reduced employment prospects (Hayden, 1997) and involvement in petty crime (Parsons, Godfrey, Howlett, Hayden & Martin, 2001). Children in care and those with SEBD and other SEN are also described as being disproportionately represented and more likely to experience exclusion (DfES, 2005b).

Potential protective factors of the PRU, as identified by children and staff, fell within the main themes of relationships; teaching and learning; expectations and environment. With regard to relationships, protective factors were linked to fostering relationships, and staff-pupil and pupil-



pupil relationships were the most pertinent topics discussed (Hart, 2012). The importance of engaging and involving parents in their child's PRU placement was also recognised by staff. Children compared negative experiences and perceptions of teachers in their previous schools with PRU staff, views which commonly feature in previous research (Kinder, Wakefield & Wilkin, 1996; Wise, 2000). In contrast PRU staff were described positively and children reported that they felt trusted by them and felt protected by the high staff–pupil ratio. Indeed, research suggests this has an influence on positive adjustment in children with SEBDs (Duggan, Heath, Toste & Ross, 2011). Indeed, children's relationships with teachers can promote advanced cognitive and social skills (Hamre & Pianta, 2001) and buffer against negative developmental outcomes (Pianta & Steinberg, 1992).

### **3.3 Conceptualisations of SEBD's**

The focus of this research concerns the needs of girls identified as having SEBDs and the influence of gender on staff's perceptions of those needs. This group are considered a minority in a field dominated by boys, receiving less attention from policy-makers, teachers and researchers, and fewer resources (Osler & Vincent, 2003).

#### **3.3.1 The ideal pupil**

Hempel-Jorgensen (2009) explains that the 'ideal pupil' concept was first used in a study by Becker (1952) which demonstrated that teachers based their perception and treatment of pupils on a model of how a pupil should respond to their teaching. Subsequent research has shown the construction and application of the 'ideal pupil' to arise out of the interaction between pupils and teachers (Youdell, 1993; Laws & Davies, 2000). The labelling of pupils in relation to the 'ideal pupil' concept is considered central to this relationship and also between pupils themselves. Therefore, children are considered as active and reflexive agents in the process of identity formation and as a creative self-actualising pupil who has freedom to negotiate independently of authority ((Hempel-Jorgensen, 2009).

As Laws and Davies (2000) argue, pupils in both primary and secondary mainstream provision identified as having SEBDs are often perceived as having something 'wrong' with them, which in teachers' perceptions is related to the child's psychology and/or deficient background. The labelling of pupils is therefore closely followed by blaming; it is seen to be the fault of pupils if they do not conform to the classroom standards of the 'ideal pupil'. However, as Hempel-Jorgensen (2009)

points out, “labelling is not only perpetuated by teachers but also by pupils” (Renold, 2005; Bird, 1980, p.4).

### **3.3.2 The influence of social processes on the construction of SEBDs**

Boys outnumber girls in the number of statements for SEN and numbers attending schools and units for pupils with SEBDs (DfES, 2005; Cooper, Upton & Smith, 2006), similar findings to those reported from the United States (Coutinho & Oswald, 2005; Donovan & Cross, 2002). Strand and Lindsay (2008) examined the identification rate (students at School Action Plus or with statements) for any type of SEN. Gender had a very strong association with SENs, and boys were found to be 2.5 times more likely to be identified than girls. For SEBD, a stepwise regression showed that gender was the single best predictor, explaining 4.2% of the variance. Similar results were found for overall SEN identification, with gender and poverty being the strongest predictors.

The findings of Flouri and Panourgia’s (2011) study are considered by the authors as supporting previous research about the importance of negative cognitive errors for emotional adjustment and externalizing problems in both boys and girls in adolescence and showed that the functional form of the effect of life stress on emotional and behavioural adjustment does not differ between genders. Furthermore, Davies (2005) argues that “masculinity and femininity are not inherent properties of individuals; they are inherent or structural properties of our society: that is, they both condition and arise from social processes” (p.238). As children learn the discursive practices of their society, they learn to position themselves correctly as male or female, since that is what is required of them to have a recognisable identity within the existing social order. Furthermore it is claimed that by not doing so can lead to a perception of oneself as a social failure.

Cooper et al. (2006) discuss that the over representation of boys in literature concerning SEN and particularly SEBDs can be related to the socialisation process, and the stress this places on assertiveness and aggression as positive masculine characteristics. These authors cite Rutter’s (1975) suggestion that the school experience of children contributes towards gender stereotypes, in that teachers behave towards boys and girls in different ways which reinforce female passivity and male assertiveness. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that when male pupils become disaffected from school, they are perhaps more likely to respond in an aggressive and confrontational manner (Furlong, 1985).

Although the literature on gender differences suggests that girls more often experience internalising disorders when identified as having externalising behavioural problems these difficulties are

perceived as more extreme than when found in boys (Lloyd, 2005). This could be due to girls having to demonstrate more severe acting-out behaviours before they are identified or that as these behaviours are more common among boys, when they occur in girls the perception of these behaviours is that they are more severe. Therefore, due to society's higher sensitivity to behaviours that are contrary to the norm and also to perceptions of stereotypical gender behaviours, girls with SEBDs showing 'acting out' behaviours are regarded as 'doubly dangerous' (Lloyd, 2005). According to McLeod and Allard (2001), they present a challenge as they are characterised as "difficult and also as in difficulty; as dangerous, and also being in danger" (p.1).

Social (or relational) aggression refers to behaviour that is intended to harm another's friendships, social status, or self-esteem (Underwood, 2003). Girls in late childhood and early adolescence have been described as being involved in social aggression exclusively and boys as also participating in overt aggression (Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist & Peltonen, 1988). Social aggression has been found to contribute to social maladjustment for girls, but not for boys (Crick, 1996), and girls have been portrayed as using social aggression against other girls, whereas boys are defined as more likely to use physical aggression against boys (Paquette & Underwood, 1999; Xie, Cairns & Cairns, 2002).

However, although studies generally demonstrate that the prevalence and experience of social aggression varies by gender and age (French, Jansen & Pidada, 2002; Rys & Bear, 1997; Xie, Farmer & Cairns, 2003), as explained by Napolitano (2004), some researchers find no differences (Prinstein, Boergers & Vernberg, 2001). Whereas much of the research on aggression has assumed a 'gender dichotomy' (Espelage, Mebane, & Swearer, 2004), it has been argued that discrepant findings in terms of gender differences in aggression may be due to measurement issues (Espelage & Swearer, 2003) influenced by researcher's social constructions. In response to this, Underwood (2003) examined influences on aggression including social cognition, relationships, gender stereotypes and socialisation practices across childhood and into adolescence in a social-ecological framework which gives further weight to the findings of Flouri and Panourgia (2011) discussed earlier.

### **3.3.3 The influence of pupil's gender on constructions of SEBDs**

Davies (1984) points out that not only do the characteristics of the 'ideal pupil' fit more comfortably with the stereotypical female, but teachers often respond differently to male and female misbehaviour, tending to be more confrontational towards boys than girls. Cooper et al. (2006) therefore suggest that schools participate in the social construction of certain forms of deviance, the

outcomes of which may well reflect the divisions and inequalities which exist in the broader society, and may well contribute to the perpetuation of these divisions and inequalities.

Furthermore, Lloyd and O' Regan (2010) argue that the different incidence in the numbers of boys and girls identified as having SEBD's and in those excluded from school (Crozier & Anstiss, 1995; Riddell, 1996; Lloyd, 1999) is clearly related to gendered constructions of deviance and gendered processes of identification, intervention and patterns of provision (Lloyd, 1999). Reiterating the need for more research in Britain on gender and deviance in school, Lloyd and O'Regan (2010) consider the ethical and theoretical challenges for researchers who wish to recognise difficulties and adversities in some of these girls' lives but who wish to avoid both the stereotyping and underplaying of agency and the strengths of individuals. Stating that they wished neither to sentimentalise, nor to avoid evidence of difficulties, the authors discuss the individual circumstances of participants to illuminate some of the complexities they face, whilst attempting to avoid individualising the problem, which, as Phoenix (1996) points out, can lead to blame.

### **3.3.4 The influence of pupil's gender on SEBD practice**

Gender-based issues are often taken for granted and remain unquestioned, and as Burr (1995) points out they can be seen neither as a product of social structure nor one of individuals operating in total isolation of these structures. Davies (2005) writes that although the majority of teachers today believe that there should be equitable treatment of the sexes, there are many beliefs, narratives, images and metaphors located in everyday discursive practices that although not immediately recognisable do constitute inequitable practice. Lloyd and O'Regan (1999) conclude that the findings of their study point to the case for a much wider discussion over the existence and effectiveness of specialised alternative provision for young women and state that this should include the views of young people and their families.

Spiteri (1999) considers that possibilities and conditions are associated with the culturally defined rules and expectations that are often associated with being of a certain gender (Hunt, 2005). Even though familial and social factors can be influential, other dynamics may also be significant. Spiteri (1999) makes a case for gender conditioning being reinforced by 'boy-friendly' curriculums often offered in SEBD schools, stating that "societal norms play an active part in shaping gender identity and lead to the acceptance and perpetuation of certain behaviours" (p.246). However, the impact of such strategies that reinforce stereotypes may not be entirely negative as it may prove to be what individuals look to as cathartic in their schooling (Martino & Pallotta-Chiarolli, 2003).

### 3.3.5 The principle of equality

Davies (2005) states that:

teachers who attempt to stretch the boundaries of what will and will not be taken to be masculine and feminine in the interests of establishing non-sexist educational practices must contend with the specific understanding of such inequitable practice on the part of the children they teach (p.237).

The ethos of a school, if it creates a positive learning environment, has been found to promote mutual respect and value for the contribution of all pupils; strengthen teacher-pupil relations; and improve communications between schools, teachers, pupils and their communities (Dunne, et al., 2007). However, teachers' perceptions of their interactions with pupils are described as being dependent upon how positively pupils respond to a 'child centred' pedagogic style, thereby judging and labelling individual pupils' in relation to an ideal type (Hempel-Jorgensen, 2009), a process that has been found to not only be perpetuated by teachers but also by pupils (Laws & Davies, 2000). However, the current researcher considers that it is important to move away from such didactic approaches so that the views of CYP are elicited and acted upon in a collaborative process that truly adopts person centred methods to participation regardless of gender.

### 3.4 Seeking the views of pupils identified as presenting with SEBDs

Although the numbers of young people identified as having SEBDs are continually growing (Cooper, 2006), and despite the fact that for these young people the issue of student voice takes on particular relevance in negotiating access to learning, there are relatively few studies specifically about or with pupils from schools or other provision for students with SEBD, and in particular girls, when compared to studies regarding mainstream children's voice and agency. In spite of government rhetoric and a growing concern about young people at risk of becoming excluded from education, they are seldom offered the opportunity to join this debate and have their voices heard (Thomas, 2007). Although the idea of pupil voice is not new, and despite the fact that 40 years ago Stenhouse (as cited in Hopkins, 2014) claimed that pupils would do better at school if they were treated "with respect as learners ...and [their] ideas listened to and taken seriously" (p. 16), this issue does not appear to have been addressed in any significant way to date. However, institutions such as schools are increasingly expected, and even required, to engage with young people's voices in order to shape and evaluate the quality of provision (Cremin, Mason & Busher, 2011). As Hopkins (2014) points out, "the engagement of pupil voice has become increasingly significant in understanding

effective pedagogy and in securing more personalised approaches to learning in United Kingdom school contexts” (p.15).

The DfES (2003, 2005) stipulated the importance of listening to what pupils have to say about the general school experience and Ofsted (2005) require inspectors to report on how far a school seeks values and acts on pupils’ views. The Children and Families Act 2014 states that the primary function of the Children’s Commissioner includes promoting awareness of the views and interests of children in England which may involve encouraging people who work with and/ or for CYP to take account of their views and interests. Furthermore, the Children’s Commissioner must take reasonable steps to involve children in the discharge of the primary function (TSO, 2014).

The lack of self-advocacy, or even advocacy, in the field of pupil voice may relate back to construction of these pupils as undeserving, unentitled or ‘bad’ (Thomas & Glenny, 2000). As some students experience greater influence and consequently perceived power when they exhibit more challenging behaviour, ‘voice’ becomes equated with physical power rather than articulation and opinions become hidden in both education and educational research (Osler & Vincent, 2003). As Sellman (2009) points out:

Perhaps... it is not surprising that power was equated with physicality as pupils in SEBD provision may have learned in the past that overt challenging behaviour results in the power to distract or subvert a classroom environment but ultimately leads to rejection and exclusion by adults (p.42)

Presenting real challenges, it has been claimed that it is easier not to hear the voices of such young people because their communication is frequently unconventional and their social status marginal (Corbett, 1998). ‘Choosing’ to communicate in ways that don’t conform to schools rules can lead professionals to label such pupils further, in effect expanding their deficits and reducing the capacity meaning that their disadvantage may increase again once they are disengaged and excluded from schooling (Lloyd, 2005). Moreover, the ‘unconventional’ communication and marginal social status (Corbett, 1998) of girls identified as having SEBDs can result in their voices being often hidden (Osler & Vincent, 2003) or negated by medicalisation (Lloyd, Stead & Cohen, 2006) by “putting their anger down to periods or hormones” (Cruddas & Haddock, 2005, p.165).

### **3.5 Pupils identified as having SEBDs views of their needs.**

Michael and Frederickson (2013) used semi- structured interviews to seek the views of pupils aged 12 to 16 years drawn from PRUs regarding the enablers and barriers to positive outcomes they had

encountered and a primarily deductive approach to thematic analysis identified five themes: relationships; curriculum; discipline; learning environment and self. 'Positive relationships' was the most widely mentioned enabling theme, and associations with teachers, peers and family members were all discussed. Young people spoke about relationships with teachers most often in terms of positive outcomes for learning and the importance of teachers providing emotional support was also highlighted. A small number of young people discussed positive relationships with their peers, largely related to feelings of reassurance or safety when they first arrived at the PRU. A discrete theme, ideas for change, was also identified where young people drew on their experience to come up with improvement suggestions where the importance of understanding and listening was emphasised.

When discussing the findings of their study Michael and Frederickson (2013) report many consistencies with those identified from the limited previous research conducted in this area. For example, as formerly discussed here both Hill (1996) and Lloyd and O'Regan (1999) found 'positive relationships with teachers' was a predominant theme identified by young people as promoting positive outcomes. Other examples include the perceived role of positive relationships with peers and support from family members in helping to promote positive outcomes (Michael & Frederickson, 2013). Other research endorses the conclusion that teacher support is related to increased levels of motivation, more success and less disruptive or passive behaviour due to frustration and feelings of low academic competence, and that perceived emotional support from teachers is likely to be related to higher levels of engagement with and enjoyment of learning, motivation to succeed and fewer emotional and behavioural problems (Everston & Emmer, 1982; Rayner, 1998; Thuen & Bru, 2009)

Similarly, in Sellman's (2009) study which concerns an intervention at an SEBD special school for boys, students particularly welcomed the structure, regularity and consistency brought to their lives and felt that the more favourable staff-student ratios and activities in place offered some order. The issue most commonly discussed by pupils was physical restraint, findings consistent with the views of students interviewed for a report by Morgan (2004) which suggested that students in SEBD provision were accepting of the 'need' for restraint but more concerned that it was done safely, fairly and by trained adults. The pupils in Sellman's study also reported that the rewards system was clear and understood by all students and they knew which behaviours were expected of them in relation to sanctions and incentives. This is considered important when trying to implement such a behaviourist system (Freiberg, 1999), as reliability and consistency are important for such a technique to work effectively (Roderick, Pitchford & Miller, 1997). Interestingly and further

highlighting the value of student voice projects in SEBD contexts, Sellman found that whilst pupils considered that both the systems of reward and ultimately restraint were underpinned by the quality of relationships, staff interviews only indicated the need for minor grammatical changes to the behaviour policy when asked about these areas. However, the students' main point was that it does not matter what intervention is used (reward, sanction or restraint); if the relationship is poor it is less likely to be effective.

Similar studies conducted by Garner (1993), Harris, Vincent, Thomson and Toalster (2006) and Jahnukainen (2001) also highlight the importance pupils place on relationships as factors in their engagement with school and its curriculum. The views expressed by these studies refer to dissatisfaction with large schools and class sizes. Likewise, Sellman's (1999) student research groups' attitude was not anti-educational or even anti-discipline. Rather they requested clarity, consistency, inclusivity and good quality relationships, which are common findings from mainstream projects and resonate with policy and professional development agendas (Cooper, 2006; Davies, 2005).

### **3.5.1 Girls identified as having SEBDs views of their needs.**

Lloyd and O' Regan's (1999) paper discusses the experience of mainstream school and special educational provision of 20 young women with SEBD and asks questions about the outcomes and effectiveness of this kind of education in a policy context of inclusion. The aims of the research were to explore issues involving the ideas of effectiveness and outcomes of alternative educational provision for young women identified as having SEBDs and to provide space for the rarely heard voices of such young women. The authors found that when gaining views of alternative provision, several of the young women identified individual professionals as helpful. Equally there was a strong feeling that others had been interfering and had not understood their lives. There was considerable consensus that the teachers in the alternative education provision were more reasonable, that they listened and that the young women could talk to them. In smaller classes teachers were considered more sympathetic to difficulty and could be asked for help.

Clarke, Boorman and Nind (2011) state that initial analysis on the talk-based accounts in their study found that the girls showed greater willingness to describe and reflect on their experiences of mainstream schooling rather than talking about current special school placement experiences and appeared comfortable and able to make suggestions regarding changes to mainstream systems which would remove barriers and improve access to them. Participants identified being heard and listened to in educational settings as of central importance and considered that staff not listening



was a matter of choice. All girls stressed the importance of being known to an audience that understands how circumstances outside school could have significant implications for how their voice and behaviours are perceived in school.

Influence arising from voice was also positioned as important as being listened to 'superficially', where the communication had no influence, leaves voices powerless and failing to achieve the promised result (Clarke et al., 2011). In response to such absence of action, girls adopted an alternative coping style, bypassing staff and seeking to achieve influence directly through violent behaviour, thus creating space for expression due to reticence to do so verbally. The authors conclude that such alternative methods of communication seem far from maladaptive outbursts, and appear to be adaptive problem-solving strategies that seek to negotiate access to education, support and care from school staff in addition to finding an identity that is empowering.

### **3.6 Participation**

#### **3.6.1 The rights of the child**

The United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), (UNICEF, 1989), ratified by the UK government in 1991, protects a number of important rights for children (Alderson, 2008; Taylor, 2000). Of specific relevance to the current study, children have the right to express their views on all matters affecting them (article 12) and to maximum participation regardless of disability (article 23). Similarly, a child's wishes and feelings should be ascertained before making decisions affecting them and their care, and a written record of their wishes and feelings should be maintained - as stipulated in section 22 of the 1989 Children's Act. However, although interest in the rights of children seems to be growing, perhaps led by the UNCRC (1989), the ideals of the convention are still often largely unrealised (Tisdall, Davis, Prout, & Hill, 2006). This could be due to a number of factors, including the time and effort that is required to translate the legislation relating to participation of CYP into practice.

#### **3.6.2 Models of participation**

Three influential models of participation include Hart's (1992) 'Ladder of Participation' (figure 12, appendix 3), Treseder's (1997) 'Non- hierarchical model of five approaches to participation in

decision-making for Children and Young People' (figure 13, appendix 4), and Shier's (2001) 'Model of pathways to participation' (figure 14, appendix 5).

Hart, a sociologist for UNICEF, when developing the ladder of participation intended the first three rungs (manipulation, decoration and tokenism) to represent forms of non-participation which enables their elimination from participation practice (Shier, 2001). The remaining five degrees describe increasing levels of participation, ranging from the child being 'assigned but informed', to 'child-initiated, shared decisions with adults' (Hart, 1992). However, although the ladder of participation is useful for informing the design of CYP's participation, there are many factors affecting the extent to which CYP can participate other than the design of a programme including their developmental ability. Also, Hart argues that it is not necessary that children always operate on the highest possible rungs of the ladder as they might prefer to perform with varying degrees of involvement or responsibility at different times. Rather, the most important factor is considered to be that programmes are designed to maximise opportunities for any child to choose to participate at their highest ability level.

As discussed by Kellett (2011), Treseder (1997) critiqued Hart's model as failing to acknowledge cultural context. In response to this Treseder's own model of participation takes the top five levels from Hart's ladder and arranges them in a circle demonstrating that they are different, but equal, forms of participation.

Shier (2001) acknowledges the influence of Hart's (1992) model when developing the 'pathways to participation' as an additional framework for practitioners to promote participation in their work. Shier's (2001) model is made up of five levels of participation, each of which has three stages of commitment to the process of empowerment. Shier's model (2001) is described as focusing more on adults' roles rather than the status of children within projects (Kellett, 2011) and maps participation from the lowest level ('children are listened to') to the highest ('children share power and responsibility for decision making'). Out of the five levels of participation identified by Shier (2001), two refer to decision-making and three to the voice of the child.

Kirby and Gibbs (2006) criticised both Hart and Shier's models on the basis that initiatives or tasks cannot be assigned a single level of participation as levels of decision making power constantly shift. Therefore, more contemporary perspectives of participation are described as veering towards advocacy and outcomes.

The continued involvement of children can only be achieved, and sceptics (both children and adults) won over, if participation is shown to result in improvements to children's quality of life. As stated

by Leverett (2008, “if participation becomes an end in itself, there is an inherent danger that people will not be open and honest about what does and does not work” (p.195).

For the purpose of her research, Kilroy (2013) synthesised Hart’s (1992), Treseder’s (1997) and Shier’s (2001) models of participation described above to produce one model of participation to inform data gathering and analysis (see appendix 6). Kilroy (2013) argues that the extended descriptions of Hart’s five degrees of participation used in Treseder’s (1997) model increased the usability of Hart’s framework in research to be carried out in organisations such as schools and was able to directly combine each of the five levels of participation proposed by Hart (1992) with the extended five non-hierarchical areas of participation in decision-making proposed by Treseder (1997).

Kilroy (2013) identified that each of the five areas of participation described by Treseder (1997) gave reference to CYPs’ participation in the task and their contribution to decision-making and so split each of the five descriptions given by Treseder (1997) into these two categories. She also included an additional category labelled the ‘voice of the child’ to include the three levels of participation identified by Shier (2001). As Shier (2001) included three stages of commitment to empowering CYP through participation: openings, opportunities and obligations, Kilroy (2013) incorporated a category labelled ‘enabling participation’ in the synthesised model to encompass this aspect of Shier’s (2001) model.

However, it is the current researcher’s opinion that although this synthesised model provides an effective method for measuring the level of participation that CYP may be involved at and how they are participating, it does not take into account the competences necessary for them to begin to take part and how these are developed and influenced.

### **3.6.3 Approaches to participation for CYP**

Shier, Hernandez, Centeno, Arroliga and Gonzalez (2014) developed a conceptual framework, based on the integration of two complementary approaches: a human rights-based approach and a human development approach to provide conceptual coherence for an investigation entitled ‘How CYP Influence Policy-Makers’. Shier et al.’s (2014) model recognises that children have significant capabilities which enable them to take the lead in their own development from an early age. However, the development of such capacities is considered as being enabled and driven by CYP’s experience of action and the effects of their voice in the world (James & Prout, 1997).

Lundy (2007) maintains that voice is constituted in four parts:

Space: Children must be given the opportunity to express a view

Voice: Children must be facilitated to express their views

Audience: The view must be listened to

Influence: The view must be acted upon as appropriate (p.933)

Therefore, the right conditions need to be in place before CYP can exercise voice and before that voice can be heard in a way that can have an influence (Kellett, 2011). Shier et al. (2014) found that the CYP that participated in their study and the adult facilitators alike spoke of difficulties due to what the authors term 'adultism', "a belief system based on the idea that the adult human being is in some sense superior to the child or of greater worth, and thus the child, by default, inferior or of lesser worth" (p.6).

Mayall (2002) argues that the asymmetrical power relationship of childhood versus adulthood is a feature of social organisation:

Adults have divided up the social order into two major groups – adults and children, with specific conditions surrounding the lives of each group: provisions, constraints and requirements, laws, rights, responsibilities and privileges. Thus, just as the concept of gender has been key to understanding women's relationships to the social order, so the concept of generation is key to understanding childhood (p.120).

Crucially, listening to children is a matter of ethics and human rights (Freeman, 1999). CYP are increasingly understood as people with something interesting and worthwhile to say - competent to have an opinion on their lives, learning, participation and engagement (Tangen, 2008). Increased concern with hearing the voice of children has partly resulted from their re-conceptualisation - as being, not just becoming (James & James, 2004) – and with increased recognition of their competence to have a worthwhile opinion now, rather than as developers of skills and maturity to express an opinion later in adulthood (Tangen, 2008).

None the less, many of the authorities involved in Shier et al.'s (2014) study were found to show little sense of accountability to CYP for the implementation of agreements made with them, and had little or no concept of themselves as duty-bearers in relation to CYP's rights. The research also identified a number of prior conditions found to increase CYP's chances of influencing policy including the interest of the CYP in the proposals being advocated and in achieving change.

However, this is a contested area, as some adult practitioners suggest that “encouraging CYP’s leadership can be counter-productive” (Feinstein & O’Kane, 2005, p. 20).

In relation to the comments made earlier regarding Kilroy’s (2013) model of participation, Shier et al. (2014) also consider how organisations support or facilitate CYP’s efforts, including the role it plays in preparation, facilitation and advocacy processes (opp.cit.) They link to this the idea that an holistic approach is more likely to create the conditions for successful impact which may involve seeking to integrate the different settings of CYP’s lives such as family, school and local community eco-systemically whilst keeping CYP central to the participation process. Furthermore, the authors consider that CYP should not just take part in making initial decisions, but also in monitoring and follow-up to ensure that proposed changes take effect in practice.

However, adults cannot empower CYP, but what they can do is promote and facilitate experiential learning processes through which CYP can empower themselves (Freire, 1972). Furthermore, CYP’s autonomy can and must be encouraged and so when planning participation practices it is important that consideration is given to how to help CYP become more independent and so avoid what Shier et al. (2014) term ‘the dependency trap’ through an on-going process of active participation and commitment.

### **3.7 How pupils identified as having SEBDs participate in decision making to meet their needs.**

Participation is a process where someone influences decisions about their lives and this leads to change Treseder (1997). Expanding on this definition Lansdown (2011) describes participation as:

an ongoing process of children’s expression and active involvement in decision-making at different levels in matters that concern them. It requires information-sharing and dialogue between children and adults based on mutual respect, and requires that full consideration of their views be given, taking into account the child’s age and maturity (p. 3).

Children who are never given opportunities to make decisions may grow up less able to exercise choice responsibly (Hillman, 2006; Leeson, 2007), as being listened to enhances children’s well-being; promotes a positive sense of identity (Eide & Winger, 2005); helps them feel more in control (Butler, 2002); assists in combating stress (Munro, 2001); develops their capacity for problem-solving (Sinclair, McCole, & Kelly, 2000) and contributes to their resilience (Gilligan, 1999). The Government’s Positive for Youth strategy states that the process of personal and social development

includes developing social, communication, and team working skills; the ability to learn from experience, control behaviours, and make good choices; and the self - esteem, resilience, and motivation to persist towards goals and overcome setbacks (DfE, 2011).

When considering the question of why the views of CYP should be listened to Kilroy (2013) refers to Roller's (1998) reflections on Kelly's Personal Construct Theory (Kelly, 1955) where he suggested that the way in which people perceive themselves and view the world is based upon constructs that they develop due to their individual experiences. Therefore, when adults act without ascertaining the views and developing an understanding of the constructs of individual CYP, this is likely to create conflict (Roller, 1998). As Kilroy (2013) points out, Roller's argument for listening to the views of CYP is relevant in practice when working with and supporting CYP and involving them in decision-making around their needs.

When considering the psychological rationale behind the importance of listening to the views of CYP, Kilroy (2013) discusses self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 2000). SDT is described as "emphasising the importance of school-based autonomy and belongingness to academic achievement and psychological adjustment" (Van Ryzin, Gravely & Roseth, 2009, p.1). Therefore, by promoting CYP's autonomy and engagement in their education, motivation and positive outcomes will be fostered. Belongingness, or relatedness, is also considered a key contributor towards such positive outcomes for CYP which may be facilitated by affording CYP the opportunity for their voices to be heard, listened to and acted upon thus further increasing autonomy and the sense of belonging (opp.cit.).

CYP are likely to experience less anxiety if people listen to them and are more likely to feel ownership of decisions which take account of their wishes and feelings (Triseliotis, Borland, Hill & Lambert, 1995). However, evidence shows that children's democratic involvement is at best limited and at worst tokenistic (Alderson, 2002; Leach, 2003; Mayall, 2005). When evaluating the Children's Fund initiative Spicer and Evans (2006) concluded that it had failed to involve children at a strategic level and suggested that "the participation agenda risked only serving and legitimating adult/professionally driven agendas" (p.178).

Nonetheless, the Government maintains that it is likely that education services will improve, and confident, engaged and responsible citizens developed, if CYP participate in the planning, delivery and evaluation of services that affect them (DfE, 2013). However, listening to students' voice is a complex task and projects need to be realistically framed and planned so that they have a genuine opportunity to have an impact (Mitra, 2008). Unfortunately, this is often neglected from scheduling

(Alderson, 2008), resulting in outcomes that are difficult to implement with the prospect of seriously harming morale. Fisher (2014) argues that if pupil voice is to successfully penetrate classroom practice, ambitious, but realistic, responses should be encouraged so that pupil perspective outcomes will be more meaningful for both teachers and pupils, learning partnerships will be supported and strategies for delivery and organisation can be negotiated within a shared understanding.

As Hopkins (2010) states:

It is essential to ensure that the processes of consultation and participation seem credible to pupils, that is, that there is 'authenticity'. Critical for authenticity is whether the interests of adults in what pupils say is real or contrived, whether there is discussion of pupils' suggestions and active follow through (p. 41).

This view is upheld by Fielding (2001a) who writes that, "it is not just about listening attentively and with interest to students . . . it is also about the explicit development of students as agents of their own and each other's' educational transformation" (p.150). However, some teachers have been found to resist pupil empowerment initiatives as they are uneasy about conceding power and control to pupils (Lewis & Burman, 2008; MacBeath, 2006; Sellman, 2003; Tyrell, 2002).

Furthermore, challenges to genuine participation are often magnified in provision for children experiencing SEBD (Davies, 2005), perhaps because as Corbett (1998) notes, CYP with SEBD are the most 'feared' and the least likely to be listened to with respect. However, the importance of voice for this group and of listening to them include the obligations in SEN legislation and policy; the potential of hearing the views of challenging young people in developing ways of managing the challenges they present, and their necessity in assessing the efficacy of interventions with them (Cooper, 1993).

Through involving pupils in the interpretation and analysis of findings Sellman (2009) found that students were keen to stress the positive aspects of their school. This is consistent with the research undertaken by Polat and Farrell (2002) and Jahnukainen (2001), where positive regard for school and education was reported by similar participant groups.

### **3.8 How girls identified as having SEBDs participate in decisions making to meet their needs.**

In 'If they don't listen I shout, and when I shout they listen': hearing the voices of girls with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties', Clarke et al., (2011) direct attention to the importance of hearing girls and enabling them to speak about their dis/ engagement in education. The authors discuss the gendered processes in which some voices become marginalised and lost and argue that participatory research methods can provide meaningful ways for girls to construct and better understand their own narratives and refer to previously discussed literature (Lloyd & O'Regan, 1999; Corbett, 1998) which considers that girls identified as having SEBDs may be silenced, marginalised and denied the opportunity to express their views on barriers to participation (Clarke et al., 2011).

Indeed, CYP from such marginalised groups have been found to be less likely to be involved than others in participatory events (DCSF, 2008), despite the fact that providing CYP with effective mechanisms to engage them in decision-making enables them to make responsible decisions Davey (2010). Furthermore, pupil participation continues to be difficult for some staff to conceptualise (Kane et al., 2003).

As the disciplinary processes of schools may be considered as gendered (Wright et al., 2000) and sexualised (Clarke, 2004), Clarke et al., (2011) consider that a dynamic behind girls' exclusions may be that they are likely to have previously expressed their voice through means that schools have found unacceptable, resulting in punishment and exclusion.

In a subsequent study Nind et al. (2012) aimed to avoid treating girl student participant voices as being independent of the discourses around them, instead accepting their voices as situated within complex dynamics. Their discourses are described as "not objectively constituted but are relational, they depend on assumed ideas of normality" (Lloyd, 2006, p. 219) as they have been educated amidst the gendered, classed and racialised disciplinary processes of schools (Wright et al. 2000), and have adopted strongly gendered and sometimes medicalised and deficit identities (Nind et al., 2012).



### **3.9 Gaining and acting on the views of pupils identified as having SEBDs**

#### **3.9.1 Obligation to elicit and act on the views of CYP**

Shevlin and Rose (2008) note that UNCRC's Article 12 states, "Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child" and call us to challenge notions of capability to "ensure that all pupils gain a full right to participation" (p.429). Referring again to the UNCRC, various government guidance (DfES, 2001a) as well as other organisations (e.g. Specialist Schools and Academies Trust, National College of School Leaders) Sellman (2009) points out that schools are encouraged to either consult their pupils about, or better still involve them with, organisational and pedagogic decision making. As Berlin (2001) reminds us, individuals who have experienced oppression or exclusion are most likely to achieve greater esteem when they are enabled to gain recognition through self-expression.

#### **3.9.2 Challenges faced in eliciting and acting on the views of CYP identified as having SEBDs**

However, this is not always easy to do and as Willoughby and Tosey (2007) explain difficulties can arise if the concept of student involvement is not carefully introduced. Martin, Worrall, and Dutson-Steinfeld (2005) also signal the risks of assuming that listening to and acting on students' voices will be unproblematic; especially with respect to issues of control currently held by adults and warn that involving student voice can lead to resentment and disillusionment for both teachers and students. Indeed, Day (2008) speculates whether professionals are ambivalent about young people's participation in planning because by empowering them they disempowered themselves.

In 'Encouraging voices: listening to young people who have been marginalised', Rose and Shevlin (2004) attempt to gain insights into the views of young people by bringing together a group of researchers and individuals from marginalised communities to share their experiences of education in order to establish principles in relation to enabling young people to express their views from their unique personal perspective. However, as described by Batsleer (2011) in 'Voices from the Edge', Arnot and Reay (2007) argue that the apparent democratic promise of 'voice' is consistently undermined by a failure to pay proper analytic attention to the codes of communication which structure that voice. As previously discussed, student voice projects often reproduce models from the adult world which pupils with SEBD may find particularly difficult to engage with or see as another stimulus for resistance (Wyness, 2006). Likewise, linguistic devices such as agendas, meeting notes, minutes and actions reports (Jones, 2004), may be perceived as a covert way of imposing

adult middle-class values and preferred means of communication into provision catering for high numbers of disaffected students in the name of pupil equality (Sellman, 2009). It is possible, therefore, that young people, and particularly those with linguistic difficulties and/or experiencing SEBD, may find such forms of communication exclusive, difficult to engage with or provocative.

### **3.9.3 The communication needs of CYP identified as having SEBDs**

Various studies have identified a high incidence of language and/ or communication needs in children with SEBDs (Nelson, Benner & Cheney, 2005; Ripley & Yuill, 2005) and estimates of the proportion of children who have co-existing difficulties in these areas vary between approximately 40% to over 90% (Benner, Nelson & Epstein, 2002). Furthermore, the literature suggests that children with SEBDs may frequently have language difficulties that have not been recognised (Cohen, Barwick, Horodezky, Vallance & Im, 1998a). Therefore, Tangen (2008) calls for an active process of exchange using more than the spoken or written word to be adopted, and Corbett (1998) calls for more emphasis on activity-based processes that have been found to be a motivating, engaging, and enjoyable communication tool for students with SEBD (Becta, 2003), as they reduce dependence on verbal and written literacy (Hill, Laybourn & Borland, 1996) and reflect youth culture (Walker, 2008). O'Connor, Hodgkinson, Burton and Torstensson (2011) concur that young people are rarely asked which methods they feel would be most appropriate to gather their views of the educational journey they have experienced (Woodhead & Falkner, 2000; Prout, 2000; Laybourn, Borland, Stafford & Hill, 2001) and as such, their research brought young people together to participate in a range of activity sessions (O'Kane, 2008).

In Hart's (2012) study, as all children experienced a range of SEN, communication needed to be flexible and imaginative in order to, "circumvent possible problems including memory, emotion, social skills, linguistic pragmatics, receptive language [and] expressive language" (Lewis & Porter, 2007, p. 230). Semi-structured interviews with children were supplemented with other approaches to validate the meaning of the data (Porter & Lacey, 2005), and additional measures, in the form of scaling and picture sheets, were also used to draw out comparisons between the PRU and previous schooling experiences whilst also providing a visual point of reference for children. Developmentally appropriate language was also used in child interviews, as advocated by Moe, Johnson and Wade (2007). Similarly, in Hopkins' (2010) study pupil voice was accessed using a form of group interview incorporating an Ishikawa or fishbone tool and card sorting exercise to help students articulate their views.

### 3.9.4 Offering alternative methods of communication

Although Greene (2009) warns that participation in research activities can be seen by young people as yet another, adult-initiated chore, as is argued by Holland, Renold, Ross and Hillman (2008), by enabling young people to choose how they wish to communicate with us, we recognise them as social actors and begin to move our practice away from adult-centric processes. Digital technologies focusing on visual methods have also been identified as ‘methods of choice’ for CYP (Kaplan, 2008) as they can offer greater accessibility than textual forms (Thomson, 2008). Similarly, visual narrative methods may offer a way of understanding (non)participation in education from the perspective of the student (Carrington, Allen & Osmolowski, 2007) and of enabling ‘unknowns’ to emerge and enhance understanding (Noyes, 2008). Cremin et al.’s (2011) article explores how pupils and teachers in a mixed secondary school in an area of urban disadvantage in the UK experience pupil voice using visual methods to unpick some of the ways in which discourses of pupil voice, engagement, discipline and inclusion were played out in this school. Pupils in mainstream classes and the Inclusion Unit took photographs and made scrapbooks to represent their views on identity and schooling. They also made poster presentations to the rest of their class about their likes and dislikes in school using their photographs.

It has been argued that task-centred activities are preferred by ‘troubled’ children” (Harden, Scott, Backett-Milburn & Jackson, 2000) as the pressure induced by one-to-one dialogue, complete with the requirement of sustained eye contact, which may have served to alienate the young person in previous encounters, is reduced (Corbett, 1998; Harden et al., 2000). Therefore, using similar methods to those adopted by Cremin et al. (2011), Boorman, Nind and Clarke’s (2009) asked girls with SEBDs to photograph what represented for them the five ‘best bits’ of school and five recommendations for ‘improvements’.

Findings from the study are described as highlighting the affordances of visual methods for providing alternative ways for young people who may be disaffected to give their views and in a later study, Nind et al. (2012) reflect on the affordances of such visual and digital methods to discover how girls perceive their educational inclusion and exclusion. The authors discuss the themes of space, identity, relationships and community that emerged from the analysis of data from their previous study and reiterate the importance of the core messages about belonging and not belonging that they heard in girls’ accounts. Referring to the digital technologies used in their research, Nind et al. cite Carrington et al. (2007) who describe photo elicitation as using photographs to prompt a narrative and a “conscious reflection on previously taken-for-granted assumptions” in which the narrator learns to “unpack their thinking and scaffold their own thought processes”, (p. 9), explaining perhaps

otherwise unavailable narratives behind the images. Comic strips offered a visual format with associated communication benefits (Gray, 1994) as girls designed a visual depiction of their journey through education. Additionally, video diary methods offered the most potential for the girls to 'play' with identity through their interactions with the camera (Noyes, 2008), exploring performance and sense of audience.

Echoing Nind et al. (2012), Carrington et al. (2007) found that the digital technologies gave the girls an "avenue to participation and social inclusion' producing texts that were 'dynamic and multi-modal, rich with interconnections and mixed media" (p.107).

### **3.9.5 The importance of authenticity**

In Hopkins' (2010) study Rudduck and Fielding (2006) are quoted as drawing attention to some other issues that underlie the development of pupil voice, "The glossy popularity of student voice can make consultation seem easy – it is not" (p. 225). Hopkins (2010) goes on to state that:

It is essential to ensure that the processes of consultation and participation seem credible to pupils, that is, that there is 'authenticity'. Critical for authenticity is whether the interests of adults in what pupils say is real or contrived, whether there is discussion of pupils' suggestions and active follow through (p. 41).

As cited in Rose and Shevlin (2004) Cook-Sather, 2002 also conclude that it is necessary to "redirect our actions in response to what we hear" (p. 3), as in too many instances an expression of desire to listen to the voices of young people has been little more than a tokenistic gesture to appease the requirements of legislation or well-intentioned policies. Similarly, an investigation by Hartas (2011) aimed to provide a group of disaffected young people with the opportunity to express their views about the things that affect their life at school in the context of a public forum. Hartas found that CYP viewed the ways in which they were given the opportunity to participate to be suited only to particular students and to meet the needs of the education setting, rather than genuinely meet the needs of individual CYP.

Interestingly, although Hill (2006) reports enjoying interviewing the pupils because they had a lot of positive contributions to make in discussions about their education, he also felt frustrated in the knowledge that their opinions would probably have little or no influence on matters of policy, reflecting that "it seems that pupils' views will only be taken seriously by some when there is legislation demanding it" (p. 35).

Nevertheless, as Nind et al. (2012) explain, time, respect and understanding are centrally important and faced with attentive listening young people may voice strong messages about belonging and not belonging, situating their learning in the context of relationships with the self and others. As Wolfe (2001) contends:

communication has the power to inevitably change us ... rework[ing] our experiences. In making public our thoughts, perhaps particularly when those thoughts are doubtful or disturbing, we tend to tidy some of their more ragged contradictory edges (p. 135).

Therefore, for young people and perhaps particularly for those who have experienced exclusion, encouraging voice entails significant responsibility for action. According to Lewis & Porter (2007), it is of significant importance that it is communicated to the young person that their voice is “worth listening to and, more- over, that people will hear their voice and that it will make a difference” (p. 226).

As Hart’s (2012) findings suggest, there is a role for systemic work in shifting thinking away from a ‘child deficit’ model to the more inclusive practice of changing systems within education settings. Therefore, seeking the girl’s voices could inform key factors that may enable them and other CYP to participate in decision making in a constructive and appropriate way, and therefore develop knowledge with regard to how best to assist them to cope upon their return to mainstream or indeed special school and in their future lives. Therefore it seemed that a participatory research approach would meet these aims.

### **3.10 Summary of literature review**

Some important principles that emerged from the systematic review of the literature suggest that pupils identified as having SEBDs can, and should, be facilitated to participate in decision making and planning regarding their needs. They are a group whose voices have been prevented from being heard by the methods chosen by adults to elicit them or by the challenge they are perceived to pose and negated by the very difficulties that policy makers, educators and researchers should be seeking to understand better. Girls are particularly underrepresented as in addition to these barriers they face further obstacles relating to gender and how this influences perceptions of SEBDs and also regarding societies expectations of them.

Importantly, the Children and Families Act 2014 (DfE, 2014) and revised SEN and Disability CoP stipulates that LA’s must have regard to the views, wishes and feelings of the CYP and to the

importance of the child or young person participating as fully as possible in decisions. The onus is therefore placed on LA's to work with CYP to establish the aims of their participation, mark progress and build trust in order to meet their duties concerning the participation of young people in education and training.

However, despite the range of legislation put in place to encourage participation of CYP difficulties are often experienced when attempting to translate policies into practice. The models of participation discussed provide frameworks for practitioners to meet this need and promote such meaningful involvement whilst eliminating non-participation from their work. Significantly, the importance of considering how to help CYP develop and strengthen their autonomy, avoid dependency and empower themselves through the process of active participation and commitment is recognised. Adding weight to this, psychological concepts including personal construct theory and SDT which relate to the importance, benefits and impact of participation to and for CYP, educational settings, the wider community and society as a whole are discussed.

The use of single case examples within some of the papers reviewed can be considered to impact on the validity of the research in respect to the generalisability of findings. However, as none of the interventions were based in environments which were artificial or alien to the child and were conducted in their naturally occurring school environments, it may be suggested that any improvements made within these settings could be transferred to the wider environment.

However, there are identified gaps in the literature, some of which this research attempts to meet. Firstly, much of the literature concerns male pupils with SEBD, or rather does not concern female pupils specifically, and this research focuses on the perceptions of the experiences and needs of girls with SEBD's. It also attempts to move towards a more meaningful model of pupil voice by listening to what the participants want to say and then acting upon those wishes, not solely for the benefit of students, but also those involved in their education, in order to inform service development and to accord with Government legislation. This could be considered not only more respectful of the rights of CYP but as it is strengths based could be considered preventative of some of the causes or exacerbation of further difficulties for CYP with SEBDs

### **3.11 Rationale for present research**

The prevalence of SEBDs is likely to be greater in socially deprived areas; amongst boys, and amongst Black Caribbean and Mixed White and Black Caribbean pupils. Travellers of Irish Heritage and

Gypsy/Roma pupils are also over-represented, as are children with other learning, health or developmental difficulties (Ellis, Tod, & Graham-Matheson, 2008). The prevalence of problems related to SEBDs has been shown to reach a peak in the adolescent years (Cooper, 2001). Of relevance to the current study, there are persistently high levels of deprivation in the city where the PRU involved in the current study is based, and the LA remains ranked as the most deprived LA area in England on the Indices of Deprivation (ID 2010; City Council, 2011).

However, findings show that SEBD provisions can help even the most disaffected pupils if there are supportive strategies and structures in place (Ofsted, 2009). With an emphasis on the individual, policies and approaches that highlight strengths and capacities can reinforce the voice of young people and enable support to be tailored around specific needs (Walker & Donaldson, 2011).

Placing people at the centre of making decisions about their own futures complements the principles and importance of pupil voice and participation. It is therefore anticipated that the outcomes of this research will support the on-going development of the PRU through the clarification of conceptualisations, structures and processes for participation in order to facilitate a continued focus on matching provision to needs and thus supporting the engagement, aspiration and attainment of girls with SEBDs.

It is reported that CYP identified as having SEBDs often feel that they are not listened to (Davies, 2005; Pomeroy, 1999) and as Davies (2005) argues, continued failure to ascertain the views of CYP with SEBDs' views in practice is likely to further maintain their negative experiences of school. This group have been found to contribute valuable information when they have taken part in research (Hartas, 2011; Norwich & Kelly, 2006; Sellman, 2009), yet despite this and the fact that they are in great need of the services that they receive, their views are less likely to be sought and they therefore continue to be under represented in the literature in terms of participation in decision-making, planning and review of their needs Laenen (2009).

When attempting to explain such gaps some argue that the challenges faced in achieving participation with all CYP tend to increase when working with CYP with SEBDs (Davies, 2005). For example, those working with such CYP may have a sense of protectiveness over them and any potential negative impacts that participation could have on their already poor self-esteem (Kane et al., 2003; Norwich & Kelly, 2006). In addition, as Sellman (2009) suggests, some school staff may be

concerned about giving pupils power with regard to decision-making, concerns which are likely to increase in provision for CYP with SEBD (Kilroy, 2013).

### **3.12 Expected contribution to knowledge**

There are five main areas in which this thesis is expected to contribute to knowledge. Firstly, due to the lack of literature available regarding the views of CYP with SEBD and their participation in decision-making the area remains vague and questions regarding how best to facilitate the process regarding how pupils' views are sought by school staff remain unanswered. Therefore, learning from the girls' past experiences of participation practices may add relevant and worthwhile knowledge to the literature.

Secondly, by discovering how pupil views are acted upon, this research will address criticisms that attempts to pay attention to children's views about their educational experiences are rare (Thomas, 2007; Riley & Docking, 2004) by providing opportunities for the voices of girls with SEBD's to be heard, a group that is often marginalised and unrepresented in both education and research.

Thirdly, as ongoing concerns about educational provision and outcomes in PRUs (DfE, 2012; DCSF, 2008) have been identified in the literature, this research aims to highlight and extend best practice in one setting thus meeting the need for further research on directions for improvement (Michael & Frederickson, 2013).

As the majority of studies that have been carried out view inclusion for pupils with SEBDs as posing a major challenge for schools and local authorities (Farrell, 2012) questions may be asked about the quality of the alternative provisions to mainstream education that can be offered. Therefore, findings from the current research aim to identify those aspects considered by staff and pupils at one such provision to offer superior practices.

Finally, by using AI methodology this investigation aims to add to the small literature base of its use in educational research. As AI is described as still being in its infancy as an educational research method, with researchers continuing to explore its place in educational evaluative research (Coghlan, Preskill & Catsambas, 2003; Grant & Humphries, 2006; Fergy, Marks-Maran, Ooms, Shapcott & Burke, 2011), it is intended that this research demonstrates the value of AI to a wider audience, as a process with the potential to improve experiences for both students and teachers.



### **3.13 Utility (impact) of the knowledge contribution**

Perhaps the most important implication of all relates to the contribution to knowledge regarding how best to involve pupils in the planning and implementation of changes intended to improve their educational and other outcomes.

#### **3.13.1 Impact on the provision**

As the provision where the investigation takes place is the only such establishment within the borough, by taking a systemic approach to provide insight into this currently under researched area the results obtained may be used for strategic purposes and service development to aid development of a long stay provision for girls identified as having SEBDs. This will therefore have an influence upon the provision and also effect the professional development of the staff who work within it.

#### **3.13.2 Impact on EP practice**

The large amount of descriptive data collected through the interviews and observations can be used in order to make comparisons with similar organisations (Elmes, Roediger & Kantowitz, 1995). The knowledge contributed by this piece of research will aim to evidence that there is a role for EPs in the facilitation of pupil voice in order to identify how pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be accelerated in order to support their engagement.

## Chapter 4: Methodology

### 4.1 Introduction

This thesis explores the ways in which girls identified as having SEBDs and staff of one specialist education provision feel pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated.

The following chapter describes the process that the researcher undertook to move from reviewing the literature to reporting findings from collected data. A detailed account of the way in which the current study was conducted, including the rationale, aims of the study and research questions that were developed as a result of the extensive literature review is provided. The research design is introduced, and the participant recruitment processes, data gathering and analysis methods and ethical guidelines and protocols that were followed are also detailed.

### 4.2 Aims of the research

**Table 3: Aims and objectives in relation to Research Questions**

Number	Aims/ Objectives	Research Questions
1	To discover how participation is conceptualised and what practices are in place to access pupil voice in one specialist SEBD provision	How do school staff and pupils construct and describe successful participation practices in facilitating pupils with SEBDs to express their views regarding their needs, and how do they view this practice as similar and different with girls and boys?
2	To discover how pupil views are acted on.	How do pupils' views regarding their needs influence provision to meet those needs?
3	To explore how one specialist SEBD provision can increase participation and support the engagement of pupils.	What factors are identified as having the greatest impact on participation in one SEBD provision, and how is this similar and different for girls and boys?

### 4.3 Research questions

The provision where the investigation took place was being re-designated to an assessment and long stay placement provider for girls with SEBD. The nature of the needs of girls presenting with SEBDs has been shown to be interpreted differently to the needs of boys (e.g. Pursell, Laursen, Rubin, Booth-LaForce & Rose-Krasnor, 2008; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992; Bellinger & Gleason, 1982; Fagot, Hagan, Leinbach & Kronsberg, 1985). The commission of this piece of research by the SMT at the PRU where girls and boys were separated was made as a result of their desire to make the redesignation of the setting as successful as possible. This suggests that a perceived difference between the genders existed and was one felt worthy of further investigation by inviting staff to provide a rationale for believing this.

Care was taken when constructing the research questions to avoid framing girls with SEBD as more problematic than boys, whilst also attempting to draw out any perceived differences and potential difference in practice. Although this approach to exploring gender-specific needs could possibly be deemed directive and as a result in danger of generating polarizing and even invalid findings, the questions were constructed in this manner as pupils are taught in single sex classes and the form of the questions therefore seemed rational. Rather than explicitly suggesting the existence of difference, the intention was to refer to the girls' classmates. Therefore, asking participants how things may be different for boys was considered an invitation to reflect on currently held views rather than a suggestion that alternate principles existed, and was part of a process which aimed to facilitate staff and pupils to contemplate all differences including those within as well as between genders.

It was anticipated that as a result pupils and staff members would accept the invitation and discover their own knowledge rather than being told by the researcher that they were mistaken to think that such great differences existed. It is hoped that by addressing these questions, answers will be provided that will contribute to a greater understanding of the experience of girls with SEBDs and how they can be supported to participate in decision making regarding their needs and engage with education.

## 4.4 Philosophical Considerations

The rules of scientific research state that it must be conducted systematically, sceptically and ethically (Robson, 2002). When considering what methodological paradigm to adopt it is necessary for the researcher to reflect on beliefs, assumptions, values and also the aims of inquiry. When making such deliberations each of the following aspects need to be considered: Ontology (the nature of reality); Epistemology (how we know reality); Axiology (the values of the paradigm); and Methodology (the implementation of the paradigm)

Ludema, Wilmot and Srivastva (1997) assert that “the ontological, epistemological, and methodological commitments upon which we base our inquiry will largely determine what we come to discover, know, and contribute to the world of human organizing” (p. 1045)

### 4.4.1 Ontology

If ontology is considered as the study of being, then an individual’s ‘ontology’ must be their answer to the question: 'What is reality?' This is important to reflect upon because whatever assumption is made in turn affects how investigations are approached.

Critical and philosophic forms of realism deny that we can have any “objective” or certain knowledge of the world, and accept the possibility of alternative valid accounts of any phenomenon. All theories about the world are seen as grounded in a particular perspective and worldview, and all knowledge is partial, incomplete, and fallible. Lakoff (1987) states this distinction between ‘objectivist’ and ‘realist’ views as follows:

Scientific objectivism claims that there is only one fully correct way in which reality can be divided up into objects, properties, and relations. . . . Scientific realism, on the other hand, assumes that the world is the way it is, while acknowledging that there can be more than one scientifically correct way of understanding reality in terms of conceptual schemes with different objects and categories of objects (p. 265).

Easton (2010) argues that the complex stories and explanations that we as humans have given to develop an understanding of the world, can be challenged and destroyed by the ‘real world’ breaking through into that which has been socially constructed.

Where naïve realism and radical constructivist views can deny the existence of any reality apart from our constructions, Shadish, Cook, and Campbell (2002) argue that “all scientists are epistemological constructivists and relativists in the sense that they believe that both the ontological world and the worlds of ideology, values, etc. play a role in the construction of scientific knowledge” (p. 29).

Blumer (1969) combined ontological realism with an epistemological constructivism and asserted that:

the empirical necessarily exists always in the form of human pictures and conceptions of it. However, this does not shift ‘reality’, as so many conclude, from the empirical world to the realm of imagery and conception. . . . [This] position is untenable because the empirical world can ‘talk back’ to our pictures of it or assertions about it—talk back in the sense of challenging and resisting, or not bending to, our images or conceptions of it. (p. 22).

Thus, one of the major implications of realism for qualitative research, and for the social sciences generally, is considered to be that it re-legitimizes ontological questions about the phenomena we study (Lawson, 2003; Tilly, 2008). As the current researcher considers that the world is not entirely socially constructed, that is the views of staff and pupils operate within the given systems of the CoP and LA placement processes, therefore a critical realist ontological approach was adopted for the present investigation which resulted in gathering of observational and documentary data, alongside the focus group and semi-structured interviews.

#### **4.4.2 Epistemological position**

Epistemology is defined by Colman (2006) as, “The theory of knowledge, especially the enquiry into what is to count as knowledge, the validity of knowledge, what distinguishes mere belief from knowledge, what kinds of things are knowledgeable, and whether anything can be known for certain” (p. 256).

Modern epistemology generally involves a debate between rationalism and empiricism, where the former considers that knowledge can be acquired through the use of reason and the latter that knowledge is obtained through experience (Markie, 2013). The ability to identify the relationship between the epistemological foundation of research and the methods employed in conducting it is critical in order for research to be truly meaningful. Being explicit about the epistemological foundations of our work and identifying our orientation can help frame our research design (Darlaston-Jones, 2007).

As scientific research must be conducted systematically, consideration of why researchers are interested in investigating a particular issue or domain as well as deciding how we might proceed is required (Robson, 2002). This scrutiny includes the role of the researcher in the investigation, his or her value base and how this might interact with the research process, and what drives or motivates that interest as well as which methods of enquiry best meet the objectives of the study (Darlaston-Jones, 2007).

The Educational Psychology Service (EPS) in which the current researcher practices uses a positive psychological approach focussing on CYPs' strengths to promote positive change and to contribute to teaching, learning and care environments. Therefore, the researcher hoped that by utilising an AI approach, positive examples of participation practices would be sought whilst problematic examples would not be the focus of the process.

Cooperrider and Whitney (2005) describe AI as social constructionism with a positive spin as the focus of interest are the processes and structure of human interactions that are considered to lead to human action (Gergen, 1985). If the way that members of any organisation construct and reconstruct the present and the past is a prelude to the way they imagine the future, AI can be considered as promoting the imagination of a future that is based on an extrapolation of the best of what is or has been, and it is this imagined future that guides the development of the group (Hayes, 2006).

The basic contention of the constructionist argument is that reality is socially constructed by and between the persons who experience it (Gergen, 1999). It is a consequence of the context in which the action occurs and is shaped by the cultural, historical, political, and social norms that operate within that context and time: and that reality can be different for each of us based on our unique understandings of the world and our experience of it (Berger & Luckman, 1966).

Multiple perspectives can provide a variety of understandings of how issues appear to different people as a result of their different interpretations of the issue (Darlaston-Jones, 2007). It can therefore be argued that more of the 'truth' associated with that issue (Berger & Luckman, 1966) can be seen which is reflected in interpretations and conclusions made by the researcher.

Some consider that many accounts presented as 'social constructionist' might better be described as social constructivist (Gergen, 1985, 1999; Hosking & Bouwen, 2000). Constructivism talks about cognitive activity (Gardner, 1985), more or less influenced by social processes, producing knowledge which is a more or less an individualised and imperfect representation of the world as it really is.

Positivists are described as believing that the world conforms to laws of causation, which could be objectively tested (de Vries, 2004). Advocates of this direction then do not consider the individual as the perceiver, conceiver or constructor of his or her world (Ashworth, 2003; Berger & Luckman, 1966; Gergen, 1999, 2001a, 2001b). Critical realism may be considered a reconciliation of the logical positivist and a social constructionist approach to learning and research (Archer, Bhaskar, Collier, Lawson & Norrie, 1998; Burgoyne, 2002). Critical realism takes the view that the world is neither a machine nor just a sea of cultural meaning, but is an open system with emergent properties and that reality consists of a number of potential underlying mechanisms which can be, but are not necessarily activated, depending on circumstance (Burgoyne, 2009). These philosophies are relevant to the present study as it uses AI which as previously discussed focuses on the processes and structure of human interactions that are considered to lead to human action (Gergen, 1985).

For critical realists the concept of 'process' is central to explanation, and these mechanisms and processes are seen as real phenomena, rather than simply as abstract models. Therefore, while critical realism rejects the idea of 'multiple realities', in the sense of independent and incommensurable worlds that are socially constructed by different individuals or societies, it is quite compatible with the idea that there are different valid perspectives on reality.

Constructivist qualitative researchers such as Smith and Deemer (2000) and Denzin and Lincoln (2005) have given more explicit attention to critical realism, noting that its epistemology is relativist rather than realist, in that it rejects the possibility of objective knowledge of the world and accepts the existence of multiple legitimate accounts and interpretations (Smith & Deemer, 2000; Smith & Hodkinson, 2005).

In general, within the realism paradigm, a case study methodology which is process orientated and does not deal with cause and effect relations, but with underlying causal tendencies (Bhaskar, 1978; Tsoukas, 1989) should be chosen when there are particular events that are focused on (Eisenhardt, 1989; Merriam, 1988).

Realism attempts to define and predict social phenomena through idiographic research that is relevant when a phenomenon has not been fully discovered and comprehended. Case study research may lead to a more informed basis for theory development (Eisenhardt, 1989; Yin, 1989) in a newly developing area of research. Therefore, the current researcher chose a case study method to carry out an investigation into the way that CYP with SEBDs and school staff from one specialist setting feel that pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated.

Through the adoption of research methods including interviews within an AI model, observation and analysis of relevant documentation the researcher aimed to ensure that they would relate to participants' ability to reflect on and account for their own actions (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor & Tindall, 1999). The researcher conducted interviews with CYP and PRU staff to give space for multiple realities rather than relying on the assumption of a singular reality thus offsetting what could be considered to be a subjective view of participation by the researcher with how it is viewed by participants. However, this does not mean that the process should result in a consensus of all voices. Indeed, consensus is not necessary for joint action and is undesirable if it means neglecting differences and excluding voices (van der Haar & Hosking, 2004).

#### **4.4.3 Axiology**

Axiology is defined by Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2009) as "the branch of philosophy that studies judgements about values" (p. 116). A traditional question of axiology concerns whether the objects of value are subjective psychological states, or objective states of the world. Researchers may be considered to play a key part in facilitating the production of knowledge and understanding through their own perceptions (Lyons & Coyle, 2008). Furthermore, to ensure credibility, researchers must be aware of how their own values impact on any research process (Saunders et al., 2009).

Through carrying out the systematic literature review and reflecting on personal professional experience gained through supporting girls and boys identified as having SEBDs, the researcher accepts and supports the UNCRC (UNICEF, 1989), which asserts that CYP should be invited and encouraged to work with adults in an inclusive way to ensure their views are heard and valued in decision making which affects them. Furthermore, the current researcher accords with the view that when CYP know that they have the right to be heard in decisions which affect them their sense of security and self-confidence may also be enhanced.

As researcher's values must impact upon methodologies selected and the way in which findings are understood and conveyed, by employing an AI approach which is considered to have an affirmative philosophical underpinning, the current researcher was able to explore what participants valued about what they did in order to work out ways that could be built on (Reed, 2007).

The current researcher therefore included CYP as participants in the current study to enable them to have the opportunity to reflect and share their views regarding their experience of participation in decision making and ideas for how this could be improved upon in order to be able to recommend a good practice model for facilitating the participation of CYP with SEBDs in decision making. The



current researcher's belief that the views of CYP are not only relevant but should be acted upon for meaningful participation to take place is demonstrated and is further evidenced as the focus of the project does not only concern the views of adults within the process and does not prioritise these over those of the CYP involved.

## **4.5 Design of the Study**

### **4.5.1 Qualitative Research**

Beer (1988) argued that qualitative research is well suited to asking the broader questions of science, stating that unlike "normal science, which attempts to answer little questions precisely. Instead we should do broader ... studies which answer more questions less precisely" (p.168). When qualitative research is based on a well-defined methodology the means to scientifically answer such far-reaching questions which can offer new and additional insight can be provided.

Whereas empirical research requires survey research/quasi-experimental data, qualitative case study research establishes a research area for clarifying greater insight into boundaries and phenomena (Emory & Cooper, 1991; Yin, 1989). A qualitative approach was chosen for the present research in order to create a balanced and honest picture where negative responses and opinions were not stifled or prevented by the researcher's positive questioning. Rather, it is argued that using semi-structured interview questions to discover how participants think barriers to facilitating participation or problems can be overcome is the only way to truly generate positive change through AI (Bushe, 2007).

#### 4.5.2 Action Research and Appreciative Inquiry

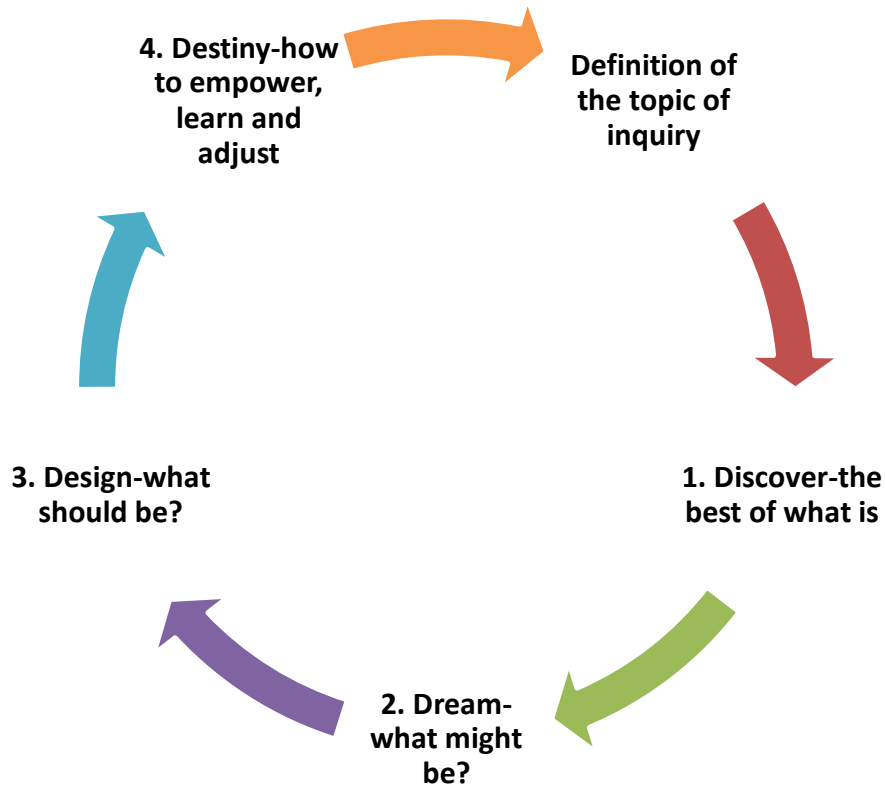
Action research is described by (Somekh, 2006) as an approach which integrates research and action in a series of flexible cycles involving holistically rather than separate steps; the collection of data; the planning and introduction of action strategies to bring about positive changes; and evaluation of those changes through further data collection, analysis and interpretation.

Action research is considered as having a generative facility, defined by (Gergen, 1978) as a "capacity to challenge the guiding assumptions of the culture, to raise fundamental questions regarding contemporary social life, to foster reconsideration of that which is 'taken for granted' and thereby furnish new alternatives for social actions" (p. 1346)

Like AI, due to its positive and participatory approach, contributors often find taking part in action research empowering and as the primary consumers of the findings, research is likely to be relevant and useful to them. However, despite some similarities (Goodley, Lawthorn, Clough & Moore, 2004; Guba & Lincoln, 1994), Action Research and AI models are described as differing in important respects as where traditional action research tends to focus on what is wrong, AI focuses on how a situation would look if it were right (Elliott, 1999).

AI aims to create improvement, innovation, change or development and the enhancement of understanding through critical collaborative inquiry, reflection, accountability, self-evaluation and participation (Zuber-Skerritt, 2003; Shuayb, Sharp, Judkins & Hetherington, 2009). When people feel heard and valued they can become empowered to influence their own practice (Melander-Wikman, 2007; Starrin, 2007) by envisioning future initiatives based on best practice (Carr & Kemmis, 1986).

The act of asking questions, the inquiry, is considered to be the critical part of AI as it begins the process of change (Hayes, 2006). Based on the assumption that the questions asked determine what is found, it follows that the more positive the questions, the more positive the data, the beliefs and the vision of the organisation at its best. Furthermore, the more positive this image is, the more energy it generates for change (opp.cit.)



**Figure 2: 4-D Cycle**

Appreciative inquiry is based on eight assumptions (Hammond, 1998)

- 1) In every society, organisation or group, something works
- 2) What we focus on becomes our reality
- 3) Reality is created in the moment and there are multiple realities
- 4) The act of asking questions of an organisation or group influences the group in some way
- 5) People have more confidence to journey to the future (the unknown) when they carry forward parts of the past (the known)
- 6) If we carry parts of the past forward, they should be what is best about the past
- 7) It is important to value differences
- 8) The language we use creates our reality

Five core principles of the approach are also described by Mohr and Watkins (2002).

**Table 4: The five core principles of AI (Mohr & Watkins, 2002).**

Core principles of appreciative inquiry	
Principle	Explanation
<b>The Constructionist Principle</b>	Our organizations evolve in the direction of the images we create based on the questions we ask as we strive to understand the systems at work.
<b>The Principle of Simultaneity</b>	Change begins the moment we ask questions.
<b>The Anticipatory Principle</b>	Our behaviour in the present is influenced by the future we anticipate.
<b>The Poetic Principle</b>	Just as poets have no constraints on what they can write about, we have no boundaries on what we can inquire and learn from.
<b>The Positive Principle</b>	The more positive the questions used to guide a change process, the more long-lasting and effective that process will be.

#### 4.5.3 The justification for choosing AI as a form of Action Research.

AI was chosen as it is a participative approach which challenges problem-solving methods to personal and service development and which aims to empower participants through democratic partaking and appreciating strengths and abilities (Ghaye & Ghaye, 1998). The intended outcome of using an AI approach was that the potential empowerment afforded by the participatory process would create energy for change and therefore develop potential for action (Hannu, Heikkinen, Huttenen & Syrjala, 2005). Through telling their stories about their organisation and its future directions and by being involved in the implementation of their own actions, the current researcher considered that the method and process would engage participants and lead to both advancements in the provision and also personal and professional development of those involved.

The decision to use AI was made with consideration to the points discussed below regarding how change at a systemic level could be made through the introduction and application of the approach to school staff and pupils.

#### **4.5.3.1 It is a participatory, empowering method.**

Participatory research is doing research with people in a given context, not doing research on people (Heron & Reason, 2001; Kostenius & Nyström, 2008; Kostenius & Öhrling, 2009; van Manen, 1997). Participatory methodologies have arisen from qualitative research approaches which aim to “reflect, explore and disseminate the views, concerns, feelings and experiences of research participants from their own perspective” (Swain & French, 1998, p. 41).

A research approach was sought for the current study that would be empowering for participants and which would also enable the girls involved to experience their views being sought and acted upon. Kesby (2007) has called for the development of more participatory research approaches that dilute the usual power structures in order to undertake research with children, reflecting a concern to “capture children’s voices, perspectives, interests and rights as citizens” (Corsaro, 2005, p. 45). Rudduck (2002) considers that:

young people’s participation can help strengthen students’ personal confidence, their sense of inclusion, and their sense of agency. Participation offers a practical agenda that teachers can act on and can affect teachers’ perceptions of students: changes in teachers’ capacity to see learning from the students’ perspective can in turn affect their relationships and aspirations for students ( p. 43).

Authors such as Clarke et al., (2011) argue that participatory research methods can provide meaningful ways for girls to construct and better understand their own narratives. In their study a range of verbal and visual methods are combined to enable choice and in an attempt to reduce the pressure that can be induced by one-to-one dialogue which may have served to alienate the young person in previous encounters (Harden, Scott, Backett-Milburn & Jackson, 2000; Corbett, 1998). The digital technologies used enabled editing of data to allow the most accurate presentation of the view participants wished to express (Clarke et al., 2011), an approach which influenced the design of the current study.

#### **4.5.3.2 To build on best practice**

Carnell’s (2005) article examines young people’s views of learning and their understanding of what helps them learn, drawing on the concept of AI with the aim of highlighting and extending best practices. Clarke, Egan, Fletcher and Ryan (2006) also used AI to investigate teaching practice with young children and report a rich variety of outcomes considered to demonstrate the value of

creating space for growth for children and for adults. The authors hoped to foster a cooperative approach to bring about significant change in practice (EPPI-Centre, 2003), which a participatory approach can achieve (Anning & Edwards, 1999), and where the child and their learning were foregrounded (Walker, 2007).

Doveston and Keenaghan (2006) describe working on the anticipatory principle of the future we anticipate is the future we create (Bagshaw, 2003). When considering how far their own project, 'Growing Talent for Inclusion', which identified and tracked the development of attributes for improving working relationships in four different primary and secondary classrooms in three schools resulted in the transformational changes that AI theorists claim make it unique, the authors refer to Bushe and Kassam's (2005) definition of transformation as "changes in the identity of a system and qualitative changes in the state of being of that system" (p. 162). They noted that their findings suggested a greater sense of belonging; teachers noticed and acknowledged attributes of the group previously submerged by challenging behaviour; participants were offered a new lens through which to track changes and create new possibilities for action; and participants were empowered to collaborate and participate to make changes (Doveston & Keenaghan, 2006). They consider the value of the AI approach as lying in its focus on locating resources rather than identifying problems, on harnessing affective as well as cognitive skills and on staff development that considers teachers values rather than training (Kennedy, 2005). Therefore, AI may be of particular benefit when including students with emotional and social barriers to learning and supporting those who teach them as it offers the potential to change the discourse from focusing on problems and difficulties to locating the energy for change (Elliott, 1999). Doveston and Keenaghan (2006) reference Hannu, Heikkinen, Huttunen and Syrjala, (2005) when concluding that "AI may result in empowerment of the people involved by making them believe in their own capabilities and action potential" (p. 3).

#### **4.5.3.3 As a challenging but non-confrontational approach**

Reed (2007) describes an AI approach as ignoring issues of power, due to its inclusive and collaborative nature and as valuable in involving student voice (Bush & Glover, 2003). Hearing what students have to say benefits teachers as they gain a more open perception of young people's capabilities; the capacity to see the familiar from a different angle; a readiness to change thinking and practice in the light of these perceptions; a renewed sense of excitement in teaching; and a practical agenda for improvement (Rudduck, 2002, p. 127).

However, suggesting that children should have a voice does not negate the importance of teacher voice and the underpinning notion of AI as a collaborative process supports staff and pupil participants in clarifying and enhancing the characteristics which make them a unique community with capacity for growth and development (Alexander et al. 2010, p. 154). This means that participants will be more likely to be fully engaged by identifying, acknowledging and amplifying what is already working well rather than by focusing on problems and difficulties to be solved (Hammond, 1998).

Doveston and Keenaghan (2006) considered that an eco- systemic approach was required for their project and that a priority was to support pupils and teachers in developing more effective and satisfying interpersonal relationships in the classroom. Described as a type of action research which is solution not problem focused, AI was therefore considered to lend itself well to a research focus of improving classroom dynamics.

Findings from the project showed an increase in the number of pupils with whom other pupils are happy to work, a reduction in the number of pupils identified as socially excluded at the beginning of the project and enhanced capacity of the group in terms of the talents identified for growth. Feedback from staff and students also suggested that the process of noticing and acknowledging strengths has contributed to improvements in working relationships.

#### **4.5.3.4 As a positive approach to educational change**

As a result of conducting the systematic literature review discussed in the previous chapter, it was anticipated that most of the pupil participants within the current study would not have had particularly positive educational experiences or relationships with all school staff. As Jacobsgaard (2003) suggests, if the starting point for evaluation is problems, then problems will inevitably be found, meaning that it is likely that evaluators will not see areas where success has been achieved. Therefore, the researcher considered that AI would have the potential to build such relationships; to develop mutual understanding and trust and to enhance collaboration (Fitzgerald, Murrell & Miller, 2003)

Two studies which discuss AI's application in special education include one by Clasen, Stine and Mors (2004) which describes how AI informed the process of developing individual education plans, shifting the focus away from failures and problem solving towards resources, possibilities and development. In a second Dalsgaard (2005) explores the potential value of a 'paradigmatic change' from the concept of problem-solving in special education to exploration of successes for the child,

the conditions that create success and the changes needed to establish positive relationships and behaviour.

Fergy et al. (2011) present the findings of a research study which aimed to promote the social and academic integration of first year student nurses into higher education and employed AI. The authors describe AI as a rarely used research approach in education and as especially useful when used where research is attempting to monitor the impact of educational change and to explore how people understand their lives (Reed, 2006).

Again emphasising its use as an evaluative method, in 'Imagine Meadfield', Willoughby and Tosey (2007) describe AI as a participative means of school improvement. The aim of their research was to evaluate AI as a school improvement process using a qualitative case study which in the constructionist tradition incorporated an emerging design, a context-dependent inquiry, and an inductive data analysis. Willoughby and Tosey conclude that evidence suggests that AI can involve members of the school community in decision-making, which may assist in the creation of a positive and democratic ethos. However, leaders are still likely to exercise power and control in various ways, even if unaware of this or denying it meaning that it is possible that AI could limit as well as create opportunity for student voices to be heard.

#### **4.5.3.5 Summary**

As AI follows a systematic and functional framework based on the 4-D cycle (see figure 2), an appreciative approach was used across the whole study, including the framing of research questions, the way interviews were conducted, the way that the analysis was undertaken with an emphasis on the expertise of all the participants and how feedback was given (Fitzgerald, et al., 2003). As this is a piece of participatory research, direct, integral involvement of the researcher with participants is required (Robson, 2007).

Therefore, it was predicted that the use of AI in this study would result in a shared positive experience for pupils and staff; strengthened networks in and across the setting; and a commitment and ownership at the school level to follow-up on the research findings. Furthermore, as a strategy for purposeful change the creation of provocative propositions will challenge those involved to progress by developing understanding and building on their current achievements. Therefore, in contrast to alternative research methods such as staff and pupil surveys, AI inquiry allows room for emotional response as well as intellectual analysis, and imagination as well as rational thought (IISD, 2000).



The process of assembling a range of organisational stakeholders can constitute policy-in-the-making (Neilsen, 1998), whilst contrasting with the gap approach to calculating and then balancing perceptions and expectations in order to deliver quality service (Zeithmal, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990). The appreciative perspective focuses on success and what people in organizations want more of (Ghaye, 2008; Thatchenkery, 2005), while the process builds relationships and develops understanding and trust through its collaborative nature (Fitzgerald et al., 2003). As a result, participants may experience positive emotions which enhance well-being (Sekerka & McCraty, 2004).

The current research emphasises both the importance and relevance of self-evaluation, as does official school inspection procedure (MacBeath, 1999, 2002; Ofsted, 2006) where attention is paid to “the hopes and aspirations of pupils and how well these hopes and aspirations have been met; the professional fulfilment of teachers; and the quality of relationships which can either promote or inhibit learning” (MacBeath, 2002, p. 54).

Therefore, the AI approach adopted throughout the current research could have additional beneficial outcomes for all participants and also for provision development.

#### **4.6 Case Study Methodology**

Case study methodology is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context” (Yin, 2009, p.18)

Case study methodology therefore provided the opportunity to explore important factors in the functioning of the PRU and how these factors fitted together in a real context (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000) as a way to understand the ‘bounded system’ in its own habitat (Stake, 1978). In this investigation, the focus is on the facilitation of pupils’ participation in expressing their needs and the context of this investigation is one specialist setting, the PRU.

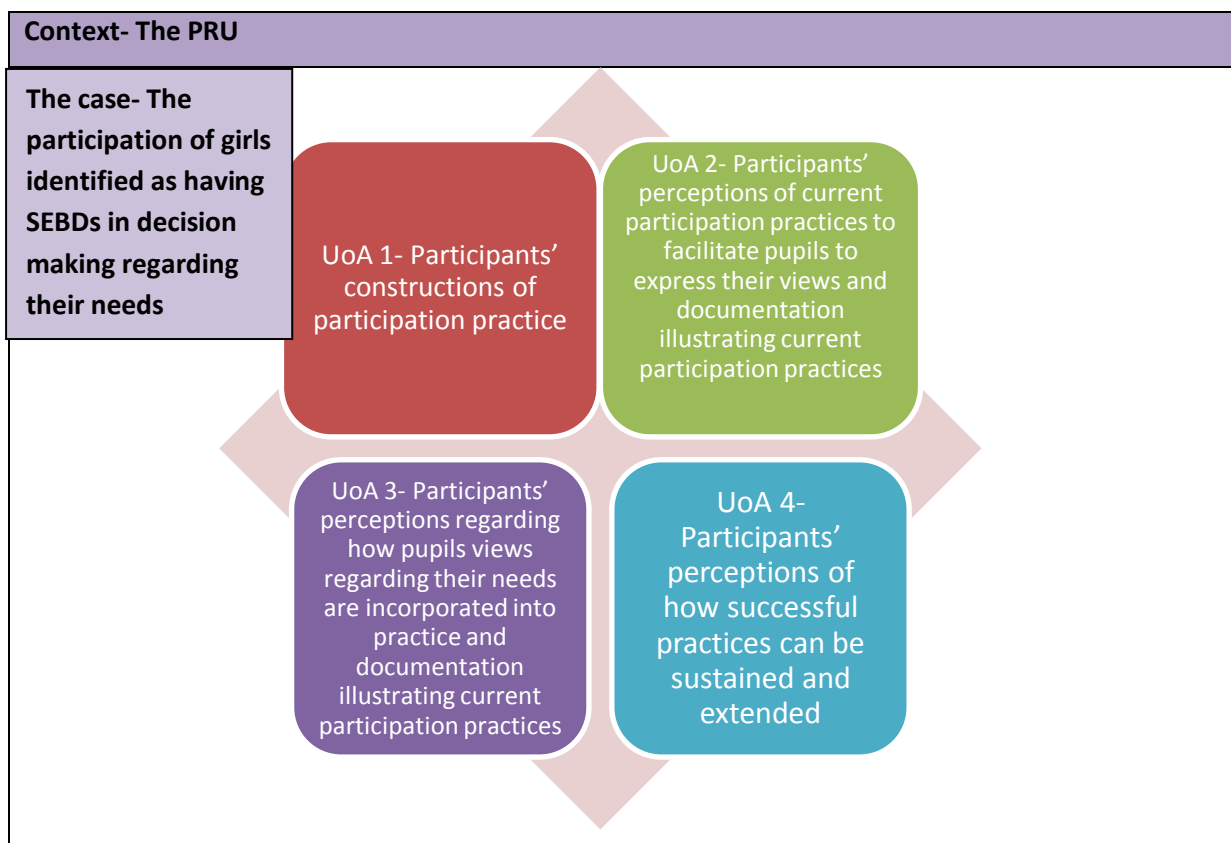
As case study methodology allows for the ‘opening up’ of new ideas and the interpretations of the phenomena being researched or new perceptions, the case study is appropriate when investigators desire to define topics broadly and not narrowly (Yin, 1993). Therefore, as little previous research has been carried out on the participation of CYP, and in particular girls with SEBD, the current researcher considers that there is a gap in the research examining this situation (Yin, 1989).

Intricate social organisational settings also call for a case study methodology (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991; Parkhe, 1993) which is considered particularly useful when the focus of the research is on the relationship between the person (or group) and the setting (Foster, 1991). As the current investigation deals with an organisational setting involving the action of a group of school staff and CYP in the facilitation of pupil participation, the method again seems appropriate.

Whereas deduction attempts to identify causal construction of experiences, case study research attempts to understand the nature of the research problem, reflecting, forming and revising meanings and structures of the phenomena being studied (Gilmore & Carson, 1996; Hirschman, 1986; Merriam, 1988). Thus, the case study method adopted can be considered well suited for inductively building a rich, deep understanding of new phenomena. In the present research, the case study method provided an analysis of the dynamics present in participation processes with CYP identified as having SEBDs for theory building based on prior knowledge gained through the extensive literature review that identified the initial research questions (Nair & Riege, 1995; Robson, 1993).

The use of case study methodology is advocated within the AI framework here to enable the organisation to be explored in its own right, generating rich data and permitting a focus on the positive experiences of participants to identify areas of good practice in the setting. Merriam (1988) also explains how case study methodology can prove particularly useful for studying educational innovations, for evaluating programmes and for informing policy.

Specifically, the current research adopted an exploratory single-embedded case study design, where the context is the PRU and the case in question is the participation of girls identified as having SEBDs in decision making regarding their needs, with embedded units of analysis informed by Yin (2009), to seek the voices of the pupils and staff; to investigate the current practices used in facilitating participation and engagement and to identify the factors that can support provision development (see figure 3). The case study design was intended to be exploratory as there is a lack of research and literature within the area of participation of CYP, and particularly girls, identified as having SEBDs in decision making.



**Figure 3: Case Study Design**

#### **4.6.1 Propositions**

Propositions are part of the case study design (Yin, 2003). Yin argues that although the research questions identify what the researcher is interested in answering, these questions are not adequate in themselves to indicate what the researcher should study. Therefore, the development of propositions is considered key to a successful case study as they can provide direction with regard to where to look for relevant evidence and what data to collect thus helping to establish what was guiding the researcher when exploring the data.

The following case study propositions were constructed on the basis of the literature review to support each of the research questions constructed are illustrated in table 5 below.

Research Question	Case Study Proposition
1. How do school staff and pupils construct and describe successful participation practices in facilitating pupils with SEBDs to express their views regarding their needs, and how do they view this practice as similar and different with girls and boys?	a) It is important that adults take the views of CYP into consideration when they make any decisions and plans involving their needs.
	b) The level of participation of CYP with SEBD in decision making around their needs is determined by adults.
	c) CYP with SEBDs can offer vital insight into what helps them to participate in expressing their views regarding their needs.
	d) School staff describe some gender specific practice as facilitating pupils with SEBDs to express their views regarding their needs.
2. How do pupils' views regarding their needs influence provision to meet those needs?	a) It is vital to act on the expressed views of CYP when they are elicited.
	b) Being identified as having SEBDs can result in views being less likely to be sought and/or to be acted upon.
	c) Gender and personal attributes of CYP with SEBDs can impact on their views being incorporated into practice.
3. What factors are identified as having the greatest impact on participation in one SEBD provision, and how is this similar and different for girls and boys?	a) Participation is facilitated by reliable relationships between pupils and school staff.
	b) The factors that have the greatest impact on participation are similar for girls and boys identified as having SEBDs

**Table 5: Propositions constructed on the basis of the literature review to support each of the research question**

#### 4.6.2 Case study protocol

The use of a case study protocol can significantly increase the reliability of a research design and also guide the researcher in carrying out the case study method (Yin, 2003). The table below describes the case study protocol used in the current investigation.

**Table 6: Case study protocol**

	Activity
<b>Single case study overview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The participation of CYP in decisions affecting them is central to new Government legislation.</li><li>• CYP identified as having SEBDs are underrepresented in the literature with regard to their views on participation.</li><li>• Girls identified as having SEBDs are especially underrepresented in the literature.</li><li>• The current research investigates how CYP identified as having SEBDs currently participate in decision making in one specialist provision.</li><li>• The current research investigates how girls identified as having SEBDs and staff working with them in one specialist provision feel that pupils could be facilitated to participate in decision making regarding their needs.</li></ul>
<b>Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Single embedded case study design intended to be exploratory.</li><li>• Context- PRU.</li><li>• One case- The participation of girls with SEBDs in decision making regarding their needs.</li><li>• Four Units of Analysis-<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Participants' constructions of participation practice.</li><li>2. Participants' perceptions of current participation practices to facilitate pupils to express their views and</li></ol></li></ul>

	<p>documentation illustrating current participation practices.</p> <p>3. Participants' perceptions regarding how pupils views regarding their needs are incorporated into practice and documentation illustrating current participation practices</p> <p>4. Participants' perceptions of how successful practices can be sustained and extended.</p>	
<b>Case study procedure</b>	Table 22 (appendix 7) represents the risk assessment and contingency plan that was developed to support the case study procedure.	
<b>Case selection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The provision and participants were selected through purposive sampling.</li> <li>• The inclusion and exclusion criteria adopted are described in Table 7.</li> </ul>	
<b>Data gathering and analysis methods</b>	<b>AI STAGE</b>	<b>METHODOLOGY</b>
	<b>Define. <i>The area of inquiry</i></b> Participants asked to define participation in the initial staff focus group and pupil interview questions.	Meeting the SMT at the PRU. Interviews. Focus group.
	<b>Discover. <i>The best of what is</i></b> Focus group and semi-structured interviews. Pupil participants offered the opportunity to take photographs to illustrate the points they wished to make.	Interviews. Focus group. Photographs. Identification of themes= analysis.
	<b>Dream. <i>What might be</i></b> Magic wand question.	Magic wand question. Developing wishes for the future.
	<b>Design. <i>What should be</i></b> Thematic analysis. Creation of provocative propositions based on dreams and validated by participants.	Identifying themes. Developing provocative propositions from dreams. Constructing fishbones. Creating action.

	Presentation of illustrative photographs developed with pupils.	
	<b>Destiny. How to empower, learn and adjust=</b> Feedback of findings to participants and the SMT. Commitment to action and change. Evaluation of changes made.	Action planning. SMT commit to carry forward actions. Contribution to policy and procedures
<b>Data analysis method</b>	<b>Stage</b>	<b>Source of data</b>
Thematic analysis Content analysis	<b>Define- The area of inquiry</b>	Full verbatim transcripts; Documentation; Research diary.
Thematic analysis Content analysis	<b>Dream- What might be</b>	Full verbatim transcripts; Research diary.
Thematic analysis Content analysis	<b>Design- What should be</b>	Full verbatim transcripts; Research diary; Presentation of illustrative photographs developed after recording pupils descriptions of the photos.
Review of data Content analysis	<b>Destiny- How to empower, learn and adjust</b>	Evaluation of changes made; Research diary.
<b>Reporting</b>	Case study findings will be reported to all those who took part and the EPS where the researcher is currently a TEP.	
<b>Timeline</b>	See table 23 (appendix 8) for full details.	

#### **4.7 Familiarisation with context**

This study uses qualitative methods in order to gather rich, in-depth data to create a detailed picture of a specialist provision's practice regarding approaches to the participation of girls with SEBDs. The researcher spent approximately six hours in the PRU over a one month period in order to introduce herself and build rapport with pupils and staff. This also included spending time with the parent liaison officers working at the PRU and attending a meeting with the member of staff responsible for facilitating the Student Council.

#### **4.8 Sampling and participant recruitment**

The PRU identified to take part in this research was selected through purposive sampling (Sarantakos, 2005; Jeon, 2004) by the Principal EP for the LA where the researcher is on bursary placement. The Head Teacher, Deputy and Assistant Head of the provision were fully informed of the project and arrangements to conduct the research were negotiated with them and participants.

An information/ training session was provided for all staff to introduce the AI process and the aims of the research prior to data collection commencing. The SMT at the PRU were consulted partly to encourage their interest in the project as well as providing a managerial perspective. Also, the commitment of the SMT to listening to and acting upon the girls' ideas regarding participation and planning was necessary and was encouraged and facilitated through regular contact. Although credit should be given to the PRU for both its willingness and commitment to act upon the findings of the research, it was also important that staff felt prepared to receive feedback that may have been difficult to implement and potentially challenging to hear. The researcher felt that any such messages would be both easier to deliver and attend to if presented within an established and mutually respectful working relationship.

Girls in key stages 3 and 4 were selected for the focus of this research. Selection of participants was informed by the Assistant Head Teacher of the PRU following inclusion and exclusion criteria below:



**Table 7: Inclusion and exclusion criteria**

Participant	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
<b>Pupils</b>	<p>Are female.</p> <p>Have been attending the PRU for at least 4 weeks.</p> <p>Will be at the PRU for at least 16 weeks.</p> <p>Are regular attenders (90 %+).</p> <p>Are not a Looked After Child</p> <p>Are not experiencing any critical incidents</p>	<p>Are not female</p> <p>Have been attending the PRU for less than 4 weeks</p> <p>Will be at the PRU for less than 16 weeks.</p> <p>Have poor attendance (-90 %)</p> <p>Are a Looked After Child due to the vulnerability and instability of the PRU placement</p> <p>Are experiencing a critical incident, e.g. 'live' safeguarding issue</p>
<b>School staff</b>	<p>Currently employed within the PRU</p> <p>Work with female pupils within the PRU</p> <p>Work or have worked with male pupils within the PRU</p> <p>Have been involved in participation activities with female pupils within the PRU</p>	<p>Are not currently employed within the PRU</p> <p>Do not work with female pupils within the PRU</p> <p>Do not or have never worked with male pupils within the PRU</p> <p>Have not been involved in participation activities with female pupils within the PRU</p>

**Table: 8 Participant Details**

Pupils	Staff
<p>Are all female.</p> <p>1 x Year 7</p> <p>2 x Year 8</p> <p>1 x Year 9</p> <p>3 previously attended all girls schools</p> <p>All excluded from mainstream school for 'behaviour problem'</p> <p>Have been attending the PRU for at least 4 weeks.</p>	<p>2 x female</p> <p>3 x male</p> <p>3 x teachers</p> <p>1 x TA</p> <p>1 x Behaviour Support Manager</p> <p>Work with female pupils within the PRU</p> <p>Work or have worked with male pupils</p>

Initially, information regarding the study (including consent and assent forms) was sent to pupils and their parents' with the support of the PRU's Parent Liaison Officers and also given to staff (see appendix 9). Participants were also offered a verbal explanation to ensure they understood the research process. It was made clear to participants that they were free to withdraw at any time.

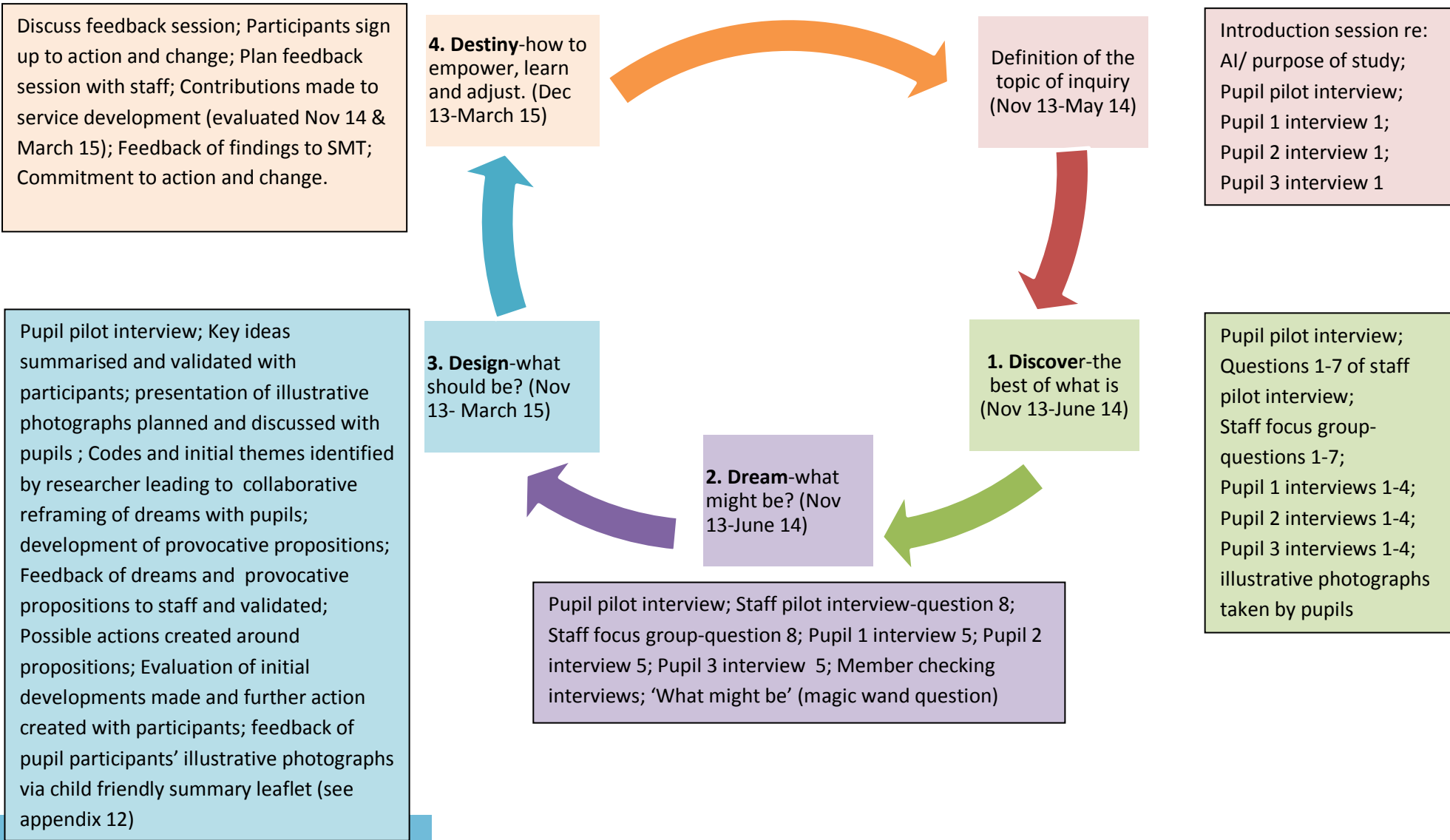
#### 4.9 Data gathering and data analysis methods

**Table 9: Data gathering and analysis**

Research Question	Data Gathering Method	Researcher Data Analysis Method
How do school staff and pupils construct and describe successful participation practices in facilitating pupils with SEBDs to express their views regarding their needs, and how do they view this practice as similar and different with girls and boys?	Staff focus group Pupil interviews Illustrative photographs Materials/ documentation held by the PRU	Thematic Analysis Thematic Analysis Content Analysis
How do pupils' views regarding their needs influence provision to meet those needs?	Staff focus group Pupil interviews Illustrative photographs Documentation	Thematic Analysis Thematic Analysis Content Analysis
What factors are identified as having the greatest impact on participation in one SEBD provision, and how is this similar and different for girls and boys?	Staff focus group Pupil interviews	Thematic Analysis Thematic Analysis

The following diagram (figure 4) illustrates the different stages of the AI research process and the data gathering and analysis methods used to address each part of the 4-D cycle. More detailed descriptions of data gathering and analyses then follow.

**Figure 4: Summary of AI research process and how each part of the 4-D cycle was addressed**



#### **4.9.1 Pilot study**

Pilot interviews were conducted with one staff member and one pupil from the PRU (Gillham, 2000) in an attempt to ensure that the wording of questions was appropriate and the content was easily understood. It was not necessary to make any changes after piloting.

#### **4.9.2 Pupil interview process**

Five semi-structured interviews were conducted from an AI perspective with each female pupil participant to gain an understanding of their perceptions and experiences of SEBD and participation in the provision (see appendix 10). The schedule also included consent checks and breaks; with the first session acting as an introduction to AI so that the girls' understood that they would have an active role in the AI process. Participants were also debriefed after each activity, and key ideas were checked with the girls at the end of each interview schedule.

It was anticipated that 1:1 interviews would take into consideration the unique and varying factors that contribute to and result from SEBD for these participants and allow for more open contributions to be made than if participants were involved in a group interview. Research by Morgan (1997) reports cases where group dynamics lead to inhibited comments.

By meeting often and over a relatively long period, it was envisioned that rapport would be built and that the girls would engage in the research process. Additionally, more regular member checking was able to take place at the end of each interview to ensure validity.

As the current researcher did not propose that girls' experiences of participation are completely different to that of boys it was important that participants were invited to discuss gender similarities and difference equally in the aim that any genuine areas of gender difference would be elicited.

The researcher considered it important to make clear to all participants that they could not promise that the PRU would make all changes suggested as a result of the AI process. Instead, it was explained that the research would advocate and hopefully facilitate the likelihood of changes being implemented.

### **4.9.3 Focus Group**

It was anticipated that a focus group conducted with four staff members who work directly with girls with SEBDs would allow for an energetic environment to be created and contributions about current practice to be made (see appendix 11). The staff focus group was designed to explore perceptions of effective ways of facilitating participation for the new female cohort of pupils. Since the study was initiated in response to the PRU staff's perception that this new group would have different needs to boys, the focus on the needs of girls' with SEBDs was apparent and known by all involved. However, great care was taken in the design of all interview schedules to consider both girls and boys in an attempt to explore the apparently prevailing view of the needs of girls with SEBDs being very different to the needs of boys with SEBDs (Lloyd, 2005).

### **4.9.4 Documentary data**

Observations of specific practices regarding participation and also general observations were recorded by the researcher as data for content analysis and as contextual information. This information, along with data regarding past and current practices regarding participation was collected in a research diary as were the researcher's reflections.

Research diaries are considered a key tool, which enable critical evaluation of progress, feelings and thoughts whilst developing ideas and fluency, encouraging reflexivity and enabling the researcher to map complex structures and relationships (Blaxter, Hughs & Tight, 2006)

### **4.9.5 Photographs**

Pupils were asked to report their past and preferred experiences of participation and the opportunity to take photographs was offered in addition to being interviewed to further illustrate the points that they wished to make. The researcher considered that this approach could engage participants whose voices are not typically heard (Strack, Lovelace, Jordan & Holmes, 2010). Cohen (2012) noted that the use of photographs eases any reticence due to inhibitions associated with speaking and so the current researcher felt that this approach could be attractive to some of the pupil participants.

A collaborative approach where the girls verbalised their own explanations and interpretations of their photographs was adopted (Wang & Burris, 1997) and visual data was presented as part of the

AI- 4D Cycle (see figure 2) where girls chose to use this method of data collection (see appendix 12). This meant that the girls could work at a level most appropriate and comfortable for them as an individual and thus enabling the process to develop more systematically.

Such approaches are consistent with the principles of participatory research (Israel, Schulz, Parker & Becker, 1998) and may be regarded as an effective way to bridge any power gaps between researcher and participant (Keremane & McKay, 2011). Photographs taken by participants can be used to highlight issues and to promote change (Drew, Duncan & Sawyer, 2010) thus facilitating individual empowerment as well as processes for change (Catalani & Minkler, 2010).

#### 4.9.6 Provocative Propositions

As part of the AI process, provocative propositions, statements that bridge the best of ‘what is’ with ‘what might be’ are constructed (Cooperider, 2002). They aim to challenge participants to think of ways that they can make desired possibilities into reality and how they could contribute to further development. Such propositions can counteract a problem solving approach by challenging those involved to ‘dream big’ and avoid being limited by current understandings and practices by creating a vision of the future. A good provocative proposition is considered to be:

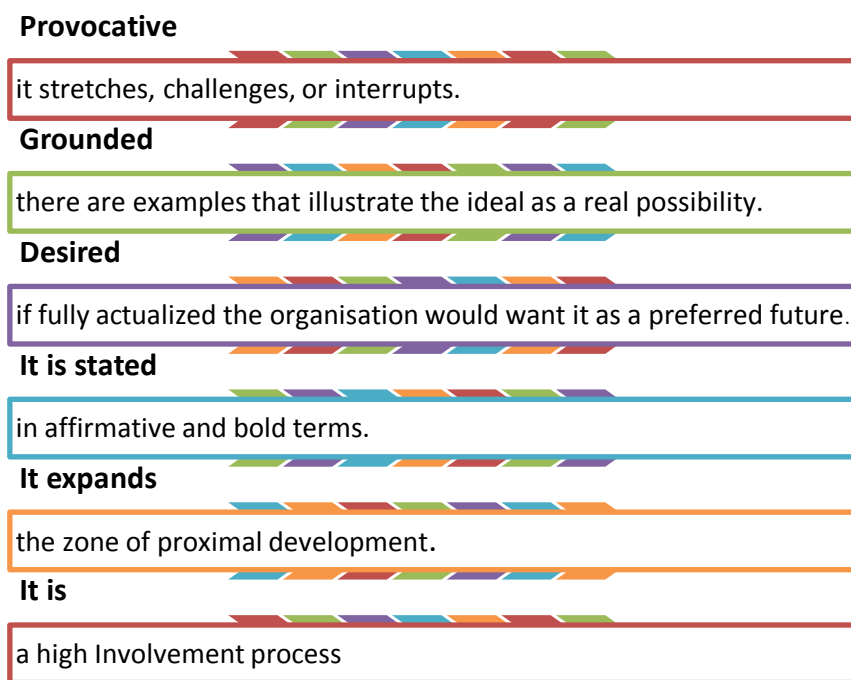


Figure 5: Description of a good provocative proposition

This means that an effective provocative proposition stretches the realm of the status quo, challenges common assumptions or routines, and helps suggest real possibilities that represent desired possibilities for the organization and its people (Cooperider, 2002).

Provocative propositions were composed by the researcher following the completion of the staff focus group and pupil interviews as a way of connecting the wishes made during the dream stage to examples of best practice. Because provocative propositions are derived from reality, by connecting to them to the vision based dreams whilst keeping them at a conscious level the aim was to inspire people involved in the PRU to do more of what works and enable ideas as to how participation could be facilitated to be created. Propositions were written in the present tense as if the organisation was already at this point and were intended to be used as an internal working document to describe the PRU working at ideal capacity.

#### **4.9.7 The Design stage**

The final propositions were then used to structure the more detailed work of the Design stage where staff participants collaborated in designing what they considered would be necessary to make the various elements of the dreams a reality based on what was discovered about past successes.

Fishbone analysis or 'Ishikawa diagrams' were used as an inclusive process to find the route to the visions. Participants were given a blank fishbone diagram (see appendix 13), in the 'head' of which the dreams that they want to bring into reality were combined and written as an area for development. In the boxes at the end of each 'spine' of the fishbone actions which would need to be taken to aid each development were noted. To support this process the researcher provided participants with categories including: equipment, process, people, materials, environment, and management, although participants were free to use their own categories if preferred.

#### **4.9.8 The action plan**

Staff participants worked together to record the actions onto post it notes along each spine of the fishbone making it an inclusive process where everyone contributed. In order to turn the fishbones into plans a series of horizontal lines, one for each area on the 'spines' of the fishbone, were drawn on a piece of flipchart paper. The focus group members and Assistant Head then transferred each post it note for each identified element onto a timeline for the components of each area for

development. This enabled participants to see dependencies between the different timelines, and they were able to adjust the placing of the individual actions if necessary (see appendix 14).

In addition to presenting pupil voices and expressing participants' wishes, examples of best practice and possible areas for further development were also identified. The contribution of the provision was celebrated during feedback of initial findings. A document summarising the key outcomes and features of the project was also produced in order to develop best practice guidelines for professionals working with young people with SEBDs (see appendix 16).

#### **4.9.9 Research diary**

A research diary was used to collate information and to supplement the information generated from the other methods of data collection. Specifically, the diary was used to record contextual observations, reflection of the researcher's dual role as a practitioner and scientist, on the design of the research and data gathering processes as well as observations which corroborated themes.

When used to reflect on the development of thought and decision making throughout the research process, diary keeping can imply the open-minded and critical approach adopted by the researcher (Silverman, 2004).

As recommended by Nadin and Cassell (2006), entries were made by the researcher immediately after each contact with the PRU and so were in chronological order. Descriptive and interpretive details were recorded separately. Additionally, the researcher used the diary to record reflections between visits and throughout the evolving research process (see appendix 17).

#### **4.10 Outputs of analyses**

Analyses of data took part both collaboratively and from a researcher led perspective. Notes were made by the researcher of participants' responses as the interviews were being conducted and key ideas were identified by the researcher after interviews and recorded in the research diary. These were then validated at the next interview and fed back to participants verbally before thematic analysis was conducted resulting in a more detailed body of knowledge being produced.



The outputs of analyses are summarised below and will be referred to at the end of the next chapter when how they support each of the research questions and case study propositions will be illustrated (see table 18)

**Table 10: Summary of outputs of analyses**

Outputs of analyses	
Collaborative analyses (AI process)	Researcher analyses
Dreams	Thematic Analysis
Provocative Propositions	
Actions	Content Analysis
Illustrative photographs	

#### 4.11 Thematic analysis

The data gathered in the discover and dream stages aimed to capture individual experiences and contribute to both service development in one setting, the PRU, and also to existing knowledge regarding the facilitation of participation of girls with SEBDs. Therefore, an analysis technique where participant experience was the central focus was necessary (Giorgi, 1985). The researcher decided to further analyse this data outside of the participative process in order to undertake a more detailed analysis of the pupils' views and enable more of the nuances of their experience to be drawn out.

Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest "through its theoretical freedom, thematic analysis provides a flexible and useful research tool, which can potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex account of data" (p.78). The framework is depicted in figure 6 and a summary of the rationale for adopting thematic analysis and the stages of this process in relation to the current research is detailed in table 11, both of which can be found below.

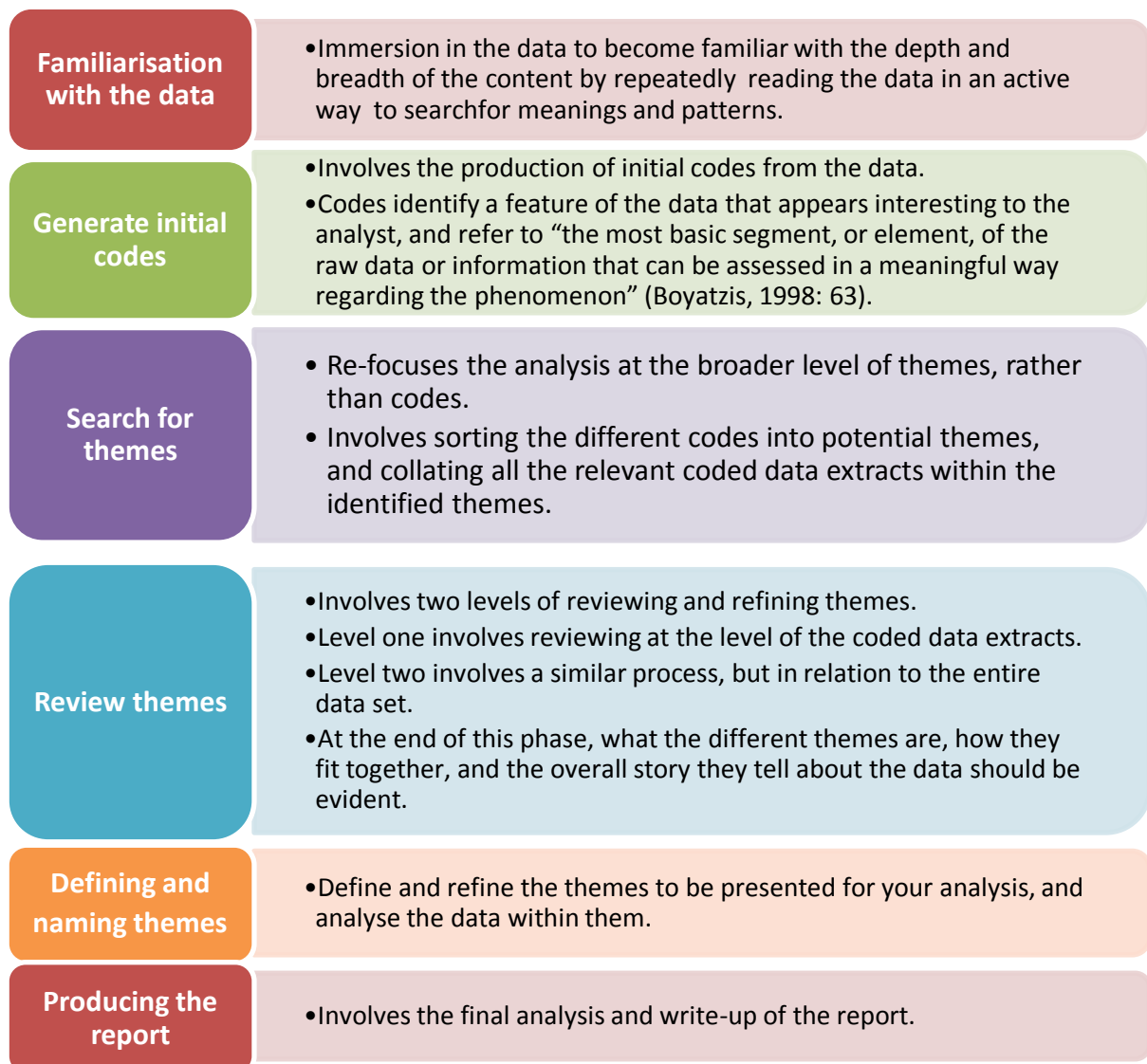


Figure 6: Adapted from Braun and Clarke’s (2006) framework for thematic analysis.

The semi-structured interview transcripts were arranged into basic data codes (features of the data) which were triangulated and organised into initial themes. Appendix 18 gives a sample of data showing the audit trail progressing from codes to initial themes to developed themes to final themes.

**Table 11: Stages of thematic analysis**

Stage of analysis	Rationale	Process
<b>Transcription</b>	<p>It is suggested that “while it may seem time consuming, frustrating, and at times boring” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.87), the process of transcription is an excellent way to aid familiarisation with data (Riessman, 1993).</p> <p>Lapadat and Lindsay (1999) suggest that transcription is an interpretative act where meanings are created, rather than simply a mechanical act of putting words onto paper.</p>	<p>The current researcher transcribed all whole words and utterances and upon completion of the task listened to the recordings again whilst reading through the transcripts to ensure that the text was accurate.</p> <p>Following transcription initial codes were generated to aid data reduction (Attride-Stirling, 2001), which were based upon recurrent issues in the text.</p>
<b>Coding</b>	<p>Coding reduces written data into manageable and coherent sections whilst still respecting the quality of the data involved (Gibbs, 2007; Flick, 2009).</p> <p>It is important that codes are derived from the data in a responsive rather than a preordained manner and their wording should be kept as close as possible to that which it is describing to enable it’s meaning to be understood, memorised and recalled quickly.</p> <p>There may be duplication or overlap of codes and the process can be considered iterative.</p>	<p>Gibbs (2007) writes that “the same code is given to an item of text that says the same thing or is about the same thing” (p. 38).</p> <p>The same piece of text may have more than one code attached to it, depending on its content (Newby, 2010).</p> <p>In coding a piece of transcription the researcher goes through the data systematically, line by line and writes a descriptive code by the side of each piece of datum (Cohen, Manion &amp; Morrison 2011).</p> <p>Once completed and verified emergent themes, frequencies of codes, patterns, key points, similarities and differences can be</p>

		noticed (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011)
<b>Thematic Analysis</b>	<p>Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns, or themes within data which minimally organises and describes data sets in rich detail. It is independent of theory and epistemology and can be applied across a range of approaches from realist methods to essentialist and social constructionist approaches (Aronson, 1994; Roulston, 2001). As Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest, thematic analysis is not a linear process. Although an advantage, this flexibility is not without its critics. However, if clear guidelines are followed such reproach can be avoided.</p>	<p>Notes were made by the researcher during the interviews and key ideas were identified after interviews and recorded in the research diary. These ideas were then used to structure the thematic analysis.</p> <p>In order to ensure that analysis was undertaken in a structured and boundaried way the current author adopted Braun and Clarke's (2006) model (see figure 6 ).</p> <p>A hybrid process of inductive and deductive thematic analysis was used (Fereday &amp; Muir-Cochrane, 2008). Data driven themes were established within and between each interview and fed back to participants at the subsequent interview and, as thematic analysis can interpret various aspects of the research topic (Boyatzis, 1998), an active researcher role was also adopted to identify themes that linked specifically to the research questions. This deductive thematic analysis resulted in a rich description of the phenomenon under investigation being facilitated meaning that social and/ or contextual factors were also analysed.</p>

#### 4.12 Content Analysis

Content analysis defines the process of summarizing and reporting written data- the main contents of data and their meaning (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). It has been defined as “a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context” (Krippendorff, 1980, p. 21). Hsieh and Shannon (2005) refer to it as “a research method for the subjective classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (p. 1278). This systematic method can be undertaken with both written and oral forms of communication and often uses categorisation as an essential feature in reducing large quantities of data (Flick, 2009).

The analytical method most likely to be used in small-scale research such as the current investigation is internal criticism, in which the contents of a document are subjected to rigorous analysis which first seeks answers to questions including what is actually said, and if terms used are employed in the same way as the researcher would use them.

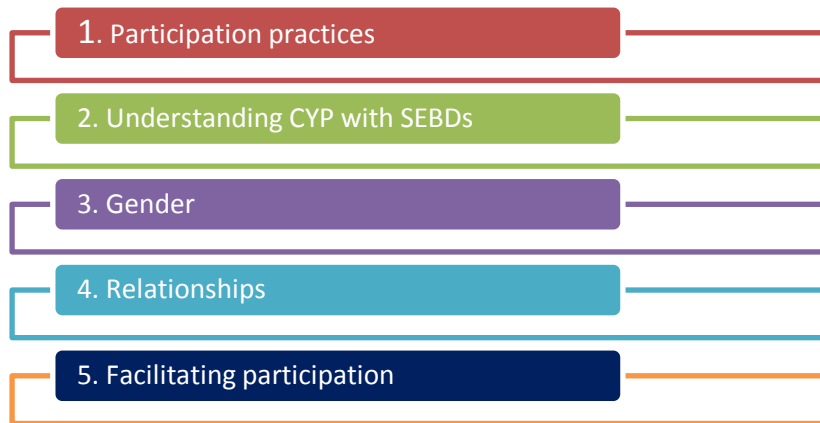
This is relevant to the present research as the language used to describe pupil’s views and needs is likely to contain judgements based on schools’ and the wider social expectations of CYP.

Furthermore, these may be influenced by pupils’ individual characteristics and/ or gender as well as those of the adult recording them.

The purpose of the document is also relevant as the aim could be to inform, command, remind or to have some other effect on the reader. A document is always written for a particular readership and shaped according to the writer’s expectations of how intended readers will interpret it. When and in what circumstances it was produced is also important.

Content analysis on coded segments of interest was used to analyse information provided relating to current participation practices within the PRU. Focus was paid to gathering contextual data rather than individual responses which provided important data to answer the research questions whilst also supporting the validity of the interview data. However, it was also important that the current researcher remained aware of any personal biases to avoid rejecting evidence that did not support the aims of the research.

A table was produced to organise data into pre-determined categories based on the thematic analyses of the semi- structured interviews and focus group (see appendix 19). By working systematically through the data the researcher was able to identify and organise 35 categories within five areas relating to participation as demonstrated in figure 7 below:



**Figure 7: Code areas.**

Next, data was re-analysed and regrouped from the content analysis into the five headings highlighted above thus reducing the 35 categories to five (see table 25, appendix 20). This enabled the researcher to comment on the groups and results obtained from this last stage and to draw attention to general and specific points described in the next chapter (table 17).

## **4.12 Reliability and validity**

### **4.12.1 Of the data**

In the current research consideration was given to the fact that the participants involved could be deemed by their volunteered involvement as being committed to change and so inclined to see it, although attempts were made by the researcher to offset this threat to the validity of the data by triangulating data. It was also possible that interviewer bias could affect the validity of interview data as pupils, school staff and the researcher worked together over a number of months and so participant responses could potentially have been influenced by a desire to please the researcher. The current author considered this to be unlikely to occur, however, and interrater reliability was addressed by anonymised interview transcriptions, codes and the themes constructed being validated by a peer to ensure trustworthiness. As it was not possible to include additional interviewers in this case a fellow final year Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP) who had knowledge and experience of using this form of analysis in research assisted the researcher. The TEP was informed of the aims of the research and also the research questions before being asked by the researcher what they considered were the most relevant passages of data in four pages of the initial

transcripts of the focus group and each pupil interview. The TEP was also requested to identify initial codes and was asked to label them with subthemes provided by the researcher as they thought appropriate.

The TEP reported that she actually read all of each transcript before taking each subtheme for each research question and extracting quotes from the transcripts that she would have used to support them. The TEP found that the majority were the same as identified by the researcher and on the two occasions where she had picked a different quote, upon reflection it was either very similar to a quote already picked by the researcher and would not have altered the meaning of any subthemes or she had put it into a different subtheme to the researcher, although it was reported that the researchers choice made more sense to her on consideration. The TEP concluded that she agreed with the codes, subthemes and themes identified by the researcher.

In order to further address potential questions regarding the validity, reliability and generalisability of the results, the researcher checked with participants that the analysis of data captured their perceptions. It is, after all, important that researchers' own interpretations and preconceptions do not work to silence or misrepresent the young person's voice (Barker & Weller, 2003).

#### **4.12.2 Of the case study design**

The use of a case study design is considered by many to heighten ecological validity as it allows more attention to be paid to the context of an organisation than more fixed, experimental designs may do (Robson, 2002). However, although such approaches may yield a large amount of descriptive data, case orientated work had been subject to criticism regarding its scientific credibility and has been challenged on methodological and epistemological grounds (Elmes et al, 1995; Robson, 2002). For example, Mjøset (2009) claims that as a case cannot be replicated at any time, especially where context is central as it cannot be 'built', there is limited ability to generalise or make firm inferences when using case study methodology.

However, suggestions for carrying out case study research in a methodologically sound way include basing research on a well-defined methodology and identifying prior theory through a literature review, the outcome of which should be an initial statement of the research problem (Nair & Riege, 1995; Robson, 1993). Both of these recommendations have been actioned by the current author.

Although multiple case studies may be considered as providing a more rigorous and complete approach than single case study research due to the triangulation of evidence collected (Bonoma,

1985; Eisenhardt, 1989; Neuman, 1994; Yin, 1994), it is possible to make a single case study more robust by gathering information from a range of sources (Robson, 2002). The current author triangulated data in an attempt to make findings more accurate and therefore more convincing (Yin, 2009).

Christie, Rowe, Perry and Chamard (2000) describe five approaches that can assist case study research to achieve integrity or rigour of validity (see table 12).

## **4.13 Critique of method**

### **4.13.1 Appreciative Inquiry**

A common critique of AI is that the focus on positive stories and experiences during the discovery phase may invalidate the negative experiences of participants and potentially repress important points that need to be made (Egan & Lancaster, 2005; Miller, Fitzgerald, Murrell, Preston & Ambekar, 2005; Pratt, 2002; Reason, 2000). Critics such as Golembiewski (2000) and Dick (2009) suggest that this prevents more 'realistic' and truly representative discussion meaning that research may be considered biased or skewed. Although calling everything a problem is unhelpfully negative and is likely to lead to the neglect of possibilities that might exist, insisting on calling everything an 'opportunity' could seem equally naïve (Burgoyne, 2009).

Practitioners who use AI are aware of such criticisms (Busche, 2011), and consider such assumptions as incorrect interpretations of the method (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987; Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999). Recommendations as to how criticisms can be addressed have been made, for example, by framing open-ended questions appropriately and paying attention to asking probing and reflective questions, the balance between strengths and weaknesses can be maintained (Clark, 2005; Patton, 2002). Others argue that it should not be implied that AI offers a non-contentious strategy for change that circumvents dissent or organisational politics (Willoughby & Tosey, 2007).

As acknowledged by Oliver (2005), what is positive for some may be negative for others and so, behind every negative image lies the positive and vice versa (Bright, Powley, Fry & Barrett, 2011; Fineman, 2006). Following this social construction and with relevance to the current study, Daniels and Cole (2002) suggest that many of the current tensions and dilemmas in the development of provision for pupils with SEBDs reflect their historical roots. They argue that a detailed analysis of current circumstances must be supplemented by an understanding of how that practice has come to be in order to understand and then change practice. Negative experiences are likely to be elicited as



a result of such historical analysis, which AI not only allows for but accepts as part of the 4-D cycle. Furthermore, as discussed by Johnson (2011), an appreciative focus can generate negative experiences and it is through appreciating and exploring those experiences that positive, or at least generative, outcomes are produced.

In order to address these issues, for the current study the researcher ensured that during the presentations and discussions with participants and also the SMT of the PRU it was made clear that although AI is encouraging it is not intended to be authoritarian, and it is the outcome that is progressive whilst the content may at times seem unconstructive. Therefore, if participants felt the need or desire to discuss negative aspects of the organisation or their experiences, both past and present, they would not be prevented from doing so.

The researcher considers that by conveying this message and by using semi-structured interview schedules to aid the flexible approach adopted participants felt relaxed enough to discuss a full range of ideas and express their thoughts without feeling that they were doing something 'wrong or damaging the process in any way. Furthermore, by the SMT being visibly involved in the study through their attendance at various meetings and by the voicing of their commitment to the process it was anticipated that participants would feel confident to offer suggestions for improvements. Indeed, participants did discuss adverse experiences and also offered recommendations for changes which the researcher considers helped to ascertain what constitutes best practice through the identification of unhelpful procedures.

Instead of becoming fixed in a dualistic, either/or discourse of positive or negative, Johnson (2011) argues that the generative potential of AI is most likely to come from embracing the polarities of human existence and that it is the tensions of those very forces that most give life and vitality to organizations (Busche, 2011). However, this fluid nature of AI is also another cause of some criticism and questions have been raised as to when exactly the process deliver 'the product' (van der Haar & Hosking, 2004). In the current study the 'product' is considered to be the knowledge gained regarding how best to facilitate pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs which is used to inform service development in one setting. However, rather than experiencing the cyclical nature of AI negatively, the researcher considers that this is a positive aspect of the methodology as it is developmental rather than static and the focus of change can be adapted to suit the most current needs as identified by those within the organisation who have are most affected by it.

#### 4.13.2 The participation of CYP

If reliability is the degree to which the finding is independent of accidental circumstances of the research, and validity is the degree to which the finding is interpreted in a correct way (Kirk & Miller, 1986, p. 20), then allowing children to participate freely and to share in the interpretation of data can enhance both (Thomas & O’Kane, 1998). As discussed by Ben-Arieh (2006) with regard to measuring and monitoring the well-being of young children, whereas most research previously focused on ‘objective’ descriptions of CYP’s lives where they were treated as passive objects that are acted on by the adult world, current efforts are more likely to focus on children as active members of society, who themselves influence the adults in their lives and their own peers. Therefore, to develop knowledge and understanding regarding effective participation practices the current researcher considered it fundamental to gather the perceptions of the pupil’s and use the insights offered regarding their experiences by using a participatory method. As stated by Pretty (1995) “participation does not simply imply the mechanical application of a ‘technique’ or method, but is instead part of a process of dialogue, action, analysis and change” (p. 54).

However, the process by which the AI attempts to involve all stakeholders in a ‘level playing field’ of collaborative strategic planning and review, has been found to reveal that some participants are uncomfortable at the prospect, perhaps due to a perceived threat to authority and concern over apparently relinquishing power to students and even other staff (Willoughby & Tosey, 2007). Indeed, listening to student voices can be problematic (Fielding & Rudduck, 2002; Rudduck & Flutter, 2004; Fielding, 2004; McMahon & Portelli, 2004), and difficulties can arise if the student involvement is not carefully introduced.

Therefore, care was taken by the researcher to introduce and explain the aims of the current study and also the AI process. This was done over time and on several occasions during group discussions with all teaching and support staff and the SMT at the PRU and through the participant information sheets (see appendix 9). Furthermore, the researcher also explained the purpose and process of the study at the beginning of the focus group and interviews and left time for participants to ask any questions. Caution was also taken to ensure that participants understood that although their views would be listened to with respect and thoughts regarding best participation practice and ideas for possible change would be presented to the SMT at the PRU no assurances could be given by the researcher that all opinions would be acted upon.

Furthermore, by offering pupil participants the opportunity to take photographs to represent or support their views, the researcher tried to address any potential issues due to perceived power imbalance or lack of confidence in communicating verbally. As Morrow and Richards (1996) suggest: using methods which are non-invasive, non-confrontational and participatory, and which encourage children to interpret their own data, might be one step forward in diminishing the ethical problems of imbalanced power relationships between researcher and researched at the point of data collection and interpretation (p. 100).

#### **4.13.3 The perceived potential impact of the gathered data.**

Previous experience of using AI to explore staff views of developing independent living skills with adolescents with Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC) (Martin, 2013) (see appendix 21) indicated that participants felt listened to throughout the AI interview process; participants felt that the positive stance of the AI approach did not prevent discussion of any concerns or criticisms they may have; participants considered that to obtain and share information about good practice focussing on what works is most effective. However, some staff were reluctant to talk about improvements that could be made as they felt it could be considered a criticism of SMT.

The researcher therefore considered that there was a possibility that participants in the current study might not have felt confident that the provocative propositions constructed as part of the AI process would be recognised by the SMT at the PRU which could affect the implementation of dreams and wishes. Participants were given the opportunity to feed such concerns back to the researcher both following initial feedback and afterwards as they were provided with copies of the constructed statements for their information. However, no amendments were made to the propositions either initially or at the later action planning stages after participants had had the opportunity to scrutinise the details.

Although it is suggested that one of the main risks when carrying out an AI is that managers may be unable or unwilling to respond to the wishes of the participants (Oakes, 2010), as a member of the SMT attended this part of the process along with the researcher and staff participants, it was possible to add timescales and milestones as they were able to take responsibility for making the goals happen. It is therefore likely that positive and sustained changes will be implemented. A date was also set to review if any actions had been implemented as a result of this part of the process (see figure 4).

#### 4.13.4 Data Gathering and Analysis.

Questionnaires were considered as an alternative to semi structured interviews and focus groups used as some suggest one advantage of using questionnaires is the degree of objectivity involved in the standardisation of administration which is harder to achieve when using interview procedures (Griffiths, 1970). However it was decided that they would not be used to gather data in this case as their use can limit data collection and may not necessarily reflect data collected in other ways. Another possible drawback of questionnaires is the literacy levels and skills required to complete them which could impact on their accessibility to participants, particularly pupils, and on their motivation to complete them. Furthermore, questionnaires would not offer the possibility to establish collaborative relationships or the chance for the researcher to ask more open ended questions which as discussed can allow negative experiences to be discussed and more positive outcomes generated (Johnson, 2011).

The accuracy of transcriptions was checked with participants although it was not possible to identify themes collaboratively within each interview session due to restrictions on staff participant's time. Furthermore, all pupil participants expressed a preference when asked that the researcher did this between sessions and then checked for accuracy with the girls at the beginning of the next session. In addition to this being the girls' preferred means analysis, it also served as a reminder of what had been discussed previously as each took part in five interviews, sometimes with more than a week between sessions. By analysing the data outside of the participative process it was possible for the researcher to present the girls' views to staff whilst avoiding any possible power dynamics that could occur if the two groups had worked together.

Although participants were not present for the final part of the proposition process due to the time restrictions faced by staff and because the pupils had left the PRU, as the researcher had previously validated key ideas with participants through member checking it was possible to construct initial proposals by considering the reflections and envisioning a collective desirable future before presented these back to staff participants. This was done sensitively and it was made clear that these were the researcher's interpretations of what had been proposed and that changes could be made to any, and indeed all, of the items if necessary. As the girls had left the PRU by this stage the researcher attempted to contact them all by telephone to arrange to check the list with them. However, it was only possible to speak with one pupil, although a paper copy was sent to another at her new school. Unfortunately, PRU staff were not aware of the contact details of the other two girls who had moved out of the LA. No alterations were requested by participants to be made to the propositions.

Approach	Process adopted in current research
<p>Construct validity- ensures adequate operational measures for the concepts under investigation (Emory &amp; Cooper, 1991; McDaniel &amp; Gates, 1991).</p>	<p>Constructs developed through literature review, use of multiple sources of evidence, establishing a chain of evidence, and having key external informants review draft reports (Christie et al., 2000).</p> <p>Triangulation of evidence to allow for a stronger substantiation of constructs and hypotheses that assists in generalisability of the research findings (Bonoma, 1985).</p> <p>Interview schedules developed to provide for a systematic process (Yin, 1994), each of which can reduce the subjectivity inherent in the case study method.</p> <p>Structured process for recording, transcribing and interpreting the data (Dick, 1990; Lincoln &amp; Guba, 1985) to provide a chain of evidence established from the beginning of the research questions through data collection to the final conclusions (Yin, 1994).</p>
<p>Confirmability- the ability of others to satisfy themselves that the research was carried out in the way it is described by the researcher (Lincoln &amp; Guba, 1985; Miles &amp; Huberman, 1994; Riege &amp; Nair, 1996).</p>	<p>By developing a record of the data collected which other researchers can access to present a chain of evidence.</p> <p>Other researchers (University Tutor and TEP) reviewing draft reports and the findings of the research (Miles &amp; Huberman, 1994; Yin, 1994).</p>
<p>Internal validity- can be established by precisely distinguishing the unit of analysis, linking of the analysis to prior theory identified in a literature review, and presentation and analysis of pilot case studies (Yin, 1993).</p>	<p>Triangulation and discussion of the results and conclusions with other researchers (Lincoln &amp; Guba, 1985; Hirschman, 1986)</p> <p>Researchers' assumptions about their world view and theoretical orientation made clear (Merriam, 1988).</p> <p>Prolonged engagement (multiple contacts) by the researcher with the respondents (Christie et al., 2000).</p> <p>Engaging in discussions to provide the opportunity for the researcher to explore areas and ideas that might not have been considered in isolation (Darlaston-Jones, 2007).</p> <p>When the researcher's ideas differed from others' the raw data was revisited to explore why interpretations of the information were made (Strauss &amp; Corbin, 1998, 1997).</p> <p>Key ideas were checked with participants through member checking following interviews and the</p>

	construction of propositions as part of the AI process. This ensured that they were an accurate reflection of the opinions expressed during the semi-structured interviews and AI session (Darlaston-Jones, 2007).
External validity/transferability- the scope to which the research findings can be replicated beyond the proximate research case studies, or generalisability (Emory & Cooper, 1991; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; McDaniel & Gates, 1991; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Yin, 1989).	Findings were generalised into a broader theory through the comparison of evidence which relied on detailed descriptions of the case study, the use of interview protocol, and also procedures for coding and analysis (Lincoln & Guba 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994).
The test of reliability- deals with the ability of other researchers to carry out the same study and achieve similar results (Cassell & Symon, 1994; King, Kochrane & Verba, 1994; Singleton, Straits & Straits, 1993).	The presentation of procedures to increase the general integrity of case study research (Christie et al., 2000).

**Table 12: Five approaches to assist case study research to achieve integrity or rigour of validity (Christie, Rowe, Perry & Chamard, 2000)**

#### 4.14 Ethical considerations

The research and information contained within this thesis was considered in line with The University of Manchester School of Education Ethical Practice, Policy and Code of Good Research and Conduct (2012). Professional practice guidelines were also be adhered to (British Psychological Society (BPS), 2006; Health Care Professions Council (HCPC), 2008). As a vulnerable group of young people were participating in the research specific ethical considerations were made (see appendices 17 and 18). UREC research approval was received on the 18th October 2013 (see appendices 22 and 23).

The issue of working ethically requires more than following a code of conduct; it requires that the researcher motives are examined, and actions and research processes for foreseeable and perhaps unforeseeable consequences that might affect participants or have even broader repercussions to society are scrutinised (O'Neill, 1989; O'Neill & Trickett, 1982; Robson, 2002). Possible issues related to power dynamics and pupil participation and how these were addressed have been discussed in the critique of methodology section. Further ethical considerations are highlighted below.

As the researcher was the only adult present for each meeting with the girls it was important that she remained aware that her presence could limit the contributions they were able to make. For this reason, Jones (2004) advocates a number of key steps that such projects should adhere to. These include clarity and transparency about the project's purpose, remit, boundaries and scope. For this purpose, a meeting was organised before the first interview commenced to gain informed assent after outlining the purpose of the research in greater detail.

The researcher also ensured that a member of staff was available in case any of the participants became upset as a result of the interview although steps were taken to minimise the likelihood of this occurring. For example, through familiarisation with the context and conducting the interviews over five sessions whilst ensuring that the timings of the interviews were organised to minimise disruption to teaching and learning, trusting and reliable relationships developed between the researcher and the girls. Additionally, the semi structured interview schedule allowed flexibility and ensured that the researcher would be able to respond to the girls' needs.

Ethical considerations when using photography are controlled access to viewing and the anonymity of any people in the images. These were ensured by the girls being supervised when taking photographs and the researcher having possession of the images. Additionally, although the girls did not choose to take photographs of individuals they did record staff boards and so it was important to blur the image so that staff members were not identifiable.

## Chapter 5: Findings

### 5.1 Chapter Overview

In this chapter, in addition to the collaborative outputs of the AI, the findings will be presented following qualitative analysis of the semi-structured interviews and focus group, review of the research diary and content analysis of documentation as outlined in the last chapter.

Data is presented as follows:

1. Thematic analysis of the focus group and interviews supported by relevant participant quotations where final and sub themes are then presented under each research question.
2. The dreams expressed by participants which informed the construction of the provocative propositions leading to action planning as part of the AI.
3. Extracts from the research diary and content analysis of documentary data is also presented.

This chapter will conclude with a summary of the findings related to the research questions, the case study propositions and the outputs of both collaborative and researcher analyses (table 18) and then more generally (table 19).



## 5.2 Research Questions

The following research questions were constructed for the current research following the systematic literature review.

1. How do school staff and pupils construct and describe successful participation practices in facilitating pupils with SEBDs to express their views regarding their needs, and how do they view this practice as similar and different with girls and boys?
2. How do pupils' views regarding their needs influence provision to meet those needs?
3. What factors are identified as having the greatest impact on participation in one SEBD provision, and how is this similar and different for girls and boys

The thematic analysis identified initial themes, sub themes and final themes. The sub themes and final themes are described in the following sections to address each research question, supported by relevant quotations from the data (*pupil participant*; staff focus group). An overview of the thematic maps for each research question showing final and sub themes is presented below in table 13 to aid orientation.

**Table 13 Overview of the thematic maps**

Successful Participation Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Defining participation</li> <li>•How participation is facilitated</li> <li>•Barriers to participation</li> <li>•Effects of successful participation</li> </ul>
The influence of gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Influence of CYP'S gender on needs</li> <li>•The influence of gender on participation</li> <li>•The influence of gender on participation practices</li> <li>•Influence of teachers' gender</li> </ul>
Pupil Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The effects of SEBDs</li> <li>•Personal attributes</li> <li>•The effects of gender</li> <li>•The importance of action</li> </ul>
The influence of CYP's views	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The effects of SEBDs</li> <li>•The effects of gender</li> <li>•Action</li> </ul>
Understanding of the needs of CYP with SEBDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Causes and functions of SEBDs</li> <li>•SEBDs in mainstream education</li> <li>•External support</li> <li>•Expectations of CYP with SEBDs</li> </ul>
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Pupil- teacher relationships</li> <li>•Peer relationships</li> <li>•Staff relationships</li> <li>•Trust</li> </ul>
Ethos of setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Staffs skills</li> <li>•Practicalities</li> <li>•Values</li> <li>•Aspirations</li> </ul>
Moving participation forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Transferring learning</li> <li>•Progression</li> <li>•Sharing knowledge</li> <li>•Community involvement</li> </ul>

### 5.3 Research Question 1

How do school staff and pupils construct and describe successful participation practices in facilitating pupils with SEBDs to express their views regarding their needs, and how do they view this practice as similar and different with girls and boys?

Initial themes underwent further and on-going analysis to refine specifics of each theme in order to convey the overall story (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This resulted in the definition and naming of two final themes; 'Successful Participation Practices' and 'The Influence of Gender' and are presented with sub themes in the final thematic map, Figure 8 below.

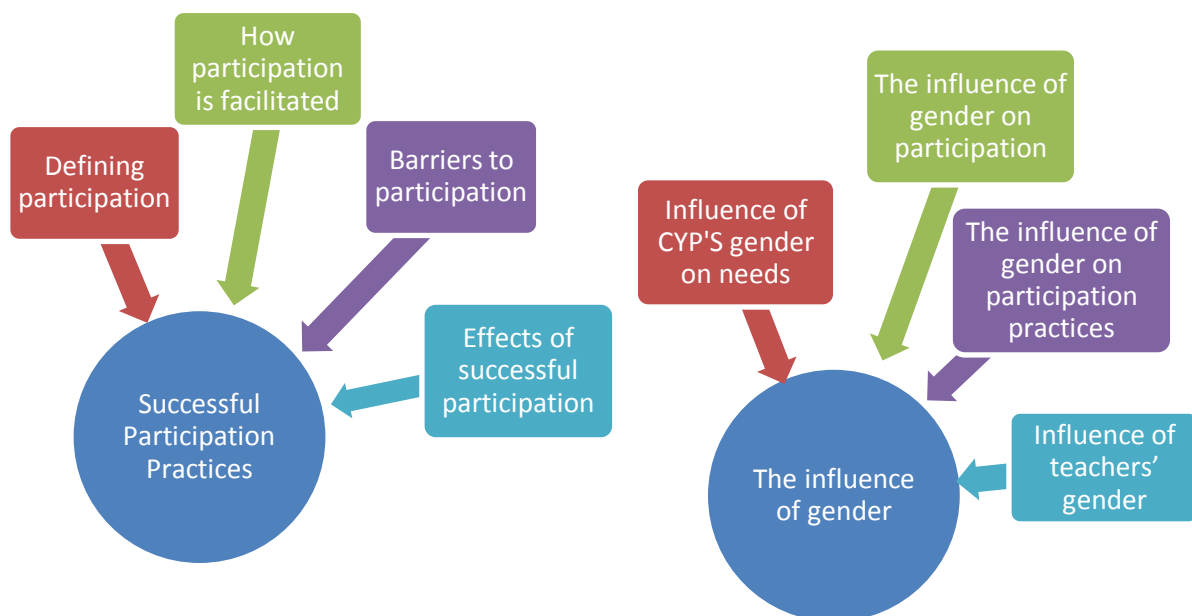


Figure 8 RQ1 Thematic Map illustrating two final themes

### 5.3.1 Final Theme 1: Successful participation practices.

The final overarching theme of successful participation practices was made up of four elaborating and clarifying sub themes (see table 13) as demonstrated below in figure 8.1.

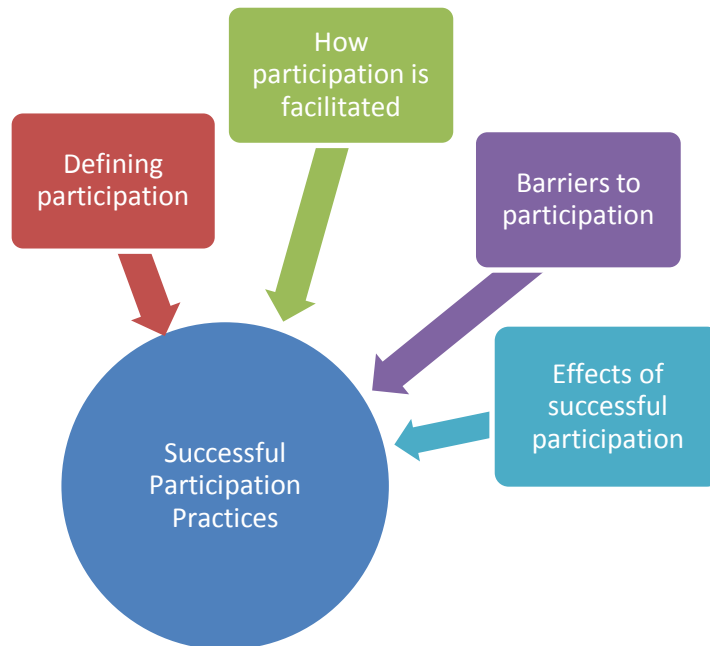


Figure 8.1: Final Theme 1: Successful participation practices.

#### 5.3.1.1 Defining 'participation'

Relating to the 'define' stage of AI each participant was asked to define participation due to the emphasis placed on this concept within the research questions and ultimate aim of the current investigation.

Pupils defined pupil participation as:

- *Working collaboratively with other pupils in class.*
- *Taking part in activities both in and out of school such as reward trips.*
- *Working as part of a team on collaborative projects and as a part of sports team.*
- *Everybody doing the same thing.*

From school staff's perspective, pupil participation meant:

- Pupils attending school and lessons.
- Pupils engaging in lessons and other activities in school.
- Pupils taking part in activities out of school.
- Pupils being actively involved and contributing to the school and wider community.
- Pupils having choices which they have a say in.
- Pupils being provided with the opportunity to make changes and taking the chance to do so.

### 5.3.1.2 How participation is facilitated

How participation is facilitated was identified as a key factor in relation to how successful the practice is for CYP with SEBDs. Participants discussed strategies employed by the PRU at the time of interviewing to aid participation.

These included school wide policies and procedures:

*You get points in lessons for doing your work properly and for being polite. (Pupil 4)*

*When they do the points and like if you get under 50 points you're in a work room, and if you're over 50 points to 90 you can choose what you want. (Pupil 2)*

*I quite like where they put you in reflection. I think they should have that in every school. (Pupil 3)*

There's the individual care plans and management plans. (Staff participant 4)

We also have points and bonus points to be awarded for behaviour that go towards reward trips such as climbing walls and ice skating. (Staff participant 3)

And specific interventions:

*In maths we used to go in and like do nothing but now we've got his card game. So we do that and like we'll do two games and then we'll just do the work then. (Pupil 1)*

*When we did work sheets yesterday it was dead good and it made the lesson go dead fast. (Pupil 2)*

*(When you leave the PRU) You have to write in a book or something. (Pupil 3)*

*I think they have said "what would you like?" and things like that. (Pupil 4)*

Within school Mr () does what we call 'Student Voice'. (Staff participant 4)

School staff give out certificates for 'pupil of the week' in subject areas. LSAs can give these out. (Staff participant 3)

Participants described their understanding of the aims of using the identified strategies and the intended outcomes:

*I think that's a good thing (points system). And you can have a trip, a reward. I think that's a good idea and every school should do that. (Pupil 3)*

*Last week I got enough points to go on a trip so I went ice skating. And next week the teachers say who's going on an Alton Towers trip. (Pupil 3)*

*So if something goes wrong you can get them and put them in reflection. I think they have five in here. I think it's brilliant how they do that. (Pupil 2)*

We're just trying to help them cos they're teenagers aren't they? (Staff participant 4)

You're trying to get them involved. (Staff participant 3)

...as an LSA a lot of the role that I play is ...giving them the strategies that I'm using to manage their behaviour and outlining it to them for them to take with them to utilise when

they're not here. (Staff participant 2)

We notice change through understanding individuals' baseline behaviour. (Staff participant 4)

You explain things and you show them things and it works. (Staff participant 1)

...what we've done is tell them "there are some other ways of dealing with that anger". (Staff participant 2)

The importance of encouraging CYP to participate in participation processes was highlighted:

*They go on a trip every Friday and they say "what would you like to do?" and they'll try and plan what you like. And they'll do what you want and what you like. So stuff like that. Instead of them choosing in case the kids don't like it. (Pupil 2)*

So what they'll say in a discussion can go their ICMP (Individual Crisis Management Plan) or on their behaviour plan because they'll say "I don't like it when someone calls me narky or someone calls me attitude" and you'll gain that from discussions. So targets settings towards their behaviour comes out in that sort of thing and maybe for how they like learning as well because you'll gain that from informal chats. (Staff participant 5)

The whole point of it (ICMP) is to sit with the young person for 10-15 minutes working through that model of aggression, that crisis model just to see where they want staff to intervene, where they want staff not to intervene. Identify certain members of staff who will help them through the crisis. Identify what the triggers are. (Staff participant 4)

...we'll take them out and say "right you're here on the spike. What's happening? What can you do to bring yourself down before you get to physical management? What can we do to help you bring yourself back down? (Staff participant 1)

What can you do differently instead of throwing a chair or a table?" And they might just say "Oh well I could just ask for some time out". So we put that on cos they've just said that. So it's just `development. (Staff participant 4)

The support offered to CYP was highlighted as a facilitator of participation by both staff and pupils, with much emphasis placed on the importance of communication, listening and understanding:

*Teachers that pay attention to what you've got to say, not to just what they've got to say. (Pupil 1)*

*Most of them (staff) will help you when you ask for help. (Pupil 4)*

*And if you need something they help you how they can. (Pupil 2)*

*They talk to me. (Pupil 3)*

*You know when someone's talking to you and you know you've done wrong. It was like that. So she weren't shouting for me to fume, but she was like... the way she'd look at you. (Pupil 1)*

*They'll be calmer with you, like they'll say do you need time out? Or they'll offer you a glass of water. (Pupil 2)*

*They're just there for me; do you know what I mean? Like whatever you ask them for they'll like, do. (Pupil 2)*

The young people have extensive access to all the adults and are able to communicate with people and their communications are discussed. I think that every child that comes here they usually are listened to and they usually have an opportunity to express their thoughts, their feelings, and their needs. That's the nature of the way we work. (Staff participant 1)

... once you sit down and have a chat with the young person. Half the time it's just not being listened to. You know, they want to get their views across and their point across. (Staff participant 2)

...being listened to, having somebody to understand, feeling comfortable enough to talk about things that have gone wrong. (Staff participant 1)

Building up confidence by giving support, as well as having those clear boundaries, as well as clearly listening. (Staff participant 1)



### 5.3.1.3 Barriers to participation

When considering how participation is facilitated potential barriers to participation were also identified as a key factor in relation to how successful the practice is for CYP with SEBDs. Pupils described some past experiences of decision making regarding their needs, all of which had been negative encounters.

*They said they were going to get people in who could help me. And places I could go to when I needed help. They just never got back. (Pupil 2)*

*I don't like people talking in front of me. I don't like people talking about me behind my back either! (Pupil 1)*

*I was sitting on the stairs once and they said to my mum that they were going to put me in care. I was only about three. They sent me upstairs so I couldn't listen but I just sat on the stairs and listened. I was only a baby. It was horrible like. I cried to me mum for about two weeks going "I don't want to go into care" but then if I was naughty me mum would go "you're going into care!" That's why I'm never having kids. (Pupil 1)*

*They said everything and did nothing. All schools do! (Pupil 4)*

*They (meetings) stress me out. I just switch off. I can't even stay awake cos I'll just sit there and just fall asleep wherever I am. (Pupil 1)*

Obstructions were described by staff and pupils as being caused by both the attitude of and approaches adopted by individuals:

*So what's scary about going up to a teacher and asking them for something? Cos they can punish you and all that. (Pupil 3)*

*I hate it when people shout at me, it makes me angrier. (Pupil 1)*

*Attitude. I hate it. I hate teachers giving me attitude. I hate teachers who just do it just for the money. I hate it! I hate it!! I prefer teachers who actually want to do and like working with kids. (Pupil 3)*

*(Being shouted at) In front of everyone. (Pupil 3)*

*She shouldn't have told me that I was on lost learning till the end of the day. If she never told me till the end of the day I'd have been to all my lessons. (Pupil 2)*

If the young person knows they've got a professional who's in their lives and doesn't turn up or cancels the meeting, it's all about kudos and priorities. If you're not a priority, if that young person's not a priority. (Staff participant 4)

...if you go too hard on them the wall's going to come back up. (Staff participant 5)

If they're (pupils) not willing. (Staff participant 1)

Group contagion can be a really big factor in being a barrier. (Staff participant 2)

People are scared of teenagers. (Staff participant 4)

Shouting at them doesn't work! (Staff participant 3)

The level of CYP's participation in decision making around their needs was not described as always being determined by adults:

*... if you say "I need time out" or something like that they're like "OK, come on". (Pupil 2)*

*(I rely on)..myself to participate. (Pupil 4)*

With a Pupil Contract everything that's on that contract is from the pupil, it's not from the staff. (Staff participant 4)

However, there are occasions where adults determine the level of CYPs participation in decision making, and also the outcome of their expressed views:

*They (staff) don't let us out. (Pupil 1)*

*We're not allowed to mix with the lads. (Pupil 2)*

*We want to play out there sometimes. Me and () were asking the other day and they said no. (Pupil 1)*

They are involved but sometimes we know more than them about how to deal with things, how to react. (Staff participant 1)

Some of the identified barriers were considered to be caused by the nature of settings, including the PRU and also mainstream schools:

*Cos they're just telling you stuff that you already know and that's boring. Yeah, and they do it all the time. Like, we're on number lines and that's like for little kids. (Pupil 2)*

*I'd like to wear makeup. Cos then they're (girls) gonna wear it more so that they get sent home. And it doesn't affect your learning. (Pupil 2)*

*I've been off (mainstream) for ages, and they did not send no work so they're keeping me off cos they don't want to be in their school. (Pupil 3)*

We might only have them for 6-8 weeks (but) you want to try and move them forward. (Staff participant 5)

It would be difficult for us to set up a parents group wouldn't it? You get schools who set up a parents group and they've got them for five years then, the same parents. Whereas us, because it's a 12 week assessment centre, you could get a group of parents who are brilliant but when the kids go the parents will go. (Staff participant 2)

... sometimes it's down to money and stuff like that. (Staff participant 3)

The barrier can be someone who comes in later. That friendship has formed. You get an element of jealousy and wanting to find their own niche and what they'll do is they'll act like the little whisper on the shoulder and contaminate that already forged friendship. (Staff participant 1)

We've had girls come in, some of the louder brasher ones and you'll know straight away that the group dynamics are going to change as soon as they walk in the door. (Staff participant 2)

Interestingly, some of the facilitators described earlier were experienced as barriers to participation by some pupils:

*Standing in them (reflection) rooms make me angrier though. (Pupil 1)*

*... if I flip then they've got to put me in there (reflection room) and I'll fume for about half an hour. (Pupil 2)*

*Well if he never told me till the end of the day (about lost learning) I'd have been to all my lessons. (Pupil 2)*

#### **5.3.1.4 Effects of successful participation**

Participants were able to describe the effects of successful participation practices on CYP:

*But now they listen and let me pick. (Pupil 3)*

*I could get on with my work. Felt a bit calmer. (Pupil 1)*

*It's just a place where I like to come; do you know what I mean? (Pupil 2)*

*They (lessons) go dead quick! (Pupil 1)*

You know you can see some of them, it's like the biggest penny in the world has just

clanged down to the bottom. (Staff participant 1)

Successful participation means that the pupil is moving forward, both in their education and with their behaviour. (Staff participant 3)

The young person I'm talking about now manages her behaviour far better and is now able to recognise when she going up the model (of aggression) when she's getting triggered. (Staff participant 2)

...she walked back into class with a smile on her face, sat down and got on with her work, interacted with her peer in an appropriate way and completed the rest of the day. That was a success. (Staff participant 1)

...one young person who was being physically managed twice a day at least. In fact I think since we did that contract I think he's been managed once over a period of about three or four weeks. (Staff participant 4)

But once you've found something that they actually want to grasp and you can work with that and you can roll with it and that's how you get them into education. (Staff participant 1)

Participants also described successful participation practices as having an effect on the PRU and the staff who work there:

If their behaviours improve and they're meeting their targets then we're working aren't we? (Staff participant 1)

The barriers really do come down and they'll chat and stuff like that. I love that. (Staff participant 5)

...you feel like you've brought them on a bit you do get some sort of level of job satisfaction. You know you can say "right, I've made an impact". (Staff participant 2)

### 5.3.2 Final Theme 2 The influence of gender

The final theme of the influence of gender was further elaborated and clarified by number of related sub themes demonstrated in figure 8.2 and which are explored below.

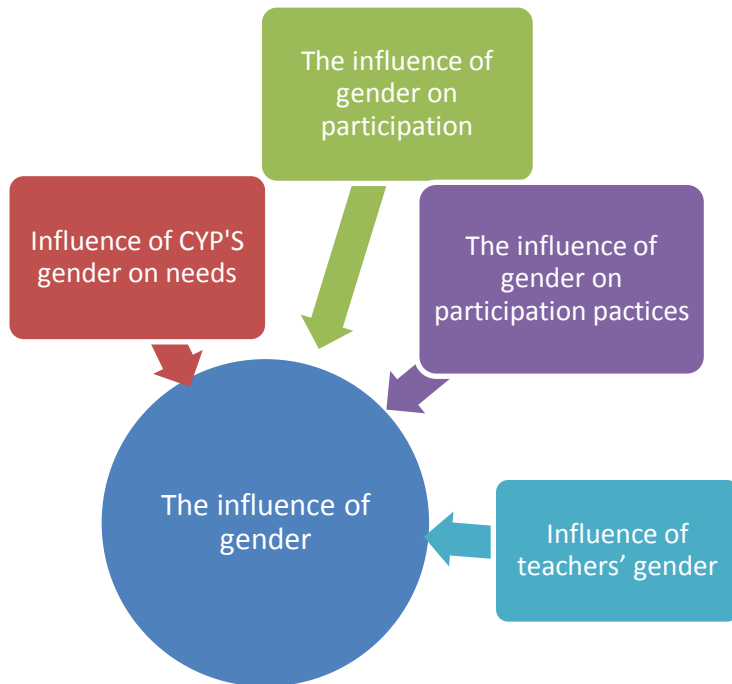


Figure 8.2: Final Theme 2 The influence of gender.

#### 5.3.2.1 Influences of gender on needs

CYP's gender was perceived to influence their needs:

*I don't think the lads want anything. (Pupil 2)*

... the girls they need to feel comfortable with somebody. (Staff participant 1)

...especially with girls because once that walls up it takes a while to break it down whereas lads are completely different aren't they? (Staff participant 4)

Boys I feel would just go and how they say it 'blend it' with a few others, while girls get a little bit, not obsessive but like to have a little ownership of other girls. It's like "you're mine.

You're my friend" (Staff participant 2)

And every now and again the girls will say "why can't we go out?"...they say "why don't we go on the yard and play?" (Staff participant 1)

### 5.3.2.2 Influences of gender on participation

Gender was also described as influencing CYP's participation:

*It's sexist. (Pupil 1)*

*You're (girls) allowed (out in the summer) but it's like that much space (2 tables). And it's at the side of the school. (Pupil 1)*

*We're not allowed (outside)... unless we want to play football. (Pupil 2)*

*All the lads are allowed out and they go out every day. (Pupil 1)*

*..they know girls aren't going to come out without makeup on...they're gonna wear it more so that they get sent home. (Pupil 2)*

*They (boys) don't really get sent home. (Pupil 4)*

Sometimes it's a bit harder with the girls because they just can't be bothered. Or they'll want to stay in and do the activities in school. (Staff participant 5)

...sometimes it's trampolining or the dry ski slope and the girls just don't want to do that. (Staff participant 4)

...they (girls) can have access if they want to go and pay football. Sometimes we'll try and do that, it's just sometimes with the boys and girls not mixing it can be difficult sometimes. (Staff participant 2)

### 5.3.2.3 The influence of gender on participation practices

Participation practices were described as being both similar and different depending on gender. Although an expectation that boys' and girls' needs would be different and that the two groups should and would be treated differently was expressed, participants were unable to fully explain what these different needs and practices were:

*(I think teachers treat girls and boys different but...) It's hard to say (how) because I'm not a lad! (Pupil 2)*

*The lads are well different than girls. I think they'd be different but I don't know how. (Pupil 3)*

I just work the same way with both, with lads and girls but I do know there is a difference between the lads and the girls. (Staff participant 1)

Some gender specific approaches to participation practices were described, and the reasons for these explained:

*I think when the lads go outside I think that helps to take their mind off flipping and stuff like that because they're running around. (Pupil 2)*

The girls tend to work separately from the boys here and they do that because we find that this is the best way for them all to achieve and their behaviour and the behavioural issues from all parties deteriorate when they come together because they struggle to manage in each other's company. (Staff participant 1)

I don't think we do it (mix genders in class) in school just to protect the lads! The lads will just try to start flirting and stuff like that and the girls will just kill them! The girls will turn round and tell them to 'f' and then if the lads say something then that's where the trouble starts. So it's easier just to separate them. (Staff participant 5)



Within school Mr () does what we call 'Student Voice' but 'm not sure if he does that with the girls. (Staff participant 3)

... obviously you target your lessons toward the girls and sometimes you do things with the girls that you do different with the lads and vice versa. (Staff participant 5)

The lads tend to go out and play football and the girls tend to stay in and do form time activities and chat. (Staff participant 2)

...a lot of staff think that individual 1:1 meetings with girls work better than trying to do it with them in groups. (Staff participant 1)

I think sometimes their (girls') views need to be taken on a lot more than lads. (Staff participant 2)

The lads you might just start messing and stuff like that. (Staff participant 5)

However, many approaches to participation were described as being gender neutral:

*I just reckon we're all treated the same. (Pupil 4)*

...there's no reason why they (girls) shouldn't be heard any differently to lads really. (Staff participant 1)

I think that boys and girls would respond generally the same way to changes like that and to being given those opportunities (to participate more in decision making). (Staff participant 4)

I'm trying to think of what would be beneficial for the girls but I'm struggling to do it just for the girls. (Staff participant 1)

I would do that with any young person anyway, male or female. (Staff participant 4)

So obviously it is different with the girls, but then I still have the banter and I still have a laugh with them but it's a different kind. (Staff participant 5)

Yeah, each kid who comes through these doors is completely different and you've got to treat each kid completely different. (Staff participant 2)

#### 5.3.2.4 Teachers' gender

The gender of the staff working with CYP was also described as influencing participation in decision making:

*Like when they're giving attitude to me I'm gonna give it back! Like, it's the girl teachers. (Pupil 2)*

*They'll (female staff) always have something to moan about. Like my work or something like that. And I'll just be like "Oh, shut up! (Pupil 3)*

And in form time it's a little bit different because we try and talk about things and I'm one of the girls form tutors (male), but sometimes they wish to discuss things that I don't wish to discuss with the girls so they get passed over to female members of staff! (Staff participant 5)

It just seems different dynamics with boys and girls because boys, especially being a male (teacher), you can go and be laddy and have a chat about footy and all that kind of stuff. Or you can mess around and have a little bit of banter and a bit of a mess around but obviously you can't do that with the girls even though some of them might want it. (Staff participant 5)

And it also seems to me that maybe she does want a little bit of physical contact, but obviously as a male teacher you've got to keep that distance, you've got to keep away. (Staff participant 5)

(Can male staff restrain females?) Oh yeah, there's no difference in what we do. We deal with them exactly the same, you're just obviously a bit more careful (with girls). (Staff participant 4)

...if you've got a girl that's kicking off then you've got to be even more careful I think when you're doing physical restraints on girls. Apart from the fact that they're much more violent and aggressive, obviously you've got to be careful what you're doing. (Staff participant 5)

## 5.4 Research Question 2

How do pupils' views regarding their needs influence provision to meet those needs?

Initial themes underwent further and on-going analysis to refine specifics of each theme in order to convey the overall story (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This resulted in the definition and naming of two final themes; 'Pupil Voice' and 'The Influence of CYPs Views', which are presented with sub themes in the thematic map in figure 9 below.

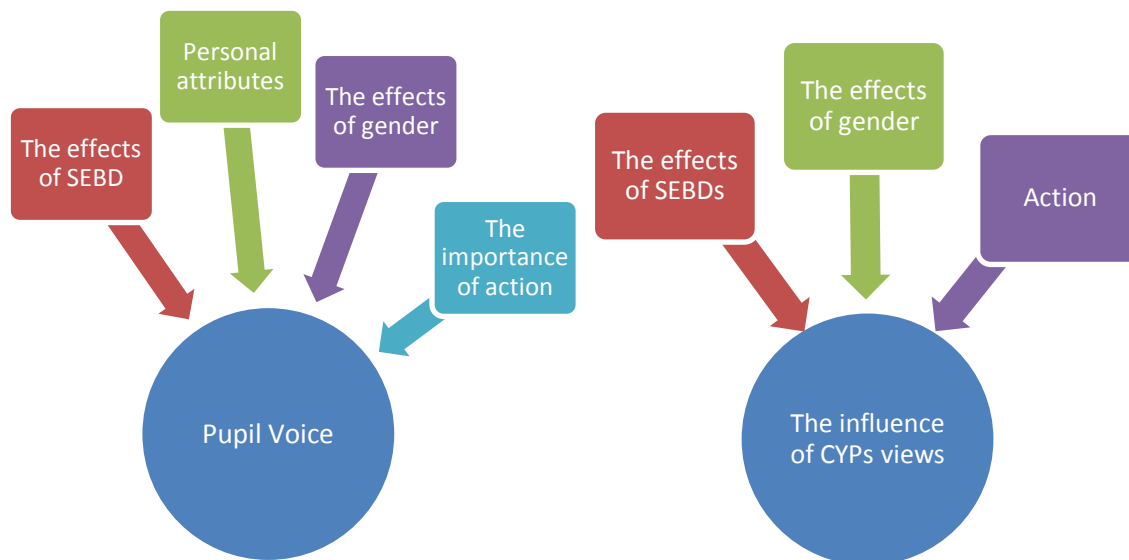
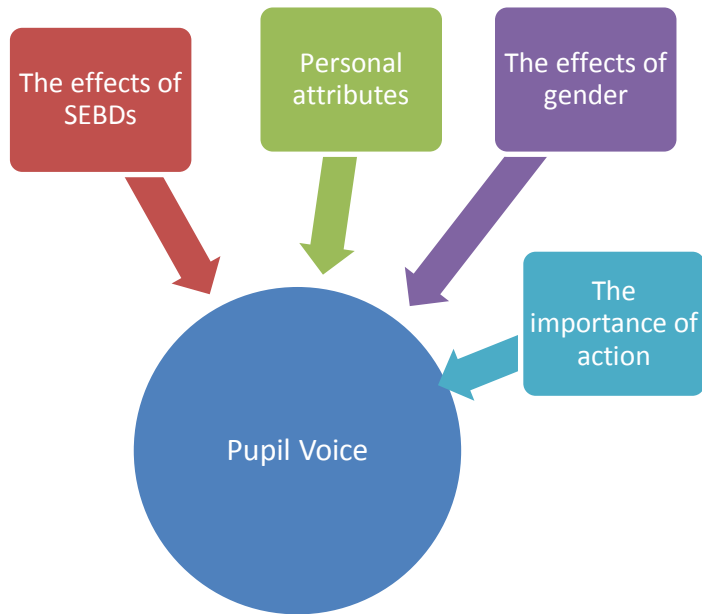


Figure 9 RQ2 Thematic Map illustrating two final themes.

### 5.4.1 Final theme 1: Pupil Voice

CYP with SEBDs were considered to be able to offer vital insight into what helps them to participate in expressing their views regarding their needs. The final theme of Pupil Voice was further elaborated and clarified by number of related sub themes demonstrated in figure 9.1, each of which is explored below.



**Figure 9.1: Final Theme 1 Pupil Voice**

#### 5.4.1.1 The effects of SEBDs

The experience and effects of being identified as having SEBDs was discussed:

*My name got brought into everything I got blamed for everything. (Pupil 2)*

*They don't see the other side; they see the bad side of me. (Pupil 3)*

*I got kicked out for disruption. (Pupil 4)*

*Imagine if I hadn't been bad I would have got all 5's. (Pupil 3)*

There might be those who struggle with our boundaries sometimes. (Staff participant 1)

The effect of CYPs experiences on those around them and the impact of supporting CYP identified as having SEBDs were also discussed:

*Yeah, she's (mum) pleased that I'm happy here. (Pupil 2)*

*(Talking about being excluded from school). My mum needs to find a babysitter so it harasses my parents and my family. And my Nan needs to mind me. (Pupil 3)*

...you've always got to be thinking, you've always got to be so on top all the time. You've got to be thinking educationally, you've got to be thinking behaviourally, you've got to be a mentor, you've got to be a counsellor and you don't know what you're doing minute by minute. So it's always "bang, bang, bang!" By the end of the day you're just like... (Staff participant 5)

But you are so on top and that's more of a burn out in a place like this than anything else. You can handle being shouted at and swore at and kicked and all the rest of it because that's just part of the parcel and you just take that for granted. I think it's more the pressure, stress. (Staff participant 5)

We get into a restraint then our adrenalin will start, it's the same with us. (Staff participant 4)

(parents say) "You're the only place that listens. You're the only place that helps us" (Staff participant 2)

And some gender specific effects were highlighted:

... with the girls you have to invest a hell of a lot of your own personality. You have to build that trust, build that rapport and you have to be quite transparent to a certain degree. (Staff participant 2)

Experiencing SEBDs was considered to impact upon CYPs ability to express their needs:

*I get angry quick and stuff like that. Just the littlest thing and then it will be all day, like yesterday. (Pupil 2)*

*If I wanted to walk out I'd just walk out. (Pupil 4)*

*I'd say "I feel in a mood". I'm in a mood cos someone's just done me head in". I'd just walk out of class and go somewhere else. (Pupil 4)*

...we're working with young people who've struggled, and quite often it seems they've struggled because they can't express their needs. (Staff participant 1)

When something triggers you that has an emotional response this is you getting agitated and if you don't deal with that there and then and regain your own self-control you're going to go to this end of the model and go to outburst and have people having to physically manage you in order to help you. (Staff participant 4)

They're quite vocal as well in saying "OK, if this particular person comes to talk to me I'm going to react badly". (Staff participant 3)

You know, they want to get their views across and their point across. (Staff participant 1)

In addition, being identified as having SEBDs was considered to result in CYP's views being less likely to be sought:

*I've never felt listened to, no. (Pupil 1)*

*They'd just be like "Get out of my classroom!" And they wouldn't, then they'd just leave you outside until next lesson. They wouldn't even come back out to you. (Pupil 2)*

#### **5.4.1.2 Personal attributes of CYP**

The individual circumstances and characteristics of CYP were described as impacting upon the ability to express views regarding needs:

*I just tell them. I wouldn't wait for them to notice. (Pupil 4)*

*If I do (have things to say) I say it! (Pupil 2)*

*I've got a lot to say! (Pupil 3)*

*If I don't like it (reward trip) then I just stay off. (Pupil 1)*

*I'm very independent. (Pupil 4)*

*Definitely (giving opinions) by myself cos it's easier. (Pupil 3)*

If everybody around you is reading and accessing the curriculum but you can't even do that basic thing that lets you access the learning but you've been too scared to tell anyone because you're ashamed...(Staff participant 1)

... those who are really struggling with their needs might struggle to speak anyway. (Staff participant 1)

Some pupils do not consider themselves as having any needs that need addressing, or choose to not express them:

*I haven't got any needs. (Pupil 4)*

*It doesn't bother me, nothing bothers me. (Pupil 4)*

*I'm not arsed what other people think. (Pupil 1)*

*I'm not like that. Like, I'm not a little...like I wouldn't eurgh! I just think it's all cringey! (Pupil 2)*

*I think it's a bit gimpy! (Pupil 2)*

*I just keep myself to myself. (Pupil 4)*

*I wouldn't tell someone something. (Pupil 4)*

*I don't really ask. If I need something I won't ask, do you know what I mean? (Pupil 2)*

*I wouldn't really talk to any new teachers cos new teachers do my head in! (Pupil 2)*

The importance of understanding and accepting individual differences was described as being both important and effective to aid participation:

*...you can be yourself. (Pupil 2)*

*Yeah, I think cos they know that what you're like and that's why you've come here. I think that helps. (Pupil 3)*

...you get lots of different types of young people, you can get a young person who's heavily involved in crime and might be on tag. And then you get another young person and you think "why are they here?" (Staff participant 4)

And they're quite complex young people. (Staff participant 3)

...you might need to have some time with that young person to build confidence so you might then do some 1:1 with that young person. (Staff participant 2)

...the bit of support where they don't feel ashamed, and they don't feel embarrassed, and they don't feel different because there's that need to conform. (Staff participant 1)

But we could say "well if you want to shout and swear we'll take you somewhere where you can shout and swear all you want". (Staff participant 5)

So with the individualised approach you're taking the time to find out their individualised stories. That's what we do. (Staff participant 4)

It's down to that personalised learning and you know what they want to do and how they



want to do it. And you tailor; I mean I tailor my lessons to what they want to do. (Staff participant 5)

It really is about understanding the individual. (Staff participant 3)

However, difficulties with understanding and accepting difference were also highlighted:

They (CYP) find people who are individual difficult. If somebody's different they find that difficult, they don't know how to accept that, they don't know how to understand that. (Staff participant 1)

And girls are bitchy, sorry. Girls are so bitchy because they don't like this difference. If there is a difference they'll pick on it. (Staff participant 1)

Noticing and responding to the changing needs of individuals was also considered to be important in eliciting pupil voice to aid participation in decision making:

Because whilst there are boundaries, and whilst there's a clear timetable and a clear running order then there is a need to allow for the individual and for individual crisis or individual needs as arise throughout a day, a year, a month a minute! (Staff participant 4)

Depends on the individual and that's why sometimes you might need time away and sometimes you might need to let them into that group and let the positive ethos of the group bring them in. (Staff participant 1)

...it might be, it could be they need to go somewhere, they need to go to a room, they need to talk to somebody, they need a ball to chuck at a wall. It could be anything. So it's just a constant thing. It moves and changes. (Staff participant 2)

### 5.4.1.3 The effects of gender

Gender was described as impacting upon the ability of CYP to express views and also upon how opinions are articulated. Some similarities experienced between genders were described:

*Everyone's got a different mind, and girls think differently. (Pupil 3)*

*I think everyone thinks differently. Everyone's got their own minds and their own opinions. . (Pupil 3)*

...boys will flare and come back down dead quick. Girls will flare and it will stay up there for a while and then they'll come back down. Or it can go the other way and go really low and depressed. But then I suppose the boys can. (Staff participant 2)

...everybody needs to feel comfortable with somebody, with people, so that's a big thing anyway. (Staff participant 1)

Sometimes they're (boys) more expressive than the girls and sometimes they're less expressive. (Staff participant 3)

...most of the time kids in general just don't want to be the victim. (Staff participant 4)

Although more differences between boys' and girls' ability to express their views were highlighted, participants did not always agree what these differences were:

I believe lads have a lot of self-esteem issues as well as girls but girls actually once they start to engage will talk about it more. (Staff participant 2)

Boys are more 'in the moment'. They don't want to be perceived as the 'victim'. (Staff participant 4)

That's an inequality between boys and girls, boys just bluff it all off and the girls are more likely to come and talk about it. (Staff participant 1)

It's like lads with anorexia for example, the lads will keep it hidden. The girls will keep it hidden but there's an inequality somewhere. (Staff participant 1)

Boys tend to be less guarded. Girls will be guarded if it's something that matters a lot to them. (Staff participant 2)

With the lads it's more, you can see more a lot easier, and you can change it sometimes a lot easier. (Staff participant 2)

There's always something else with the girls. Boys are very blatant. (Staff participant 3)

Boys is quite surface level. Boys are very superficial. (Staff participant 2)

It's rare we find a boy with so much...Baggage. (Staff participant 1)

A contrast between staff members' view that girls are more open and that girls keep things concealed was particularly evident:

But the girls might bottle things up, that's female nature I think, whereas the lads will be quite outspoken about things from the start. (Staff participant 1)

It takes longer with girls to see what it is. (Staff participant 3)

I enjoy working with them (girls) because they're more open, they'll talk about things and they'll talk about their feelings and they'll go a bit deep. (Staff participant 5)

Differences in how views if expressed are communicated were also highlighted:

*I think lads flip more than girls. (Pupil 2)*

*Lads get more angry. I think. (Pupil 1)*

*(Boys) Put themselves in danger or someone else. Like punching walls and stuff like that.*

*(Pupil 3)*

*They (girls) do (get angry) but I think they're more held back than what lads are. (Pupil 2)*

*Well they (girls) just flip, they just shout. (Pupil 2)*

Lads go up and then they blow and then they come back down again. Girls go up, stay there for about two years and then they might come back down again. If you're lucky! (Staff participant 5)

Sometimes the lads will sit back. We've had some of the older ones will just sit back, watch who they need to look at and who they need to deal with and go and deal with them and then they'll get their standing within the school. But sometimes the girls will come straight in. (Staff participant 2)

And they (girls) seek revenge. And they'll (girls) say "well I won't do anything in class". (Staff participant 3)

Boys just hit and kick Girls will bite, scratch, pull hair. Girly fights are a lot more violent than boy fights! (Staff participant 5)

Possible reasons for the perceived differences between the genders in their ability to express views regarding needs included:

### **Biological**

We're (females) driven far more I think by our emotions than lads are and men are. And some women more than others. (Staff participant 1)

Girls' moods fluctuate regularly on a monthly basis. Absolutely. (Staff participant 2)

(Boys) don't have that monthly drive on their hormones. They don't have the oestrogen progesterone battle going on in their body. They have a constant supply of testosterone don't they? (Staff participant 1)

## Social

...because there's such blurred lines on roles I think it's just more about girls especially now they want to be strong individuals but they've got a misconception about being strong and so we have a literal battle for supremacy over boys and cos girls physiologically develop quicker than boys you can have that outweighed balance. So, I think that girls still sort of rule the roost a bit. (Staff participant 2)

I always think it's hard for a girl to get here is it? They have to be a little bit more extreme you know. (Staff participant 3)

Sometimes girls will be more brazen about it... They'll come in and go "I've got this standing so I've got to keep this standing". (Staff participant 2)

Girls seem to come in and know...Everyone that the other one's having conflict with. (Staff participant 4)

...roles for gender now are not the same as they used to be. (Staff participant 2)

## Emotional

*Lads have no fear. Lads don't cry as much as girls. I think boys do feel differently but they just hide it. (Pupil 3)*

*They (boys) just only show anger emotions. (Pupil 3)*

But boys don't let things get to them as much as girls, or not showing it as much. Girls linger more on problems, they ruminate. (Staff participant 2)

You'll get a lad responding to a situation and breaking down, but you'll get a girl breaking down and she'll say "I don't know why I'm getting upset". (Staff participant 1)

The lack of contact between girls and boys in the PRU affected some participant's awareness of others' needs:

*I'm not in a school with lads. (Pupil 4)*

*I don't see them (boys). (Pupil 1)*

#### **5.4.1.4 The importance of action**

Participants placed importance on the views of CYP being elicited and also acted upon:

*...why would you say "yeah" and then not? (Pupil 2)*

Of course they should have their needs heard; Of course they should be able to express their needs. (Staff participant 1)

...but you've been too scared to tell anyone because you're ashamed, being able to express that or having that picked up here...that's important. (Staff participant 1)

If you're going to open that box, you've got to be prepared to, you know, deal with what you find. (Staff participant 3)

The benefits of eliciting and acting upon views, and the consequences of not doing so were described:

*...they don't know what we feel so I think they should ask us. (Pupil 3)*

*No one will listen, so there's no point! (Pupil 1)*

She was able to offload basically, and then she was able to get the support and then she made it back into class. (Staff participant 1)

...how has this young person managed to get through to the age 13 or 14 years of age and nothings been done for them? (Staff participant 3)

However, there was recognition that pupils are not always asked for their views regarding decision making regarding their needs, or their views acted upon:

*They haven't asked me. (Pupil 4)*

*No one will listen, so there's no point! (Pupil 2)*

*They let us out the other day and then we said can we go out tomorrow and they said yeah and then the other teacher wouldn't let us. He was saying wait I need to wait for someone to come but no one come. (Pupil 1)*

We set Educational and Behavioural targets as staff. But pupils don't really have a say in those. (Staff participant 4)

Pupils don't have a say in choosing activities. They don't have to go on reward trips, they can choose to stay in school and do activities there. (Staff participant 5)

Ideas for improvements which could be made were also generated, although some felt that change was not necessary:

*... I'd like to play basketball. (Pupil 1)*

*Every school should ask one person in every form to see what they like about the school, what they need to improve and all that. (Pupil 3)*

*Just ask me. Just do it. And I'd tell them. (Pupil 3)*

*I think it's all alright. (Pupil 2)*

*I wouldn't change it (PRU). (Pupil 4)*

I think in mainstream they probably have these focus groups. So I think those do go on so voices do get heard. (Staff participant 1)

We could do more pupil forums, and make sure that the girls take part. (Staff participant 3)

You can do individual key work sessions, you can do group key work sessions and lots of things that are holding us back really. (Staff participant 4)

From an ideal world point of view they would have form time and would use that form time. (Staff participant 1)

#### 5.4.2 Final Theme 2: The influence of CYP's views

The overarching theme of the influence of CYP's views was further elaborated and clarified by number of related subthemes demonstrated in figure 9.2. Each subtheme is explored below.

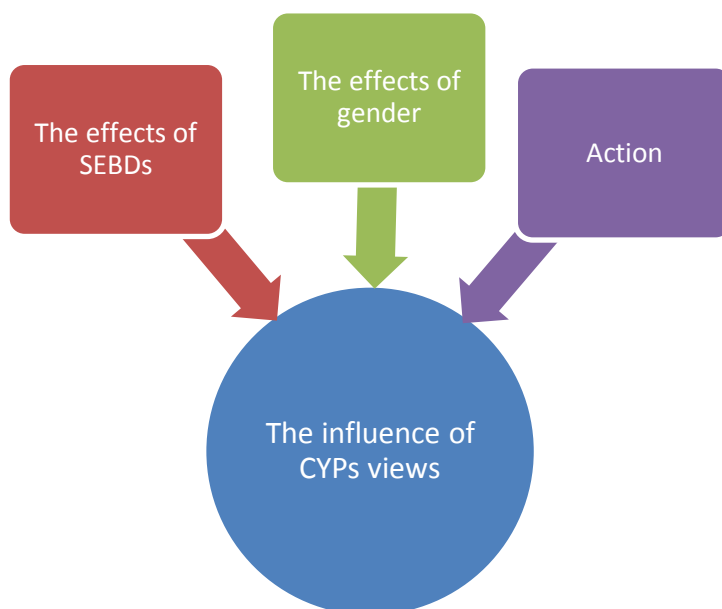


Figure 9.2: Final Theme 2 The influence of CYPs views



#### 5.4.2.1 The effects of SEBDs

Being identified as having SEBDs was considered to result in CYP's views regarding their needs being less likely to be acted upon:

*In primary they did not do a thing about my behaviour. (Pupil 3)*

*Primary school should have noticed something was wrong. They should have got me tested then I wouldn't have to go through all this hassle would I? If I'd got tested quicker. So that's bad! (Pupil 3)*

Different schools, especially mainstream, and even departments and individual teachers all have individual and different levels of tolerance of behaviour. (Staff participant 5)

#### 5.4.2.2 The effects of gender

Gender was considered to impact upon the influence of CYP's views:

Certainly with behaviour with the lads, most of the lads will have an outburst and then quite quickly you can have a reconciliation. (Staff participant 4)

...most of the time the girls will fester and won't forget and won't give up and won't have the reconciliation. (Staff participant 2)

Boys are different because they don't really want to fight and they will tend to threaten to do so usually when staff are around to prevent it or break it up. That means they haven't 'lost face' and aren't a 'victim'. Boys do talk about fighting more but they are more likely to enter into discussions with each other with support from staff to resolve the situation. (Staff participant 4)

Girls won't wait for staff to be around to carry through threat to fight though. On a few occasions girls have started fighting without warning. If girls want to fight they will! (Staff participant 3)

Possible reasons for the perceived differences regarding the influence that the views of boys and girls have were discussed:

*Someone said girls get out quicker and lads stay here longer. But it just depends. (Pupil 3)*

*It's rare where lads get out (of the PRU). (Pupil 3)*

Sometimes I think you can generalise (boys views) a lot more than you can with girls. Especially these days because girls' lives are even worse than lads lives these days because there's so many pressures. (Staff participant 2)

I think we have more diversity with women with jobs than men do. (Staff participant 1)

...girls sort of had this idea that they need to play up to this big hard role now a little bit. (Staff participant 2)

Participants also considered the potential influence of gender on participation in the future:

Females have entered into the employment areas more than men have entered the female ones. But you have to cater for everyone. (Staff participant 1)

So it's a lot more difficult for girls these days so you have to talk to them a lot more. But with girls you have no idea what they're doing and what pressures they're under. So with girls it's always been a lot different but I think it's getting a lot worse. (Staff participant 5)

#### **5.4.2.3 Action**

The need for pupils to be aware that their views, if and when expressed, are having some influence was highlighted:

*Make sure you do it. Don't say you will and then don't. (Pupil 2)*

*You actually do it and stick to it. (Pupil 3)*

...it is really important that they (CYP) see their views being acted upon and things

happening. (Staff participant 4)

It's them knowing that you will act or will do something with what they are going to share.

(Staff participant 1)

... knowing that there is going to be an outcome from what is discussed or what is expressed. (Staff participant 3)

You've got to be able to rely on the person. (Staff participant 4)

And the effects of views not having an influence were described:

*You change the way you act cos you think you're going to get help and then they don't do it.*

*So then you won't want their help. (Pupil 2)*

*No one will listen, so there's no point! Like the other places, they just don't do nothing.*

*(Pupil 2)*

*If they can't be bothered I can't be bothered going to their school. (Pupil 3)*

*I've asked them loads of times and they've just gone no. So I've just sat back down. Given up. (Pupil 1)*

You know "I can't come today but I'll come tomorrow. I can't come tomorrow. I can't make it today I'll come at the end of the week". To a young person they're straight away thinking "I'm not valued here at all". They're not thinking that but they're thinking "you said you were gonna be here and you're not. I can't rely on you". (Staff participant 4)

### 5.5 Research Question 3

What factors are identified as having the greatest impact on participation in one SEBD provision, and how is this similar and different for girls and boys?

Initial themes underwent on-going analysis in order to convey the overall story (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This resulted in the definition and naming of four final themes; 'Understanding the needs of pupils with SEBDs'; 'Relationships'; 'Ethos of setting' and 'Moving Participation Forward'.



Figure 10 RQ 3 Thematic Map illustrating four main themes

### 5.5.1 Final Theme 1: Understanding the needs of pupils with SEBDs

The overarching final theme of understanding the needs of pupils with SEBDs was further elaborated and clarified by number of related subthemes demonstrated in figure 8. Each subtheme is explored below.

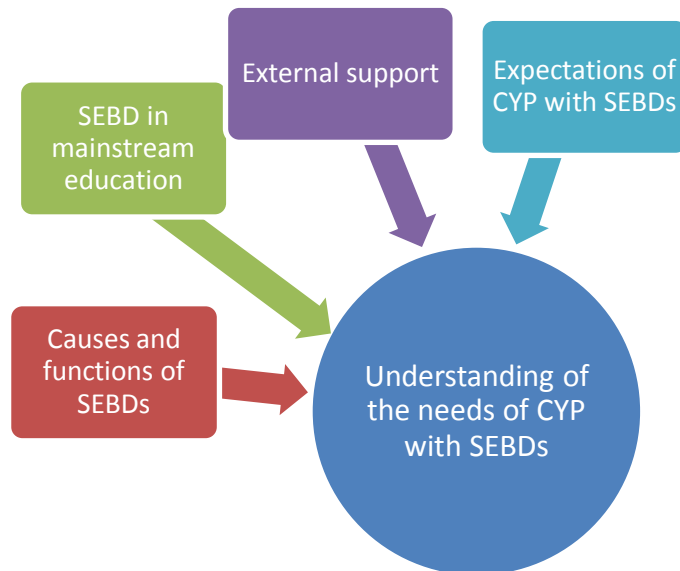


Figure 10.1: Final Theme 1: Understanding the needs of pupils with SEBDs

#### 5.5.1.1 Causes and Functions of SEBDs

The importance of having an understanding of the potential causes and functions of SEBDs in relation to expression of needs and participation was discussed:

Yes we get some very, very, very challenging behaviour from girls and boys alike. But there's usually a reason. (Staff participant 1)

...we get lads and girls coming here and you look at them and go "well there's more than just behaviour wrong with that kid. There's definitely something else". (Staff participant 2)

These related to learning in school settings and also to external influences:

*I used to go in late (to mainstream) cos I didn't wake up. (Pupil 4)*

*Cos then they're gonna wear it (makeup) more so that they get sent home. (Pupil 2)*

...we see children who are here for a lot of different reasons than just what goes on in school, but most of it is to do with school related time. (Staff participant 4)

Learning can be a trigger itself. Particularly with the young people who are really struggling with literacy and numeracy, then learning itself can be a trigger and it's about managing that and making sure you've got appropriate work on the go. (Staff participant 5)

They've chosen to escalate their behaviour so they don't have to be in lessons, which is an expression of need but it's not a direct expression. (Staff participant 1)

You know if they for example can't read and they've been masking that with their behaviour, they're very frightened about that. (Staff participant 1)

What you're seeing in a lot of the behavioural struggles is that there have been no boundaries so there's no understanding of, I'm wanting to say right and wrong but I don't want to make it that big because some do have a concept of right and wrong but their concepts of right and wrong may not be the universally held concepts of right and wrong. (Staff participant 1)

Unstructured time is the biggest flair point. Breaks and lunches and moving round the building... (Staff participant 4)

...you do have to deal with all of the external factors like home life, peer groups, drugs. (Staff participant 3)

I'd say about 95% of the kids that come here have got an issue every morning when they come in. (Staff participant 4)

Reference was made to the influence of CYP's relationships and interactions with others on SEBDs:

*Everyone was going onto me “()’s trying to get you kicked out”. And I thought, “Well it’s crap here anyway so I’m going” and I got kicked out. (Pupil 1)*

*I had loads of fights with this girl. I’d have her a fight and she’d cause it but then she’d start crying... and then I’d get kicked out. (Pupil 1)*

*Because there were girls arguing in our lesson, they’d be like “oh yeah, it was (name)”. But it wasn’t me and then that would make me flip. (Pupil 2)*

*They just really annoyed me. I was in year 5 and I ended up having a fight with another person. (Pupil 3)*

*... say someone’s messing about in class you’ll get the blame and just be like “what”? So stuff like that kicks you off. (Pupil 2)*

*I only fight for self-defence. If someone winds me up I punch them. (Pupil 3)*

*...cos I’m with her all day and I’m reminding her of all the...I’m the trigger! I’m the target, I’m this that and all that. (Staff participant 2)*

*...all they’ve (pupils) done for the last 12/13 years is when a teacher gets in their face, smack them or hit them and then leg it. (Staff participant 5)*

*They’ve bumped into someone they don’t like. (Staff participant 3)*

The potential impact of CYPs family members and their relationships on SEBDs were also discussed:

*We (CYP and mum) physically fight! That’s what I got put in care for last time and then I went back home. They said I could stay but then we had another fight because I was angry. (Pupil 1)*

*Me Nan used to say to me “you’re going in a home! You’re going into a home with all the naughty kids! And you’ll be locked in a cell with nothing ” And cos I’d heard that before I*

*heard that, when they said they were going to put me in care I was like... I thought about what me Nan had said and I was like pure sobbing. (Pupil 1)*

...the young people that we look after today are actually children of quite young parents. I feel that all these things, the real massive breakdown is the poor parenting skills...That's the key. That's the problem. (Staff participant 2)

I think that when a young person gets excluded from school I think the parent needs to do some work as well. (Staff participant 4)

A lot of the parents won't get involved with parent groups but it's the one's that usually need it more who won't. (Staff participant 3)

You might have a young person who you know for a fact if you mention their mother that's it, it will all go pear shaped. (Staff participant 2)

She was from a high profile family as well. So she had standing outside the school. So she came in and brought that with her. (Staff participant 5)

...most of the time their home life is quite hectic. You know where they live is a problem for them straight away so if you could just take them away out of the area. (Staff participant 4)

And some parents, you get really good feedback and they want their child to do better. And others you go "Oh OK then" so your phone call will be "they've had a fantastic day", but there's no real, you know that when they go back that child and that parent are not going to communicate at all. (Staff participant 2)

You do the work here with the young person and then you plonk them back with their family. (Staff participant 4)

A lot of respect for the difficulties faced by CYP with SEBDs was voiced by staff:

I know adults who can't cope with their feelings and behaviours. (Staff participant 4)



We couldn't cope in their environment. (Staff participant 3)

From my point of view I'd far rather work with these young people and I think a lot of my colleagues might be similar. (Staff participant 1)

Ultimately that's why everybody else is on board as well because they recognise that we've got some of the most vulnerable children in the city. (Staff participant 1)

### 5.5.1.2 SEBDs in mainstream education

Some issues related to the mainstream education of CYP experiencing SEBDs were discussed:

*... in (mainstream) school... people have got different educational needs. (Pupil 3)*

*I think people in every school something goes wrong doesn't it? Every day. (Pupil 3)*

I think that when they come from a mainstream they are labelled aren't they? (Staff participant 3)

...it's just basically an emotive view from mainstream teachers. (Staff participant 5)

...mainstream teachers sometimes haven't got a clue how to handle these kids. (Staff participant 5)

Mainstream teachers are overwhelmed because of the 30 strong class members. (Staff participant 3)

... understanding the individual...is easier for us here than it is for anyone who's got an SEBD young person when they've got 30 odd other kids to consider. (Staff participant 1)

But then you get back into a mainstream and a teacher gets in their face and they fall back. (Staff participant 5)

Differences relating to the participation of CYP with SEBDs in the PRU and mainstream education were described:

*But like I like coming here do you know what I mean? It's better than mainstream. (Pupil 3)*

*You can't be loud because none of them are loud. But in here I can. (Pupil 2)*

*I just find it better here than mainstream and what mainstream do. (Pupil 1)*

*They have a TA and they put you in groups and I think that's alright. But in high school you go all different ways. (Pupil 3)*

*It makes me feel happy. (Pupil 2)*

*I feel happier cos I hate that (mainstream) school. . (Pupil 3)*

*You know what? I am good by myself in school here. (Pupil 3)*

In a mainstream environment for example, those views might be heard by several class teachers but then that group as a whole might not feed that on so there may not be any change. (Staff participant 1)

So here it's very different to what they might experience in mainstream because their views are heard. (Staff participant 1)

...sometimes we have kids that are on the border line of whether or not they should go back to mainstream but they settle down in here so well that we put them back into mainstream and they totally mess it up. (Staff participant 5)

...some of the ones that go into mainstream are just back in and left and that's where sometimes they fail. (Staff participant 3)

### 5.5.1.3 External support

The need to, and utility of, accessing external support to meet the needs of CYP with SEBDs was referred to:

*I tell me dad (opinions for PEP meetings). (Pupil 1)*

Advocates come in for PEP meetings- often from care homes. It can be intimidating for young people to sit in a room full of adults so staff spend time accessing their views to pass on for them. Staff also feedback outcomes of meetings to young people. (Staff participant 4)

...we refer them onto people, ADHD and people like that. Brook Advisory, Child Protection, Social Workers. (Staff participant 3)

### 5.5.1.4 Expectations of CYP with SEBDs

The potential effects of expectations on CYPs participation were described:

*They (mainstream staff) were like "that girl's a bad person" and that's it. (Pupil 3)*

*In (mainstream school) they were like "oh, we see only bad sides". Like all the people in my class and that they were seeing the straight face, not the happy messing around kid that I am too. (Pupil 3)*

*That they just think that's it, that I'm not capable of doing harder work. That's for my own year! Cos it's not helping if you give someone work that's like two years younger than them when they can do stuff that's a bit harder. (Pupil 1)*

I read somewhere that once they've reached the age of three you may as well forget it. They've already established where they are in life and their rules. (Staff participant 4)

Some different expectations were described as being held according to the gender of the CYP:

*I remember someone said girls fighting is worse than boys. Cos girls always go for the hair don't they? But boys just punch don't they, and that's it. Kick and punch and that. (Pupil 3)*

...the first time I've been introduced to working with girls was when I came here. And I've got to tell you I was like "hang on!" It's a different type of thing altogether. But once you get over that it's fine. (Staff participant 2)

The girl's class is notorious for being quite a difficult class to conduct. (Staff participant 5)

I mean expectations maybe of what they're doing. I mean, if people are making videos like that thinking "This is really terrible", it's kind of out of touch with reality really of what's actually happening. (Staff participant 5)

### 5.5.2 Final Theme 2: Relationships

The overarching final theme of relationships was further elaborated and clarified by number of related subthemes demonstrated in figure 10.2. Each subtheme is explored below.

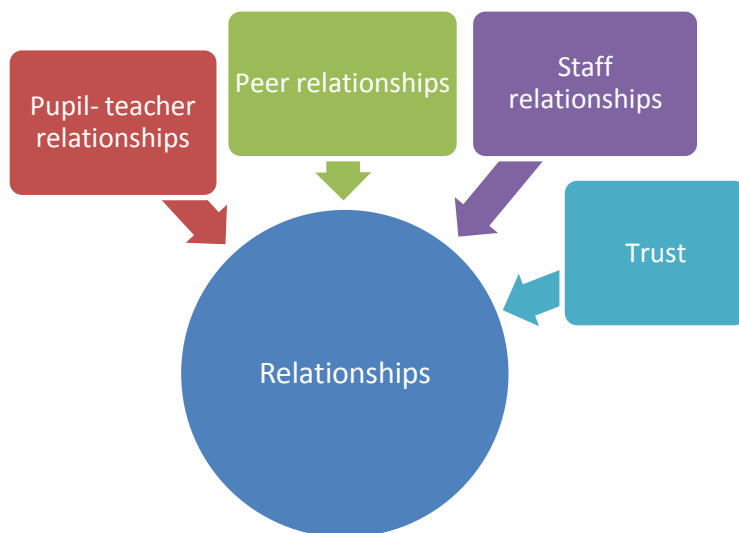


Figure 10.2: Final Theme 2: Relationships

### 5.5.2.1 Pupil- teacher relationships

The importance of reliable relationships between pupils and school staff to participation was described:

You're building up that rapport in order to try and break down the barriers to help them to engage in education. (Staff participant 1)

How such relationships are developed and maintained was also explained:

*Cos when like we're in class she lets us talk while we do our work and all the others are like "be quiet!" (Pupil 1)*

*They're sound. Most of them will help you when you ask for help. I don't really ask for help but they will be there for you. (Pupil 2)*

*That PE teacher says we're the best class in the school cos we work hard. (Pupil 3)*

*I just reckon he's (TA) like someone I can talk to. (Pupil 2)*

*And if you need something they help you how they can. (Pupil 2)*

*I just reckon that they do notice (change in mood). (Pupil 4)*

And I think when you apply certain different human emotions; I think that gets them to open up to you. (Staff participant 1)

I found they'll come to you more because you've invested a little bit of time into them and sort of like "at least he's bothered like". (Staff participant 2)

You're not the teacher, you're just the fella that's taking them to Alton Towers or the Lake District and then you really get a lot more out of it. The barriers really do come down and they'll chat and stuff like that. I love that. And then you come back into school and you go back to being Sir but you're that one who took them away. (Staff participant 5)

We providing that stable background everyday.(Staff participant 4)

It can't just be "these are the rules. I'm the teacher or LSA". (Staff participant 3)

I love it when we take them out of this situation and the barriers come down. (Staff participant 5)

Some gender specific issues regarding relationships were also described:

...with the girls you have to invest a hell of a lot of your own personality. You have to build that trust, build that rapport and you have to be quite transparent to a certain degree. (Staff participant 2)

I still have the banter and I still have a laugh with them (girls)... so I'll go in and I'll try to break down a barrier. You'll know straight away if that works or it doesn't (Staff participant 5)

The benefits of such strong pupil-teacher relationships were discussed:

*I settled in quicker here than in secondary. Cos I think they know I'm not actually that bad. I'm just like not as bad as secondary thought. (Pupil 3)*

*I want (TA) back! We all used to say we hated her but now we don't! (Pupil 1)*

*I like the teachers. (Pupil 4)*

*The (PRU) teachers are better. (Pupil 2)*

You gain a little bit more respect and a little bit more friendship and a better relationship. (Staff participant 4)

I'll just stick my head round the door and they'll just laugh and they'll go "Oh, f off you!" and that'll be it and the mood will be broken and then I can go in and tell everyone else to go on and bring them back down again. (Staff participant 5)

They're less likely to give you a punch then. They've built that relationship with you. (Staff participant 5)

Possible consequences of not having such good relationships were also explored:

*I hate teachers giving me attitude. I hate teachers who just do it just for the money. I hate it! I hate it!! I prefer teachers who actually want to do and like working with kids. Cos some teachers do don't they? (Pupil 3)*

*They love working with kids, and some just do it for the money. (Pupil 3)*

And if you get that wall built up then you're not going to move them, you're not going to get anywhere with them. (Staff participant 5)

Participants also referred to the parental aspect of supporting CYP with SEBDs:

You're there as their corporate parent... and I think that that helps again to break down the barriers to learning because they're not just seeing you as a teacher are they? (Staff participant 2)

They're like your foster children when you're out with them. (Staff participant 5)

...being a parent, being a father and all the rest of it all you want to do is give them a cuddle, but then you think "hang on a minute, can't be doing that. (Staff participant 5)

How participation could be improved further through pupil-teacher relationships was described:

*Just ask us what we want to do. Cos I don't mind a teacher coming up to me and saying "do you want to be in this?" And if I like them I'll say "yeah" and if I don't I'll say "No". It's simple, just ask! It's not rocket science. It's just two people having a conversation! (Pupil 3)*

(Key workers) could spend time with the young person outside of school doing after school programmes which are going to be more relaxed. I think that would mean the young person talking more and opening up more. (Staff participant 4)

### 5.5.2.2 Peer relationships

Relationships between pupils were described:

*The people here are sounder. Like I came in on the first day and didn't know no-one and just got along with all the girls on the first day. And I was thinking "they're all gonna be bitchy" but they weren't. (Pupil 2)*

*They're just dead nice to you. Like they haven't said nothing horrible to me cos I get along with them all. But they might argue with other people. (Pupil 2)*

*Like we're just all the same. Like none of them are too bitchy. (Pupil 4)*

*The girls. I get on with them so like... they've been what I've been through probably so they're similar. (Pupil 2)*

How peer relationships influence participation was discussed:

*Because they'd (friends) just participate. And I could help them. (Pupil 3)*

*Because you can be yourself. (Pupil 2)*

*Because you don't have to like do something, like you don't have to be different around them. You can just be yourself. (Pupil 1)*

*Yeah if me mates knew I was getting wound up they'd be like "shall we go?" and then....(Pupil 2)*

*Like my old mate, whenever something was wrong she could tell by my face. And at home, she knows if there's something going wrong at home too. (Pupil 3)*



### 5.5.2.3 Staff relationships

Effective relationships between staff members were described and were also considered to impact on the participation of CYP:

I think that we're quite a well-established team; I think that makes a huge difference. And being able to be open and honest with each other makes a difference. (Staff participant 1)

...and I think our working relationship has to have an impact. (Staff participant 4)

...the working relationship between the form tutor and the LSA to build that rapport with the young people, build the rapport, the working rapport with each other and so that we can say with either non-verbal communication "right OK let me lead on this" or alternatively "it's your turn to step in". (Staff participant 2)

...the LSA's will come in and tell the teachers what's going on. (Staff participant 5)

Everybody supports everybody and we're a good team. (Staff participant 3)

The young people know that we're a really good team. (Staff participant 1)

### 5.5.2.4 Trust

The importance of trust in all relationships in facilitating the expression of needs and participation was described:

*It takes a lot to trust people and then if people let you down it makes you feel a bit...(Pupil 2)*

*I've actually never said that. Even my mates don't know! (Pupil 3)*

And for them to be able to say that to you maybe takes some of that relationship, that element of trust. (Staff participant 1)

...it's them knowing that they can trust you to a certain extent...Knowing that you will listen

and that you are listening and you're not just fobbing them off. (Staff participant 4)

You have to build that trust, build that rapport and you have to be quite transparent. (Staff participant 1)

So you have to gain that trust however you need to do it and then you can move forward. (Staff participant 5)

### 5.5.3 Final Theme 3: Ethos of setting

The overarching final theme of the ethos of the setting was further elaborated and clarified by number of related subthemes demonstrated in figure 10.3. Each subtheme is explored below.

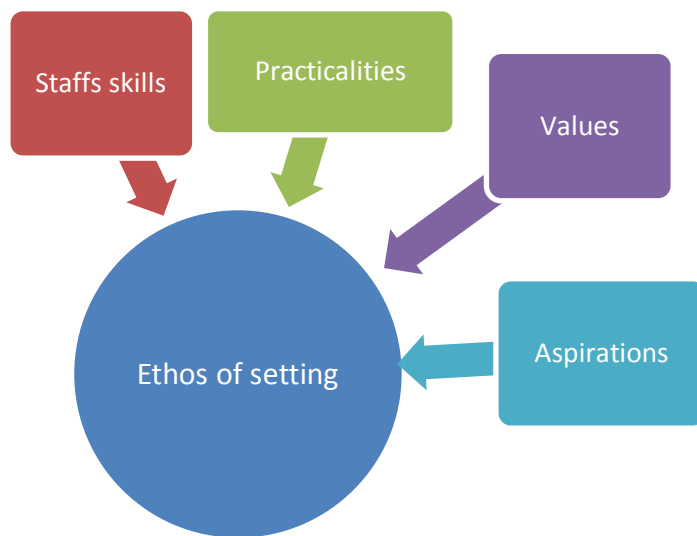


Figure 10.3: Ethos of setting

### 5.5.3.1 Staffs skills

The range of skills possessed by staff at the PRU was discussed:

*They ask if you need any help. ... (Pupil 2)*

*...they can restrain you. ... (Pupil 3)*

*I think they can put you in a head lock but they can't do it that tight. ... (Pupil 3)*

We just recognise those triggers and we're always aware of triggers and we're always aware of change and we're always aware of escalation. And, I don't know how we do it, but I think we are acutely aware of mood. Mood throughout colleagues, mood throughout the young people, mood throughout the building. And I don't know I don't know if everyone is, I assume they are because we all work so well together. (Staff participant 1)

Staff use TCI (Therapeutic Crisis Intervention) if pupils are about to have a fight. . (Staff participant 4)

...sometimes knowing when to step back and go "right OK". (Staff participant 5)

I think that here we're a highly skilled team and we're used to doing what we do. . (Staff participant 1)

How such skills are developed was described:

Well most of the time you can see what's going on as soon as they walk through the door. You can see if they're in that mood or they're not or they'll change throughout the day. And it's what we do and you can't, you don't get trained to be a behaviourist, you work your way into it don't you? (Staff participant 5)

I've done that key worker role and I've also done education cos again I refer back to (name of secure unit), it was social care, 24 hour care plus there was an educational block as well so I got the best of both worlds. (Staff participant 4)

I'm relatively new to the education sector, it's been about six years. But prior to that I've been in social care, children's homes and things like that. (Staff participant 2)

You don't get taught those sort of strategies. I've talked to teachers who are friends and I've got a friend who's a lecturer, she teaches teachers and she says on teacher training courses they don't deal with this kind of stuff. When I was training, behaviour was a four week, five week course and that was it. (Staff participant 5)

...we're obviously trained to do what we need to do. We can get onto restraints but we try not to. (Staff participant 4)

Staff skills were identified as having an impact on the participation of CYP, and the potential consequences of staff not possessing these skills were also considered:

*I enjoy all of it. (Pupil 4)*

*I'm just good all along now. (Pupil 3)*

We talk about triggers and young people go to outburst quite regularly and we manage them. It's not about not allowing them to express themselves, it's about getting them to recognise how to manage their own behaviour. (Staff participant 4)

You know whether or not that person needs to be left in a room for a good hour, or that person can be talked to and brought down or that person needs to be taken away. (Staff participant 5)

Some support, some competence work, some ability to spend some time so that they can engage. (Staff participant 1)

If you didn't do that you'd have a lot more outbursts in terms of negative outburst and behaviours. (Staff participant 1)

If you weren't managing at the trigger stage and managing to maintain a baseline behaviour you'd constantly have everyone triggering each other because they're all high needs young people. (Staff participant 4)

...you're always ahead, especially when you're teaching because you can get them settled on a task but then you've got to make sure that they're on a task and they're working. (Staff

participant 5)

So what I do when I'm teaching, once they're on a task and they're working well I'll just walk around keeping them going, keeping them focussed, either behaviourally or educationally. So if I need to go and have a bit of banter I'll go and have a bit of banter and if not I'll just leave them to it. (Staff participant 5)

...a good LSA who knows what they (pupil) want and what they need, they'll know what it is and you ask almost leading questions. (Staff participant 3)

### 5.5.3.2 Practicalities

The smaller size of the PRU setting was considered to have an impact on participation:

*I think this is a good little size. I think they should have loads of these size. (Pupil 3)*

*I like small stuff. It feels like I'm in primary again! (Pupil 3)*

*They've got more time. They sit with you and help you with anything. (Pupil 1)*

*I think there's less people in your class and stuff like that so there's not as many people that they need to get around so they help you more. (Pupil 2)*

### 5.5.3.3 Values

Importance was placed on the values held and communicated by adults to CYP in relation to facilitating the expression of needs and participation:

This is how it's going to be, we're going to be open and honest, no view is wrong. Everybody's view has a place. (Staff participant 1)

Without clear boundaries there is no understanding of what's appropriate and what's inappropriate. (Staff participant 1)

I think this school does set some nice values in place. The difference between right and

wrong. The structure. (Staff participant 2)

We'll do whatever we can to support you. (Staff participant 4)

The consistency of the messages communicated to CYP was considered to be important:

Everyone's here really because we want to work with these young people and because we want to see them do well. (Staff participant 1)

They won't hear a different story from a different member of staff. We're all singing from the same hymn sheet and we're all working towards the same thing and we're a very good working unit. So I think that makes it very good for the young people. (Staff participant 1)

It's continuity. You know, young people in the building know, say for instance if someone swears they know that they could go to any member of staff and be challenged for it if they swore in front of them. (Staff participant 3)

You can't have one member of staff or a couple of members of staff saying "just leave it, let him get away with that". (Staff participant 4)

The clear boundaries and the clear learning side of things is really, really important. If you've got that down then they progress anyway. (Staff participant 1)

#### 5.5.3.4 Aspirations

Pupils described their ambitions and preferred future:

*I want two (kids)! I want one boy or a girl and a boy. (Pupil 2)*

*I want to be that person who gets out. One of the lads got out of here after one week. (Pupil 3)*

*I think I could get out next week or something cos I have been good all last week, today and probably all this week and probably all next week. So I could get out early. (Pupil 3)*

*I'll find my own job. (Pupil 4)*

Staff also expressed the goals and aspirations that they have for CYP at the PRU:

You pray they get the support they need and that it's in place. (Staff participant 5)

When they're back in mainstream school hopefully they can learn a bit better. (Staff participant 3)

...you want them to leave with something that they can access employment from or access life from. So you'd want to be making sure their life skills are in place as well as their educational attainment. (Staff participant 1)

I'd want to make sure they were ready to move out into the world and succeed in life. (Staff participant 1)

I'd be getting them ready for life and potential employment. (Staff participant 4)

#### 5.4 Final Theme 4: Moving participation forward

The overarching final theme of moving participation forward was further elaborated and clarified by number of related subthemes demonstrated in figure 10.4. Each subtheme is explored below.

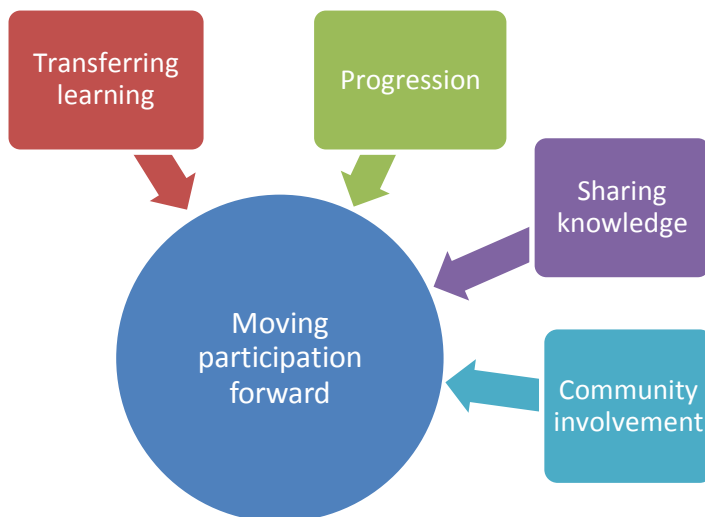


Figure 10.4: Moving participation forward

#### 5.5.4.1 Transferring learning

Emphasis was placed on the need for CYP to be able to transfer learning across contexts in order to aid expression of their needs and participation:

I'm giving them the strategies that I'm using to manage their behaviour and outlining it to them for them to take with them to utilise when they're not here. (Staff participant 2)

Well there you go. That was something tangible to take away (model of aggression). (Staff participant 1)

I'm trying to help you how to manage your own behaviour because I'm not always going to be able to do it for you, so it's about more for the long run rather than just for the immediate. (Staff participant 2)

So they can think "this is what x said" or "this is what y said" and they can move forward. (Staff participant 2)

...it's about more for the long run rather than just for the immediate. (Staff participant 5)

Potential barriers to this process were noted:

They have the support here but then you look at what else there is. (Staff participant 3)

That young person cannot transfer the knowledge that they learn when they go home. So, the breakdown I feel is occurring as soon as they step foot back over their own front door. (Staff participant 4)

#### 5.5.4.2 Progression

Some progress with regard to participation was identified by staff and pupils as already having been made at the PRU:

*I have got wound up by a kid but I just took myself out. Then I punched a wall and hurt my knuckles a bit. (Pupil 3)*



When I first came to work here five years ago we didn't have ICMPs and we didn't have Pupil Contracts. (Staff participant 4)

However, other potential areas for development were identified:

*They should put the year 8's with the year 8's and the year 9's with the year 9's. Or like the closest age range. (Pupil 1)*

*If the lessons weren't boring! (Pupil 2)*

*Just make the lessons good. (Pupil 4)*

*I think I need a punch bag. (Pupil 3)*

If you're going long stay then if you're taking them up to 16 you want them to leave with something that they can access employment from or access life from. So you'd want to be making sure their life skills are in place as well as their educational attainment. (Staff participant 1)

It would help if more key workers could be employed who aren't necessarily attached to particular form groups. (Staff participant 4)

They could have animals to look after in the grounds. (Staff participant 4)

I think it should be more about looking at their behaviour. Not the family background, more the social background and their attitudes to learning. (Staff participant 5)

I think it's to do with a lot more should be maybe done when they first come into a school. ...a phased integration would be a good one so that they (pupils) come in slowly. (Staff participant 3)

I think if we had an investment in children when they were two or three years of age. (Staff participant 4)

Maybe if we had them in early years. (Staff participant 5)

Some gender specific considerations were also acknowledged:

*I'd like to wear makeup. Not having to tie our hair up in P.E. (Pupil 2)*

The girls might be able to get involved with planning the area and like common rooms. (Staff participant 4)

And you'd probably need some extended external providers in terms of education because you could probably end up looking at some vocational qualifications and they need to be broad ranging to allow for individuality. You don't want to be stereotyping anybody or steering them down a certain route. (Staff participant 1)

The vocational choices might be different, but then the vocational choices of girls might be different. But that might be the same with the lads. (Staff participant 1)

There have been discussions taking place about the long stay girls having an area for them to make cups of tea and meals at times. (Staff participant 4)

I think it will be better when we have the girls provision because their needs, although we keep saying there's lots of similarities their needs are a bit different. (Staff participant 2)

...if you've got a group of girls who want to sit there filing their nails while they're working, or painting their nails, if you've got the time and the staff to be able to do that then it works. If you haven't then you've got six girls and they've got to sit down and do the work then all they're going to do is kick off. (Staff participant 5)

The benefits of implementing such changes were discussed:

They (key workers) could do more activities that young people will engage in cos they enjoy it like Art which is perceived as less of a 'lesson'. (Staff participant 4)

...because they're (pupils) part of participation they have a choice almost. (Staff participant 2)

The resources needed to facilitate such changes were discussed:

We'd need more money and more staff. (Staff participant 3)

We would need a new building for a long stay provision for girls. More money would mean more staff could be employed and more activities offered to encourage them to take part. That's participation. They could have more choice too. (Staff participant 4)

It's about the team that's running it and about what's available. (Staff participant 1)

We need a good support network that we've got already. We just need that available. So it's having those staff and the time and the money to be able to do that kind of stuff (individualised learning). (Staff participant 1)

However, potential barriers to this process were also noted:

It would be difficult for us to set up a parents group wouldn't it? You get schools who set up a parents group and they've got them for five years then, the same parents. Whereas us, because it's a 12 week assessment centre, you could get a group of parents who are brilliant but when the kids go the parents will go. (Staff participant 2)

#### 5.5.4.3 Sharing knowledge

How knowledge is currently shared within and outside of the PRU to aid the participation of CYP was described:

And then you take that on board and you move it on and I'll disseminate that to other members of staff. So what they'll say in a discussion can go their ICMP or on their behaviour plan. (Staff participant 4)

Conversations do go around. (Staff participant 1)

Best practice is shared in TA meetings three times a week and weekly staff meeting. We also have morning briefings. (Staff participant 1)

Pupils ICMP's are taken to the FAP (fair access panel) attended by SMT every Friday in order to share any knowledge of young person gained here. The information also goes with child to any new school, along with their Pupil Contract. (Staff participant 5)

The consequences of not sharing knowledge were discussed:

You look at their records and paperwork that's come with them and lots of the time there isn't sufficient paper work that's come with them. (Staff participant 5)

And we have to go through the whole process of standing on the landmines that trigger certain behaviours because they come with such little information. (Staff participant 2)

At the moment we don't do a lot of sharing information. I mean kids come to us with not a lot of information and (Assistant Head) has moaned a lot about that and a lot of it is getting better. But we send masses of information back out with them. We send them off with loads of information. I think that was one of the things that Ofsted picked up on, the amount of stuff that we do actually do and they go away with. (Staff participant 5)

Advice regarding how knowledge could be shared more effectively was also discussed:

*I'd just say "tell them then". (Pupil 4 )*

*I'd just say "go up, be brave and go up to the teacher and say. And if they don't say don't punch them in the face!" (Pupil 3)*

*Don't get angry if you can't get everything you want. (Pupil 3)*

*I think it's best if you just find things out for yourself. I'd tell them to just say what they want to teachers. (Pupil 4)*

Staff here think that it would be easier if all schools and other provisions worked from the same plans. (Staff participant 3)

...one of the things I want to try and do is give a little bit more support, like doing an

outreach type of thing where we carry on supporting them. (Staff participant 5)

What I'd like to do is take our expertise out. We are experts at what we do.

Send this to Mr Cameron! (Staff participant 4)

Some pupils found it difficult to imagine helping other pupils to do express their views:

*I'd say "do it yourself" (You wouldn't help them?) No. It's funny isn't it? (Pupil 2)*

*"Tell someone then". I don't know what I'd say to be honest, I'd just be like "OK, why you telling me?" (Pupil 2)*

*I wouldn't tell none of the other girls nothing. (Pupil 4)*

#### **5.5.4.4 Community involvement**

Value was placed on CYP participating in their communities, regardless of gender:

In an ideal world all pupils, regardless of gender would participate more in their communities. It would give them a sense of ownership, some control and responsibility. (Staff participant 1)

If the young people were happier in their own communities and had more of a say and opportunities for their voices to be heard they would feel more like they were making a meaningful contribution. (Staff participant 4)

That would make them have pride in their community. (Staff participant 4)

How this was currently facilitated in the PRU was described, and ideas for improvements generated:

We've just started setting up, in order to give them an alternative to just knocking around the streets, trying to set up the free Lifestyle passes for the girls so that they can try and cultivate a hobby not just a one off activity. (Staff participant 2)

...golf is another good one cos we've started with the lads. We've got a driving range round the corner. If you can get them interested in golf they're out for four hours. (Staff participant 4)

You can introduce things that are within the community that they wouldn't necessarily be able to access without support and an introduction. (Staff participant 4)

## 5.6 Thematic Analysis Summary

Following analysis of the interview data eight key themes and 31 sub themes emerged to define successful participation practices for CYP with SEBDs. These were summarised in Table 13.

## 5.7 Dreams for the future

Pupil and staff participants were asked, as part of the semi-structured interviews and focus group respectively, to describe their dreams for the future. Carter (2006) describes the Dream phase of AI as being "focused on the affirmative exploration of 'what might be' through thinking outside of the usual boundaries and by envisioning positive futures" (p.54).

The collated list of wishes is presented in table 14 below:

**Table 14: Dreams for the future**

- ❖ A girls' provision within a nice building which is fit for purpose for running a permanent girls unit which can meet their emotional needs by taking a holistic approach to their participation.
- ❖ Girls to be involved with planning the area and common rooms and for them to have an area for them to make cups of tea and meals at times and animals to look after in the grounds.
- ❖ *For the ethos of the PRU to remain the same in a long stay provision but for some rules to be changed to reflect girls' expressed needs such as being able to wear makeup for school.*
- ❖ For girls to have form time so that they can be supported to express their needs and

their views acted upon in order to individualise plans for them and aid participation.

- ❖ To ensure that girls take part in pupil forums or student councils whilst ensuring that regular opportunities are also provided for them to express their needs on a 1:1 basis.
- ❖ *For individual differences to be noticed and needs to be met as they arise, whilst recognising that differences exist within as well as between genders.*
- ❖ For integration of CYP into the short and long stay provision to be phased so that relationships can be built and needs can be expressed and understood thus making them more likely to be met.
- ❖ More screening work with a focus on CYP's behaviour, social background and their attitudes to learning to be done when they start at PRU/ school to find out and understand what motivates them to participate and to enable learning to be personalised.
- ❖ For knowledge to be shared regarding girls' with SEBDs views of their needs to develop understanding and alter adults' expectations of them.
- ❖ *For staff and CYP to have access to a good support network of staff who share the same values and who enjoy working with CYP.*
- ❖ For CYP to have access to external support and services that can provide vocational qualifications which need to be broad ranging to allow for individuality and which avoid stereotyping and/ or steering CYP down a certain route.
- ❖ To ensure that CYP's life skills are developed as well their educational attainment so that they are ready to move out into the world with skills and qualifications that they can access employment from and succeed in life.
- ❖ For all pupils, regardless of gender, to be supported to participate more in their communities in order to facilitate a sense of ownership, some control and responsibility.
- ❖ For more key workers to be employed who can spend time with CYP outside of school accessing and engaging with a wider choice of activities which are not associated with school thus enabling CYP to express their views regarding their needs in a more relaxed or neutral environment and enabling participation.
- ❖ For CYP to have opportunities for their voices to be heard and their views acted upon in society to help them to have pride in their communities as they make meaningful contributions to them.
- ❖ For parents groups to be set up to develop understanding and skills to meet the needs of CYP with SEBDs and to support and transfer the work done in the PRU in order to facilitate engagement and participation.

## 5.8 Provocative Propositions

As discussed in the previous chapter and represented below, the next stage of the AI 4-D cycle is the construction of provocative propositions. Due to the restrictions on participant's time statements were composed by the researcher after the dream stage of the AI process. When constructing the statements the researcher built on what staff and the girls had expressed during the discovery and dream stages of the AI process before combining them. The 14 propositions were constructed from participants' values as surmised by the researcher from the dreams and the summary of the final themes and sub themes. The final list was then sent to the girls and checked with staff in order to ensure they were valid. Their ideas are expressed in as follows:

**Table 15: Provocative Propositions**

1. 'Children and young people identified as having SEBDs have much to offer in regard to participating in decision making regardless of gender'.
2. 'We aim to empower all children and young people identified as having SEBDs to tackle the barriers that they may face and assist them to appropriately challenge misconceptions about their capabilities across contexts.'
3. 'We recognise the value in developing skills in children and young people identified as having SEBDs as we believe that it is important that they are assisted to make choices and have control of their future'
4. 'We have high expectations which gently challenge and assist the development of children and young people, school staff and others'
5. 'Relationships based on trust and respect enables people to take safe risks and we are proud of the relationships that we foster between pupils, staff, parents and professionals.'
6. 'Sharing aspirations and belief in young people's potential with others involved in their care and education assists meaningful participation.'
7. 'We endeavour to develop and maintain good home-school relationships through regular communication and are aware of the difficulties that many families of children and young



people with SEBDs face.’

8. ‘Staff work as a team and can trust and rely on each other’s commitment, drive and professionalism. We hold a diverse range of skills which we utilise whilst recognising and employing the skills of other professionals and learning from the children and young people we work with to develop our practice and increase effectiveness’
9. ‘We appreciate and value firm boundaries and clear strategies used by staff’.
10. ‘Students are encouraged to participate in school and the community to support their attainment of the variety of personal and social skills needed to function independently, healthily and safely in society.’
11. ‘We understand that it takes patience and perseverance for children and young people to develop participation skills and invest time in this important and valuable process ’
12. ‘Our common view is that our expertise in the field of SEBD, thorough knowledge of our students and perception of them as unique individuals enables us to provide a flexible approach to learning which is personalised to their specific needs ’
13. ‘There is a greater probability of successfully addressing the needs of children with SEBDs when we commence work with them at a younger age’.
14. ‘We recognise the need for provision to be adapted to meet the needs of girls with SEBDs as equally as boys needs are met’

## 5.9 Action planning

The Design and Destiny stages of the 4-D cycle involved all staff participants and the Assistant Head of the PRU (see figure 4). The provocative propositions were fed back to attendees by the researcher and dreams generated previously were discussed. Although it was intended that pupil participants would also attend this meeting they did not wish to, preferring instead for the researcher to communicate their wishes and dreams.

After considering the list of dreams and provocative propositions four main areas for action for development were agreed by participants. The following list of was recorded on fishbone diagrams (appendix 13):

- Action 1- Pupils being involved in decision making
- Action 2- Establishing a long stay provision for girls with SEBDs
- Action 3- Developing the ethos of the PRU
- Action 4- Parental involvement

The action plans created with the staff participants and Assistant Head in the design phase are illustrated visually in appendix 14 and also in appendix 15 which illustrates the plan which relates to the dreams constructed and fishbone analyses conducted.

Participants and the Assistant Head were provided with copies of the plan to use as a working document to facilitate reflection and action. A review of actions took place twelve weeks later at a meeting between the researcher, two focus group members and the Assistant Head. Changes reported by the SMT at the PRU as being made as a result of the AI process are described below in Table 16.

**Table 16: Participation initiatives implemented at the PRU over the 12 months since data collection began.**

Developments implemented between Dream (Jan 2014) and Design (Sept 2014) stages	Developments suggested and implemented following Design and Destiny stages (Sept 2014-Marcg 2015).	Other significant changes made to the setting during the research period (Nov 2013- March 2015).
Mixing classes so that boy and girl pupils are streamed according to need and ability rather than gender.	Beauty sessions offered as a reward. Some male pupils have also chosen to attend. Pupils allowed to wear light 'day' makeup.	One reflection room turned into a school library.
The inclusion of girls in 'Student Voice'.	Subject Reps nominated by staff meet as part of pupil voice	Change of name of school to reflect the "considerable

	initiative. Discuss what is happening in each subject area and make suggestions for improvements thus informing the curriculum and focusing on values and responsibility.	skills and strategies to reach new heights by facilitating learning with a positive ethos and change the course of behaviour for young people referred to us”.
Girls allowed onto the yard with boys at break times as opposed to being segregated.	PRU has held a series of ‘clinics’ to further develop parental involvement.	PRU received Healthy Schools award

## 5.10 Other sources of data

### 5.10.1 Research Diary

Reflexivity involves reflecting on the way in which research is carried out and understanding how the process of doing research shapes its outcomes (Hardy, Phillips & Clegg, 2001). The decision to use a research diary was made before the research commenced to make any potential subjectivities which could influence the interpretations generated as transparent as possible. Reflexivity is an on-going process and the diary enabled reflection long after the research had concluded (Nadin & Cassell, 2006).

The research diary recorded contextual observations, reflections of the researcher’s dual role as a practitioner and scientist, reflections on the design of the research and on data gathering processes, as well as observations which corroborated the themes produced. As discussed by Nadin and Cassell (2006), reflections on each interview experience were recorded as soon as practically possible following each contact with the PRU, focussing on both practical issues as well as how the researcher had experienced the event. Typically these included comments on: how well it was felt interviews, meetings and observations had gone and feelings experienced throughout; what the dominant themes were; any anomalies or contradictions, along with ideas about the methodological and theoretical implications these may have.

Examples taken from the research diary are presented below in order to illustrate a variety of issues concerned with the aims and objectives of the research, the impact of which is considered at the practical or methodological level, and also in relation to how enabling it was for the researcher to consider their own assumptions, values and beliefs and how these impacted upon the current

research. The diary provides a record of concerns which may have otherwise been lost, or at least simply not considered (Nadin & Cassell, 2006).

#### 5.10.1.1 Example 1

The first example is taken from an early stage in the research process following initial contact with the Deputy Head before data collection commenced. When thinking about what questions would be most enlightening and also useful for participants to know the answer to the researcher initially thought that the main focus could be around understanding the girls' histories and previous experiences in order to identify risk factors to girls being identified as having SEBDs. However, reflection on the discussion with the Deputy Head's brought the usefulness of looking backwards into question as his views and concerns mainly regarded the current and future needs of girls identified as having SEBDs, and also the needs of those supporting them in order to facilitate participation. These concerns were expressed in the diary as follows:

*...PRU (staff) are keen to meet the needs of all pupils and want to get things 'right' for them. They are worried that girls are at risk of exploitation and have more complex needs than boys there. They are also concerned that placing such girls with boys with SEBDs may create further problems.*

*They want to plan to move forward and it doesn't feel that at present they are set up to deliver what girls with SEBDs need. They are keen to find out how the girls view the PRU as a setting, what they think are the best things about the PRU and what they would like to see happen in the future...*

This example can be interpreted as having an impact on the research itself as it raised awareness of the need for a research method which would be solution as opposed to problem focussed and which would empower and enable participants and the PRU as a setting by developing knowledge and skills. This resulted in the decision to adopt AI, as a participatory and inspiring approach which the researcher considered would be likely to meet not only the needs of the pupils, but also of the staff working with them who had expressed a desire to develop their understanding of girls' needs although at the time they felt uncertain of their ability to do so.

This is reflected in the diary as follows:

*... AI is inclusive so the leadership team, staff and pupils are likely to be able to use this approach to gain valuable insights and knowledge about the factors that contribute to participation. Also, AI is likely to enhance 'buy-in' because all participants will be active members in the process and in the development of practices. Staff don't seem very confident about their knowledge of girls identified as having SEBDs so it might be better to devise broad participation goals and then allow room for initiatives to emerge over time through on-going inquiry and collaboration using AI...*

As discussed by Waters and White (2015), adopting an AI approach would provide time for staff and pupils to become more comfortable with the culture facilitating participation rather than introducing a fully-devised participation plan, which might be experienced as a 'culture shock'.

In relation to the current researcher's personal values the above examples illustrated that there was a parallel need to act on the expressed views of participants and stakeholders in the design of the project. It also highlighted the benefit of reflection and consideration of participants' capacity; both on a practical and more personal level for involvement in any change process.

#### **5.10.1.2 Example 2**

The second example was recorded following the focus group with staff participants. Participants engaged with the process fully with the result that although initially scheduled to last one hour the interview took two hours to complete. Participants elected to continue past the agreed hour for the focus group as they reported finding the process interesting and beneficial and all were keen to complete the activity.

Participants were open and honest and presented as feeling relaxed as well as committed to the activity. All participants verbalised that they had enjoyed taking part in the group, with some referring to the process as 'therapeutic'.

Following the interview the following comments were recorded:

*...Some staff seem keen to reiterate that boys and girls are the same. However, boys with SEBDs were referred to as being more like mainstream girls e.g. acting out emotions but in a more aggressive*

*way. Do they mean that girls with SEBDs are less like mainstream girls then and more like 'typical' boys? Is this a gendered view of SEBD girls based on stereotypical expectations? Or, is it that they consider SEBD girls and/or girls in general are becoming more aggressive due to their (CYP'S) own changing views e.g. "girls are equal to boys/ boys won't get one over on me/ need to strike out first"?...*

Upon reflection on this entry the current researcher considered that the discrepancies between how at one time participants described girls with SEBDs and their needs as being the same as boys with SEBDs but then described differences, either expected or actual, was demonstrated without the researcher asking potentially leading questions which would automatically suggest difference or indeed similarity. Cognitive dissonance seemed to cause participants some discomfort as they examined existing beliefs, ideas, or values (Festinger, 1957). Some participants initially attempted to reduce this dissonance, as highlighted in the diary entry below.

*...It seems that staff are looking for differences between genders because they think they exist. Would differences not be found within genders if looked for hard enough?...*

The researcher considered that such perceptions were likely to impact upon the outcomes of the investigation, although this would not necessarily be in a negative or detrimental way. Rather, it was thought that dissonance reduction would be achieved as cognitions altered as a result of on-going discussion and reflection on the existing rationales for perceived differences, a prediction which fits with a constructivist model of learning.

Furthermore, the general effectiveness of psychological intervention has been explained in part through cognitive dissonance theory (Cooper, 2007). Some social psychologists have argued that the effort invested by the individuals in order to engage in interventions positively influences their effectiveness (Cooper & Axsom, 1982). This argument is perhaps supported by the fact that the focus group members chose to increase the amount of time spent in discussion and as previously stated, described the process as 'therapeutic'.

### 5.10.1.3 Example 3

Whilst conducting all of the interviews with staff and pupils and therefore completing the Discover, Dream and Design stages of the AI cycle, how to conduct the Destiny stage, how to empower, learn and adjust was considered. Diary entries were made throughout the process regarding how best to achieve this as represented below.

*... It might be best to do it (plan) following feedback so that it happens organically as a natural part of the cycle...*

As staff agency is considered a necessary condition for creating school change (Elmore, 2000; Fullan, 2001; Heck & Hallinger, 2009), the current researcher considered that this would be facilitated through the AI process. However, it was recognised that this would require a commitment not only from participants, but also from the SMT. Therefore, it was important to develop and maintain a working relationship that was likely to assist this and ensure that sufficient time was allocated to carry out these plans. Additionally it was important that this occurred when participants would be most receptive, were not already engaged on other activities or overwhelmed with school pressures (Waters & White, 2015).

*...I will need to talk to Assistant Head about timings for feeding back and implementing the changes. How much time are they willing to give to the process?...*

*...I have sent a number of possible dates to Assistant Head for him to discuss with staff and decide which would be the most appropriate to feedback and plan...*

Upon reflection of this a mutually agreeable timeline was negotiated between the researcher and the SMT. Furthermore, the on-going availability of participants was discussed, what would be expected of them and what they could also expect as an outcome of being involved in the study.

*...It is important that participants and SMT are aware that as AI is a collaborative, inquiry based approach which should be empowering, they are part of the feedback and planning as opposed to being told what to do by me as the 'researcher' or 'expert' or by SMT as the 'bosses' ...*

Diary entries made following the feedback and planning demonstrate that involvement in the practice had created a sense of collective self-efficacy which could lead to increased social capital (White & Waters, 2015).

*...Assistant Head mentioned disseminating the findings to other schools. He thinks that they would 'buy in' to the process as a way of understanding how to facilitate participation...*

It therefore seemed that the inclusive AI approach could also serve to promote new connections and relationships between the PRU and other schools. Reflection upon this led to the researcher to conclude that as a research method AI was likely to have an impact not only on the PRU and those who work and are educated there, but also potentially on other settings and students in the area.

#### **5.10.1.4 Example 4**

The following diary entries refer to the meeting that took place between the researcher and a member of teaching staff at the PRU responsible for running the Student Voice initiative.

*...The purpose of the group is to get CYP's opinions about after school clubs, reward trips and P.E. lesson etc. Five or six boys make up the group and no girls were involved in the group when we met. Pupils can discuss anything they would like although Mr X said he has an agenda and asks the pupils what their thoughts are which all seems a bit unrepresentative and pointless...*

Initially this led the researcher to perceive the process as being somewhat unequal, contrived and tokenistic, a judgement which when read back and reflected upon seemed too critical. As a result the researcher examined her own values and beliefs and how these could impact upon the reported findings of the data if biased. Attention was then given to the reasons for the approach taken and the reported outcomes.



*...Changes have been implemented as a result of the CYP's views, such as skiing being offered as a reward trip so at least views are acted upon. However, Mr X explained that the frequent change in pupils at the PRU can affect the continuation of activities and make running the group difficult at times...*

*...The PRU has never mixed girls and boys in class although they played rounders together last year which Mr X said went very well. However, girls are due to go on a separate skiing trip and have been on a girls' only walking trip recently....*

Nonetheless, the researcher noted the segregation practices which were currently in place which seemed swayed towards meeting the educational and emotional needs of male pupils.

*...Boys play football at break or cards if they are inside. Girls are not allowed out so they stay in watching films...*

*...When male pupils arrive at the PRU they all spend three weeks with Mr X working to their own abilities before they are streamed into the most appropriate class. However, girls go straight into one of the girls' classes...*

The researcher also noted that during the meeting potential changes and adaptations to practice were beginning to be identified, possibly as a consequence of inquiry and discussion of the issue of participation. Simultaneity is described as a core principle of AI (Mohr & Watkins, 2002) and refers to change which begins the moment we ask questions. Indeed, inquiry may be considered as an intervention in its own right as "The questions we ask are fateful" (Cooperider & Whitney, 1999). This phenomenon is referred to in the extract below.

*...Mr X reported that he was going to ask the girls if they would like to join the group and stated that he would not take a different approach with them than he does with the boys...*

This led to the researcher to reflect on the facilitative nature of AI as a method to create change and on its empowering aspects. However, the researcher also deliberated further on the impact that she could have on outcomes if a system cannot be observed without it being somehow affected.

As it was not just participants who may have been affected by the 'frames' set up by the questions asked, the researcher was aware that they could also be influenced, particularly if they did not reflect on the assumptions that shaped the investigation. Therefore, the use of the research diary was paramount to aiding such contemplations as the researcher was not separate from the system, or the PRU, being observed.

Furthermore, the diary enabled rumination on the effect of the questioning process itself on participant's perceptions and not just on the relevance and accuracy of the answers and information provided by them.

### **5.11 Documentary evidence**

The nature of this research led to the researcher accessing particular primary sources of data which included pupil files within which included interview documentation, a copy of the ICMP and records of any Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings.

Although valuable, these inadvertent documents produced by settings for practical purposes still require care to be taken when analysing them because it cannot be discounted that they may have intended to give a particular impression, whether positive or negative (Duffy, 1998).

Another point about the nature of documents concerns their 'witting' and 'unwitting' evidence. Witting evidence is the information which the original author of the document wanted to impart. Unwitting evidence is everything else that can be learned from the document (Marwick, 2001). In this case, in a pupil's file, the witting evidence could be considered to refer to everything that is recorded regarding views and needs. The unwitting evidence, on the other hand, might be considered to come from any underlying assumptions unintentionally revealed in the language used and also from the particular methods chosen to elicit and record these views. "All documents provide unwitting evidence, but it is the task of the researcher to try to assess its precise significance" (Duffy, 1998, p. 128)

### 5.11.1 Stages of content analysis

In this case focus was paid to recording various aspects of the content of pupils' files pertaining to participation in order to obtain a more objective evaluation. In the first stage of the analysis interpretative comments found in the available data were examined. As advised by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) and as demonstrated in table 24 (appendix 19), data was organised into pre-determined categories based on the thematic analyses of the semi-structured interviews, focus group and reflections on the research diary. Four of the categories were removed as although relevant to the thematic analysis their repetition did not add anything to the content analysis.

Next, data was re-analysed according to possible groupings under the five main headings described in the last chapter (figure 7) which enabled the researcher to comment on the groups and results obtained from this last stage and to draw attention to general and specific points included below.

Unfortunately, due to the sensitive and confidential nature of the documents that were analysed it was not possible for the researcher to make copies which when annotated would have enabled the reader to see the connection between the analysis and the points made here.

**Table 17: General and specific points of content analysis**

- a) There are many reasons which may potentially result in CYP being identified as having SEBDs and which may impact upon the degree that they can participate in decision making.
- b) Not all causes of SEBD are within the CYP's control and the level of their participation in decision making around their needs may be determined by adults.
- c) Disruption and verbal aggression are reported as significant factors in how girls identified as having SEBDs may express views regarding their needs which can act as barriers to participation.
- d) Being identified as having SEBDs often results in exclusions from a number of educational provisions thus resulting in views being less likely to be sought and/or to be acted upon and affecting CYP's ability to participate.
- e) Exclusions from educational provision often results in CYP's attainment levels reducing.
- f) CYP with SEBDs are likely to engage with most interventions aimed at assisting them to express their views regarding their needs appropriately and aid participation.
- g) Although both internal and external support may be provided to assist CYP with SEBDs to participate in education, personal attributes of CYP and family members may impact on their engagement and on views being incorporated into practice..

- h) Knowledge is not always shared between school settings regarding the educational history, strengths and needs of CYP with SEBDs.
- i) The reasons for non-participation of CYP with SEBDs and/ or their parents are not sought or reported by school settings.
- j) Girls identified as having SEBDs are likely to experience safeguarding issues making it important for adults to take their views into consideration when making any decisions and plans involving their needs.
- k) Participation is affected by the relationships which exist between pupils, peers, school staff and family members.
- l) The process of gathering the views of CYP when constructing ICMPs is more about learning how best to manage and react to CYP as opposed to involving them in decision making or planning.

## 5.12 Summary of the findings

In this chapter the researcher has presented the key findings from the focus group and semi-structured interviews which resulted in participants' dreams and propositions for the future being developed into an action plan to fulfil the design and destiny stages of the AI cycle. The findings were triangulated with analysis of reflections collected and recorded by the researcher in a diary and also of examination and analysis of information provided by the PRU relating to the participation of girls identified as having SEBDs in decision making.

Findings related to the research questions, the case study propositions and the outputs of both collaborative and researcher analyses are summarised below in table 18.

**Table 18: Summary of findings related to the research questions, the case study propositions and the outputs of both collaborative and researcher analyses.**

Research Question	Case Study Proposition	Analyses supporting each proposition
1. How do school staff and pupils construct and describe successful participation practices	a) It is important that adults take the views of CYP into consideration when they make any	<i>Collaborative</i>
		Dreams Provocative Propositions

in facilitating pupils with SEBDs to express their views regarding their needs, and how do they view this practice as similar and different with girls and boys?	decisions and plans involving their needs.	Actions
		<i>Researcher</i>
		Thematic Analysis
	b) The level of participation of CYP with SEBDs in decision making around their needs is determined by adults.	<i>Collaborative</i>
		Illustrative photographs
		<i>Researcher</i>
		Thematic Analysis Content Analysis
	c) School staff describe some gender specific practice as facilitating pupils with SEBDs to express their views regarding their needs.	<i>Collaborative</i>
		Actions
		<i>Researcher</i>
		Thematic Analysis
	c) CYP with SEBDs can offer vital insight into what helps them to participate in expressing their views regarding their needs.	<i>Collaborative</i>
		Dreams Provocative Propositions Actions Illustrative photographs
<i>Researcher</i>		
Thematic Analysis Content Analysis		
2. How do pupils' views regarding their needs influence provision to meet those needs?		<i>Collaborative</i>
		Dreams Provocative Propositions Actions
	<i>Researcher</i>	
	Thematic Analysis	
	b) Being identified as having SEBDs can result in views being less likely to be sought and/or to be acted upon.	<i>Collaborative</i>
<i>Researcher</i>		
Thematic Analysis Content Analysis		
c) Gender and personal	<i>Collaborative</i>	

	attributes of CYP with SEBDs can impact on their views being incorporated into practice.	<i>Researcher</i>
		Thematic Analysis Content Analysis
3. What factors are identified as having the greatest impact on participation in one SEBD provision, and how is this similar and different for girls and boys?	a) Participation is facilitated by reliable relationships between pupils and school staff.	<i>Collaborative</i>
		Dreams Provocative Propositions Actions
		<i>Researcher</i>
	b) The factors that have the greatest impact on participation are similar for girls and boys identified as having SEBDs	<i>Collaborative</i>
		Provocative Propositions Actions Illustrative Photographs
		<i>Researcher</i>
		Thematic Analysis

An overall summary of the main findings is provided below in table 19. The researcher will discuss these findings in the following chapter with reference to the reviewed literature and potential contributions to knowledge. The implications of these results for both EP practice and future research will also be considered and deliberated.

**Table 19: An overall summary of the main findings**

Research Question	Main Findings
How do school staff and pupils construct and describe successful participation practices in facilitating pupils with SEBDs to express their views regarding their needs, and how do they	Pupils and staff had a similar perception of what 'participation' means and participants expressed the importance of CYP with SEBDs being involved in decisions made about their needs.  Facilitators and barriers to participation were identified, including the ability of CYP to act autonomously. The effects of participation practices on both CYP and those around them were also discussed.

<p>view this practice as similar and different with girls and boys?</p>	<p>Gender was described as influencing CYP's needs and also their ability to participate in decision making. Gender was also described as influencing the participation practices employed for use with CYP, although many approaches to participation were described as being gender neutral.</p> <p>However, it was not only CYP's gender that was considered to impact upon participation as staff's gender was also described as having an influence on the process.</p>
<p>How do pupils' views regarding their needs influence provision to meet those needs?</p>	<p>Pupil voice was identified as influencing how the needs of CYP with SEBDs are met. The effect SEBDs, both on CYP and those supporting them were discussed, as was the impact on CYPs ability to express their needs, and indeed on their views being sought.</p> <p>Understanding and accepting individual differences was considered as impacting upon the ability of CYP to express their views, as was the need to notice and respond to changing needs.</p> <p>Gender was again considered to have bearing upon pupil voice and both similarities and differences between genders were described, although more variances were highlighted, and how these diverge was not always agreed upon by participants.</p> <p>Staff participants identified potential biological, social and emotional reasons for perceived differences between the genders in their ability to express views regarding needs, pupils offered explanations due to emotions.</p> <p>The importance of acting upon pupil's opinions was acknowledged by all participants, and the possible effects of not doing so were discussed. However, being identified as having SEBDs was considered to result in views being less likely to be acted upon and gender was also considered to impact upon the influence of the views of CYP.</p>
<p>What factors are identified as having the</p>	<p>Understanding the needs of pupils with SEBDs, including the many possible causes and functions of such difficulties and behaviours were</p>

<p>greatest impact on participation in one SEBD provision, and how is this similar and different for girls and boys?</p>	<p>considered to impact on participation. Particular reference was made to expectations of CYP with SEBDs and others' expectations of them related to participating in decision making.</p> <p>Relationships between pupils and teachers, between peers and also between staff members were considered to affect the ability of CYP with SEBDs to participate in decision making. Trust was identified as being key in all relationships and was described by all participants as facilitating expression of needs and aiding participation.</p> <p>The ethos of the PRU was considered to influence participation, the structure of which was described as being influenced by the smaller size of the setting, the skills possessed and utilised by staff, the values held and communicated by adults to CYP in the PRU and aspirations held by pupils and for them by staff.</p> <p>Ideas as to how participation practices could be developed were generated by all participants, which related to procedures not only taking part in the PRU, but also to other contexts such as mainstream settings and in the wider community. The importance of sharing knowledge across settings was stated, and ideas regarding how to facilitate this were created. Some gender specific considerations were also noted.</p>
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## Chapter 6: Discussion

### 6.1 Introduction

The following and final chapter discusses the findings presented in Chapter 5 and is comprised of the following sections: first, the research aims and questions that were developed in the initial stages of the investigation following a comprehensive literature review are recalled. The answers to the three research questions are structured according to the propositions made for each (see table 18).

Next, consideration is given to the methodologies used by identifying the strengths and weaknesses of AI in this case. Finally, reflections on the research process are discussed and consideration to the implications of the current findings for theory, practice and future research are outlined.

In the LA where the research took place there is no special provision for girls with SEBDs. The small number of girls with an EHC plan or a statement of SEBD are educated in mainstream or out of borough placements. To fill this gap the PRU was going through a process of change to accommodate long stay provision for girls and the current research was commissioned to support the development of this provision. Therefore, with the recent UK legislative changes made to SEN provision and the organisational changes faced by the PRU it was considered timely to investigate issues currently facing CYP and particularly girls identified as having SEBDs in relation to their participation in decision making. This study aimed to better understand these factors at a time of change, both to the PRU, to SEN and to EP practice.

As girls identified as having SEBDs are a particularly underrepresented voice in research (Osler & Vincent, 2003) the researcher was interested in considering development of the provision from their perspective as well from the staff's. Following a review of the literature which explored how pupils, and specifically girls, presenting with SEBDs can best be supported to express their views and how perceptions of SEBDs are influenced by gender the research questions outlined below were constructed. Literature regarding participatory research methods and particularly AI were also examined to inform meaningful ways for the girls to construct their views related to the questions with the aim of providing an equal platform for staff and pupil views and to provide a dynamic and reflective form of staff and provision development.

### 6.1.1 Research questions

Three research questions sought to identify the ways in which girls identified as having SEBDs and staff of one specialist education provision feel pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated.

Eight key themes identified through thematic analysis are highlighted in Chapter 5 to be associated with the facilitation of participation practices in the PRU. In addition to the identified key factors, a number of supplementary themes were recognised.

The researcher considers that the number and breadth of key and supplementary themes demonstrates the value of AI as a participatory methodology to examining participation practices. This is supported further by entries made by in the research diary and by the initiatives implemented at the PRU over the 12 month period during which data collection took place (see table 16).

### 6.1.2 Main findings

This research identified the ways in which girls identified as having SEBDs and staff of one specialist education provision feel pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated. A summary of the main findings can be found in table 19 in the previous chapter and the range of factors identified as associated with this are explored in detail below.

## 6.2 Research Question 1:

How do school staff and pupils construct and describe successful participation practices in facilitating pupils with SEBDs to express their views regarding their needs, and how do they view this practice as similar and different with girls and boys?

### 6.2.1 Case study proposition 1 a

**It is important that adults take the views of CYP into consideration when they make any decisions and plans involving their needs.**

It was proposed that when making any decisions or plans regarding the needs of CYP it is vital that adults ask pupils for their opinions and then take those into account. As detailed in the thematic analysis and also in the dreams, provocative propositions and actions developed as a result of the AI, the findings suggest that this view was shared by both CYP and staff from the PRU. Therefore the evidence is largely supportive of staff and pupils perceiving it to be important that adults take the views of CYP into consideration when they make decision and plans involving their needs.

In the provision, CYP's views were taken into account when constructing ICMPS. However, content analysis of the documentation indicated that this process of gathering the views of CYP was more about learning how best to manage and react to CYP as opposed to involving them in decision making or planning. Furthermore, the pupil participants did not comment on this strategy during the interviews, suggesting that they were either not aware of it, or did not experience it as a participative practice.

The need for pupils to be aware that their views, if and when expressed, are having some influence was highlighted by participants in the current study. Indeed, Shier et al.'s (2014) model of participation recognises that children have significant capabilities which enable them to take the lead in their own development from an early age, although the development of such capacities is considered as being enabled and driven by CYP's experience of action and the effects of their action in the world (James & Prout, 1997). Participants also discussed past experiences of CYPs views not being acted upon and described the effects of this as ceasing to engage in school and also being prevented from participating further. Participants also described the potential negative effect on the individuals' self- concept and on relationships between adults and pupils.

Involvement in the 'Student Voice' group was considered by staff to offer more of an opportunity for CYP to express their views and make decisions, although it was found as part of this research that not all pupil groups, for example girls, were represented on the council. Unsurprisingly, none of the girls commented on this strategy. Interestingly however, one of the participation practices

implemented between the Dream and Design stages as outlined in table 16 was the inclusion of girls in 'Student Voice'.

Experiences of views being elicited and then not being acted upon were also shared and the impact that this can have on relationships and willingness to engage and participate in the future. One of the dreams constructed by participants as a result of the AI was:

**To ensure that girls take part in pupil forums or student councils to express their needs.**

Additionally, one of the participation practices implemented following the Design and Destiny stages as shown in table 16 was that Subject Reps, including girls, meet to discuss what is happening in each subject area and make suggestions for improvements.

As stated in the Children and Families Act 2014 (DfE, 2014) the primary function of the Children's Commissioner includes promoting awareness of the views and interests of children in England which may involve encouraging people who work with and/ or for children and young people to take account of their views and interests (TSO, 2014). With regard to the importance of adults outside of the PRU taking the views of CYP into consideration when they make any decisions and plans involving their needs, some past experiences of decisions being made for them by adults were discussed by pupils and the negative effects that this had had on them. This was outlined in a further dream identified from the 'magic wand question' with staff who felt it would help pupils to have pride in their communities as they made meaningful contributions to them:

**For CYP to have opportunities for their voices to be heard and their views acted upon in wider society.**

### 6.2.2 Case study proposition 1 b

**The level of participation of CYP with SEBDs in decision making around their needs is determined by adults.**

It was proposed by the researcher that adults would determine the level of participation of CYP with SEBDs in decision-making around their needs. As detailed in the thematic analysis, and supported by the illustrative photographs and content analysis, findings demonstrate that the level of CYP's participation was not always determined by adults. For example, as highlighted by quotations illustrating the theme 'Barriers to participation', although pupils described most experiences of decision making regarding their needs as negative encounters, a small number of examples which had been governed by CYP were also provided by pupils and staff. However, occasions were described where adults not only control the level of facilitation of CYP's involvement, but also the outcome of their views when expressed.

In summary, the evidence for this proposition was found to be supportive in part. Therefore, the researcher proposes a revised proposition as follows:

**The level of participation of CYP with SEBDs in decision-making around their needs is facilitated by adults.**

In the literature, children's democratic involvement has been described as being at best limited and at worst tokenistic (Alderson, 2002; Leach, 2003; Mayall, 2005); and it has been suggested that the participation agenda risked only serving and legitimating adult/professionally driven agendas (Spicer & Evans, 2006). The current researcher suggests that these views of participation may have been reflected in what was found from the content analysis of documentation provided by the PRU, and also as a result of the thematic analysis when considering some experiences of participation. However, through triangulation of data, and particularly with reference to the outcomes of the AI, it was evident that participants were aware of improvements that could be made to the way in which CYP participate in decision making and were able to plan how such changes could be made in the

PRU and wider contexts. Furthermore, participants were committed to implementing these actions with the support of the SMT

The current author considers that this makes the research meaningful as the literature states, student voice projects need to be realistically framed and planned (Mitra, 2008) so that they have a genuine opportunity to have an impact. It was felt that if the 'design' and 'destiny' phases had been neglected from the schedule there was a possibility that morale among participants could have been affected (Alderson, 2008). As Fisher (2014) argues, to assist pupil voice to impact upon classroom practice it is important to develop learning partnerships which can support negotiated strategies for delivery and organisation within a shared understanding.

It is considered by the current researcher based on information provided by both the staff and pupils that the participation of CYP in the PRU is likely to be improved by the support offered and commitment made by SMT. For example following the Design and Destiny stages of the research, a series of 'clinics' held to further develop CYP and also parental involvement which were organised by the Parent Liaison Officers employed at the PRU. Staff participants also considered employment of a specific person to support participation of CYP could be beneficial, an idea supported by the literature (see Davey, Lea, Shaw & Burke, 2010a).

### **6.2.3 Case study proposition 1 c**

**CYP with SEBDs can offer vital insight into what helps them to participate in expressing their views regarding their needs.**

It was proposed by the researcher that CYP with SEBDs understand what helps them to express their views. This was detailed in the thematic analysis, illustrative photographs and content analysis, and throughout the AI.

Pupil participants discussed strategies and specific interventions employed by the PRU to aid participation and were also able to describe their understanding of their aims and intended outcomes. These included the rewards system, the use of time out and reflection rooms. Pupils in Sellman's (2009) study also reported that the rewards system was clear and understood by all students and they knew which behaviours were expected of them in relation to sanctions and

incentives. This is considered important when trying to implement such a behaviourist system (Freiberg, 1999), as reliability and consistency are important for such a technique to work effectively (Roderick et al., 1997). These findings are relevant to the current study as they provide not only information as to how to facilitate participation and remove barriers to the process, but could also offer confirmation to the managers and staff from the PRU that the bounded and consistent ethos of the setting as recommended in the literature and government guidance (e.g. Hart, 2010; Ofsted, 2005), is also recognised and appreciated by pupils.

Listening to children is a matter of ethics and human rights (Freeman, 1999) and taking time to do this and develop understanding can enable young people to voice strong messages (Nind, et al., 2012). The support offered to CYP by staff at the PRU was highlighted as a facilitator of participation, with much emphasis placed on the importance of communication, listening and understanding. As various studies identify high incidences of language and/ or communication needs in CYP with SEBDs (e.g. Nelson et al., 2005; Ripley & Yuill, 2005) communication needs to be flexible and imaginative in order to, “circumvent possible problems including memory, emotion, social skills, linguistic pragmatics, receptive language [and] expressive language” (Lewis & Porter, 2007, p. 230). Examples of such adaptations to communication were observed by the researcher in the PRU in the form of visual aids and reminders of the points system and rewards that could be earned by pupils; brief, specific and positively phrased rules and sanctions (Little & Akin-Little, 2008); participation activities available such as Student Voice and clubs and diagrams of the ‘model of aggression’.

A further development of this aspect of the PRU was identified by staff and pupils at the Dream phase:

**Girls would have form time so that they can be supported to express their needs and their views acted upon in order to individualise plans for them and aid participation.**

Roller (1998) states that when adults do not listen to CYP and act without ascertaining their views they cannot develop an understanding of the constructs of individual CYP, which is likely to create conflict. Participants in this study described such disagreements as creating barriers to participation. Disputes were described by both staff and pupils as being caused by the negative attitudes of individuals and ineffective approaches to participation being adopted. Moreover, what some

considered as facilitative, others deemed as preventing participation and some of the enablers described by both staff and pupils were experienced as barriers by some pupils. This particularly related to the use of reflection rooms, as highlighted in section 5.3.1.3, 'Barriers to participation'.

The current researcher considers that this difference in opinions regarding what helps and hinders participation accords with an ecosystemic approach to individuals' phenomenological interpretations in the development of solutions which allows for difference and individuality including conflicting personal perspectives to be both accepted and appreciated (Cooper & Upton, 1990). Similarly, Hartas (2011) found that CYP viewed the ways in which they were given the opportunity to participate to be suited only to particular students.

In the current study, pupils acknowledged that what might help them may not help others and staff participants appreciated the pupil's differing views on the reflection rooms and expressed an understanding as to why this could occur due to individuality and difference. During the course of the study changes were made to the practice of using reflection rooms and one was turned into a library.

#### **6.2.4 Case study proposition 1 d**

**School staff describe some gender specific practice as facilitating pupils with SEBDs to express their views regarding their needs.**

It was proposed by the researcher that staff at the PRU would describe some practice as taking place which was gender specific. As detailed in the thematic analysis of the AI, this was in fact the case, although participants were unable to fully explain why they expected that boys' and girls' needs would be different and that the two groups should and would be treated differently. Furthermore, the content analysis of documentation did not reveal any references to the influence of CYP's gender on their needs or participation or to the effects of gender on participation practices.

Participants offered some reasons for why they thought the approaches adopted for girls and boys differed, and as the literature points out, gender-based issues were often taken for granted and remain unquestioned (Burr, 1995). Hunt (2005) considers that possibilities and conditions are associated with the culturally defined rules and expectations that are often associated with being of



a certain gender and Spiteri (1999) makes a case for gender conditioning being reinforced by 'boy-friendly' curriculums often offered in SEBD schools, stating that societal norms play an active part in shaping gender identity and lead to the acceptance and perpetuation of certain behaviours. Butler (2006) suggests that gender differences are a historical product that have become reified over time and so appear to be natural, "The act that one does, the act that one performs, is, in a sense, an act that has been going on before one arrived on the scene" (p. 66.) This act is perpetuated by the social sanctions that punish or marginalise those individuals who fail to perform their gender within the culturally accepted norms.

The literature also suggests that the school experience of children contributes towards gender stereotypes, in that teachers behave towards boys and girls in different ways which reinforce female passivity and male assertiveness (Rutter, 1975). This concept regards gender as a consequence of socialisation rather than as a product of biological difference, as described by Oakley (1985) below:

'Sex' is a word that refers to biological differences between male and female: the visible difference in genitalia, the related difference in procreative function. 'Gender' however is a matter of culture: it refers to the social classification into 'masculine' and 'feminine' (p. 16).

From this perspective, institutions such as the family and the education system may be regarded as playing crucial roles in the gender socialisation of CYP. Howe (2009) describes two main theories of gender socialisation as gender schema theory and Bussey and Bandura's (1999) social cognitive theory of gender development. According to gender schema theory sextyping occurs because of a readiness to process information based upon sex differences (Bem, 1981), which society plays a role in through the differential treatment of girls and boys (Crawford & Unger, 2003). This differential treatment is considered to lead to the development of gender schemas which help to structure experience and to regulate behaviour (Martin & Halverson, 1981).

Bussey and Bandura (1999) present an alternative social cognitive theory of gender development which recognises biological potentials but also emphasises the role that the social environment plays in shaping gender roles. The authors link the processes that regulate gendered behaviour which cause individuals to conform to accepted gendered behaviour within a particular culture to the social sanctions of disapproval that occur when an individual acts in a way that does not conform to their expected gender role.

In the current study staff gender was also described as influencing participation practices. However, whereas male staff members described feeling unable to always meet girls' needs due to their own gender, female staff did not describe such difficulties as existing between them and male pupils. These accounts demonstrate more general stereotypes of men and women by suggesting that girls need a woman to talk to whereas males do not have the skills necessary to support pupils in this way. However, the only difficult relationships described as existing within the PRU by girl pupils related to interactions with female staff members.

These findings are supported by those of Lahelma (2000) who found that pupils overwhelmingly reject gender as a salient factor in teacher-pupil relations, and tend to stress instead that individual teaching ability has the greatest impact (Smedley, 1999; Ashley & Lee, 2003; Drudy, Martin, Woods & O'Flynn, 2005). Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer and Rivera (2006), also note that there is no evidence to suggest that men teachers as a group adopt different pedagogies and behaviours in the classroom to women teachers (Skelton, 2002; Hutchings, 2002; Smedley, 1999; Lahelma, 2000).

Although Cooper et al. (2006) suggest that schools' social construction of deviance may reflect the divisions and inequalities which exist in the broader society, many approaches to participation were described as being gender neutral by participants. Furthermore, ideas for improvements that could be made in this area were generated in the Dream stage of the AI. These included the dream below constructed by pupils; a social construction which would disagree with the theories of gender socialisation discussed earlier which draw upon the idea of masculinity and femininity as two distinct and fixed categories rather than conceptualising those categories as diverse (Dillabough, 2001).

**For individual differences to be noticed and needs to be met as they arise, whilst recognising that differences exist within as well as between genders.**

Other dreams constructed by staff included:

**For CYP to have access to external support and services that can provide vocational qualifications which need to be broad ranging to allow for individuality and which avoid stereotyping and/ or steering CYP down a certain route.**

**For all pupils, regardless of gender, to be supported to participate more in their communities in order to facilitate a sense of ownership, some control and responsibility**

The current researcher considers that gender was referenced here by staff participants as a result of the reflections they had made during the focus group. Although there was a commonly held view that differences do exist between boys and girls, including in how they participate, a consequence of discussing such perceptions and the reasons for them enabled participants to contemplate on the accuracy of such judgements. Furthermore, a desire for more equality in opportunities for CYP both in school and in their communities was expressed by both staff and pupils.

### **6.3 Research Question 2:**

**How do pupils' views regarding their needs influence provision to meet those needs?**

#### **6.3.1 Case study proposition 2 a**

**It is vital to act on the expressed views of CYP when they are elicited.**

The current researcher proposed that when views are elicited and expressed by CYP there is a necessity to act upon them and the findings show that participants also placed importance on this

elicitation and action. As demonstrated by the thematic analysis and throughout the AI 'pupil voice' was considered key to this process.

As discussed in the literature, schools are expected, and in fact required, to engage with pupil voices in order to shape and evaluate the quality of provision (Cremin et al., 2011). The increased concern with hearing the voice of children is considered to have partly resulted from their re-conceptualisation - as being, not just becoming (James & James, 2004) – and with increased recognition of their competence to have a worthwhile opinion now, rather than as developers of skills and maturity to express an opinion later in adulthood (Tangen, 2008).

Nind et al. (2012) found that adults in their study placed importance on a personalised approaches to students, based on thorough assessment and responsiveness to their interests and voice when educating girls identified as having SEBDs. Influence arising from voice is also positioned as important as being listened to 'superficially', where the communication has no influence, leaves voices powerless and failing to achieve the promised result (Clarke et al., 2011).

Participants from the current study also held similar views to this and one of the dreams was that:

**More screening work would be done where the focus is on CYP's behaviour, social background and their attitudes to learning.**

The aim of doing this would be to find out and understand what motivates CYP to participate to enable learning to be personalised.

However, although interest in the rights of children seems to be growing, perhaps led by the UNCRC (UNICEF, 1989), and despite the range of legislation put in place to encourage participation of CYP, the ideals of the convention are still often largely unrealised (Tisdall et al., 2006). This may be due in part to the amount of time and effort required to translate such policies into practice as listening to students' voice is a complex task (Mitra, 2008). As reported by Rose and Shevlin (2004) Cook-Sather (2002) writes that it is necessary to "redirect our actions in response to what we hear" ( p. 3), as in too many instances an expression of desire to listen to the voices of young people has been

little more than a tokenistic gesture to appease the requirements of legislation or well-intentioned policies.

As explained by Willoughby and Tosey (2007), difficulties can arise if the concept of student involvement is not carefully introduced and Martin et al. (2005) also signal the risks of assuming that listening to and acting on students' voices will be unproblematic. However, as Hart (2012) suggests, there is a role for systemic work in shifting thinking away from a 'child deficit' model to the more inclusive practice of changing systems within education settings. Fisher (2014) argues that if pupil voice is to successfully penetrate classroom practice, ambitious, but realistic, responses should be encouraged so that pupil perspective outcomes will be more meaningful for both teachers and pupils.

This could in some way be supported if schools and other relevant organisations adopt the models of participation discussed in previous chapters. For example, in Shier's (2001) 'pathways to participation' model which is made up of five levels of participation, two refer to decision-making and three to the voice of the child. However, these models of participation do not consider the relationships that exist between adults and CYP and how they can act as both barriers and facilitators to meaningful participation.

The Children and Families Act 2014 (DfE, 2014) and revised SEN and Disability CoP stipulates that LA's must have regard to the views, wishes and feelings of the CYP and to the importance of the child or young person participating as fully as possible in decisions. As Hopkins (2014) points out, "the engagement of pupil voice has become increasingly significant in understanding effective pedagogy and in securing more personalised approaches to learning in United Kingdom school contexts" (p.15). This move toward customising methods of participation was referred to by staff participants who explained that noticing and responding to the changing needs of individuals was important in eliciting pupil voice to aid their participation in decision making. One dream was:

**For individual differences to be noticed and needs to be met as they arise, whilst recognising that differences exist within as well as between genders.**

Participants discussed the benefits of elicitation of pupil voice and the importance of action.

Literature concerning personal construct theory and SDT discusses the importance, benefits and

impact of participation to and for CYP, educational settings and the wider community. Another of the dreams was:

**For CYP to have opportunities for their voices to be heard and their views acted upon in society to help them to have pride in their communities as they make meaningful contributions to them.**

When considering SDT in relation to this desire, CYP were considered to be extrinsically motivated to participate by an appreciation of valued outcomes of participation (Chatzisarantis, Hagger, Biddle, & Karageorghis, 2002). However, in parts of the interview process, pupils and staff were actually more intrinsically motivated by the activity itself, describing the process as 'therapeutic'.

### **6.3.2 Case study proposition 2 b**

**Being identified as having SEBDs can result in views being less likely to be sought and/or to be acted upon.**

It was proposed that the identification of SEBDs can prevent pupil views being sought and also acted upon. As demonstrated by the thematic and content analyses, this was an assessment shared by participants.

It would seem that in spite of the government rhetoric and growing concern about young people at risk of becoming excluded from education, they are seldom offered the opportunity to join this debate and have their voices heard (Thomas, 2007). The experience and effects of being identified as having SEBDs was discussed by participants and although literature demonstrates that for such young people the issue of student voice takes on particular relevance in negotiating access to learning (Cooper, 2006), pupil participants explained that their views regarding their needs had never previously been sought.

Participants also recognised that if asked for their views regarding decision making about their needs, pupil's views are not always acted upon. However, for young people, especially those who have experienced exclusion, encouraging voice entails significant responsibility for action. It is of

significant importance that it is communicated to the young person that their voice is “worth listening to and, more- over, that people will hear their voice and that it will make a difference” (Lewis & Porter, 2007, p. 226). Girls in the Clarke et al., (2011) study were found to seek to achieve influence directly through violent behaviour where they were listened to ‘superficially’ and so had no influence.

The lack of self-advocacy, or even advocacy, may relate to constructions of them as undeserving, unentitled or ‘bad’ (Thomas & Glenny, 2000), something which pupil participants in this study referred to, describing the experience and effects of being identified as having SEBDs as becoming misunderstood and perceived as ‘bad’ (section 5.4.1.1) and the potential effects of such unrepresentative beliefs on participation were described as the whole person was not seen, or allowed by CYP to be known by others. As quoted by one pupil participant:

***In (mainstream school) they were like “oh, we see only bad sides”. Like all the people in my class and that they were seeing the straight face, not the happy messing around kid that I am too”***

**(Pupil 2, section 5.5.1.4)**

Findings from the current study also demonstrate that experiencing SEBDs was considered by both pupils and staff to impact negatively both upon CYPs’ ability to express their needs and on the impact of their communications. Some similar experiences were described, for example CYP became disillusioned with staff when they did not feel that they had received the help they needed or were promised, and also in different ways as demonstrated by the various levels of confidence to voice their opinions described. Literature states that some students experience greater influence and consequently perceived power when they exhibit more challenging behaviour, which has been found to equate ‘voice’ with physical power rather than articulation and so opinions can become hidden in both education and educational research (Osler & Vincent, 2003). Furthermore, by operationalizing such physical power as ‘aggression’ it has become stereotyped as a male phenomenon which Ringrose (2008) and Björkquist (1994) argue fails to capture the more subtle forms of social manipulation that girls more commonly use to harm others.

Björkquist (1994) suggests that these differences in aggressive behaviour are a consequence of women’s physical weakness rather than being a result of cultural expectations of emotional displays, although this argument would not be supported by the finding of the current study. However, rather

than describing the girls at the PRU as being stronger than the boys, they were defined as more 'out of control' and harder to talk around. This concept of the girls being somehow more wild and uncontrollable (Lutz, 1996) than the boys seems at odds with the description of anger or aggression, more commonly associated with the behaviour of men rather than women. Indeed, this type of girl's behaviour was constructed as deviant (Ringrose, 2008) whereas the same behaviour when demonstrated by boys was constructed as more 'normal' and less disturbing.

Brody (1997) cites numerous studies which suggest that when expressions of anger are considered differently a different picture emerges, with some research suggesting that women verbalise more intense anger for longer periods of time than men. Therefore, as research suggests that emotions are the products of systems of cultural belief particular to communities (Armon-Jones, 1986), it is possible that the girls' chosen expressions were influenced and facilitated eco systemically including by their families, peers, community and school including the PRU.

The effects of SEBDs on family members and on school staff supporting CYP identified as such were also discussed by participants in the current study. Staff discussed the emotional and physical demands which are usually managed by informal means.

**"...you've always got to be thinking, you've always got to be so on top all the time. You've got to be thinking educationally, you've got to be thinking behaviourally, you've got to be a mentor, you've got to be a counsellor and you don't know what you're doing minute by minute. So it's always "bang, bang, bang!" By the end of the day you're just like..."**

**(Staff participant 5, section 5.4.1.1)**

**"Everybody supports everybody and we're a good team."**

**(Staff participant 1, section 5.5.2.3)**

It has been claimed that it is easier not to hear the voices of such young people because their communication is frequently unconventional and their social status marginal (Corbett, 1998). 'Choosing' to communicate in ways that don't conform to schools rules can lead professionals to label such pupils further, in effect expanding their deficits and reducing the capacity. As Sellman (2009) points out:



Perhaps... it is not surprising that power was equated with physicality as pupils in SEBD provision may have learned in the past that overt challenging behaviour results in the power to distract or subvert a classroom environment but ultimately leads to rejection and exclusion by adults (p.42).

Challenges to genuine participation are often magnified in provision for children experiencing SEBDs (Davies, 2005). As Corbett (1998) notes, CYP with SEBDs are the most 'feared' and the least likely to be listened to with respect. However, the importance of voice for this group and of listening to them include the obligations in SEN legislation and policy; the potential of hearing the views of challenging young people in developing ways of managing the challenges they present, and their necessity in assessing the efficacy of interventions with them (Cooper, 1993).

As previously discussed, literature demonstrates that student voice projects often reproduce models from the adult world which pupils with SEBDs may find particularly difficult to engage with or see as another stimulus for resistance (Wyness, 2006). Furthermore, various studies have identified a high incidence of language and/ or communication needs in children with SEBDs (Nelson et al. 2005; Ripley & Yuill, 2005), and CYP with SEBDs may frequently have language difficulties that have not been recognised (Cohen et. al.1998a). It is therefore possible that young people, and particularly those with linguistic difficulties and/or experiencing SEBDs, may find traditional, adult forms of communication, exclusive, difficult to engage with or provocative.

### **6.3.3 Case study proposition 2 c**

#### **Gender and personal attributes of CYP with SEBDs can impact on their views being incorporated into practice.**

It was proposed that the gender and personal attributes of CYP with SEBDs can have an effect upon views being incorporated into practice. Findings from thematic and content analysis agreed with the second part of this evaluation but findings from content analysis did not demonstrate gender as having an impact and so the researcher proposes a revised proposition as follows:

**Narrative accounts of CYP with SEBDs demonstrate that gender and personal attributes impact on their views being incorporated into practice.**

Gender was described as impacting upon the ability of CYP to express views and also upon how opinions are articulated. Some similarities experienced between genders were described although more differences between boys' and girls' ability to express their views were highlighted. However, participants did not always agree what these differences were and divergence between views were evident. Interestingly, although staff described differences as existing between boys' and girls' ability to express their views, pupils referred to differences in how views are communicated.

Traditionally, it has been assumed that differences in emotional expression and experience between women and men are rooted in biology (Howe, 2009). However, the findings from this study supports research which suggests that it is the discourses of gender which tend to focus upon differences between male and females rather than similarities (Kimball, 1995; Lott, 1997) which assumes that emotions are internal and biological and are reflected in gender differences in behaviour. Brody's (1997) research has shown how these display rules are gendered resulting in different behaviours from men and women in response to such emotions as anger.

It is suggested that masculinity and femininity both condition and arise from social processes (Davies, 2005), that schools participate in the social construction of pupil behaviour and that these constructions reflect the divisions and inequalities in wider society and in turn contribute to their continuation (Cooper et al., 2006).

Gender has a very strong association with SENs, and for SEBDs gender is the single best predictor (Strand & Lindsay, 2008). The current researcher considers that it may be that the higher number of boys with SEBDs in the PRU means that staff have more experience of working with this group and so feel more able to comment on boys' ability to express their needs. Another possible explanation is that some staff participant's perceptions of stereotypical gender behaviours have resulted in their assessment that girls present more of a challenge as they are characterised as "difficult and also as in difficulty; as dangerous, and also being in danger" (McLeod & Allard, 2001, p.1).

Staff participants also described the need to invest more of themselves to form relationships with girls in order to build trust. This could be due to CYP's past experiences of relationships which may have impeded upon their capacity to form trusting bonds with others (Mowatt , 2010), and could also be related to the meanings they give to the girls' behaviour in a reciprocal relationship.

Additionally, it seems likely that participants were referring to the need to respond to the unique profile of pupils which related to how SEBDs were conceptualised. Central to this holistic view of pupils were the relationships that existed between staff and CYP and which develop understanding of the individual circumstances and characteristics of CYP with SEBDs which impact upon the ability to express their needs. The importance of understanding and accepting such differences was described as being both important and effective to aid participation by staff and pupil participants.

Teachers in Hart's (2010) study identified subtle responses to disruptive behaviour such as deliberate ignoring or using a long stare, as well as more punitive strategies such as a verbal reprimand (Akin-Little, Little & Laniti, 2007; Little & Akin-Little 2008; van Tartwijk, den Brok & Veldman, 2009). Staff at the PRU described adapting such responses based on an understanding of the individuality of CYP which was informed by their relationships and which enabled noticing and adjusting to changing needs. In contrast, mainstream teachers were described by both staff and pupil participants as being unable to always do this, due either to lack of time, skills or motivation.

The difficulties that some young people have with expression of their needs was also discussed and interestingly, the researcher found that some pupils did not consider themselves as having any needs which could be a reflection of the wording of the question and the negative connotation that the word 'need' may have for some young people. Literature demonstrates that CYP hold negative views of externalizing behavioural problems (e.g., Kazdin, Griest, & Esveldt-Dawson, 1984; Lancelotta & Vaughn, 1989; Safran, Safran & Rich, 1994), which may impact upon not only the ability to accept difference in others, but also upon self-acceptance. It is therefore possible when given the time and understanding by the current researcher and faced with attentive listening the young people may have felt more able to voice strong messages about belonging and not belonging, situating their learning in the context of relationships with the self and others rather than talking about their 'needs' (Nind et al., 2012).

Participants offered explanations for why they considered CYP with SEBDs to differ in their ability to express their views. The recognition that behaviour problems may arise from several factors is an important feature of an ecosystemic approach (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Cole (1998) states that:

according to this perspective the pupil is part of a web of interconnecting systems: the internal physical and mental systems of the pupil which interact with the classroom system; the school system; the neighbourhood system; and, importantly, the family system (p. 122).

An effective learning environment is seen as key to promoting positive behaviour and is identified as the first site for intervention when concerns are raised about pupil behaviour (Daniels & Williams, 2000). From this perspective, strategies based on reinforcement and punishment are important, but should be allied to preventative strategies which promote a positive climate, pupil self-discipline and social problem-solving strategies (Bear, 1998).

Staff participants placed most emphasis on biological and sociological reasons for the perceived differences between the genders in their ability to express their views regarding their needs, whereas pupils only described emotional causes. This is perhaps not surprising as Howe (2009) notes, traditional approaches to locating causes of SEBDs have utilised medical or behavioural models (Thomas & Loxley, 2001), a common element of which is that they are 'gender blind' and so usually ignore gendered constructions of behaviour of pupils or assume that they are based in biology. However, Aapola (1995) suggests that such simplistic biological explanations are often used to describe complex psycho-social problems and can thus disadvantage young people.

Traditional approaches are also described as treating emotions in a similar way to personality traits, as rooted in biology, stable over time and independent of social context (Fischer, 1993), in contrast Brody's (1997) definition of emotion highlights the need to understand the biological component as mediated through our experience and through our interpretation of the world around us. However, the emphasis also placed on social constructions by staff in the current study suggests a shift as the individual attributes of pupils were considered in relation to cultural and social creations (Gergen, 2001).

The current author considers that rather than concluding that pupils did not consider there to be any other explanations of difference other than those relating to emotions, it is more likely the case that the girls were more familiar and perhaps comfortable with engaging in discourse regarding feelings.

Indeed, research has demonstrated that one construction of difference between genders is that of the emotional woman and the unemotional man (Lupton, 1998) and in a study of the relationship between gender, self-concept and children's autobiographical narrative, Buckner and Fivush (1998) found that girls provided more emotional information about their past than boys.

Gender was also considered to impact upon the influence of CYP's views and possible reasons for the perceived differences regarding the influence that the views of boys and girls have were discussed. Literature claims that the 'unconventional' communication and marginal social status (Corbett, 1998) of girls identified as having SEBDs can result in their voices being often hidden (Osler & Vincent, 2003) or negated by medicalisation (Lloyd, Stead & Cohen, 2006) by putting their anger down to periods or hormones (Cruddas & Haddock, 2005). Nind et al. (2012) describe girls' voices as being situated within complex dynamics and their discourses as being relational and dependent on assumed ideas of normality (Lloyd, 2006). As girls have been educated amidst the gendered, classed and racialised disciplinary processes of schools (Wright et al., 2000), these authors consider them to have adopted strongly gendered and sometimes medicalised and deficit identities (Nind et al., 2012).

Frederickson and Cline (2002) refer to constructs of SEBD as changing to mirror the evolution of societal attitudes to young people who present with 'problematic' behaviours. It is therefore important to take into account the role societal, family and school environments play in creating and ameliorating young people's SEBDs (Evans, Harden, Thomas & Benefield, 2003) and, with reference to the current study, the profile of girls with SEBDs may be considered a fluid concept as participants also considered the potential influence of gender on participation in the future. This was particularly true of staff participants, although it is interesting that pupils described fewer differences as existing according to gender than staff which perhaps suggests that they already considered the concept differently.

#### 6.4 Research Question 3:

What factors are identified as having the greatest impact on participation in one SEBD provision, and how is this similar and different for girls and boys?

#### **6.4.1 Case study proposition 3 a**

##### **Participation is facilitated by reliable relationships between pupils and school staff.**

It was proposed that CYPs participation could be facilitated by the relationships which exist between pupils and staff. The thematic and content analyses and AI supported this suggestion.

Both pupils and teachers identify positive relationships as key to effective pupil learning and positive behaviour outcomes (Michael & Frederickson, 2013; Van Tartwijk et al., 2009; Cothran, Kulinna & Garrahy, 2003) and also as key elements in facilitating student self-determination (Nie & Lau, 2009).

Attachment theory emphasises the importance of secure and trusting relationships, as well as emotional containment and expression (Bowlby, 1969) and it has been suggested that effective teachers play a role akin to that of good parents in terms of providing consistent, positive expectations and a disposition towards nurturing (Wentzel, 2002). This was a thought expressed by staff participants in the current study when discussing the parental aspect of supporting CYP with SEBDs, as demonstrated in the last chapter and highlighted below.

**“They’re like your foster children when you’re out with them.”**

**(Staff participant 5, section 5.5.2.1)**

Humanistic perspectives attach great significance to the relationship between teacher and pupil (Hart, 2010). One example is learner-centred education, where the teacher displays empathy, unconditional positive regard, genuineness, non-directivity and the encouragement of critical thinking (Cornelius-White, 2007). These values and use of these skills were discussed by both pupil and staff participants in the current study, and additionally the researcher considers that her utilisation of existing counselling skills (Rogers, 1957; McLeod, 2003) facilitated the development of positive relationships with stakeholders and the subsequent gathering of information.

**“You’ve got to be a mentor, you’ve got to be a counsellor ...”**

**(Staff participant 4, section 5.4.1.1)**

**“I gave her the empathy. And I think when you apply certain different human emotions; I think that gets them to open up to you. And she then opened up”**

**(Staff participant 2)**

**“It’s therapeutic the way that it works for us and for our young people.”**

**(Staff participant 4)**

***“I hate teachers who just do it just for the money. I hate it! I hate it!! I prefer teachers who actually want to do and like working with kids.”***

**(Pupil 2, section 5.5.2.1)**

Opendakker and Van Damme (2006) found that the relationship between teachers and students was positively influenced by the extent to which the teacher adopted a learner-centred teaching style which requires empathy, unconditional positive regard and congruence. This way of being was associated with increased opportunities to learn, better integration of students within classes, and increased student participation. The current researcher considers that a learner-centred style is adopted within the PRU as it has also been within this study and that the suggestions for further developments are further evidence of such a person centred approach as is the implementation of participant’s suggestions by SMT (see table 16).

#### **6.4.1.1 Building rapport**

Attention was paid by participants to how rapport is built and effective bonds are maintained. Hart (2010) explains that verbal reinforcement is possibly the most fundamental tool available to teachers and arguably the most powerful and meaningful for pupils (Hayes, Hindle & Withington, 2007). As suggested by Nind et al. (2012) a key theme in educating girls identified as having SEBDs is building and maintaining relationships and in Hart’s PRU study protective factors were linked to fostering staff–pupil and pupil–pupil relationships (Hart, 2012). Similarly, Michael and Frederickson

(2013) found 'positive relationships' to be the most widely mentioned empowering theme regarding the enablers and barriers to positive outcomes for secondary aged pupils in a PRU. As discussed previously, both Hill (1996) and Lloyd and O'Regan (1999) found 'positive relationships with teachers' was a predominant theme identified by young people as promoting positive outcomes. Other examples include the perceived role of positive relationships with peers and support from family members in helping to promote positive outcomes (Michael & Frederickson, 2013). As previously discussed, some gender specific issues regarding teacher- pupil relationships were described by participants in the current study and the benefits of strong associations were discussed, as were the potential consequences of them not existing.

Myers and Pianta (2008) report that teachers who demonstrate emotional warmth have been shown to improve the well-being of students, both with regard to engagement with school and also in enabling academic achievement. McDonald-Connor et al. (2005) demonstrate that the positive characteristics of teachers impact strongly on academic outcomes.

#### **6.4.1.2 Trust**

The importance of trust in all relationships was described as facilitating the expression of needs and therefore CYP's participation. The Children and Families Act 2014 (DfE, 2014) states that LAs should work with CYP and parents to establish the aims of their participation, mark progress and build trust. This is not always easy, however, and pupil participants referred to past experiences which have affected their faith in others. Therefore, a challenge faced by those working with CYP with SEBDs is being able to persevere through the difficulties, conveying faith in their capacity to effect change (Mowatt, 2010).

Evidence of the effect of communicating such confidence in the ability of CYP to participate and have an influence was expressed by a pupil when reflecting on her articulations.

***"I've actually never said that. Even my mates don't know!"***

**(Pupil 1, section 5.5.2.4)**



### 6.4.1.3 Understanding SEBDs

Understanding of pupils with SEBDs was considered by participants to influence interactions and the importance of being aware of the potential causes and functions of SEBDs was described as being significant to the formation of supportive relationships. Causes identified related to the influence of school settings and also to relationships that CYP have with both staff and family members, again alluding to an ecosystemic approach to understanding behaviour and highlighting the systemic interrelationships that exist between individuals rather than the existence of causal relationships existing between any one factor and SEBD.

Using attribution theory as a lens through which to view challenging behaviour in schools indicates that teachers tend to attribute the cause of challenging behaviour in schools primarily to home and parent factors (Lambert & Miller, 2010). Staff participants in the current study located the causes of pupil behaviour in similar ways and also expressed understanding as to why this could occur. Although Armstrong (2014) suggests that recent SEN policy moves against and away from previous efforts to modernise discourse and subsequent practice around child and adolescent behaviour (Armstrong & Hallett, 2012; Farrell, 2012) the current researcher considers that participants in this study were able to reflect on reasons for difficulties and generate ideas to meet them through their involvement in the AI process. Therefore, rather than blaming, possible solutions were created and a dream was:

**For parent's groups to be set up to develop understanding and skills to meet the needs of CYP with SEBDs and to support and transfer the work done in the PRU in order to facilitate engagement and participation.**

This was implemented following Design and Destiny stages and has the potential to overcome reciprocal barriers that can separate some parents and school staff when pupils' behaviour is deemed to be difficult to manage at school (DCFS, 2009). Furthermore, as the SEN CoP (2014) emphasises the importance of positive relationships with parents to support school's work in developing emotional, social and behavioural skills, this strategy could help the PRU to meet statutory obligations. In fact, since data collection began the PRU has been successful in receiving a Healthy Schools award, one target of which was to further develop parental involvement which

they achieved and are continuing to address through the establishment of parent-child information sessions and clinics.

The experience of mainstream education of CYP with SEBDs was also discussed and differences relating to the participation of such CYP in the PRU and schools were described. As in Clarke et al.'s (2011) study, pupils were able to describe and reflect on their experiences of mainstream schooling and appeared comfortable and able to make suggestions regarding changes to mainstream systems which would remove barriers and improve access to them.

#### **6.4.1.4 External support**

Recognition was also given by participants to how external support could be accessed in order to meet the needs of CYP with SEBDs. This related to accessing both professionals and family members and as suggested by Lambert and Miller (2010), such carefully conducted 'ecosystemic consultations' (Aponte, 1976; Cooper & Upton, 1990; Miller, 2003) could be:

utilised to bring together pupils, teachers, and parents with a trained external professional in order to manage safely the potentially inflammatory dynamics caused by conflicting attributions, whilst permitting a more productive search for approaches that meet with the approval of all parties (p. 618).

One of the external providers already supporting the PRU, Brook Advisory Service, were described as primarily supporting the female pupils. However, rather than reflecting common discourses of sexual identity where the male is constructed as active while the female is constructed as passive (Allen, 2003), it was the girl pupils who were described by staff as being more assertive and responsible for their own sexual health. The girls were not described as being sexually vulnerable or constructed as victims but staff did express a difference between what the girls had experienced and what professionals expected them to have a level of awareness of.

#### **6.4.1.5 Expectations**

The potential effects of expectations of CYPs were also described as impacting upon how their needs are understood and therefore upon the strength of relationships. Again referring to attributions held, literature examining the factor structure of parents' attributions for challenging behaviour in

school indicates that parents' attributed misbehaviour to 'differentiation of classroom demands and expectations' (Lambert & Miller, 2010). More positively, Hart's (2012) research which aimed to explore the potential protective factors of a PRU through the voices of children and staff identified expectations as one potential protective factor. Students also report that setting out and enforcing high expectations from the start is important (Cothran et.al. 2003). Some different expectations were also described as being held according to the gender of the CYP in the current study which Spiteri (1999) considers to be associated with the culturally defined rules and expectations that are often associated with being of a certain gender (Hunt, 2005). To counter this difference staff participants in the current study expressed a dream that:

**Knowledge would be shared regarding girls' with SEBDs views of their needs to develop understanding and alter adults' expectations of them.**

#### **6.4.1.6 The influence of relationships**

How participation could be improved further through pupil's relationships with adults was expressed in the dream:

**For more key workers to be employed who can spend time with CYP outside of school accessing and engaging with a wider choice of activities thus enabling CYP to express their views regarding their needs in a more relaxed or neutral environment and enabling participation.**

Participants also discussed peer relationships and their influence on participation. As in Michael and Frederickson's (2013) study, positive associations with peers largely related to feelings of acceptance and reassurance when they first arrived at the PRU, which have been found to promote positive outcomes. On the other hand, female pupils were described by staff participants as expressing themselves through the exclusion of other girls from friendship groups, name calling and manipulation. Gonick (2004) identifies this dialogue regarding adolescent girls as a 'mean girl' discourse, where girls are pathologised and Wiseman (2002) expressed concern about social

hierarchies among girls and how some will use their social power against other girls in order to maintain their popularity, an observation again shared by staff at the PRU.

By constructing girl's on-going and long lasting behaviours as more problematic than boys, staff seem to construct female pupils as somehow more deviant and difficult to deal with than boys (Ringrose, 2008). The accounts demonstrating this draw upon a discourse of difference although evidence demonstrates that gender differences in indirect aggression are trivial (Card, Stucky, Sawalani & Little, 2008).

Participants also identified effective relationships between staff members as impacting upon the participation of CYP. As discussed in the literature, communities of practice based on shared values in which the ways of thinking and of being gradually become internalised enable change to become possible (Mowat, 2007; Sergiovanni, 1994).

#### **6.4.1.7 Ethos**

The ethos of a school, if it creates a positive learning environment, has been found to promote mutual respect and value for the contribution of all pupils; strengthen teacher-pupil relations; and improve communications between schools, teachers, pupils and their communities. Furthermore, placing emphasis on participation and teamwork, praise and positive affirmation, active pupil participation and engagement in learning has been found to be encouraging and motivating (Dunne et.al. 2007). In relation to findings from the current research, Sebba, Brown, Steward, Galton, & James, (2007) found that the schools in which lower attaining pupils were most highly motivated and engaged were characterised by an ethos that reflected strong, genuine pupil voice.

Staff and pupil participants placed importance on the values held and communicated to CYP to the ethos of the PRU. Plowman (2006) considers that whenever an individual feels uncomfortable or in dispute with another, there a misalignment between the respective behaviours and values of the two parties. Alternatively, McDonald-Connor et al. (2005) demonstrate that the positive, valuing, characteristics of teachers as described by participants in the current study can impact strongly on academic outcomes.

When considering the ethos of the setting, the skill set possessed by staff at the PRU was described as impacting upon relationships and on the participation of CYP. The potential consequences of staff

not possessing these skills were also considered. Cooper (2011) explores research evidence on approaches to promoting the positive educational engagement of students with SEBDs and describes provision as being often founded upon published good practice advocating firm boundaries, well-organised structures and routines controlled by adults (Cole et.al. 1998; Daniels et al. 1998a). However, this would not accord with a person-centred approach and would be more evident if students were encouraged and supported to reflect on their behaviour and contribute ideas to community living (Bridgeland, 1971; Cooper, 1993).

Pupils made reference to staff being able to restrain students in the PRU, an issue also discussed by students interviewed for a report by Morgan (2004) which suggested that students in SEBD provision were accepting of the 'need' for restraint but more concerned that it was done safely, fairly and by trained adults. Sellman (2009) found that pupils considered that both the systems of reward and ultimately restraint were underpinned by the quality of relationships, their main point being that it does not matter what intervention is used (reward, sanction or restraint), if the relationship is poor it is less likely to be effective.

The current researcher considers that the PRU demonstrates the aspects identified by Cooper (2011) including firm boundaries and structured and predictable procedures. However, although managed and supervised by staff, these practices occur within the context of positive relationships which is both important in a person centred approach and is conducive to enabling pupil participation.

The consistency of the messages communicated to CYP was considered to be important and in Sellman's (2009) study which concerns an intervention at an SEBD special school for boys where a student research group was formed to evaluate the school's behaviour policy, students particularly welcomed the structure, regularity and consistency brought to their lives. As discussed earlier, reliability and consistency are also important for techniques involving rewards and sanctions to work effectively (Roderick et al. 1997). Participants in the current study described clarity and consistency as important to good quality relationships and as also aiding pupil progression. This is also a common finding from mainstream projects and resonates with policy and professional development agendas (Cooper, 2006; Davies, 2005).

It would seem therefore, in order to have long-term effect, change regarding participation practices needs to impact at the level of values and beliefs of the key stakeholders (MacGilchrist et al. 2004).

In this case this primarily includes pupils, staff and the SMT and one of the staff participants' dreams was:

**For staff and CYP to have access to a good support network of staff who share the same values and who enjoy working with CYP.**

Aspirations of and for CYP with SEBDs were also described by participants and a dream was:

**That CYP's life skills are developed as well their educational attainment so that they are ready to move out into the world with skills and qualifications that they can access employment from and succeed in life.**

A further ambition for CYP was that they would be able to transfer what they had learned at the PRU into other educational settings including mainstream schools in order to aid expression of their needs and participation. Potential barriers to the achievement of this were noted, and again refer to the many systems that surround CYP and the influence that these can have on participation and life in general.

Participants described a dream as being:

**For the ethos of the PRU to remain the same in a long stay provision but for some rules to be changed to reflect girls' expressed needs such as being allowed outside at break and lunch and to be able to wear makeup for school.**

#### 6.4.1.8 Pragmatic aspects

Participants also referred to the smaller size of the PRU as impacting on participation which other studies conducted by Garner (1993); Harris et al. (2006) and Jahnukainen (2001) have also highlighted as being important to pupils who express dissatisfaction with large schools and class

sizes. Lloyd and O' Regan (1999) also found that teachers were considered more sympathetic to difficulty and could be asked for help in smaller classes in PRUs, a finding shared by participants in the current study.

#### 6.4.1.9 Progress and development

Some progress with regard to participation was identified by staff and pupils as having been made between the Dream and Design stages and participation practices suggested and implemented following Design and Destiny stages also included beauty sessions being offered as a reward. Interestingly what had been proffered as an incentive for female pupils in an attempt to meet their needs and facilitate participation taking into account gender, some male pupils were reported to have also chosen to attend these sessions. Other proposals put into effect between the Dream and Design stage included pupils being allowed to wear light 'day' makeup.

Other potential areas for development were identified by participants' suggestions which were expressed through dreams which included:

**For the integration of CYP into short and long stay provision to be phased so that relationships can be built and needs can be expressed and understood thus making them more likely to be met.**

Evaluating the changes made during the Destiny stage of the AI the researcher was informed by staff participants and the Deputy Head of the PRU that the LA had decided to integrate the long stay girls' provision within an existing special school for SEBD boys within the city. Although this had been a surprise to all staff at the PRU and had left them feeling disappointed as they were looking forward to the change and expressed a desire to continue to develop the PRU, as the focus of the current study was on collecting pupil views to inform provision development the researcher considers that the process and data are still useful as the setting will continue to be a PRU for both boys and girls.

### 6.4.2 Case study proposition 3 b

**The factors that have the greatest impact on participation are similar for girls and boys identified as having SEBDs.**

Participants did not refer to any gender specific considerations when considering factors that influence CYP's participation. However, reflections were made regarding what dynamics might be important when creating a girls only provision. These related to both practical considerations as expressed through dreams such as:

**Girls to be involved with planning the area and common rooms and for them to have an area for them to make cups of tea and meals at times and animals to look after in the grounds.**

Although, as discussed, the PRU will no longer house a permanent girls' provision there is potential for these suggestions to be implemented within the current setting. Furthermore, it is possible that staff at the existing SEBD boys' provision would welcome some input and support to prepare for the impending changes to their school.

Thought was also given to the emotional needs of girls as expressed through the dream:

**For a girls' provision within a nice building which is fit for purpose for running a permanent girls unit which can meet their emotional needs by taking a holistic approach to their participation.**

Again, these are likely to be needs of girls whether at a setting for a short or a long time and furthermore it is also possible that boys would benefit too from such provision. However, it is also possible that the Western culture of coding emotionality as feminine means that staff did not pay as much regard to the emotional needs of boys, perhaps regarding them as more 'rational'.

These were in fact findings reported by Smith et al. (2004) after setting up a support room within a school in which all pupils could discuss their emotional and behavioural problems and successes, and



where they could learn techniques to manage their own behaviour in order for them to be able to continue to access learning. Flouri and Panourgia's (2011) study also showed that the functional form of the effect of life stress on emotional and behavioural adjustment does not differ between genders. Furthermore, both male and female young people from the PRUs involved in Michael and Frederickson's (2013) study spoke about the importance of teachers providing emotional support and perceived emotional support from teachers was found by Thuen and Bru (2009) to be related to higher levels of engagement with and enjoyment of learning, motivation to succeed and fewer emotional and behavioural problems regardless of gender.

Participants did not refer to any differences according to gender when examining how knowledge is currently shared within and outside of the PRU to aid the participation of CYP, although the consequences of not distributing information were discussed and ideas regarding how the process could be improved were generated. Interestingly, although pupils felt able to offer guidance to teachers on how to improve participation practice for CYP, they were hesitant to recommend changes to peers.

Participation as a process requires information-sharing and dialogue between all involved (Lansdown, 2011). Therefore, participants from this study could be in a position to share key findings that may enable CYP from the PRU and other settings to participate in decision making in a constructive and appropriate way. Knowledge regarding how best to assist CYP to transition back into mainstream or indeed special school and the community to achieve their full potential in their future lives could be developed through the decision to use AI as a participatory research approach.

### **6.5 Summary: Factors facilitating participation**

Eight key themes were identified through thematic analysis, which were supported by the content analysis and illustrative photographs, as having the greatest impact on the facilitation of participation practices in the PRU. These include successful participation practices; the influence of gender; pupil voice; the influence of CYP's views; understanding of the needs of CYP with SEBDs; relationships; ethos of the setting; and moving participation forward. A number of supplementary themes were also identified, an overview of which are described in table 13. In an attempt to unite the many themes and to address the aims of the research, table 14 is a visual representation of the Dream stage of the AI.

The themes identified correspond with the existing literature base and importantly with the aspirations set out in the SEN and disability CoP: 0 to 25 years (DfE, 2015). Specifically, the legislation sets out a clearer focus on the participation of CYP in decision-making at individual and strategic levels; the importance of the CYP participating as fully as possible in decisions, and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions. The current researcher considers that the participants involved in this study were afforded these opportunities through taking part in this research and in relation to the principles underpinning the CoP the aims of participation were established, progress made was marked and it is anticipated that trust between staff and pupils has been built.

It is encouraging that the initial changes implemented as a result of the AI suggest that the ethos within the PRU has incorporated these principles and participation is likely to continue to be facilitated if the practice continues to be recognised, valued, planned and resourced; and there are clearly described roles for CYP and parents and that they understand the impact their participation is making (DfE, 2015).

## **6.6 Appreciative Inquiry**

### **6.6.1 Strengths of AI**

It would seem that, when used as a process for organisational and professional development, AI has been demonstrated as facilitating systemic work whilst also supporting the principles and ideals of those involved in embedding participatory practices for CYP and their families in the PRU. The changes described in table 16 relate to the plan created with the staff participants and the Assistant Head (appendix 15) as a result of transferring the dreams into actions. By paying attention to the ethos and the ethics and values that inform the culture of the setting, more meaningful participatory encounters are likely to be experienced by all involved. This avoids the tokenism that can often occur when practitioners have been trained to implement procedures without deeper thought and consideration being given to what is actually required of them on a personal, professional and organisational level.

Kennedy (2005) explains that collaborative action research provides an alternative to the more passive roles imposed on teachers in traditional models of professional development. Burbank and

Kauchack (2003) advocates that teachers should view their development as a process and not merely as a product of someone else's endeavours. Action research as a model of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) has been acknowledged as being successful in allowing teachers to ask critical questions of their practice and has significant capacity for transformative practice and professional autonomy (Kennedy, 2005).

Were the AI approach adopted in the current study implemented across this and other LAs, there could be enormous implications to development as by taking into account the whole implications of the obligations set out in the new legislation and SEN CoP, the requirements could be met completely, thus ensuring that the needs of CYP and their parents/ carers are understood and aspirations fulfilled.

Furthermore, the findings demonstrate that participants also valued the need to support the successful preparation of CYP for adulthood and their participating in society, including having friends and supportive relationships, and participating in, and contributing to, the local community. This suggests that the data generated by the AI was meaningful to participants as by encouraging reflection not only on the past and present which may have produced more problem focused discussion time was also given to imagining preferred futures and aspirations which led to the construction of dreams and wishes and ultimately to meaningful action.

Although not participants in the initial focus group, the SMT were involved in part of the AI process which made it easier to ascertain the extent that participant's views were likely to be taken into account. It can therefore be concluded that the AI enabled duties set out under Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 (DfE, 2014), that LAs should ensure that CYP feel they have participated fully in the process and have a sense of co-ownership, to be addressed. As stated by Hobbs, Todd and Taylor (2000):

we need to work so that children and young people feel they can own and predict their own story. ...provide the child with a greater understanding of their own situation and what actions may be open to them to undertake positive change (p. 110).

It is anticipated by the researcher based on the literature reviewed (Sellman, 2009; Farrell, 2012) that the staff involved in the study will feel more knowledgeable and enabled to support CYP and work with them in partnership, enabling students to participate fully in decisions about the outcomes they wish to achieve. Furthermore other obligations and facilitators of participation

including working closely with and involving parents were both identified as important by participants and have begun to be met within the PRU.

### 6.6.2 Limitations of AI

As discussed, AI identifies 'the best of what is' in order to articulate 'what might be' in the future. However, in spite of this positive slant it was at times a challenge to engage pupil participants in discussion regarding what worked well because of their lack of experience of participating in decision making and their lack of experience of reflecting on the positive. Therefore, as an interviewer the researcher found that there was a balance to be struck between maintaining rapport and empathy, listening to 'problem centred' views or opinions and upholding the main principles of AI (White, 2013).

Another characteristic of the AI approach is the tendency of AI to underplay power relationships within an organisation. Staff participants were in what might be considered a 'lower' hierarchical position in the PRU to the SMT and as there is often a relationship between hierarchical position and the impact of an individual's views or opinion it was important to ensure anonymity in this research when presenting findings to the SMT. Furthermore, AI is dependent on participant's ability to articulate their thoughts and views and on the mastery of language which varies amongst individuals. The pupils in particular were affected at times by affective factors such as anger and sadness which may have contributed to their ability to articulate their perceptions of the issues they faced.

As mentioned in the earlier chapter, AI is often criticised for underplaying the reality of participant's feelings of negativity and possible deep seated grievances which have their origins in past events. It therefore may not always be possible to 'reframe' such experiences positively to identify the 'best of what is'. However, despite the challenges faced as a result of remaining positive the researcher considers that the process and outcomes benefitted participants on a number of levels.

## 6.7 Positive features of the Study

As stated in Howe (2009), Sutherland (2004) suggests that a 'gender differences discourse' is the most frequently invoked communication which perhaps has a common sense quality because of the widespread assumption that gender differences are innate and biological rather than socially constructed. Following a critical realist approach, it was possible to identify whether a discourse of sameness or difference provided an explanation of gendered behaviour regarding the participation of CYP in decision making and planning. Therefore, this study has contributed to the literature base and knowledge regarding similarities between genders as opposed to differences.

## 6.8 Difficulties and Limitations of the study

As with most research, this study has a number of difficulties and limitations. A study of the perceptions of individuals is always likely to be complex given the variation between interpretations of views and meanings and it is probable that the participants in this study had different levels of understanding of the terms and concepts related to participation. This has implications for ensuring that the methodology, design, data analysis validity and reliability of the study are as meticulous as possible as discussed in the previous chapter. Although the researcher has gained an understanding of what was successful and why in facilitating decision making in the PRU and has identified a number of key factors relating to participation practices, these need to be understood within the context of the individual case and as such may not be representative and generalisable to the education community more broadly. Indeed, there are good reasons to believe that there would be greater similarities between participants within a PRU than there would across different settings (Hart, 2010). The ideographic situation thus depends upon many factors which could explain why research findings and psychological theory do not always translate into practice as discussed in Miller and Frederickson (2006).

The purposive sample is small although this study could act as a basis for further, larger scale studies in order to understand the perceptions of a wider group of staff and CYP, both girls and boys, identified as having SEBDs. As the staff participants in this study were employed by the same LA as the researcher who spent 18 months in the PRU with the aim of developing rapport to improve the quality of relationships and therefore data collected, a challenge was posed due to awareness that these relationships could conversely affect the content of the interviewees' responses due to a wish

to agree, shock or surprise the researcher. It is therefore important for researchers to maximise the validity of research and the use of the Interview Schedule (appendices 7 and 8) went some way towards increasing the trustworthiness of the research interviews.

Issues such as validity and reliability are often associated with quantitative studies whilst qualitative research is concerned with trustworthiness. In qualitative research an additional range of criteria is suggested with published guidelines by a number of researchers (Barker, Pistrang & Elliot, 2002; Elliott, Fischer & Rennie, 1999; Popay & Williams, 1998). Issues related to trustworthiness have already been addressed in Chapter 4. Attempts were taken to maximise the trustworthiness of the data and to minimise invalidity due to the effects described, although it is not possible to claim total validity in this study.

In keeping with a qualitative approach, comprehensive illustrative quotations have been presented to illustrate identified themes. To increase trustworthiness member checking was adopted as an important quality criterion in the study. Data has been presented and discussed through visual thematic maps to contribute to the internal coherence and narrative of the data (Elliot et al.1999; Popay & Williams, 1998). A summary of the data analysis was provided to highlight the importance of the final themes contributing to the desirable actions and support perceived as necessary for their implication. It is proposed that the findings should not necessarily be generalised but may serve as a basis for future researchers to investigate the challenges to facilitating the participation of CYP identified as having SEBDs and the support necessary in the changing professional landscape.

Hobbs et al. (2000) note that consulting with children poses difficulties for EP practice and warn that “Educational Psychologists cannot just ask the child for their view of their situation, and expect them to tell us” (p.110). As discussed, the researcher offered pupils the opportunity to support verbal discussion with photographs to facilitate their understanding and communication. However, on reflection, the researcher considers that more emphasis could have been placed on this as the sole form of data gathering to support CYP to share their views and aid participation. For example, pupil three was a naturally quiet girl and it is likely that a verbal interview was not only not the most appropriate method of data gathering for her but that she might also find it more difficult to ask to use another method. In retrospect, the researcher could have included the use of photographs in the research design as a standard method which would have enhanced the contributions made and provided a more comprehensive and reliable account of all CYP’s views.

However, despite the limitations of the current research identified in this section, the single case study design and chosen methodology provided rich and comprehensive data to inform each of the three research questions.

## **6.9 Implications for EP practice**

The findings presented in chapter 5 and discussed in this chapter in relation to each proposition for each research question have enabled the researcher to identify the most significant findings in relation to implications for practice and to inform good practice recommendations as an outcome of the current research.

Given the number of factors which were associated with the facilitation of CYPs participation in decision making, the research has a number of implications for professionals working with this group, those who support them and their families. Evidence is provided which can enhance understanding of the influences on successful participation thus providing guidance for schools and other education settings as to how to meet the requirements set out in UK government legislation.

### **6.9.1 Implications for participation practice**

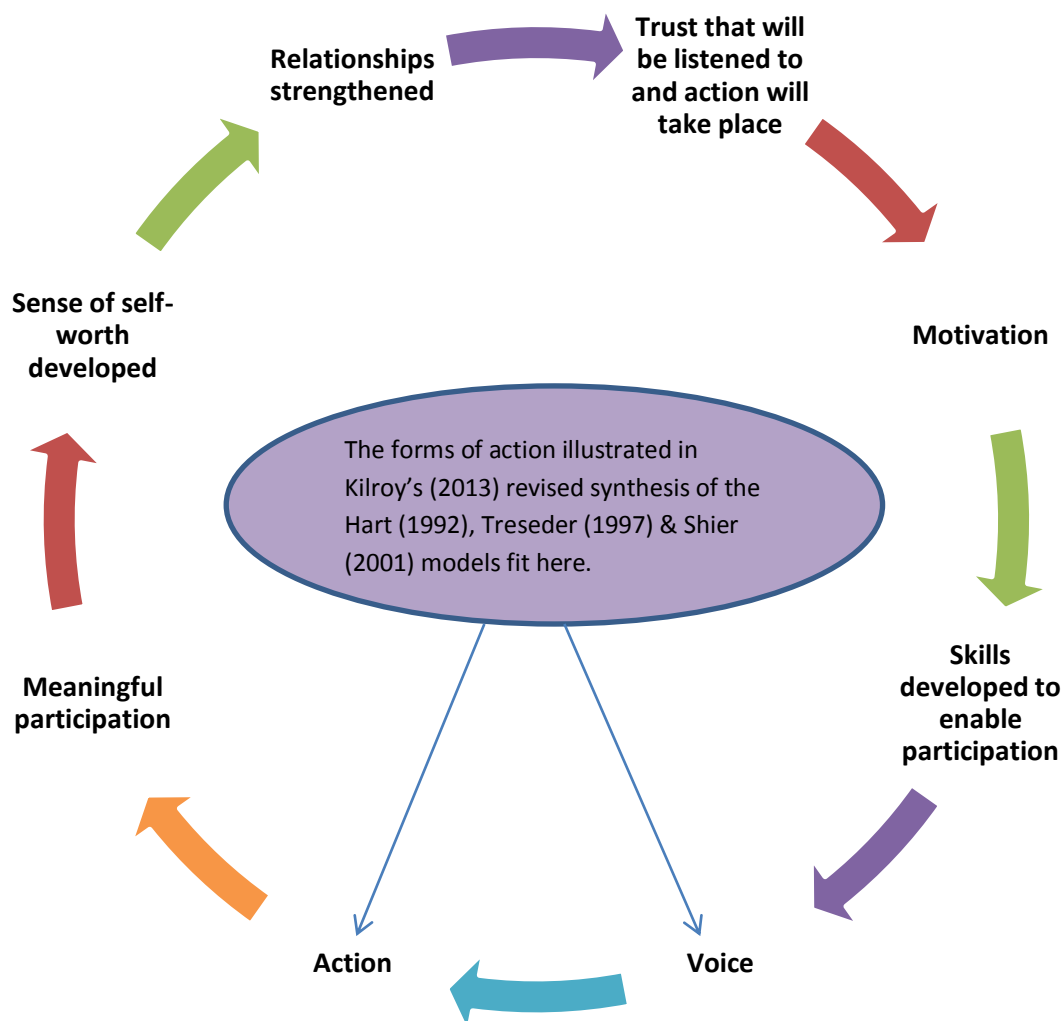
In Chapter 3 the researcher discussed Kilroy's (2013) synthesised model of participation (Figure 15, appendix 6) which was developed by combining what Kilroy found to be the key aspects of the three most influential models of participation (Hart, 1992; Treseder, 1997; Shier, 2001). Kilroy highlighted the importance of considering the influences taking place on the level of participation overall, the level of decision-making, and CYP being enabled to have a voice.

When making recommendations based on some of the key findings from this study that could contribute to a good practice model of participation the current researcher gives particular consideration to the revised SEN CoP (DfE, 2014), the underpinning principles of which place importance on the CYP, and their parents, participating as fully as possible in decisions; and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions.

Similar to the findings of Davison's (2013) study, staff in the current study suggested that their role in supporting CYP to participate in decision making was embedded within an eco-systemic model, and comprised components which overlapped and interacted with each other. Fundamental to each component, however, were the relationships which existed between staff and pupils; between

peers; between colleagues; between staff and parents/ carers and between pupils and their parents/ carers.

Therefore, the current author considers that this element, that of ‘relationships’, is the key aspect of participation and underpins each of the influences identified by Davison (2013) and Kilroy (2013). Furthermore, relationships are also influenced by meaningful participation experiences, making the process reciprocal and sustaining. With this in mind a further revised model of participation is presented below.



**Figure 11: Revised model of participation**

It is particularly important that staff and pupils from settings other than the PRU are also afforded the opportunity to develop understanding regarding the significance and consequence of relationships, particularly relating to participation of CYP. This is particularly meaningful given the



emphasis on collaborative working and participation in the 2014 SEN CoP, making future research into developing and maintaining effective relationships between professionals, CYP and their families of substantial use.

### **6.9.2 The role of the EP**

EPs are often called upon to consult and advise as well as to train school staff in approaches to the management and support of CYP (Hart, 2010). In Scotland, the Review of the Provision of Educational Psychology Services (The Currie Report) (Scottish Executive, 2002) identified EPs working at the levels of the individual child or family, the school or establishment and the LA. In relation to each of these levels, EPs were seen to engage in five core activities: consultation, assessment, intervention, training and research (Farrell et al. 2006). The Children and Families Act 2014 (DfE, 2014) and revised SEN and Disability CoP places the onus on LAs to work with CYP to establish the aims of their participation, mark progress and build trust in order to meet their duties concerning the participation of young people in education and training. However, evidence shows that children's democratic involvement is at best limited and at worst tokenistic (Alderson, 2002; Leach, 2003; Mayall, 2005). This might be due to the view held by some professionals, parents and indeed CYP that such interactions involve a relationship of power and control, where the adults shape and manage CYP, whose autonomy is undermined and overlooked (Hart, 2010). However, a humanistic approach which is suggested in person-centred planning, considers that students' motivation, and consequently their behaviour, is underpinned by certain basic psychological needs, such as needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Nie & Lau, 2009).

Because humanistic approaches emphasise choice and student autonomy they have been contrasted with approaches that emphasise teacher, rather than student, control (Hart, 2010) which can diminish motivation (Nie & Lau, 2009), and foster powerlessness. As Lake (2004) argues:

Under this [behavioural] approach, adults must control children's behaviour because children are not capable of controlling themselves; adults must decide what is right and wrong for children because children are not capable of deciding right and wrong for themselves. However, controlling young children hinders their development of self-esteem and self-identity. Controlling young children may also reinforce the powerlessness they feel in adult environments and could stunt their growth toward equality. The act of controlling children is the act of oppressing children. (p. 571)

Although the current researcher considers that the present study helped the PRU staff to meet the responsibilities for facilitating person-centred participation as set out in The Children and Families

Act 2014, and that the dreams and provocative propositions generated as part of the AI could also have the potential to assist participation of CYP, regardless of their gender, in other settings, there remains an on-going duty for the LA to ensure that this process when undertaken is meaningful for CYP and is never tokenistic. Long (2014) provides an overview of the new SEN system and describes the requirements for LAs. The guidance states that by September 2014, LAs should have ensured that early years' settings, schools and FE colleges in their area had overhauled teacher training and professional development to better help pupils with SENs and to raise their attainment. Whilst capacity has been built in the PRU to meet training and development issues due to the implications of the new legislation, there is a need to do this in other locations, both special and mainstream, across the authority. The researcher considers that the findings presented as a result of this study could inform such training and development on a number of levels and provide guidance as to how to best embed participation practice in person centred planning.

Fundamentally, it is the perception of 'participation' and what this entails that can have a considerable impact on how CYP are enabled and facilitated to take part in decision making and planning to participate. The findings demonstrate that how language is used can contribute to understanding of the process and it is how gender is construed which influences expectations and therefore differences in procedures. Views of the process of participation and how this should be managed need to be challenged systemically, in organisations such as education settings and also on a more individual level with pupils, parents and school staff. Furthermore, the potential positive outcomes of successful participation for all CYP with SEBDs and also those adults who support and care for them could be shared as could knowledge regarding how best to facilitate this.

The use of a qualitative methodology has also been shown to assist in the drawing out of views of participants some of whom are often classified as 'hard to reach', thus contributing to the knowledge base of EPs regarding accessing "pupil voice". Importantly, the use of AI may enable principles which encourage meaningful involvement and the development of shared ownership of decisions to be achieved by CYP and their parents. Furthermore rather than participation being perceived as a laborious and even alien process, AI can enhance already existing practices whilst developing and improving them further. As a result, CYP are more likely to be asked for their views and have their voices listened to and most importantly acted upon.

Given the current emphasis on person centred planning EPs could benefit from utilising the skills demonstrated in this AI process when consulting with and listening to CYP and their parents to gain their views regarding their strengths and needs (Harris, 2013). Furthermore, EPs could act as trainers by facilitating other professionals such as school and college staff to adopt an AI approach to help

identify how the many recent changes made to the education system in the UK, and particularly related to SEN, could be implemented as efficiently and as unobtrusively as possible. This would align the EP's skills with the research element of AI as the development aspect is for the organisation implementing changes to own, again facilitating possession of any transformations and the responsibility for decisions and action.

### **6.10 Areas for future research**

This discussion has indicated a number of areas for future research arising from this study. As stated in Chapter 4, the purpose of this research was to develop explanation and a rich understanding of what was associated with the facilitation of CYP identified with SEBDs participation in decision making. Whilst this research has limited statistical generalisability it provides rich data from one case about what is associated with the successful facilitation of participation and why. This, along with further evidence from other similar cases would be beneficial for supporting analytic and theoretical generalisability (Yin, 2009). As highlighted by Miller and Frederickson (2006) to "collate, compare and contrast examples of single interventions in complex settings leads to greater and more widely generalizable knowledge of successful interventions" (p.118). Therefore, the more similar cases with similar findings the more promising the evidence of analytic generalisability. In addition, a stronger claim for theoretical generalisability could be made if the factors associated with success are absent in unsuccessful cases.

It could be hypothesised that the factors which support girls with SEBDs might also be beneficial in supporting boys experiencing similar difficulties, and indeed all CYP who after all have a right to be involved in making decisions about those things which affect them. Researching factors associated with successful facilitation of all CYP in participation in decision making could therefore be an area for future research.

As noted, the participation of CYP in planning and decision making is a concern to educators' and a matter of statutory obligation. It would seem, therefore, that there is a strong case for further research to contribute to the further development of evidence-based approaches in this area. The findings suggest that there is a need to understand better the processes that not only facilitate CYP identified as having SEBDs participation but also act on their views once elicited. In particular, there is a need to research the views of girls identified as having SEBDs and the connection between constructions of gender and perceptions of needs and the impact that this can have on participation.

The importance of and impact of relationships at a number of different levels was identified in the present study as a recurrent theme and it is hoped that this study has provided information which will enable other researchers to investigate this further. The PRU recognised the need to build and maintain relationships with various groups as part of their remit as demonstrated by the commissioning of this study, by the values expressed and school ethos described and by the employment of parent liaison officers and establishment of the parents group as a result of the actions planned as part of the AI. However, not all settings recognise and promote relationships as effectively and so further examination of the importance of working with schools from a place where they feel ready would also be of value, a requirement which AI has been demonstrated to lend itself well to.

To form relationships staff have to be in the mind-set to do so which means that their own social and emotional needs must be understood and developed. When discussing a research study into the links between staff wellbeing and school performance, Briner and Dewberry (2007) explain that although most research tends to focus on individual wellbeing and performance indicators, research conducted on a group or collective level reveals stronger links between wellbeing and performance. The authors go on to suggest that there are links between how teachers feel about their work and the performance of pupils in that school, even after controlling for other factors that are known to have an influence on pupil performance. Therefore, it is important to pay attention to the wellbeing of school staff as well as to that of CYP in order to improve the quality of relationships which have been shown here to be key to participation. A longer term and larger scale study to inform interventions across LAs aimed at addressing the social and emotional development of pupils and staff could increase understanding of this area.

### **6.11 Reflections**

Reflexive accounts are considered an interesting addition (Oliver, 2004) and allow the researcher the opportunity to reflect upon their own personal and subjective perspective. As discussed, this research aimed to address a gap in the research literature and explore the perceptions of stakeholders involved with CYP identified as having SEBDs and gather their views about factors associated with the facilitation of their participation in decision making. Following the study, the researcher reflected upon the research process, a summary of which will be presented in this section, from both a personal and professional perspective and contemplates the effect on the researcher and on the learning that took place as a consequence of the study.

### 6.11.1 The researcher's contribution.

As highlighted in Chapter 5 and discussed in this chapter, positive relationships emerged as a key theme in supporting CYP identified as having SEBDs in various ways including participating in decision making. The researcher suggests that the development of positive relationships was also an important element of the research process in facilitating discussion with participants. By developing rapport over the extended data gathering period and taking time to sensitively gain a thorough understanding of participant's experiences and perceptions open and honest discussion took place.

As suggested by Coyle and Wright (1996), developing a sense of connectedness and rapport between the researcher and participant can, "promote open and honest responding and can be used to help the interviewer to obtain detailed information and a clear understanding of the interviewee's experiences and feelings and to check that he or she has understood what has been said" (p.434). By paraphrasing and summarising participant's responses it was possible for the researcher to verify their own understanding and also facilitate further elaboration through affording time for participant's to reflect upon their responses. Additionally, the researcher considers that this assisted in ensuring the reliability and validity of findings both during the interviews and also as a part of the member checking process.

The use of semi structured interview schedules also enabled the researcher to work flexibly and at times adapt questions depending on the participant's needs and responses. This meant that participants were kept at the centre of the process and the researcher considers that the therapeutic core conditions of empathy congruence and unconditional positive regard were both demonstrated and experienced by staff and pupils (Rogers, 1957). The ability to empathise with participants was essential, especially when considering the past experiences of pupils and the impact that these had had on them and their ability to participate in decision making. Therefore, the researcher considers that the use of counselling skills and techniques helped participants to construct their stories, possibly for the first time in some cases, by offering time and a safe space to discuss experiences. For example, when discussing the different and often hidden elements of her personality, one pupil stated that she had never told anybody about this other than the researcher. Indeed, both staff and pupils reported their experience of the research process as therapeutic and as resulting in new levels of self-awareness, knowledge and understanding.

Coyle and Wright (1996) acknowledged that participants may wish to explore some of the painful experiences that have been aroused and the researcher considers that it would have been unethical to have ignored or dismissed such discussion in an attempt to stick to the planned agenda. However,

it was essential that the researcher worked ethically by ensuring that the time participants spent in interviews did not exceed what was set out in the information and consent/ assent forms signed by participants and pupil's parents. Furthermore, the researcher ensured that participants had time at the end of interviews to 'debrief' if necessary.

In summary, whilst it was not the purpose of this research participants may have found that constructing something meaningful and relevant for the first time and having a sense of feeling listened to and understood, was helpful and in some way satisfying which resulted in more honest and open discussions. The researcher would therefore suggest that the application of existing counselling skills in the interviews was beneficial, enabling rich data to be gathered which might not have been obtained with a less flexible and empathic approach. This resulted in participants considering past experiences to generate visions for the future and planning how actions could be achieved, thus making this participation process both collaborative and meaningful.

#### **6.11.2 Gathering the views of 'hard to reach' CYP.**

The researcher also made a number of reflections on the process of gathering the young people's views. As highlighted in Chapter 5, the young people were given the choice of how they wanted to express their views, either verbally or using photography. Whilst two out of three of the girls did take photographs they all expressed their views verbally first, using the camera to confirm their talk based accounts. There could be a number of reasons for this. Firstly, it could be that photography did not lend itself well to what the girls wanted to say, as some of the identified factors were quite abstract which may have been difficult to express through photographs. Secondly, the young people might have found it easy to access responses to questions because these were likely to be in consciousness, particularly given their age. For this reason, the girls may have preferred to express their views orally. Photography or art materials may have been preferred however, had the pupils been of a younger age, had particular learning needs or if there had been more challenging questions which explored traumatic experiences for example. Thirdly, it was hypothesised that photography might have been helpful in engaging the young people. However, it is possible that the positive relationship the researcher quickly established with participants meant that they felt comfortable to talk openly. Finally, it is possible that simply being offered a choice of methods was facilitative because it gave the young people some control, particularly given that choice and control emerged as a theme in the data.

The researcher held five sessions with each young person because it was hypothesised that the relationship with the researcher may have developed further over numerous interviews which might in turn have facilitated additional information as the pupils learned to trust the researcher. The researcher had a sense that the young people were conversing freely in conversation and the emergence of positive and negative issues suggested that they were being honest.

However, it was not always easy to arrange so many sessions due to time restrictions. Also, due to the nature of the setting, it was important that interviews were planned to take place in PRU before the girls left for more permanent education provisions. The young people showed a good insight into factors which had both facilitated and created barriers to their participation in decision making. They also responded well to the question investigating what could lead to more successful participation practices. However, it was more difficult for the young people to answer questions regarding how they would share these ideas with either other pupils or teachers. It is possible that this was either too abstract for them, or as the researcher considers to be more likely to be the case, because they had little experience of being asked for and of sharing their views regarding their needs. Furthermore, most of the girls expressed feeling embarrassed at the thought of discussing their thoughts in this way, again perhaps due to lack of experience or to the expectations that other's may have of them and how they should act.

### **6.11.3 The use of thematic analysis**

When reflecting upon the use of thematic analysis as a methodology for analysing qualitative data the researcher recognised the benefits that enabled key features of data to be summarised providing results which were accessible to the general public; advantages highlighted in Braun and Clarke (2006). This was important for the researcher who wanted to make a greater contribution to knowledge and for the findings to be accessible to school staff and pupils and also to other education and health professionals who work with young people who are identified as having SEBDs.

However, the researcher did not envisage that data collection and analysis would be so time consuming thus confirming that qualitative research is not an easy option as is often suggested.

### **6.11.4 Personal effects of and learning from the research**

The study has had an effect on the researcher personally. What emerged is the understanding that CYP with SEBDs not only have a right to their voices being sought and heard but that they also want

to express their views and are able to when given the opportunity and space to do so regardless of their gender. Critical to this, however, is that they experience action which relies on the existence of trusting and respectful relationships between staff, pupils and other professionals.

The AI model is an attempt to show how both pupil voice and action are associated in relation to participation in decision making and planning. This research process has developed the researcher's understanding of philosophical as well as psychological concepts and in accordance with Howe's (2009) reflection, has further impressed the sentiments expressed by Lindsay (2008), "Psychologists have the opportunity to exercise power and influence many people's lives. This carries with it the necessity to behave ethically" (p.189)

Returning to the point made earlier, by embedding participation practices within person centred planning through professional and organisational development as opposed to using more superficial training events and manuals, practitioners will be enabled to facilitate more meaningful experiences for CYP and their families therefore meeting statutory and local obligations. More importantly, by recognising the need to work ethically through acting on the views expressed by CYP and choosing to put resources into organisational development whilst rejecting tokenistic practice and dictating training, professionals and organisations will be more able to carry out their duties. This would support the progression of staff skills and improve well-being, thus reducing feelings of inadequacy which if not addressed would be likely to impact negatively on staff welfare and affect relationships with pupils and as a result, participation.

## 6.12 Conclusion

The factors related to how girls identified as having SEBDs and staff in one PRU feel pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated have been understood and the core psychological functions underpinning them revealed. The importance of pupils feeling valued, secure and experiencing autonomy within supportive relationships are all emphasised by humanistic perspectives which promote participation and the development of social and emotional skills and wellbeing for both CYP and adults.

It is hoped that the new knowledge generated will be shared in order to support those working at the individual, organisational and wider societal or systemic level with CYP identified as having SEBDs to facilitate changes to participation practices, regardless of gender. Although potentially challenging, there are many benefits and conceivable positive outcomes of the meaningful



participation of CYP with SEBDs and the processes required are perhaps less difficult than adults supporting them imagine. As succinctly stated by one pupil in this study:

***“Just ask us what we want to do...It’s simple, just ask! It’s not rocket science. It’s just two people having a conversation!”***

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## 8.1

Appendix 1: Table 20: Excluded papers

Search 1					
Database	Journal	Title	Author	Abstract	Reason for exclusion
Education-Sage	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Identifying And Assessing The Job-Related Social Skills Of Adolescents And Young Adults With Emotional And Behavioral Disorders	Bullis, V., Evans, N., Fredericks, H.D.B., & Davis, C. (1993)	This research first described job-related social behaviors for persons with EBD by following the behavioral analytic model and then used this information to develop measures of these skills.	Non-UK study (USA)
Search 2					
ASSIA	Remedial and Special Education	Strengths-Based Assessment Differences Across Students with LD and EBD	Reid, R., Epstein, M., Pastor, D., & Ryser, G. (2000)	Current assessment techniques for children with learning disabilities (LD) and emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) are typically focused on identifying deficits. This study investigated the use of an alternative strength-based perspective, using the Behavioral and Emotional Rating Scale (BERS).	Does not refer to participation
ASSIA	Remedial and Special Education	Peer-Mediated Intervention Studies on Academic Achievement for Students with EBD: A Review	Ryan, J., Reid, R. & Epstein, M. (2004)	The authors of this review examined the effectiveness of peer-mediated interventions on the academic functioning of students with emotional and behavior disorders (EBD)	Non-UK study (USA)

<b>ASSIA</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Special Education Identification of Head Start Children with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders in Second Grade	Forness, S., Cluett, S., Ramey, C., Ramey, T., Sharon, Zima, L., Bonnie, T., et al. (1998)	In the current study, two cohorts of 3,694 second-grade children across 30 sites were screened for EBD as part of a larger study on Head Start transition	Non-UK study (USA)
<b>ASSIA</b>	The Journal of Special Education	A Longitudinal Study of Depressive Symptomology and Self-Concept in Adolescents	Montague, M., Enders, C., Dietz, S., Dixon, J., Cavendish, W., Morrison, W (2008)	The purpose of the study was to investigate the trajectories of depressive symptomology and self-concept in adolescents between the ages of 13 and 17 and to determine whether primary school teacher ratings of adaptive and maladaptive behavior predict self-reported depressive symptoms and self-concept in adolescence.	Non-UK study (USA)
<b>ASSIA</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Self-Determination Prospects of Youth With High-Incidence Disabilities: Divergent Perspectives and Related Factors	Carter, E. Trainor, A., Owens, L., Sweden, B. & Sun, Y. (2010)	This article examined the self-determination prospects of 196 youth with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD), learning disabilities (LD), and mild/moderate cognitive disabilities (CD) using the AIR Self-Determination Scale. Teachers reported the capacities of youth with EBD to engage in self-determined behavior to be significantly lower than those of youth	Non-UK study (USA)

				with LD but higher than youth with CD.	
<b>ASSIA</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Consequences of Differential Diagnostic Criteria on Identification Rates of Children with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders	Cluett, S., Forness, S., Ramey, S., Ramey, C., Hsu, C. et al. (1998)	The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of different diagnostic criteria on EBD identification by systematically varying the respondent for the symptom checklist (parent and/or teacher) and the type of functional impairment (poor academic achievement and/or poor social skills) required for diagnosis.	Non-UK study (USA). Does not refer to participation.
<b>ASSIA</b>	Remedial and Special Education	Motivation and Self-Regulation. A Comparison of Students with Learning and Behavior Problems	Fulk, B., Brigham, M., Frederick, J., Lohman, Darlene (1998)	The purpose of this study was to investigate the motivational characteristics of 3 groups of adolescents: students with learning disabilities (LD), students with emotional or behavioral disorders (EBD), and students with average achievement (AA).	Does not refer to participation
<b>ASSIA</b>	Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties	An exploration of teachers' current perceptions of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties	Soles, T., Bloom, E., Lee Heath, N. & Karagiannakis, A. (2008)	This study investigated teachers' current perceptions of SEBD by examining characteristics of children nominated by their teachers as having SEBD. While the majority of children were nominated for externalizing behaviours,	Non UK study (USA)

				teachers rated girls as having more severe externalizing difficulties than boys.	
<b>ASSIA</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Sociocultural Correlates of Disciplinary Exclusion Among Students With Emotional, Behavioral, and Learning Disabilities in the SEELS National Dataset	Achilles, G., Mclaughlin, M., Croninger, R. (2007)	From the SEELS study, the study authors entered multilevel predictors into logistic regression analyses to identify factors associated with higher likelihood of exclusion (HLE) among students in three high-exclusion disability groups: emotional/behavioral disorders (EBD), other health impairment (OHI) with a diagnosis of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and learning disability (LD).	Non UK study (USA)
<b>ASSIA</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Behavioral Disorders in the School. Participant Roles and Sub-Roles in Three Types of School Violence	Gumpel, T. (2008)	This study presents an attempt to widen the study of emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) to include children not formally identified by the school as having EBD through examining the case of extreme school aggressors and their victims.	Non-UK study (Jerusalem)
<b>ASSIA</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Academic Attainment During Commitment and Postrelease Education-Related Outcomes of Juvenile Justice-	Cavendish, W. (2014)	This study examined academic characteristics of youth with and without disabilities (N = 4,066) and reports on the education-related	Non-UK study (USA)

		Involved Youth With and Without Disabilities		outcomes of these youth 3 years after release from juvenile justice facilities in Florida.	
<b>ASSIA</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Professional Beliefs About Parents of Children with Mental and Emotional Disabilities. A Cross-Discipline Comparison	Johnson, H., Renaud, E. (1997)	The views of social workers, child psychiatrists, and psychologists about parents of children with mental, emotional, and behavioral disorders were compared in this study.	Non-UK study (USA)
<b>ASSIA</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Patterns and Predictors of Disciplinary Exclusion Over Time: An Analysis of the SEELS National Data Set	Bowman-Perrott, L., Benz, M., Hsu, H.Y., Kwok, O.M., Eisterhold, L.A. & Zhang, D. (2011)	This study used data from the Special Education Elementary Longitudinal Study to examine patterns and predictors of disciplinary exclusion over time	Non-UK study (USA)
<b>BEI</b>	Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties	Peer relations and emotion regulation of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties with and without a developmental disorder	Lynn, S., Carroll, A., Houghton, S. & Cobham, V. (2013)	Compared the emotion regulation and peer relationships of children aged 8–12 years with EBD and children with EBD plus a diagnosed developmental disorder. There was a multivariate main effect for sex, with females presenting with higher levels of negative emotional intensity (e.g., frustration, anger, aggression) than males.	Non- UK study (Australian)
<b>BEI</b>	European Journal of Special Needs Education	Disproportionality in special education: identifying children with emotional behavioural difficulties in Irish	Banks, J., Shevlin, M. & McCoy, S. (2012)	This paper stems from previous research which highlights how children from disadvantaged backgrounds and those attending schools	Non- UK study (Ireland)



		primary schools		designated as socio-economically disadvantaged are significantly more likely than their peers to be identified as having a special educational need of a non-normative type such as emotional behavioural difficulty (EBD)	
<b>BEI</b>	Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties	Associations between social potential and emotional and behavioural difficulties in Egyptian children	Emam, M. (2012)	The present study focuses on the PBs of Egyptian children. Results showed that boys were reported to show more EBDs than girls, whereas girls showed better PBs than did the boys.	Non-UK study (Egyptian)
<b>BEI</b>	Educational Studies	The social, emotional and behavioural difficulties of primary school children with poor attendance records	Carroll (2013)	Two complementary studies of poor and better attenders are presented. To measure emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) different teacher-com- pleted rating scales were employed, and to determine social difficulties, the studies used sociometry and some items from the scales.	Does not refer to participation
<b>Education-Sage</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Identifying And Assessing The Job-Related Social Skills Of Adolescents And Young Adults With Emotional And Behavioral Disorders	Bullis, V., Evans, N., Fredericks, H.D.B., & Davis, C. (1993)	This research first described job-related social behaviors for persons with EBD by following the behavioral analytic model and then used this	Duplicate

				information to develop measures of these skills.	
<b>Education-Sage</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Peers' Perceptions of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders: What Are Students Thinking?	Safran, S.(1995)	Based on the implications of other findings, professionals need to target peer-identified behavioral and social skill goals and develop programming aimed at normalization to improve acceptance in integrated settings.	Duplicate
<b>ERIC</b>	Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties	An exploration of teachers' current perceptions of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties	Soles , T., Bloom , E., Lee Heath, N. & Karagiannakis, A. (2008)	This study investigated teachers' current perceptions of SEBD by examining characteristics of children nominated by their teachers as having SEBD. While the majority of children were nominated for externalizing behaviours, teachers rated girls as having more severe externalizing -difficulties than boys.	Duplicate
<b>ERIC</b>	The Journal of Special Education	Evidence of Ethnic Disproportionality in Special Education in an English Population	Strand, S. & Lindsay, G. (2009)	The authors present an analysis of the 2005 Pupil Level Annual School Census for 6.5 million students aged 5 to 16 years in England.	Duplicate
<b>Search 3</b>					
<b>ASSIA</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral	Improving mathematics homework	Cancio, E., West, R., Young, K. Richard. K. (2004)	The authors of this study investigated the feasibility of teaching parents of students with EBD	Investigated whether parents of students with EBD can

	Disorders	completion and accuracy of students with EBD through self-management and parent participation		to establish and maintain a homework completion program based on teaching the students to manage their own behavior.	facilitate use of a homework program.
<b>ASSIA</b>	Child: Care, Health & Development	Parental views about services for children attending schools for the emotionally and behaviourally disturbed (EBD): a qualitative analysis	Crawford, T. & Simonoff, E. (2003)	This study examines the views of parents of children attending schools for the emotionally and behaviourally disturbed (EBD).	Refers to parents views
<b>ASSIA</b>	Teaching and Teacher Education	On the front-line: Teachers as active observers of pupils' mental health	Rothi, D M; Leavey, G.,Gerard; Best, R. (2008)	In this paper teachers' experiences in the context of greater inclusion are investigated. Researchers undertook in-depth interviews, to explore teachers' views on competency and training in mental health management.	Refers to teachers ability to manage mental health needs.
<b>ASSIA</b>	Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties	HOW SHOULD THE 'EFFECTIVENESS' OF SCHOOLS FOR PUPILS WITH EBD BE ASSESSED?	Cole, T. & Visser, J. (1998)	This paper discusses the notion of 'effectiveness' in relation to special schools for pupils with EBD.	Does not refer to pupil participation
<b>ASSIA</b>	Intervention in School and Clinic	Four Supportive Pillars in Career Exploration and Development for Adolescents with LD and EBD	Trainor, A., Smith, S.A., Sunyoung K. (2012)	In addition to typical career development and vocational programs in general education,	Does not refer to participation.

				providing school-based programs that are directly linked to employment and career development for youth with learning and emotional and behavioral disabilities is a legally mandated service in special education	
<b>ASSIA</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Concordance among three diagnostic procedures for identifying depression in children and adolescents with EBD	Pellegrino, J.F., Singh, N., Carmanico, S. J. (1999)	Assesses 50 children and adolescents with emotional and behavioural disorders for depression and co-morbid conditions using the Diagnostic Interview Schedule for Children (DISC) and the self-report Mood and Feelings Questionnaire (MFQ).	Does not refer to pupil participation
<b>ASSIA</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Deconstructing Research on Systems of Care for Youth with EBD. Frameworks for Policy Research	Rosenblatt, A., Woodbridge, M. (2003)	This article examines how methods for policy analysis can be utilized to measure the impact of the systems-of-care approach	Does not refer to pupil participation
<b>ASSIA</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Factors Associated With Participation of Children With Mental Health Problems in Structured Youth Development Programs	Keller, T., Bost, N., Lock, E., Marcenko, M. (2005)	This study examined the involvement of children with EBD in positive youth development programs and investigated factors associated with their participation. From a sample of children in an urban public mental health system, interviews with the	Non-UK study (USA)

				child and primary caregiver assessed child behavior and mental health, family functioning, and social demographic status	
<b>ASSIA</b>	Child: care, health and development	'I don't trust you, you are going to tell', adolescents with emotional and behavioural disorders participating in qualitative research	Vander Laenen, F. (2008)	During a 2-year research study into the preferences of adolescents with EBD regarding drug prevention policy, the author examined these young people's opinions and their experience of participation in research.	Non-UK study (Belgium)
<b>ASSIA</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Zigmond, N. (2006)	Behavioral Disorders Twenty-Four Months After High School: Paths Taken by Youth Diagnosed With Severe Emotional and Behavioural Disorders	The author located students with severe emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) who had been assigned to separate day schools with partial hospitalization treatment facilities because their public school programs did not sufficiently meet their needs, then conducted interviews at 3, 6, 12, 18, and 24 months postsecondary school as part of a large 5-year study of factors influencing the transition process for students with serious emotional disturbance (SED)	Refers to transition
<b>ASSIA</b>	Psychology in the Schools	Considerations for Establishing a Multi-Tiered Problem-Solving	Magyar, C. and Pandolfi, V. (2012)	This article describes considerations for establishing a multi-	Refers to ASD specifically

		Model for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders and Comorbid Emotional–Behavioral Disorders		tiered problem-solving model of service delivery that can guide identification, intervention, and progress monitoring of EBD in students with ASD.	
<b>ASSIA</b>	Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties	You tell us: how well are we preparing teachers for a career in classrooms serving children with emotional disabilities?	Kindzierski , C., O'Dell , R., Marable, M. & Raimondi, S. (2013)	This study was designed to reveal the knowledge and skill sets that practicing day treatment and residential treatment EBD teachers view as important, and/or lacking, in novice EBD teachers, and to situate those findings within the larger contexts of teacher attrition and teacher preparation in special education	Non-UK study (US study)
<b>ASSIA</b>	Adoption & Fostering	Foster carers' beliefs regarding the causes of foster children's emotional and behavioural difficulties: A preliminary model	Taylor, A., Swann, R., Warren, F. (2008)	Report on a study that aimed to explore foster carers' beliefs about the causes of foster children's emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD), with a view to creating a theory to explain how this particular group of people make sense of these problems	Refers to foster carers views
<b>ASSIA</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Strengthening Emotional Support Services. An Empirically Based Model For Training Teachers of Students with Behavior Disorders	Sawka, K., McCurdy, D., Barry L; Mannella, M. (2002)	This article describes the implementation of the SESS project pilot with 64 school staff members in a large urban school district.	Non UK study (USA)

<b>ASSIA</b>	Emotional & Behavioural Difficulties	Working with children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties: a view from speech and language therapists	Parow, B. (2009)	This paper draws on a small-scale study carried out in England. Data were collected using questionnaires and interviews in order to describe and explore SLTs' practice and opinions.	Refers to SLTs views
<b>ASSIA</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	The Impact of Teaching Self-Determination Skills on the On-Task and Off-Task Behaviors of Students With Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Kelly, J., Shogren, K.(2014)	A multiple baseline across participants design was used to examine the functional relation between the Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction (SDLMI) intervention and the on- and off-task behaviors of high school students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD).	Non-UK study (USA)
<b>ASSIA</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Professional Beliefs About Parents of Children with Mental and Emotional Disabilities. A Cross-Discipline Comparison	Johnson, H, Renaud, Edwin (1997)	Views about parents' competence, pathology, credibility, role in the etiology of children's problems were measured	Refer to professionals views about parents
<b>ASSIA</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Peers' Perceptions of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders. What Are Students Thinking?	Safran, S. (1995)	Based on the implications of findings, professionals need to target peer-identified behavioral and social skill goals and develop programming aimed at normalization to improve acceptance in integrated settings.	Duplicate

<b>BEI</b>	Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties	You tell us: how well are we preparing teachers for a career in classrooms serving children with emotional disabilities?	Kindzierski , C., O'Dell , R., Marable, M. & Raimondi, S. (2013)	This study was designed to reveal the knowledge and skill sets that practicing day treatment and residential treatment EBD teachers view as important, and/or lacking, in novice EBD teachers, and to situate those findings within the larger contexts of teacher attrition and teacher preparation in special education	Duplicate
<b>BEI</b>	Emotional & Behavioural Difficulties	Working with children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties: a view from speech and language therapists	Parow, B. (2009)	This paper draws on a small-scale study carried out in England. Data were collected using questionnaires and interviews in order to describe and explore SLTs' practice and opinions.	Duplicate
<b>BEI</b>	Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties	EFFECTIVE EBD SCHOOLING - A VIEW FROM THE INSIDE	Sattin, R. (1999)		Duplicate
<b>ERIC</b>	Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties	Experiences and perceptions of physical education	Medcalf, R., Marshall, J., Hardman, K., and Visserd, J. (2011)		Duplicate
<b>ERIC</b>	Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties	Lessons learned: student voice at a school for pupils experiencing social, emotional and behavioural difficulties	Sellman (2009)	This article reports one such attempt at an SEBD special school, where a student research group was formed to evaluate the school's behaviour policy.	Duplicate



<b>ERIC</b>	Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools	Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Functioning of Secondary School Students with Low Academic and Language Performance: Perspectives from Students, Teachers, and Parents	Joffe, V., Black, E. (2012)	This study explores SEBF in a nonclinical group of 12-year-old students with low educational and language performance from their own perspectives and those of their parents and teachers.	Focuses on SLT
<b>ERIC</b>	Emotional & Behavioural Difficulties	Working with children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties: a view from speech and language therapists	Parow, B. (2009)	This paper draws on a small-scale study carried out in England. Data were collected using questionnaires and interviews in order to describe and explore SLTs' practice and opinions.	Duplicate
<b>ERIC</b>	International Journal on School Disaffection 5.1 (2007):	Are We Nearly There yet? Curriculum, Relationships and Disaffected Pupils	Macleod, G. (2007)	The research reported here was part of a study exploring the experiences of young people identified as having social, emotional and behaviour difficulties (SEBD) who were placed in a special school. Interviews were carried out with a total of 14 pupils from two schools. Pupils were invited to talk about their school experiences in general and their views on the curriculum and relationships with teachers both in mainstream and in the specialist provision.	Not available

<b>Education: SAGE</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders	Peers' Perceptions of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders: What Are Students Thinking?	Safran, S.(1995)	Based on the implications of other findings, professionals need to target peer-identified behavioral and social skill goals and develop programming aimed at normalization to improve acceptance in integrated settings.	Duplicate
<b>Education: SAGE</b>	Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions	Functional Assessment and Wraparound as Systemic School Processes: Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Systems Examples	Scott, T. and Eber, L. (2003)	This article proposes a framework for expanding the traditional presentation of wraparound and FBA to (a) view wraparound and FBA as concepts that are inextricably linked at the core of each level of the proactive systemic process of PBS and (b) understand how wrap- around and FBA are critical features of prevention as well as intervention for creating safer schools for all students	Non-UK study (USA)
<b>Education: SAGE</b>	Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions	Shifting From Reactive to Proactive Discipline in an Urban School District: A Change of Focus Through PBIS Implementation	Netzel, D. and Eber, L. (2003)	This article describes PBIS implementation as experienced by an urban school district in Illinois.	Refers to US intervention/ policy
<b>Education: SAGE</b>	Journal of Emotional and Behavioral	Wraparound and Positive Behavioral Interventions and	Eber, L., Sugai, G., Smith, C., and Scott, T.(2002)	This article explores how the school-based wraparound approach and a	Non-UK study focusing on US policy/ intervention

	Disorders	Supports in the Schools		school-wide systems approach to positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) work together to create more effective school environments and improved outcomes for students with or at risk of behavioral challenges.	
ProQuest	Education and Training	Teaching HE students with emotional and behavioural difficulties	Taylor, M., Baskett, M., Duffy, S., Wren, C. (2008)	The purpose of this paper is to examine the nature of the types of adjustments appropriate to university teaching practices for students with emotional and behavioural difficulties in the UK higher education (HE) sector	Duplicate

## 8.2

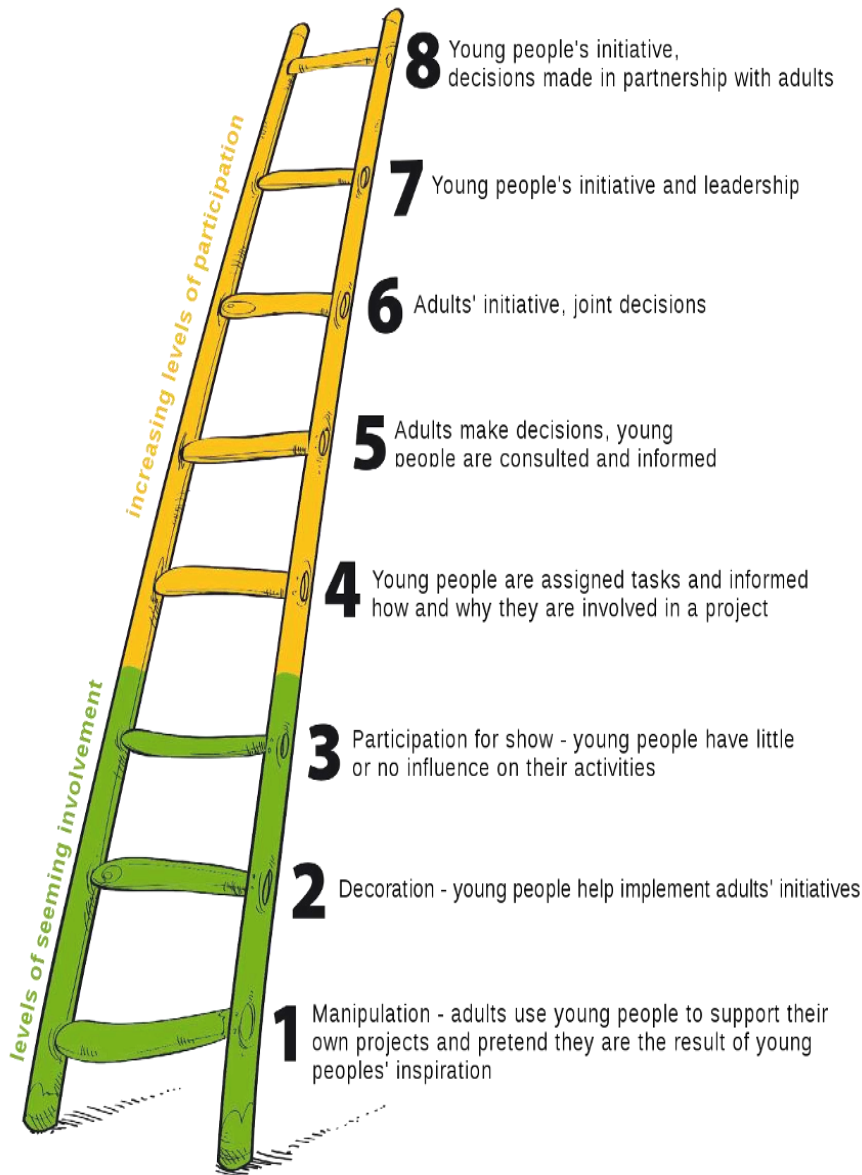
**Appendix 2: Table 21: Table to show the ‘nearest hit’ studies to be included in the literature review and how they were located.**

Reference	Source
Batsleer, J. (2011) Voices from an edge. Unsettling the practices of youth voice and participation: arts-based practice in The Blue Room, Manchester, <i>Pedagogy, Culture &amp; Society</i> , 19:3, 419-434	British Education Index
Bennett (2006) Helpful and unhelpful practices in meeting the needs of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties: a pilot survey of staff views in one local authority <i>British Journal of Special Education</i> 33 (4) 188-195	ProQuest
Biddulph, M. (2011) Articulating student voice and facilitating curriculum agency, <i>The Curriculum Journal</i> , 22:3, 381-399	British Education Index
Clarke, Boorman and Nind (2011) If they don't listen I shout, and when I shout they listen': hearing the voices of girls with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties <i>British Educational Research Journal</i> 37 (5) 765–780	Google Scholar
Connora, Hodgkinsonb, Burtonc and Torstenssona (2011) Pupil voice: listening to and hearing the educational experiences of young people with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD) <i>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</i> , 16 (3), 289-302	ProQuest
Cooper (2011) Teacher strategies for effective intervention with students presenting social, emotional and behavioural difficulties: an international review <i>European Journal of Special Needs Education</i> , 26 (1), 71-86	ProQuest
Cooper , P., Upton, G. & Smith, C. (1991) Ethnic Minority and Gender Distribution Among Staff and Pupils in Facilities for Pupils with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties in England and Wales, <i>British Journal of Sociology of Education</i> , 12 (1), 77-94	Google Scholar
Cremin , H., Mason, C. & Busher, H. (2011) Problematising pupil voice using visual methods: findings from a study of engaged and disaffected pupils in an urban secondary school, <i>British Educational Research Journal</i> , 37:4, 585-603	British Education Index
Fisher (2014) Using pupil perspective in the primary classroom: an exploration of some of the potential issues, <i>Research Papers in Education</i> , 29:4, 390-409	British Education Index
Flouri and Panourgia (2011) Gender differences in the pathway from adverse life events to adolescent emotional and behavioural problems via negative cognitive errors <i>British Journal of Developmental Psychology</i> 29, 234–252	ProQuest
Hart (2012) What helps children in a pupil referral unit (PRU)? An exploration into the potential protective factors of a PRU as identified by children and staff <i>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</i> 18 (2) 196–212	Google Scholar

Hill (2006) Pupil referral units: "Are they effective in helping schools work with children who have emotional and behavioural difficulties? <i>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</i> , 2 (1), 28-36	ProQuest
Hopkins, E. (2010) Classroom conditions for effective learning: hearing the voice of Key Stage 3 pupils <i>Improving Schools</i> 13 (1), 39-53	British Education Index
Ingram, R. (2013) Interpretation of children's views by educational psychologists: dilemmas and solutions, <i>Educational Psychology in Practice: theory, research and practice in educational psychology</i> , 29:4, 335-346	British Education Index
Lloyd & O'Regan (2010) You Have to Learn to Love Yourself 'Cos No One Else Will.' Young Women with 'Social, Emotional or Behavioural Difficulties' and the Idea of the Underclass <i>Gender and Education</i> 12 (1) 39-52	Google Scholar
Lloyd & O'Regan (1999) Education for social exclusion? Issues to do with the effectiveness of educational provision for young women with 'Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties' <i>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</i> 4 (2) 38-46	Google Scholar
Mackie, L., Law, J. (2010) Pragmatic Language and the Child with Emotional/Behavioural Difficulties (EBD): A Pilot Study Exploring the Interaction between Behaviour and Communication Disability <i>International Journal of Language &amp; Communication Disorders</i> 45 (4), 397-410.	ERIC
Michael and Frederickson (2013) Improving pupil referral unit outcomes: pupil perspectives <i>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</i> 18 (4) 407-422	British Education Index
Mowat (2010) He comes to talk to me about things': supporting pupils experiencing social and emotional behavioural difficulties—a focus upon interpersonal relationships <i>Pastoral Care in Education: An International Journal of Personal, Social and Emotional Development</i> 28 (3)163-180,	Google Scholar
Nind, Boorman and Clarke (2012) Creating Spaces to Belong: Listening to the Voice of Girls with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties through Digital Visual and Narrative Methods <i>International Journal of Inclusive Education</i> 16 (7) 643-656	Google Scholar
O'Connor, M. , Hodkinson, A. , Burton, D., and Torstensson, G. (2011) Pupil voice: listening to and hearing the educational experiences of young people with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD), <i>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</i> , 16 (3), 289-302	British Education Index
Richards, R. & Richards, L. (2013) Sponges do not make their own water: student engagement through dialogue and the development of reflective consciousness, <i>Reflective Practice: International and Multidisciplinary Perspectives</i> , 14:6, 774-786	British Education Index
Rose, R. and Shevlin, M. (2004) Encouraging voices: listening to young people who have been marginalised <i>Support for Learning</i> 19, (4), 155–161	British Education Index

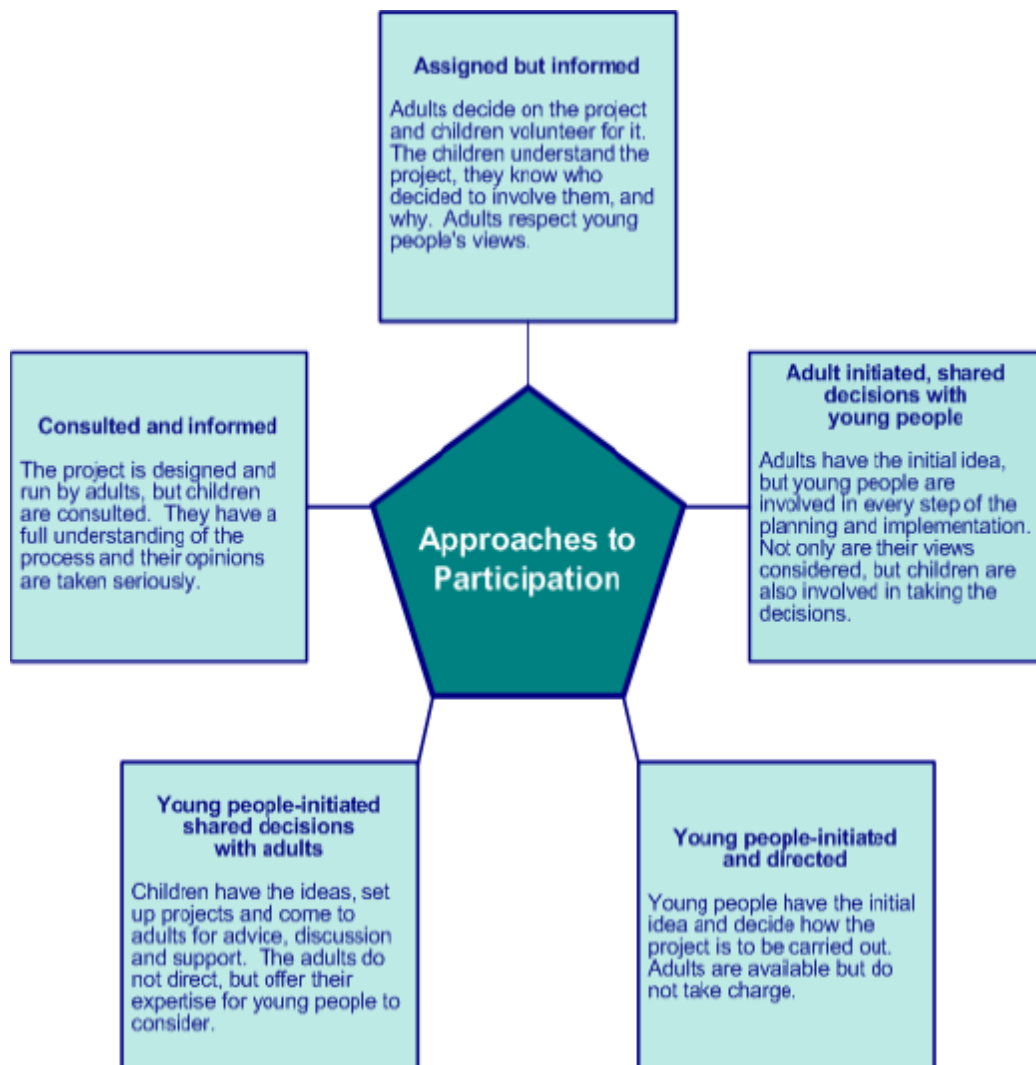
Safran, P. (1995) Peers' Perceptions of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders: What Are Students Thinking? <i>Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders</i> , 3 (2) 66-75	Education: A Sage Full Text Collection
Sellman (2009) Lessons learned: student voice at a school for pupils experiencing social, emotional and behavioural difficulties <i>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</i> , 14 (1), 33-48	ASSIA
Smith, Travell & Worton (2006) You, me and us <i>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</i> , 9 (3), 171-180	Google Scholar
Spiteri, D. (2009) Forging an identity over the life-course, <i>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</i> , 14 (3), 239-249	ASSIA
Strand & Lindsay (2009) Evidence of Ethnic Disproportionality in Special Education in an English Population <i>The Journal of Special Education</i> 43 (3) 174-190	ASSIA

Appendix 3: Figure 12: Harts (1992) Ladder of Participation



## 8.4

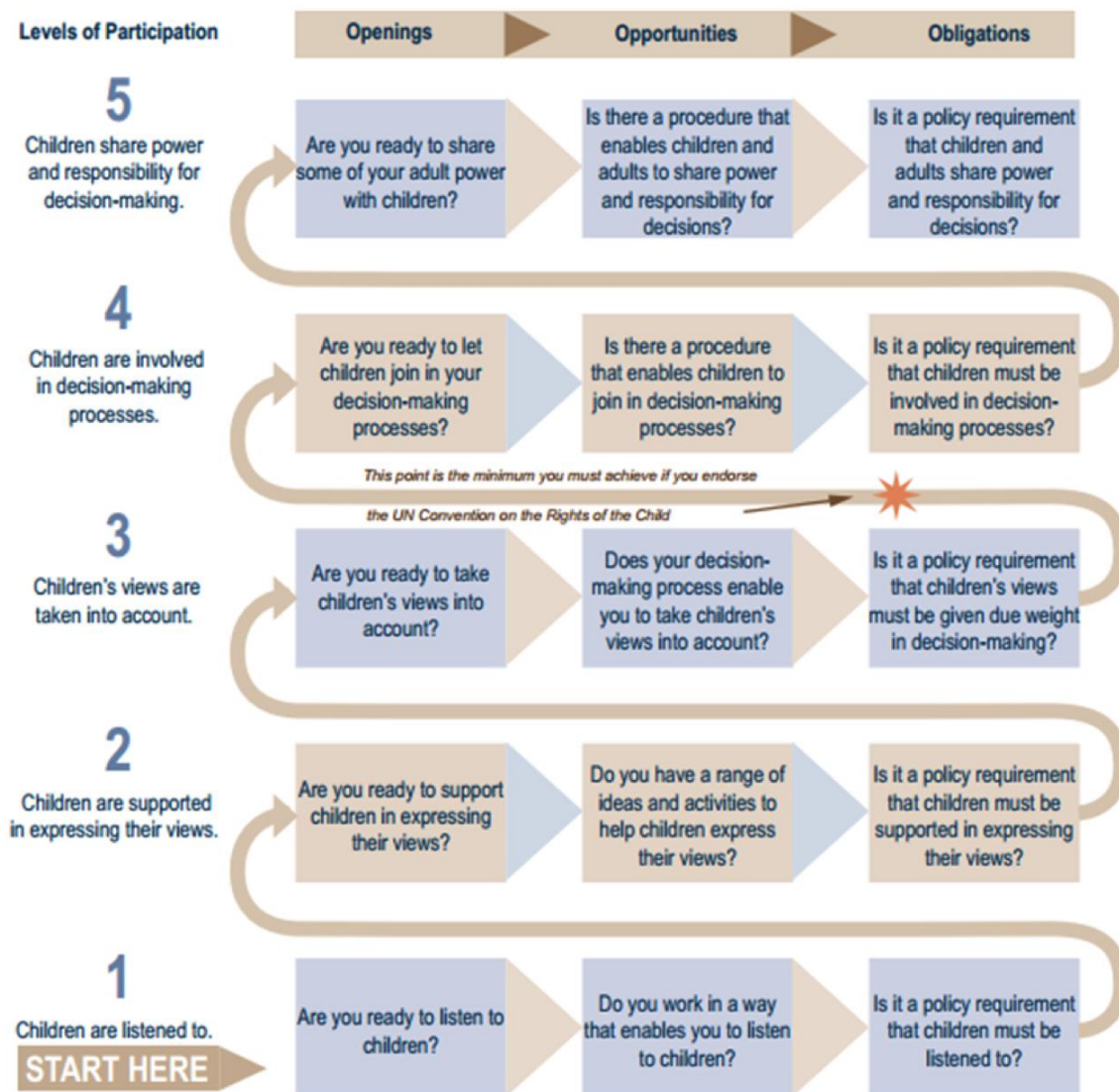
Appendix 4: Figure 13: Treseder's (1997) Non-hierarchical model of five approaches to participation in decision-making for CYP.



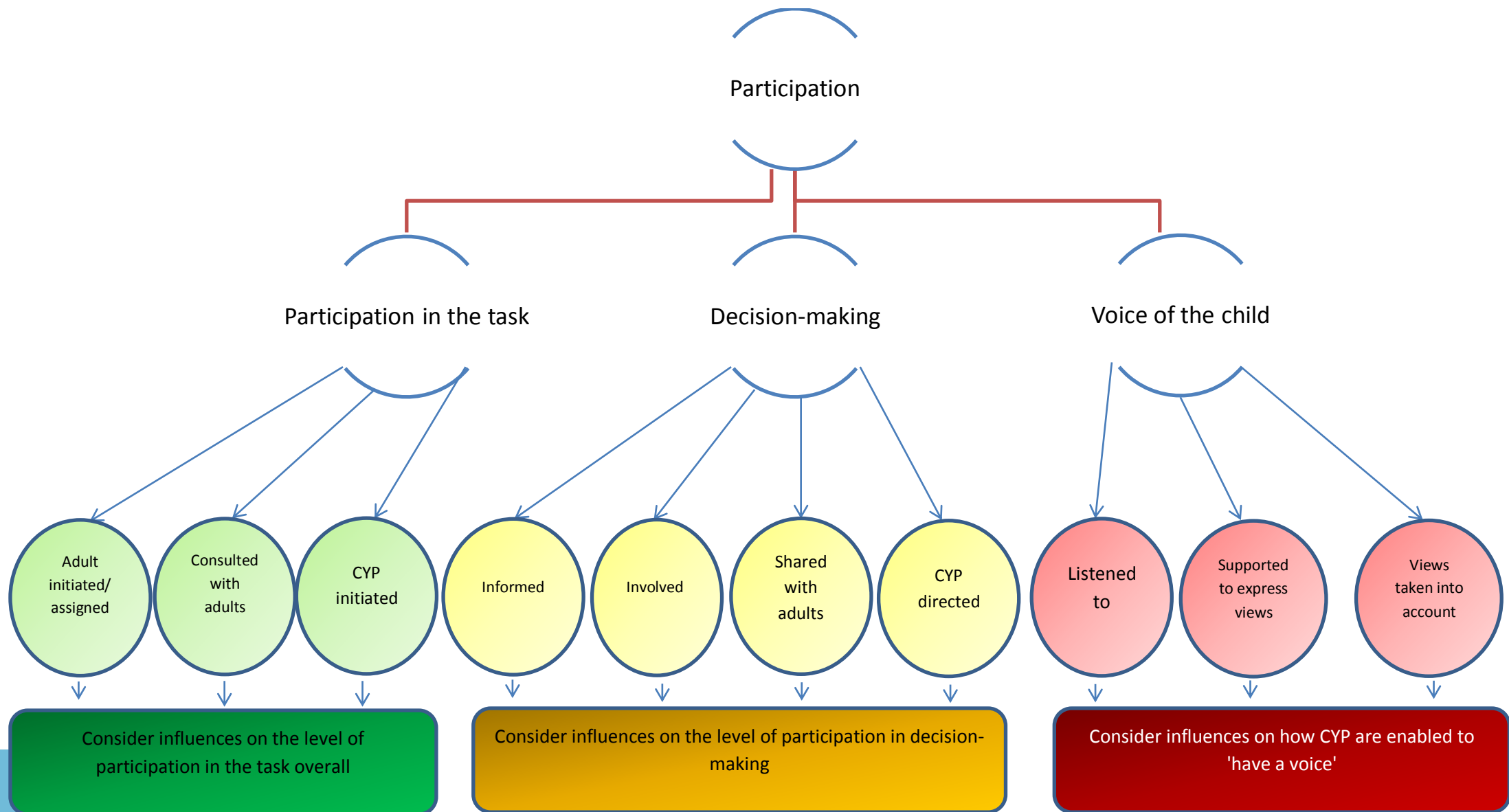


Appendix 5: Figure 14: Shier's (2001) 'Model of pathways to participation'

**Pathways to Participation**  
Harry Shier 2001



8.6 Appendix 6: Figure 15: Kilroy's (2013) Synthesised model of participation (adapted from existing models by Hart, (1992), Treseder (1997) and Shier (2001)).



## 8.7

### Appendix 7: Table 22: Operational Risk Analysis

Details regarding the completed operational risk analysis can be found in table 22 below

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Contingency plan</b>
Head Teacher may not give consent for research to be conducted.	Low	Be available to meet the Head Teacher to give more information about the research and answer any questions. Explain the rationale and potential benefits of the research and method of data collection (AI) Reassure that the interviews will be conducted at the convenience of the provision.
Participants need to take time out of their working/ school day	Low	Staff focus group arranged at convenient times with the PRU and as early as possible to allow for cover to be arranged. Pupil interviews conducted on five separate occasions and dates set in collaboration with staff to minimise disruption to learning and maximise engagement in the research process.
Participants may not want to take part in the research	Low	Researcher to spend time over a 4-6 week period in the PRU as a TEP to build rapport with staff, pupils and participants. Selected participants will be given two weeks' notice prior to initial meetings and Participant Information Sheets will provide details of what will be involved and researcher's contact details so any questions they may have can be addressed Make the potential benefits of the research clear to participants and explain how AI works. Working with girls on a 1:1 basis is likely to increase their engagement in the AI process. Ask the Head Teacher to identify other potential participants as a contingency list.
Participants may leave PRU before data collection completed	Medium	Participants will be selected in collaboration with a key contact from the PRU. Only those who will be at the PRU for a minimum of 16 weeks will be selected as potential participants.
Literacy and language	Medium	A staff member known to participants and their parents/ carers will be available to explain the information in the

levels may cause a barrier for some pupil and/ or parents/ carers		Participant Information Sheets, including issues around consent/ assent and their right to not take part. Interviews will be audio recorded meaning that participants are not required to provide written responses. Other forms of recording responses such as visual representations through photographs can be used by participants.
Participants may be absent from the PRU on a scheduled interview day.	Medium	Exclusion criteria will mean that Looked After Children will not be selected. Send participants a reminder of the date shortly before the interview. Maintain communication with participants so any questions can be addressed and potential problems avoided. Ensure participants are able to contact the researcher. Be reliable as a researcher by keeping to all dates and times agreed to maintain professional boundaries. Contingency days will be incorporated into the time budget to allow for this occurrence.
Discussion of experiences may cause emotional responses.	Medium	Exclusion criteria will mean that pupils currently 'in crises' will not be selected. Participants will be made aware that have the right to not take part or to withdraw at any time. A key worker from the PRU will be available for pupils to talk to if they need to.

<p>Staff may reject pupils propositions constructed as a result of the research and not implement any of their ideas.</p>	<p>Low</p>	<p>Ensure that the senior leadership team are committed to listening to the views of the girls regarding participation and to considering implementing their ideas if appropriate.</p> <p>Provide training/ awareness raising of the AI process in advance of the research commencing to ensure that staff are aware of the process and the aims of the research.</p> <p>Spend time in the PRU prior to the research commencing to build rapport among staff and ensure that they are engaged in the research process.</p> <p>Support the girls to feed back their propositions to staff in the most appropriate way for them, acting as advocate if requested</p>
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## 8.8

### Appendix 8: Table 23: Timeline

Details of the research in the form of a timeline can be found in table 14 below.

Activity	Date
Commence TEP placement; Meet Assistant Head from PRU to explain research	1 Sept 13
Spend time in provision as a TEP	Sept- Oct 13
Observation of participation activities	On-going
Conduct training session with staff re: AI process and aims of research	Nov 13
Potential participants identified. Information, consent/assent forms sent.	Nov 13
Conduct pilot interviews and finalise AI questions for participants	Nov 13-Dec 13
Conduct Focus group with staff	Dec 13
Conduct 1:1 interviews with pupils	Jan – May 14
Literature review	April 14
Check and feedback propositions to girls.	June 14
Feedback to senior management with participants as a part of AI process	Nov 14
Transcription and analysis of interviews; Content Analysis of observations and materials; Reflections of research diary.	On-going Sept 14
Meet with senior manager to evaluate if changes made as a result of the AI	Nov 14/ March 15
Submit methodology	Dec 14
Submit abstract	Jan 15
Submit results	February 15
Submit discussion	March 15
Thesis submission	May 15
Thesis oral examination	Jul 15

Table 14: Time-line

## 8.9

### Appendix 9: Information for participants regarding the study

#### Staff Focus Group-Information sheet



***An investigation into how girls identified as having Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and staff of one specialist education provision feel pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated***

#### **Participant Information Sheet**

You are being invited to take part in a research study that will be written up as a doctoral thesis and assessed as part of the researchers Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

#### **Who will conduct the research?**

Julie Martin (Trainee Educational Psychologist)

School Of Education, Ellen Wilkinson Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL.

#### **Title of the Research**

*An investigation into how girls identified as having Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and staff of one specialist education provision feel pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated.*

#### **What is the aim of the research?**

This research aims to discover how participation is conceptualised and what practices are in place to access pupil voice in one specialist SEBD provision. It also aims to discover how pupil views are acted on and to explore how one specialist SEBD provision can increase participation and support the engagement of pupils

**Why have I been chosen?**

You have been chosen to take part as you have been identified as a professional who works with girls identified as having SEBD. There will be four participants who are members of staff in total involved in the research from one provision.

**What would I be asked to do if I took part?**

You will take part in a group interview that lasts one hour which will be arranged a convenient time for you. You have the right to not take part or withdraw from process at any time.

**What happens to the data collected?**

The responses from the interview will be analysed and written up for a doctoral thesis.

Any quotations will be anonymised in reports and/or feedback.

**How is confidentiality maintained?**

The education provision and participant's names will not be identified. All data will be stored securely and destroyed when it is no longer needed.

**What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?**

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

**Will I be paid for participating in the research?**

No payment will be received for participating in the research.

**What is the duration of the research?**

The process will last for approximately 1 academic year.

**Where will the research be conducted?**

The interview will take place in a quiet, private room in the PRU. You will be informed of the location if you choose to take part.

**Will the outcomes of the research be published?**

The research findings will be written up as part of a doctoral thesis for the Professional Doctorate in Child and Educational Psychology at the University of Manchester. The findings from the study will also be fed back to the PRU.

**Criminal Records Check (if applicable)**

The researcher has undergone a satisfactory criminal records check.



### Contact for further information

Julie Martin

[julie.martin-3@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk](mailto:julie.martin-3@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk)

### What if something goes wrong?

Please contact me at the above email address, or alternatively my University Supervisor

Dr Catherine Kelly

Catherine.Kelly@manchester.ac.uk

0161 275 7262.

If there are any issues regarding this research that you would prefer not to discuss with members of the research team, please contact the Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator by either writing to 'The Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator, Research Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL', by emailing: [Research-Governance@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Research-Governance@manchester.ac.uk), or by telephoning 0161 275 7583 or 275 809

## Pupil Interviews- Information sheet for parents

The University  
of Manchester

MANCHESTER  
1824

*An investigation into how girls identified as having Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and staff of one specialist education provision feel pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated.*

### Participant Information Sheet

Your child is invited to take part in a research study that will be written up as a doctoral thesis and assessed as part of the researchers Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

#### **Who will conduct the research?**

Julie Martin (Trainee Educational Psychologist)

School Of Education, Ellen Wilkinson Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road,  
Manchester, M13 9PL.

#### **Title of the Research**

*An investigation into how girls identified as having Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and staff of one specialist education provision feel pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated.*

**What is the aim of the research?**

This research aims to discover how participation is conceptualised and what practices are in place to access pupil voice in one specialist SEBD provision. It also aims to discover how pupil views are acted on and to explore how one specialist SEBD provision can increase participation and support the engagement of pupils

**Why has your child been chosen?**

Your child has been chosen to take part as they are a girl identified as having SEBD. There will be at least three female pupils in total involved in the research.

**What would I be asked to do if I took part?**

Your child will take part in five separate interviews that will last up to one hour each in total. The interviews will be arranged at a convenient time to cause the least disruption to your child. Questions will explore your child's experiences and thoughts about how they take part in decisions made about their needs.

**What happens to the data collected?**

The responses from the interview will be analysed and written up for a doctoral thesis. Any quotations will be anonymised in reports and/or feedback. Your child's name will not be used.

**How is confidentiality maintained?**

Neither the SEC nor your child's name will be identified. All data will be stored securely and destroyed when it is no longer needed.

**What happens if I do not want my child to take part or if I change my mind?**

It is up to you to decide whether or not you would like your child to take part. If you do decide you would like your child to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. Your child will still be free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

**Will I be paid for participating in the research?**

No payment will be received for participating in the research.

**What is the duration of the research?**

The five interview sessions will take up to one hour each. The process will last for approximately one academic year.

**Where will the research be conducted?**

The interview will take place in a quiet, private room in the PRU. Your child will be informed of the location if you decide you would like them to take part.

**Will the outcomes of the research be published?**

The research findings will be written up as part of a doctoral thesis for the Professional Doctorate in Child and Educational Psychology at the University of Manchester. The findings from the study will also be fed back to the PRU. Your child's name will not be used in the report or in any feedback and all quotes of what your child has said will be anonymised.

**Criminal Records Check (if applicable)**

The researcher has undergone a satisfactory criminal records check.

**Contact for further information**

Julie Martin

[julie.martin-3@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk](mailto:julie.martin-3@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk)

**What if something goes wrong?**

Please contact me at the above email address, or alternatively my University Supervisor

Dr Catherine Kelly

Catherine.Kelly@manchester.ac.uk

0161 275 7262.

If there are any issues regarding this research that you would prefer not to discuss with members of the research team, please contact the Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator by either writing to 'The Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator, Research Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL', by emailing: [Research-Governance@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Research-Governance@manchester.ac.uk), or by telephoning 0161 275 7583 or 275 8093

## Pupil Information sheet

MANCHESTER  
1824

The University  
of Manchester

***An investigation into how girls identified as having Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and staff of one specialist education provision feel pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated***

You are invited to take part in a research study that will be written up for a Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology.

Before you decide if you would like to take part it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve.

Please take your time to read through the following information carefully and discuss it with your parents/ carers or teachers if you want to.

This research aims to discover what participation means to you and what is done to access pupil voice in the SEC. It will also try to find out how your views are acted on and how participation can be increased.

If you decide to take part you will be involved in five separate interview sessions that will last up to one hour each. You will be asked to answer some questions, either verbally or by taking photographs to explore your ideas about how you think you would like to be involved more.

The interview will take place in a quiet, private room, which you will be told about if you decide that you would like to take part.

The person carrying out the research is:

Julie Martin (Trainee Educational Psychologist)

School Of Education, Ellen Wilkinson Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL.

You have been chosen because the research will look at how girls who have been identified as having Social Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties are listened to and have their opinions included in school.

It will also look at how girls can be helped to be more involved in planning and making decisions about their needs.

All of the interviews will be audio recorded so that the researcher can listen to them to find common themes in the things that are said. Nobody apart from the researcher and maybe their Supervisor at Manchester University will listen to these and they will be destroyed when they are no longer needed.

You can be involved in telling or showing the SEC about your experiences and ideas for changes when all of the interviews have finished. The researcher will also be involved in this to help and support you.

The research will be written up and the findings fed back to the SEC so that they will know how to help girls with SEBD to get involved more with planning and decision making.

If you decide that you would like to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and you will be asked to sign a consent form. You can decide that you do not want to take part at any time.

If you have got any questions please email the researcher who is called Julie Martin at:

[julie.martin-3@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk](mailto:julie.martin-3@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk)

Or, if you would prefer, please speak to ..... at the...

## Consent form- staff



*An investigation into how girls identified as having Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and staff of one specialist education provision feel pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated.*

### CONSENT FORM

#### (Staff Focus Group)

If you are happy to participate please complete and sign the consent form below

	<b>Please Initial Box</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I understand that the interviews will be audio recorded</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I agree to the use of anonymous quotes</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books or journals.</li></ul>	

I agree to take part in the above project

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of person taking consent

## Consent form- for parents of child participants



*An investigation into how girls identified as having Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and staff of one specialist education provision feel pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated.*

### PARENTAL CONSENT FORM

#### (Child interviews)

If you are happy for your child to participate please complete and sign the consent form below

	<b>Please Initial Box</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I understand that the participation of my child in the study is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I understand that the interviews will be audio recorded</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I agree to the use of anonymous quotes for my child.</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I agree that any data collected may be published anonymously in a doctoral thesis.</li></ul>	

I agree for my child to take part in the above project

_____	_____	_____
Name of child	Date	Parent/ carer signature
_____	_____	_____
Name of person taking consent	Date	Signature
_____	_____	_____



## Assent form- for pupil participants



***An investigation into how girls identified as having Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and staff of one specialist education provision feel pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated.***

### ASSENT FORM

(Pupil interviews)

If you are happy to participate please complete and sign the consent form below

	<b>Please Initial Box</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I understand that the interviews will be audio recorded</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I agree to the use of anonymous quotes</li></ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books or journals.</li></ul>	

I agree to take part in the above project

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of person taking consent

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 8.10

### Appendix 10: Pupil semi-structured interview schedule

The interview schedules will be piloted to ensure that questions can be clearly understood and that the one hour allocated time is sufficient for effective discussion. Visual supports and technologies will be provided for illustration and recording purposes. The interview will also be audio recorded.

#### Semi-structured interview schedule pupils (Session 1)

Introduction to the research and explanation of AI process

I will introduce myself and the purpose of the research- how we can improve how girls with SEBD participate in school. After verifying consent and explaining that participants have the right to withdraw I will explain confidentiality and anonymity.

I will then explain the AI process:

- It is a positive approach
- It aims to discover the best of what is already happening in an organisation
- Themes will be identified and provocative propositions constructed from the interviews
- Future actions will be planned at a workshop session

Participants understanding of the process will be checked and the option to ask questions given. I will ensure that participants understand they will lead the process and also that although I cannot promise that the PRU will make all of the changes that they suggest, I will facilitate the process and act as an advocate for them thus increasing the likelihood that this will happen. The interviews will be audio recorded and notes made on flip charts.

A date for the next session will be set in collaboration with relevant members of staff in order to minimise disruption to the girls' learning or other activities happening in the PRU such as reward trips, and to maximise engagement in the research process.

#### Semi-structured interview schedule pupils (Session 2)

Introduction

As I explained last time, I am here today because I am interested in finding out more about the strengths and needs of girls who have been identified as having SEBDs. Many young people who are not able to attend mainstream schools for various reasons are told they have Social, Emotional or Behavioural Difficulties. There are lots more boys than girls who find themselves in this situation and so professionals might feel that they understand their

needs more. I would like to find out how girls can be helped to get involved with schools like this one and to have a say in what goes on in them.

I am going to talk about participation which some people say is a process where someone influences decisions about their lives and this leads to change. When I talk about participation I mean you having a say and being involved with things that make a difference to your school experience.

#### Questions

1. I would like to start by defining 'participation' with you. When we talk about participating in school, what does it mean to you?

Prompts: What does it mean in relation to you and other girls expressing your views about your needs? Is this the same or different for boys?

2. How has this happened in other schools you have been to?

Prompts: What went on there to help you participate? What did you find most helpful about what the staff did? What did you find least helpful about what the staff did? What would have been a more helpful way? Was it the same or different for boys? How?

3. How do staff in the SEC act on your views to meet your needs?

Prompts: What goes on here to help girls participate? Is it the same or different to what goes on for boys? What do you find most helpful about what the staff do? What do you find least helpful about what the staff do?

4. How are you asked for your opinions about things here?

Prompts: Can you describe some situations where you have been asked what you think? How has this helped you to make decisions and participate? How could it have been made more helpful? Is this the same or different to how boys are asked? How?

5. What makes successful activities feel like they have helped you?

Prompts: Can you describe some activities that have helped you to participate and make decisions? What was so helpful about this activity? How did you know it was successful?

The discussion will be summarised and responses checked and the opportunity given to participants to ask questions or add information.

Member checking will take place at the end of the session and propositions from this part of the AI process will be constructed with the participant in order to verify that they are an accurate reflection of their views.

A date for the next session will be set in collaboration with relevant staff member in order to minimise disruption to the girls' learning or other activities happening in the PRU such as reward trips, and to maximise engagement in the research process.

Semi-structured interview schedule pupils (Session 3)

Introduction

As I explained last time, I am here today because I am interested in finding out more about the strengths and needs of girls who have been identified as having SEBD and I would like to find out how girls can be helped to get involved with schools like this one and to have a say in what goes on in them.

We talked about participation which I mean as you having a say and being involved with things that make a difference to your school experience.

The propositions that we constructed as a result of the last session will be revisited as a reminder of the last interview schedule. We will then move on to the next set of questions.

Questions

1. What do you like most about:

- The things you do here?
- The other pupils here?
- The staff?
- The SEC as a whole?

Prompts: Who are the people who help you? How do they help you? How do they help other pupils? Do you get the same or different help to the boys?

2. What makes you work well with other people?

Prompts: What are the things that help this to happen? How do these things help you? Do the same things help other girls? Do the same things help the boys? How could you be helped more?

3. Can you tell me about a time when you felt that you have been listened to about what you would like to get better at or what needed to change at school?

Prompts: What are the things that helped this to happen? How did these things help you? How could you have been helped more?

4. Can you tell me about a time when you have felt part of decisions that have been made about your life?

Prompts: How were your views acted upon? How did this make you feel?

5. Can you tell me about a time when you have felt part of decisions that have been made about school life in general, or about your particular needs here in the SEC? Think of a high point, when you felt most successful, engaged and listened to.

Prompts: What made this a high point? How were your views acted upon? How did this make you feel?

6. What part of this are you most proud of?

Prompts: Why were you proud? What helped you to feel this way?

The discussion will be summarised and the opportunity given to ask questions or add information.

Member checking will take place at the end of the session and propositions from this part of the AI process will be constructed with the participant in order to verify that they are an accurate reflection of their views.

A date for the next session will be set in collaboration with relevant staff members in order to minimise disruption to the girls' learning or other activities happening in the PRU such as reward trips, and to maximise engagement in the research process.

Semi-structured interview schedule pupils (Session 4)

Introduction

As I explained last time, I am here today because I am interested in finding out more about the strengths and needs of girls who have been identified as having SEBD and I would like to find out how girls can be helped to get involved with schools like this one and to have a say in what goes on in them.

We talked about participation which I mean as you having a say and being involved with things that make a difference to your school experience.

The propositions that we constructed as a result of the last session will be revisited as a reminder of the last interview schedule. We will then move on to the next set of questions.

Participants understanding of the process will be checked and the option to ask questions given. The interviews will be audio recorded and notes made on flip charts.

### Questions

1. What are the main things which make this SEC work well?
  - What helps you to engage with school?
  - How is this different for other pupils?

Prompts: What are the things that help this to happen? What are the things that stop this from happening?

2. What do they do well here that helps you to participate by supporting you to express your views about your needs?

Prompts: What are the things that help this to happen? What are the things that stop this from happening? Do the same things help and stop this happening for other girls and boys?

3. What do you think are your main needs?

Prompts: What would help you to be successful here? What would help you to be successful in other schools? What would help you to be successful in life? What would help boys to be successful?

4. How do staff notice if your needs have changed and how do they react to this?

Prompts: What are the things that might make your needs change? How might you let staff know that they have changed? What would be a helpful way for them to react? And is this the same or different for girls and boys? How?

5. How is this different to how other people notice your needs have changed and the way they react to that?

Prompts: Which other people might notice your needs have changed? How might they react? What makes staff in the SEC better at noticing girl's needs and responding to that change?

The discussion will be summarised and the opportunity given to ask questions or add information. Member checking will take place at the end of the session and propositions from this part of the AI process will be constructed with the participant in order to verify that they are an accurate reflection of their views.

A date for the next session will be set in collaboration with relevant staff members in order to minimise disruption to the girls' learning or other activities happening in the PRU such as reward trips, and to maximise engagement in the research process.

Semi-structured interview schedule pupils (Session 5)

Introduction

As I explained last time, I am here today because I am interested in finding out more about the strengths and needs of girls who have been identified as having SEBD and I would like to find out how girls can be helped to get involved with schools like this one and to have a say in what goes on in them.

We talked about participation which I mean as you having a say and being involved with things that make a difference to your school experience.

The propositions that we constructed as a result of the last session will be revisited as a reminder of the last interview schedule. We will then move on to the next set of questions.

Participants understanding of the process will be checked and the option to ask questions given. The interviews will be audio recorded and notes made on flip charts.

Questions

1. What makes this school different or special from others?

Prompts: What could make it even better?

2. If you had a magic wand, how would the ways your views about how you are supported are asked for and girls are helped to participate in decision making in the SEC look like in a years' time?

Prompts: What would help you to achieve this dream? What activities would be happening? How would views be acted upon? Would this be the same or different for other girls and boys? How?

3. If a new girl was starting at the school, what would be the best bit of advice you could give them to help them to take part in decisions made regarding them in school?

Prompts: How would you let girls know how they can best participate? How would you suggest they give their views? Would this be the same or different for boys? How?

4. If a new member of staff was starting at the school, what would be the best bit of advice you could give them to help them listen to girls and help them to take part in school by acting on their views?

Prompts: How do you let staff know how they can best help you? How would you suggest they act on your views? And would this be the same or different for girls and boys? How?

The discussion will be summarised and the opportunity given to ask questions or add information.

Member checking will take place at the end of the session and propositions from this part of the AI process will be constructed with the participant in order to verify that they are an accurate reflection of their views.

A date for a session to feedback all of the propositions to the girls will be set with relevant members of staff in order to minimise disruption to the girls' learning or other activities happening in the PRU such as reward trips, and to maximise engagement in the research process.



## 8.11

### Appendix 11: Staff focus group interview schedule

Introduce myself and establish ground rules for the group. Explain the purpose of the meeting- how we can understand the needs of girls with SEBD better and how to support girl's participation as a way of facilitating them to express their needs. Explain confidentiality, anonymity and remind participants of their right to withdraw. Participants understanding of the process will be checked and the option to ask questions given. The discussion will be audio recorded and notes made on flip charts.

I will remind staff of the AI process:

- It is a positive approach
- It aims to discover the best of what is already happening in an organisation
- Themes will be identified and provocative propositions constructed from the girls' interviews
- Future actions may be planned at a workshop session after the feedback session.

1. I would like to start by defining 'participation' with you. When we talk about girls with SEBD participating in school, what does it mean?

*Prompts: What does participation mean in relation to pupils expressing their views regarding their needs?*

2. Is this the same for girls and boys?

*Prompts: Do girls and boys express their views regarding their needs differently?*

3. How do you as a provision facilitate pupils' expressions of their needs and act on those views?

*Prompts: What works well? Is this the same for girls and boys? How do you act upon their views?*

4. Who are the people or organisations that support this work?

*What makes your relationship with them successful? How does it help you and the pupils? Are there any services specifically targeted towards helping girls?*

5. What are the core things which contribute to successful work
  - With children and young people with SEBD?

- With girls with SEBD?
- Helping girls to participate to express their views on their needs?

*Prompts: What are the facilitators of this? What are the barriers to this?*

6. How do you adjust and adapt to pupils' changing needs?

*Prompts: How do you manage to notice and adjust to pupils' needs throughout the day? Is this the same process for girls and boys? How? What are the benefits of doing this? What can be the consequences of not doing this?*

7. How do you measure the success of pupils' involvement in support to meet their needs?

*Prompts: What does successful participation look like? What methods are in place to monitor and evaluate success? Is the process the same for girls and boys? How? How do you share best practice?*

8. How could the process of participation for girls with SEBD and the ways their views are elicited and acted on be improved?

*Prompts: What participation activities could be happening? How could views be acted upon? What resources would help you to achieve this? Is this the same process for girls and boys?*

The discussion will be summarised and responses checked and the opportunity given to participants to ask questions or add information.

8.12

Appendix 12: Presentation of visual data

# Our School



# Our School

## School rules

It is important that school rules take the needs of girl pupils into account. Girls would like to go outside at break times and would like to wear makeup for school.



## Relationships

Good relationships between pupils, staff and parents help pupils to take part in school. It is important that staff listen to and support pupils and can be trusted.



## Expectations

We understand what is expected of us in school and what is available to help us. It would be good if we had more of a say in the rewards that are offered for us meeting or targets.



## Subjects

Girls enjoy the practical subjects like art and cookery. It would be good if more P.E options were available apart from football. It would also be good if girls were allowed to play football outside like the boys if they want to.



## Strategies

Some strategies like 'time out' work for some pupils. But, for some of us spending time in isolation makes things worse. It is important to find out about pupils as individuals and what works best for them to help them take part.



## Improvements

Pupils have some ideas about things that could be changed to make things better in the PRU and other schools. It is easier for us to tell adults when they ask us for our opinions than if we are expected to approach them with ideas.



## Action

It is important to listen to our views and act on them if possible. Otherwise we feel defeated and frustrated which makes us not want to bother expressing our views as we there is no point.

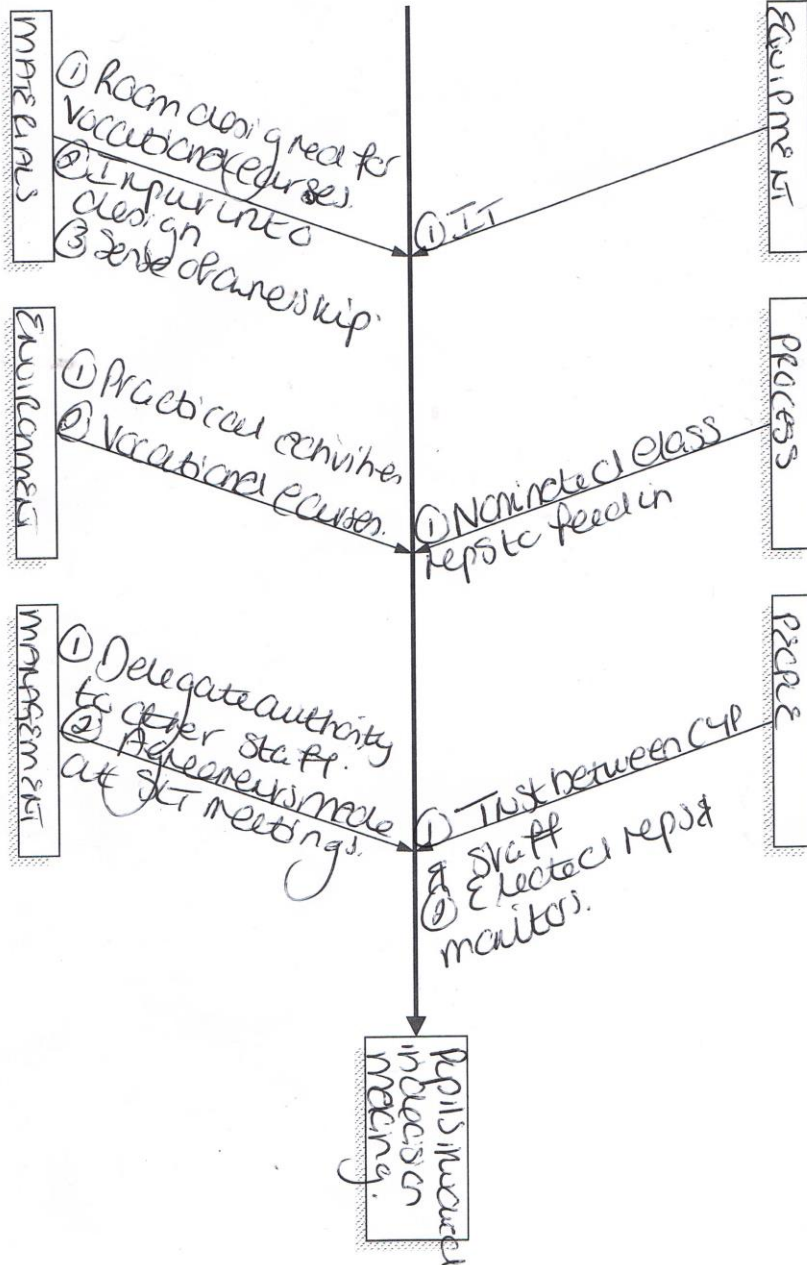


8.13 Appendix 13: Example of a fishbone analysis

**Fishbone Diagram**  
Cause-and-Effect Analysis

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cause \_\_\_\_\_ Effect \_\_\_\_\_



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<http://www.vertex42.com/ExcelTemplates/fishbone-diagram.html>

8.14

Appendix 14: Action plans



**Appendix 15: The action plan created with the staff participants and Assistant Head****ACTIONS****Dreams (1)**

- a) For girls to have form time so that they can be supported to express their needs and their views acted upon in order to individualise plans for them and aid participation.
- b) To ensure that girls take part in pupil forums or student councils whilst ensuring that regular opportunities are also provided for them to express their needs on a 1:1 basis
- c) More screening work with a focus on CYP's behaviour, social background and their attitudes to learning to be done when they start at PRU/ long stay provision to find out and understand what motivates them to participate and to enable learning to be personalised.
- d) For knowledge to be shared regarding girls' with SEBDs views of their needs to develop understanding and alter adults' expectations of them.
- e) For CYP to have access to external support and services that can provide vocational qualifications which need to be broad ranging to allow for individuality and which avoid stereotyping and/ or steering CYP down a certain route.
- f) For more key workers to be employed who can spend time with CYP outside of school accessing and engaging with a wider choice of activities which are not associated with school thus enabling CYP to express their views regarding their needs in a more relaxed or neutral environment and enabling participation.
- g) For CYP to have opportunities for their voices to be heard and their views acted upon in society to help them to have pride in their communities as they make meaningful contributions to them.

**Action**

1. **Pupils being involved in decision making**

**Causes****Equipment**

- IT

**Process**

- Time for 1:1 discussion and group work depending on preference
- Nominated class reps to feed in CYP's views
- Ensure girls are represented on Student Council
- CYP asked for input into ideas for rewards/ trips

**People**

- Elected class reps and monitors

- Trust between CYP and staff developed and maintained

### **Materials**

- Room designed for vocational courses
- Girls' input into design of girls area= sense of ownership
- Musical instruments- for music lessons

### **Environment**

- Practical activities
- Vocational courses
- Girls allowed outside at break/ lunch

### **Management**

- Delegated authority to other staff in school
- Agreements made at SLT meetings shared with staff
- Student reps involved

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### **Dreams (2)**

- a) A girls' provision within a nice building which is fit for purpose for running a permanent girls unit which can meet their emotional needs by taking a holistic approach to their participation.
- b) Girls to be involved with planning the area and common rooms and for them to have an area for them to make cups of tea and meals at times and animals to look after in the grounds.
- c) For integration of CYP into short and long stay provision to be phased so that relationships can be built and needs can be expressed and understood thus making them more likely to be met.
- d) For all pupils, regardless of gender, to be supported to participate more in their communities in order to facilitate a sense of ownership, some control and responsibility.

### **Effect**

#### **2. Establishing a long stay provision for girls with SEBDs**

### **Causes**

#### **Equipment**

- Appropriate building
- Leisure facilities
- Recreational facilities
- Swimming pool

#### **Process**



- Girls' input into design of girls area= sense of ownership
- Community involvement encouraged and supported
- Morning briefings/ meetings between staff
- Access to other services e.g) Youth service
- Residential= trips and wraparound care for pupils to stay in school

#### **People**

- Support from other organisations as appropriate
- Designated teachers
- Specialist teachers e.g) music
- Residential staff

#### **Materials**

- Resources
- Animals
- Gardening equipment
- Music equipment

#### **Environment**

- Vocational rooms
- Enclosed gardens
- Therapy rooms
- No stairs

#### **Management**

- Feedback decisions to staff
- Planning to take place
- Investment of staffs time
- Financial input

#### **Dreams (3)**

- a) For the ethos of the PRU to remain the same in a long stay provision but for some rules to be changed to reflect girls' expressed needs such as being allowed outside at break and lunch and to be able to wear makeup for school.
- b) For individual differences to be noticed and needs to be met as they arise, whilst recognising that differences exist within as well as between genders.
- c) For staff and CYP to have access to a good support network of staff who share the same values and who enjoy working with CYP.
- d) To ensure that CYP's life skills are developed as well their educational attainment so that they are ready to move out into the world with skills and qualifications that they can access employment from and succeed in life.

#### **Effect**

### **3. Developing the ethos of the PRU**

#### **Causes**

**Equipment**

- Fit for purpose
- Comfortable
- Choice of activities

**Process**

- Place of education
- Support needs
- Give it time
- Equal opportunities amongst boys and girls

**People**

- Relationships important
- Same goals
- Same expectations
- Enjoy working with young people

**Materials**

- Appropriate
- Age appropriate
- Stage appropriate
- Varied
- Meets vocational needs
- Sufficient

**Environment**

- Welcoming
- Outside space
- Equal access to boys and girls
- Education focused

**Management**

- Support staff
- Employ rights kind of people
- Take calculates risks
- Ask for pupils opinions and act on views
- Promote positivity

---

**Dreams (4)**

- a) For parents groups to be set up to develop understanding and skills to meet the needs of CYP with SEBDs and to support and transfer the work done in the PRU in order to facilitate engagement and participation.

**Effect****4. Parental involvement****Causes****Equipment**

- Crafts
- Activities
- Creche

**Process**

- Incentives for parental attendance
- Start to ask parents what they would like to do

**People**

- Help to run crèche
- Appropriately skilled people to run activities
- Take less formal approach to group than school

**Materials**

- Refreshments
- Resources
- Resources for other services or to be provided by them

**Environment**

- Creche
- Appropriate room for parents to meet
- Attend other services e.g) Addaction
- More welcoming/ less threatening atmosphere than school

**Management**

- Practical support for off-site visits
- Investment of staff time
- Financial input

## 8.16

**Appendix 16: Summary of the key outcomes and features of the project produced for participants and management team.**

**An investigation into how girls identified as having Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and staff of one specialist education provision feel pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated.**

### **Introduction**

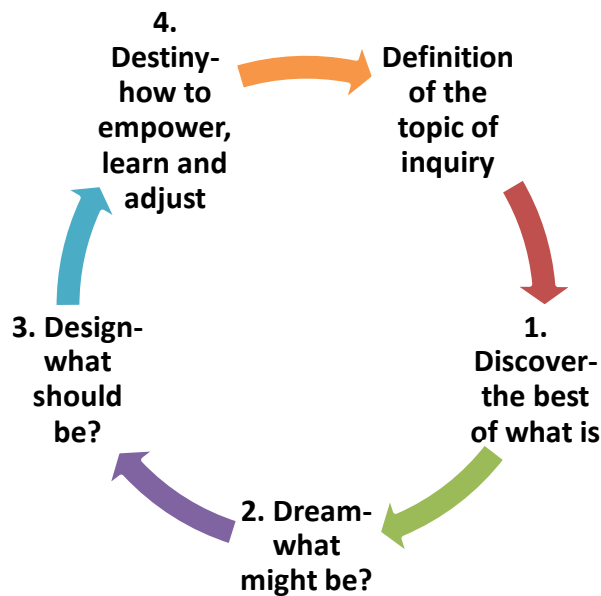
The Children and Families Act 2014 makes clear that local authorities (LAs) and schools must have regard to: the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person (CYP) with special educational needs (SEN); and highlights the importance of CYP participating as fully as possible in decisions, and of being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions. CYP with SEN in the form of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) continue to be an under researched and underrepresented voice. The views of girls with SEBDs are particularly diminished as, in addition to the barriers faced by CYP with SEBD, they face further obstacles relating to gender and how this influences perceptions of SEBDs.

### **Methodology**

This research aimed to engage the PRU in action research to facilitate the planned development into a special provision for girls with SEBDs. The views of pupils, specifically girls, and staff were explored concerning how pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated within an appreciative inquiry (AI) framework.

The act of asking questions, the inquiry, is considered to be the critical part of AI as it begins the process of change (Hayes, 2006). Based on the assumption that the questions asked determine what is found, it follows that the more positive the questions, the more positive the data, the beliefs and the vision of the organisation at its best. Furthermore, the more positive this image is, the more energy it generates for change (Hayes, 2006).

Figure: 4-D Cycle



Appreciative inquiry is based on eight assumptions (Hammond, 1998)

- 1) In every society, organisation or group, something works
- 2) What we focus on becomes our reality
- 3) Reality is created in the moment and there are multiple realities
- 4) The act of asking questions of an organisation or group influences the group in some way
- 5) People have more confidence to journey to the future (the unknown) when they carry forward parts of the past (the known)
- 6) If we carry parts of the past forward, they should be what is best about the past
- 7) It is important to value differences
- 8) The language we use creates our reality (p.20).

## **Findings**

The data collected through the semi structured interviews, photographs and documentation was analysed using thematic and content analysis. Following analysis of the interview data eight key

themes further complemented by sub themes emerged to define successful participation practices for CYP with SEBD as represented below.

### Overview of the thematic maps

Successful Participation Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Defining participation</li> <li>•How participation is facilitated</li> <li>•Barriers to participation</li> <li>•Effects of successful participation</li> </ul>
The influence of gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Influence of CYP'S gender on needs</li> <li>•The influence of gender on participation</li> <li>•The influence of gender on participation practices</li> <li>•Influence of teachers' gender</li> </ul>
Pupil Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The effects of SEBD</li> <li>•Personal attributes</li> <li>•The effects of gender</li> <li>•The importance of action</li> </ul>
The influence of CYP's views	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•The effects of SEBD</li> <li>•The effects of gender</li> <li>•Action</li> </ul>
Understanding of the needs of CYP with SEBDs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Causes and functions of SEBDs</li> <li>•SEBDs in mainstream education</li> <li>•External support</li> <li>•Expectations of CYP with SEBDs</li> </ul>
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Pupil- teacher relationships</li> <li>•Peer relationships</li> <li>•Staff relationships</li> <li>•Trust</li> </ul>
Ethos of setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Staffs skills</li> <li>•Practicalities</li> <li>•Values</li> <li>•Aspirations</li> </ul>
Moving participation forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Transferring learning</li> <li>•Progression</li> <li>•Sharing knowledge</li> <li>•Community involvement</li> </ul>

As part of the AI process participants were asked to describe their dreams for the future. The collated list of wishes is presented below:

- ❖ A girls' provision within a nice building which is fit for purpose for running a permanent girls unit which can meet their emotional needs by taking a holistic approach to their participation.
- ❖ Girls to be involved with planning the area and common rooms and for them to have an area for them to make cups of tea and meals at times and animals to look after in the grounds.
- ❖ For the ethos of the PRU to remain the same in a long stay provision but for some rules to be changed to reflect girls' expressed needs such as being able to wear makeup for school.
- ❖ For girls to have form time so that they can be supported to express their needs and their views acted upon in order to individualise plans for them and aid participation.
- ❖ To ensure that girls take part in pupil forums or student councils whilst ensuring that regular opportunities are also provided for them to express their needs on a 1:1 basis.
- ❖ For individual differences to be noticed and needs to be met as they arise, whilst recognising that differences exist within as well as between genders.
- ❖ For integration of CYP into the short and long stay provision to be phased so that relationships can be built and needs can be expressed and understood thus making them more likely to be met.
- ❖ More screening work with a focus on CYP's behaviour, social background and their attitudes to learning to be done when they start at PRU/ school to find out and understand what motivates them to participate and to enable learning to be personalised.
- ❖ For knowledge to be shared regarding girls' with SEBDs views of their needs to develop understanding and alter adults' expectations of them.
- ❖ For staff and CYP to have access to a good support network of staff who share the same values and who enjoy working with CYP.
- ❖ For CYP to have access to external support and services that can provide vocational qualifications which need to be broad ranging to allow for individuality and which avoid stereotyping and/ or steering CYP down a certain route.
- ❖ To ensure that CYP's life skills are developed as well their educational attainment so that they are ready to move out into the world with skills and qualifications that they can access employment from and succeed in life.

- ❖ For all pupils, regardless of gender, to be supported to participate more in their communities in order to facilitate a sense of ownership, some control and responsibility.
- ❖ For more key workers to be employed who can spend time with CYP outside of school accessing and engaging with a wider choice of activities which are not associated with school thus enabling CYP to express their views regarding their needs in a more relaxed or neutral environment and enabling participation.
- ❖ For CYP to have opportunities for their voices to be heard and their views acted upon in society to help them to have pride in their communities as they make meaningful contributions to them.
- ❖ For parents groups to be set up to develop understanding and skills to meet the needs of CYP with SEBDs and to support and transfer the work done in the PRU in order to facilitate engagement and participation.

Statements were then composed by the researcher which built on what participants had expressed during the discovery and dream stages of the AI process and the summary of the final themes and sub themes. These ideas or 'provocative propositions' are expressed as follows:

1. 'Children and young people identified as having SEBD have much to offer in regard to participating in decision making regardless of gender'.
2. 'We aim to empower all children and young people identified as having SEBD to tackle the barriers that they may face and assist them to appropriately challenge misconceptions about their capabilities across contexts.'
3. 'We recognise the value in developing skills in children and young people identified as having SEBDs as we believe that it is important that they are assisted to make choices and have control of their future'
4. 'We have high expectations which gently challenge and assist the development of children and young people, school staff and others'
5. 'Relationships based on trust and respect enables people to take safe risks and we are proud of the relationships that we foster between pupils, staff, parents and professionals.'
6. 'Sharing aspirations and belief in young people's potential with others involved in their care and education assists meaningful participation.'
7. 'We endeavour to develop and maintain good home-school relationships through regular



communication and are aware of the difficulties that many families of children and young people with SEBDs face.'

8. 'Staff work as a team and can trust and rely on each other's commitment, drive and professionalism. We hold a diverse range of skills which we utilise whilst recognising and employing the skills of other professionals and learning from the children and young people we work with to develop our practice and increase effectiveness'
9. 'We appreciate and value firm boundaries and clear strategies used by staff'.
10. 'Students are encouraged to participate in school and the community to support their attainment of the variety of personal and social skills needed to function independently, healthily and safely in society.'
11. 'We understand that it takes patience and perseverance for children and young people to develop participation skills and invest time in this important and valuable process '
12. 'Our common view is that our expertise in the field of SEBD, thorough knowledge of our students and perception of them as unique individuals enables us to provide a flexible approach to learning which is personalised to their specific needs '
13. 'There is a greater probability of successfully addressing the needs of children with SEBD when we commence work with them at a younger age'.
14. 'We recognise the need for provision to be adapted to meet the needs of girls with SEBD as equally as boys needs are met'

### **Action plan to fulfil the design and destiny stages of the AI cycle**

Four main areas for action for development were agreed by participants:

- Action 1- Pupils being involved in decision making
- Action 2- Establishing a long stay provision for girls with SEBDs
- Action 3- Developing the ethos of the PRU
- Action 4- Parental involvement

The findings were triangulated with analysis of reflections collected and recorded by the researcher in a diary and also of examination and analysis of information provided by the PRU relating to the participation of girls identified as having SEBDs in decision making. Data was examined using content analysis which drew attention to general and specific points included below.

- m) There are many reasons which may potentially result in CYP being identified as having SEBDs and which may impact upon the degree that they can participate in decision making.
- n) Not all causes of SEBD are within the CYP's control and the level of their participation in decision making around their needs may be determined by adults.
- o) Disruption and verbal aggression are reported as significant factors in how girls identified as having SEBDs may express views regarding their needs which can act as barriers to participation.
- p) Being identified as having SEBDs often results in exclusions from a number of educational provisions thus resulting in views being less likely to be sought and/or to be acted upon and affecting CYP's ability to participate.
- q) Exclusions from educational provision often results in CYP's attainment levels reducing.
- r) CYP with SEBDs are likely to engage with most interventions aimed at assisting them to express their views regarding their needs appropriately and aid participation.
- s) Although both internal and external support may be provided to assist CYP with SEBDs to participate in education, personal attributes of CYP and family members may impact on their engagement and on views being incorporated into practice..
- t) Knowledge is not always shared between school settings regarding the educational history, strengths and needs of CYP with SEBD.
- u) The reasons for non-participation of CYP with SEBDs and/ or their parents are not sought or reported by school settings.
- v) Girls identified as having SEBD are likely to experience safeguarding issues making it important for adults to take their views into consideration when making any decisions and plans involving their needs.
- w) Participation is affected by the relationships which exist between pupils, peers, school staff and family members.
- x) The process of gathering the views of CYP when constructing ICMPs is more about learning how best to manage and react to CYP as opposed to involving them in decision making or planning.

An overall summary of the main findings of the study is provided below.

Research Question	Main Findings
<p>How do school staff and pupils construct and describe successful participation practices in facilitating pupils with SEBDs to express their views regarding their needs, and how do they view this practice as similar and different with girls and boys?</p>	<p>Pupils and staff have a similar perception of what ‘participation’ means and participants expressed the importance of CYP with SEBDs being involved in decisions made about their needs.</p> <p>Facilitators and barriers to participation were identified, including the ability of CYP to act autonomously. The effects of participation practices on both CYP and those around them were also discussed.</p> <p>Gender was described as influencing CYP’s needs and also their ability to participate in decision making. Gender was also described as influencing the participation practices employed for use with CYP, although many approaches to participation were described as being gender neutral.</p> <p>However, it was not only CYP’s gender that was considered to impact upon participation as staff’s gender was also described as having an influence on the process.</p>
<p>How do pupils’ views regarding their needs influence provision to meet those needs?</p>	<p>Pupil voice was identified as influencing how the needs of CYP with SEBDs are met. The effect of SEBDs, both on CYP and those supporting them were discussed, as was the impact on CYPs ability to express their needs, and indeed on their views being sought.</p> <p>Understanding and accepting individual differences was considered as impacting upon the ability of CYP to express their views, as was the need for staff to notice and respond to changing needs.</p> <p>Gender was again considered to have bearing upon pupil voice and both similarities and differences between genders were described, although more variances than parallels were highlighted, and how these diverge was not always agreed upon by participants.</p>

	<p>Staff participants identified potential biological, social and emotional reasons for perceived differences between the genders in their ability to express views regarding needs. Pupils offered explanations due to emotions.</p> <p>The importance of acting upon pupil's opinions was acknowledged by all participants, and the possible effects of not doing so were discussed. However, being identified as having SEBDs was considered to result in views being less likely to be acted upon and gender was also considered to impact upon the influence of the views of CYP.</p>
<p>What factors are identified as having the greatest impact on participation in one SEBD provision, and how is this similar and different for girls and boys?</p>	<p>Understanding the needs of pupils with SEBDs, including the many possible causes and functions of such difficulties and behaviours were considered to impact on participation. Particular reference was made to expectations of CYP with SEBDs and others' expectations of them related to participating in decision making.</p> <p>Relationships between pupils and teachers, between peers and also between staff members were considered to affect the ability of CYP with SEBDs to participate in decision making. Trust was identified as being key in all relationships and was described by all participants as facilitating expression of needs and aiding participation.</p> <p>The ethos of the PRU was considered to influence participation, the structure of which was described as being influenced by the smaller size of the setting, the skills possessed and utilised by staff, the values held and communicated by adults to CYP in the PRU and aspirations held by pupils and for them by staff.</p> <p>Ideas as to how participation practices could be developed were generated by all participants, which related to procedures not only taking place in the PRU, but also to other contexts such as mainstream settings and in the wider community. The importance of</p>

	sharing knowledge across settings was identified, and ideas regarding how to facilitate this were created. Some gender specific considerations were also noted.
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## Discussion

Proposition	Findings
1 a. It is important that adults take the views of CYP into consideration when they make any decisions and plans involving their needs.	As detailed in the thematic analysis and also in the dreams, provocative propositions and actions developed as a result of the AI, the findings suggest that this view was shared by participants from the PRU. Therefore the evidence is largely supportive of this proposition.
1 b. The level of participation of CYP with SEBD in decision making around their needs is determined by adults.	As detailed in the thematic analysis, and supported by the illustrative photographs produced by pupils and by the content analysis, findings demonstrate that the level of CYP's participation was not always determined by adults. However, occasions were described where adults not only control the level of facilitation of CYP's involvement, but also the outcome of their views when expressed. In summary, the evidence for this proposition was found to be supportive in part. Therefore, the researcher proposed a revised proposition as follows:  <b><i>The level of participation of CYP with SEBD in decision-making around their needs is facilitated by adults.</i></b>
1 c. CYP with SEBDs can offer vital insight into what helps them to participate in expressing their views regarding their needs.	This was detailed in the thematic analysis, illustrative photographs, content analysis, and throughout the AI. The support offered to CYP by staff at the PRU was highlighted as a facilitator of participation, with much emphasis placed on the importance of communication, listening and understanding. Examples of adaptations to communication were observed by the researcher in the PRU in the form of visual aids and reminders of the points system and rewards that could be earned by pupils; rules and sanctions; participation activities available such as Student Voice and clubs and diagrams of the 'model of aggression'.

<p>1 d. School staff describe some gender specific practice as facilitating pupils with SEBDs to express their views regarding their needs.</p>	<p>As detailed in the thematic analysis of the AI, this was in fact the case, although participants were unable to fully explain why they expected that boys' and girls' needs would be different and that the two groups would be treated differently. Furthermore, the content analysis of documentation did not reveal any references to the influence of CYP'S gender on their needs or participation or to the effects of gender on participation.</p> <p>Participants offered some reasons for why they thought the approaches adopted for girls and boys differed, although gender-based issues were often taken for granted. Staff gender was also described as influencing participation practices, however, whereas male staff members described feeling unable to always meet girls' needs due to their own gender, female staff did not describe such difficulties as existing between them and male pupils.</p> <p>These accounts could be considered to demonstrate more general stereotypes of men and women by suggesting that girls need a woman to talk to whereas males do not have the skills necessary to support pupils in this way. However, the researcher considers that any difficulties expressed by male staff to meet girls needs related to potential safeguarding issues as opposed to lack of skills.</p>
<p>2 a. It is vital to act on the expressed views of CYP when they are elicited.</p>	<p>The findings show that participants placed importance on both elicitation and action. As demonstrated by the thematic analysis and throughout the AI 'pupil voice' was considered key to this process. The Children and Families Act 2014 (DfE, 2014) and revised Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice stipulates that LA's must have regard to the views, wishes and feelings of the CYP and to the importance of the child or young person participating as fully as possible in decisions. This move toward customising methods of participation was referred to by staff participants who explained that noticing and responding to the changing needs of individuals was important in eliciting pupil voice to aid their participation in decision making.</p>

<p>2 b. Being identified as having SEBDs can result in views being less likely to be sought and/or to be acted upon.</p>	<p>This was an assessment shared by participants and findings also demonstrate that experiencing SEBDs was considered to impact upon CYPs ability to express their needs. Literature states that some students experience greater influence and consequently perceived power when they exhibit more challenging behaviour.</p> <p>Participants also recognised that if asked for their views regarding decision making about their needs, pupil's views are not always acted upon. However, for young people, especially those who have experienced exclusion, encouraging voice entails significant responsibility for action. The effects of SEBDs on family members and on school staff supporting CYP identified as such were also discussed by participants in the current study, with staff describing the emotional and physical demands of their work.</p>
<p>2 c. Gender and personal attributes of CYP with SEBDs can impact on their views being incorporated into practice.</p>	<p>Whereas thematic and content analysis agreed with the second part of this evaluation, as previously discussed content analysis did not demonstrate gender as having an impact and so the researcher proposes a revised proposition as follows:</p> <p><b><i>Narrative accounts of CYP with SEBDs demonstrate that gender and personal attributes impact on their views being incorporated into practice.</i></b></p> <p>Interestingly, although staff described differences as existing between boys' and girls' ability to express their views, pupils only referred to differences in how views are communicated. The researcher considers that it may be that the higher number of boys with SEBDs in the PRU means that staff have more experience of working with this group and so feel more able to comment on boys' ability to express their needs.</p> <p>Another possible explanation is that some staff participant's perceptions of stereotypical gender behaviours have resulted in their assessment that girls present more of a challenge as they are characterised as 'difficult and also as in difficulty; as dangerous, and</p>

	<p>also being in danger' (McLeod &amp; Allard, 2001, p.1).</p> <p>Staff participants described the need to invest more of themselves to form relationships with girls in order to build trust, although why staff perceive this to be more of a consideration for female pupils is not clear.</p> <p>It seems that participants were referring to the need to respond to the unique profile of pupils which related to how SEBDs were conceptualised. Central to this holistic view of pupils were the relationships that existed between staff and CYP. The importance of understanding and accepting such differences was described as being both important and effective to aid participation by participants.</p> <p>Gender was also considered to impact upon the influence of CYP's views and possible reasons for this were discussed. The profile of girls with SEBD may be considered a fluid concept as participants also considered the potential influence of gender on participation in the future. This was particularly true of staff participants, which perhaps suggests that pupils already considered the concept of gender differently.</p>
<p>3 a. Participation is facilitated by reliable relationships between pupils and school staff.</p>	<p>The thematic and content analyses and AI supported this suggestion. Humanistic perspectives attach great significance to the relationship between teacher and pupil (Hart, 2012) and understanding of pupils with SEBDs was considered by participants to influence interactions. The importance of being aware of the potential causes and functions of SEBDs was described as being significant to the formation of supportive relationships. Causes identified related to the influence of school settings and also to relationships that CYP have with both staff and family members, alluding to an ecosystemic approach to understanding behaviour and highlighting the systemic interrelationships that exist between individuals rather than the existence of causal relationships existing between any one factor and SEBD.</p>



Participants were able to generate ideas to meet such difficulties through their involvement in the AI process and recognition was also given to how external support could be accessed in order to meet the needs of CYP with SEBD.

Attention was paid by participants to how rapport is built and effective bonds are maintained. As suggested by Nind, Boorman and Clarke (2012) a key theme in educating girls identified as having SEBDs is building and maintaining relationships and in Hart's (2012) study which also took place in a PRU, protective factors were linked to fostering staff–pupil and pupil–pupil relationships . Similarly, Michael and Frederickson (2013) found 'positive relationships' to be the most widely mentioned empowering theme regarding the enablers and barriers to positive outcomes for secondary aged pupils in a PRU.

Participants also discussed peer relationships and their influence on participation and female pupils were described by staff participants as often expressing themselves through the exclusion of other girls from friendship groups, name calling and manipulation. Participants also identified effective relationships between staff members as impacting upon the participation of CYP.

The importance of trust in all relationships was described as facilitating the expression of needs and therefore CYP's participation. The Children and Families Act 2014 (DfE, 2014) states that LA's should work with CYP and parents to establish the aims of their participation, mark progress and build trust. This is not always easy, however, and pupil participants referred to past experiences which have affected their faith in others. Therefore, a challenge faced by those working with CYP with SEBDs is being able to persevere through the difficulties, conveying faith in their capacity to effect change (Mowatt, 2010).

	<p>When considering the ethos of the setting, the skill set possessed by staff at the PRU was described as impacting upon relationships and on the participation of CYP, and the potential consequences of staff not possessing these skills were also considered. Participants also referred to the smaller size of the PRU as impacting on participation and as found by Lloyd and O’ Regan (1999), teachers were considered more sympathetic to difficulty and could be asked for help in smaller classes in PRUs.</p> <p>Staff and pupil participants placed importance on the values held and communicated to CYP to the ethos of the PRU and as demonstrated by McDonald-Connor et al. (2005), the positive, valuing, characteristics of teachers can impact strongly on academic outcomes. The consistency of the messages communicated to CYP was considered to be important and Sellman’s (2009) found that students with SEBDs particularly welcomed structure, regularity and consistency. Participants in the current study described clarity and consistency as important to good quality relationships and as also aiding pupil progression.</p>
<p>3 b. The factors that have the greatest impact on participation are similar for girls and boys identified as having SEBDs.</p>	<p>An ambition held by staff for CYP was that they would be able to transfer what they had learned at the PRU into other educational settings including mainstream schools in order to aid expression of their needs and participation. Potential barriers to the achievement of this were noted, and again refer to the many systems that surround CYP and the influence that these can have on participation and life in general.</p> <p>Participants did not refer to any differences according to gender when examining how knowledge is currently shared within and outside of the PRU to aid the participation of CYP, although the consequences of not distributing information were discussed and ideas regarding how the process could be improved were generated. Interestingly, although pupils felt able to offer guidance to teachers</p>

	on how to improve participation practice for CYP, they were hesitant to recommend changes to peers.
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## **Summary**

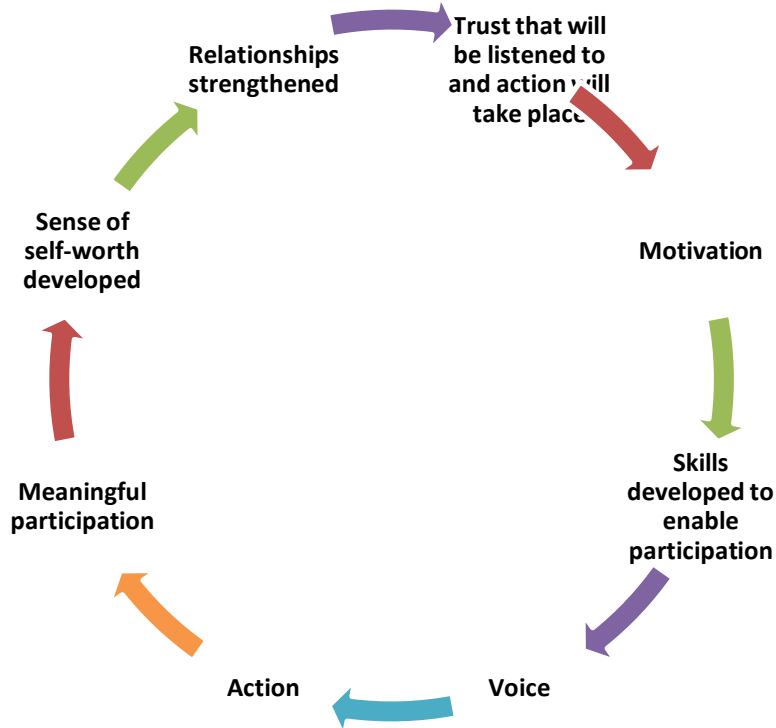
Eight key themes were identified through thematic analysis, which were supported by the content analysis and photographs taken by the girls, as having the greatest impact on the facilitation of participation practices in the PRU.

The themes identified correspond with the existing literature base and importantly with the aspirations set out in the Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE, 2015). Specifically, the legislation sets out a clearer focus on the participation of CYP in decision-making at individual and strategic levels; the importance of CYP participating as fully as possible in decisions, and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions.

Staff in the current study suggested that their role in supporting CYP to participate in decision making was embedded within an eco-systemic model, and comprised components which overlapped and interacted with each other. Fundamental to each component, however, were the relationships which existed between staff and pupils; between peers; between colleagues; between staff and parents/ cares and between pupils and their parents/ carers.

Therefore, the current author considers that this element, that of 'relationships', is the key aspect of participation. Furthermore, relationships are also influenced by meaningful participation experiences, making the process reciprocal and sustaining. With this in mind the researcher developed a model of participation which is a modification of Kilroy's (2013) revised synthesis of the Hart (1992), Treseder (1997) & Shier (2001) models.

### **Revised model of participation**



Fundamentally, it is the perception of ‘participation’ and what this entails that can have a considerable impact on how CYP are enabled and facilitated to take part in decision making and planning to participate. Views of the process of participation and how this should be managed need to be challenged systemically, in organisations such as education settings and also on a more individual level with pupils, parents and school staff. Furthermore, the potential positive outcomes of successful participation for all CYP with SEBDs and also those adults who support and care for them could be shared as could knowledge regarding how best to facilitate this.

## **Conclusion**

Participation as a process requires information-sharing and dialogue between all involved (Lansdown, 2011). Therefore, participants from this study could be in a position to share key findings and knowledge generated in order to support those working at the individual, organisational and wider societal or systemic level with CYP identified as having SEBDs to facilitate changes to participation practices, regardless of gender.

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### 8.17 Appendix 17: Example of reflective diary entry

Her with new pupil participation.  
Yr 8 new starter.  
Seemed willing to take part  
but asked if I'd encourage  
answers down better than give  
verbal feedback.  
Found it difficult to make  
eye contact.  
Dad's late arrival was a pointer  
to a phrasing of the verbal phrases  
which she may learn to do as she  
writes it.  
She doesn't feel as the moment  
that she would like to be  
part of feedback she's had  
that might change.

## 8.18

### Appendix 18: Audit trail

First the researcher highlighted initial codes in the data, coding them as 'quote notations', demonstrated by the first 30 codes of the transcript for pupil 2

Transcript	Initial codes (quote notations)
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>THEMATIC ANALYSIS</u></b></p> <p><b>Pupil 1:</b> <b><u>Interview 2</u></b> <i>I would like to start by defining 'participation' with you. When we talk about girls with SEBD participating in school, what does it mean?</i> <i>Yes, takes part in things and has some influence over decisions that are made about things that go on and then that leads to change. So what I mean is you having a say and being involved in things that make a difference to your time in school. OK?</i></p> <p>Yeah <i>So, if I say 'participation' and if we talk about girls participating in a school, what does it mean to you? What do you think it means?</i></p> <p><b>Girls taking part</b> <i>Girls taking part, yeah. So, do you think it's the same or different how girls take part in school than how boys do? Do you think there's any difference between boys and girls and what they do?</i></p> <p><b>Not really no.</b> <i>Ok, so in other schools that you've been to. You mentioned you went to (X) and (X), and even primary school. What primary school did you go to?</i> (X) <i>So, did anything go on in any of those schools that helped you take part in school?</i></p> <p><b>No one's ever helped me to do nothing like that.</b> <i>No one's ever helped you to do something?</i></p> <p><b>No. They've always said that they will. Not primary. But (X) and (X) both said that they'd do something to help but no one ever has.</b> <i>No one ever did? So you're in year 8, so nearly 2 years in senior school. So have there been a lot of times when they said they would help you and then didn't?</i></p> <p><b>Loads. All the time</b> <i>What did they say they were going to help you with?</i></p> <p><b>They said they were going to get people in who could help me. And</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participation= taking part in things</li> <li>2. No difference according to gender</li> <li>3. Never helped to participate in in other schools</li> <li>4. Has been told would be helped</li> <li>5. Promises of help not kept</li> <li>6. Promises not acted upon.</li> </ol>



places I could go to when I needed help. They just never got back. Do you know what I mean?

And how did that feel when they said they would and then didn't?

I'm used to it.

You're used to it?

Yeah

So what did you think you needed help with?

Just like my anger like. I get angry quick and stuff like that.

So you go from being alright to getting angry really quickly?

Just the littlest thing and then it will be all day, like yesterday. I was in art and the teacher said "get out" and all that and I was like "what??" and then I went back and she gave me lost learning. At break she told me and then I wouldn't go to any of my lessons then because I was on lost learning.

So you didn't go to any lessons?

I went to my first three.

So would you have liked help with that? Would you have liked to be able to be helped?

She shouldn't have told me that I was on lost learning till the end of the day.

So would that help you?

Well if he never told me till the end of the day I'd have been to all my lessons.

So that would have helped you to take part in the rest of the day?

Yeah.

Ok, so thinking about those other schools where you said they never helped you, what was the least helpful things they did in the schools? What things were the kind of things that went on? Is there anything that really stands out in your mind?

Because my name got brought into everything I got blamed for everything. In (X), not in (X), but in (X) like, I would get my name brought into everything.

Why was that do you think?

Don't know

You don't know? Did you start like getting into trouble pretty much soon after you started in (X)?

7. Resigned to being let down by schools.

8. Gets angry quickly  
9. Expressed need for help

10. Hard to get over incidents  
11. Effect on learning

12. Effects of sanctions on participation

13. Reputation leads to blame

Yeah

*So do you think you got a bit of a name for yourself and then they blame you whether you're involved or not?*

Normally because there were girls arguing in our lesson, they'd be like "oh yeah, it was (name)". But it wasn't me and then that would make me flip.

*And then they'd think "well it must be you because you're flipping". Whereas you're flipping because it's not fair.*

Yeah

*It's hard that though isn't it?*

I know

*So what do you think they could have done to help you more then?*

Don't know

*What would you have liked help with? You said your anger.*

Just getting angry and that.

*How would you have liked them to help you with your anger?*  
Don't know.

*Would you have liked help to stay calmer do you think?*

Yeah, obviously.

*Anything else that they said they were going to help you with and then didn't*

*They said everything and did nothing. All schools do!*

*Do you think they all do? Do you think this one might help you a bit more?*

I've not been here that long.

*Did you know anyone when you came here?*  
Two people. One girl, one boy.

*Are they alright?*

The lad was in (X) and the girl I just know from going out. But she's not in my group.

*Are there two girls classes still?*

Yeah.

14. Lack of understanding of behaviours

15. Wants to change behavior

16. Lack of help and support  
17. Mistrust of schools

**So what are the other girls like in your class?**

**They're alright.**

*You all get on alright?*

So, so. I know one of them.

*Are they all year 8?*

2 year 7, 3 year 8, and 1 year 9.

*Right, so it's a bit of a mix. But no problems so far?*

Not really

*That's good. Is there anything that staff have done here that...say like you tell them "I need this, or I think this, or I like this". Is there anything that they've done already where they've acted on what you've said?*

**Yeah, like if you say "I need time out" or something like that they're like "OK, come on". Stuff like that.**

*Is that good?*

Yeah.

**So you can say to them "I need time out" which is a really good thing to do isn't it because you're thinking about that before it goes too far and they're listening to you.**

Yeah

*And where do you go? Do you have somewhere special where you go or do you just...?*

**I just go sitting on the benches or in the reflecting room.**

*Does someone sit with you or do they just leave you alone?*

**No, someone sits with me.**

*And what do they do? Do they try and talk to you or do they just leave you to be quiet?*

They talk to me.

Do you like that?

Yeah.

*So that's good. So has anything else gone on where you've asked for something or said you need something and they've helped you?*

**I don't really ask. If I need something I won't ask, do you know what I mean?**

18. Peer relationships

19. PRU staff acting on expression of needs

20. Positive experience of being listened to

21. Able to verbalise needs

22. Taking responsibility for self

23. Support received from staff

24. Difficult to ask for help

<p><i>Yeah. Ok, so what do you find most helpful about the staff here and what they do for you?</i></p> <p><b>They're just there for me; do you know what I mean? Like whatever you ask them for they'll like, do you know what I mean?</b></p> <p><i>And is there anything that you don't find very helpful? Is there anything that you wish they didn't do?</i></p> <p><b>They say like "don't give me attitude" and all that. Like when they're giving attitude to me I'm gonna give it back! Like, it's the girl teachers.</b></p> <p><i>It's the girl teachers?</i></p> <p><b>Yeah, not the men ones, it's the girl ones.</b></p> <p><i>Do you get on better with the men teachers than the girl teachers?</i></p> <p>Yeah.</p> <p><i>So you think the girl teachers give you a bit of attitude sometimes?</i></p> <p><b>All the time! In lessons all the time.</b></p> <p><i>Every lesson? What about?</i></p> <p><b>They'll always have something to moan about. Like my work or something like that. And I'll just be like "Oh, shut up!"</b></p> <p><i>Do you get on with any of them?</i></p> <p>Not the girl ones no</p>	<p>25. Availability of staff important</p> <p>26. Acting on needs important</p> <p>27. Relationships with staff</p> <p>28. Effect of staff gender on relationships</p> <p>29. Better relationships with male staff</p> <p>30. Effect of staff's attitude on participation</p>
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Next the researcher created initial subthemes for the codes/quote notations, as demonstrated in the following first 25 initial codes of the transcript for pupil 2.

Initial codes	Initial subthemes
1. Participation= taking part in things	Meaning of participation
2. No difference according to gender	Similarities between genders
3. Effect of staff gender on relationships	Differences between genders
4. Better relationships with male staff	Differences between genders
5. Never helped to participate in in other schools	Past experience of participation
6. Has been told would be helped	Past experience of participation

7. Positive experience of being listened to	Positive experience of of participation
8. Promises of help not kept	Needs not met
9. Promises not acted upon.	Needs not met
10. Lack of help and support	Needs not met
11. Resigned to being let down by schools	Effect of inaction
12. Gets angry quickly	Causes and effects of SEBDs
13. Hard to get over incidents	Causes and effects of SEBDs
14. Effect on learning	Causes and effects of SEBDs
15. Lack of understanding of behaviours	Understanding of SEBDs
16. Expressed need for help	Expressing needs
17. Wants to change behaviour	Expressing needs
18. Able to verbalise needs	Expressing needs
19. Difficult to ask for help	Expressing needs
20. Effects of sanctions on participation	Effects on participation
21. Reputation leads to blame	Effects on participation
22. Mistrust of schools	Effects on participation
23. Peer relationships	Relationships
24. Support received from staff	Relationships
25. Relationships with staff	Relationships
26. Taking responsibility for self	Relationships
27. Availability of staff important	Self-reliance
28. Effect of staff's attitude on participation	Staff skills
29. PRU staff acting on expression of needs	Staff skills Importance of action
30. Acting on needs important	Importance of action

The initial subthemes ‘Similarities between genders’ and ‘Differences between genders’ were refined as subtheme ‘The influence of gender on participation practices’, as identified in the table below, along with an example of another similarly refined initial subtheme:

<b>Initial subtheme</b>	<b>Refined subtheme</b>	<b>Subsequent main theme</b>
Similarities between genders Differences between genders’	The influence of gender on participation practices	Successful Participation Practices
Causes and effects of SEBDs Understanding of SEBDs	Causes and functions of SEBD	Understanding of the needs of CYP with SEBD

The researcher grouped the initial codes and identified overarching main themes and relevant subthemes. This process continued whereby the researcher refined subthemes and identified main theme. An overview of the thematic maps is illustrated in Table 13 which was constructed as a result of this progressive refining process from the initial codes (quote notations) described at the beginning of this audit trail resulting in subthemes and main themes.

8.19 Appendix 19: Table 24: Stage 1 of content analysis informing code areas.

Categories	Interview documentation with mainstream school staff, pupils and parent/ carer on entry to PRU	Individual Crisis Management Plan (ICMP)	Records of Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings
Successful Participation Practices			
Defining participation			
How participation is facilitated	///	///	///
Barriers to participation			
Effects of successful participation			
The influence of gender			
Influence of CYP'S gender on needs			
The influence of gender on participation			
The influence of gender on participation practices		/	
Influence of teachers' gender			
Pupil Voice		///	
The effects of SEBD	/////		
Personal attributes	///	///	/////
The effects of gender			
The importance of action			
The influence of CYP's views			
The effects of SEBD			
The effects of gender			
Action			
Causes and functions of SEBD	/////	/////	///
SEBD in mainstream education	//	//	/
External support	////////	//	///
Expectations of CYP with SEBD			/
Relationships	////////	////////	///
Pupil- teacher relationships			
Peer relationships			
Staff relationships			
Trust			
Ethos of setting			
Staffs skills			
Practicalities	//	///	////
Values			
Aspirations			
Moving participation forward			
Transferring learning			
Progression	/		
Sharing knowledge	/	///	//
Community involvement			

## 8.20 Appendix 20: Table 25: Audit trail-content analysis

Categories	Documentation		
	Interview	ICMP	TAC meetings
Successful Participation Practices			
Defining participation			
How participation is facilitated	///	///	///
Barriers to participation			
Effects of successful participation			
Influence of CYP'S gender on needs			
The influence of gender on participation			
The influence of gender on participation practices		/	
Influence of teachers' gender			
Pupil Voice		///	
The effects of SEBD	/////		
Personal attributes	///	///	/////
The effects of gender			
The importance of action			
The influence of CYP's views			
Causes and functions of SEBD	////////	/////	///
SEBD in mainstream education	//	//	/
External support	////////	//	///
Expectations of CYP with SEBD			/
Relationships	////////	////////	///
Pupil- teacher relationships			
Peer relationships			
Staff relationships			
Trust			
Ethos of setting			
Staffs skills			
Practicalities	//	///	////
Values			
Aspirations			
Moving participation forward			
Transferring learning			
Progression	/		
Sharing knowledge	/	///	//
Community involvement			

Participation practices; Understanding CYP with SEBDs; Gender; Relationships; Facilitating participation.



## 8.21

### Appendix 21: AI Pilot study - Evaluation questions

1. Do you feel that you have been listened to during the interview?
2. Which questions were most relevant to you and your work? Why?
3. Which questions were not relevant to you and your work? Why?
4. Do you feel that the vocabulary used in the questions is what you would choose to describe your experiences?
5. Do you feel that the overt commitment to 'the positive' prevented discussion of any concerns or criticisms you may have?

## 8.22

### Appendix 22: RESEARCH RISK AND ETHICS ASSESSMENT

#### School of Education, University of Manchester

The School of Education is committed to developing and supporting the highest standards of research in education and its associated fields. The *Research Risk and Ethics Assessment* (RREA) resource has been created in order to maintain these high academic standards and associated codes of good research practice. The research portfolio within the School of Education covers a wide range of fields and perspectives. Research within each of these areas places responsibilities of a differing nature on supervisors and students subject to course, level, focus and participants. The aim of the *Research Risk and Ethics Assessment* is to assist supervisors and students in assessing these factors.

The School has determined three levels of *Research Risk* each of which has a number of associated criteria and have implications for the degree of ethical review required. In general, the research risk level is considered to be:

- **High** IF the research focuses on groups within society in need of special support, or where it may be non-standard, or if there is a possibility the research may be contentious in one or more ways.
- **Medium** IF the research follows standard procedures and established research methodologies and is considered non-contentious.
- **Low** IF the research is of a routine nature and is considered non-contentious<sup>1</sup>.

Agreement to proceed with research at each of these levels is provided by an appropriate University Research Ethics Committee, a School of Education Research Integrity Committee member, or by the supervisor/tutor respectively.

#### How to complete the Research Risk and Ethics Assessment (RREA) form.

This form should be completed, in consultation with the School of Education *Ethical Practice Policy Guidelines*<sup>2</sup>, by School of Education students and their supervisors in all cases, except where a pre-approved assignment template currently exists<sup>3</sup>. There are six main sections to this document, with three additional sections for UG/PGT research (or Prof. Doc Research Papers) seeking ethical approval for LOW risk studies from a supervisor/tutor:

#### ANY student

- Section A – Summary of Research Proposal (page 1)
- Section B – Description of Research (page 2)
- Sections C.0-C.1 – Criteria for HIGH risk research (page 4)
- Section C.2 – Criteria for MEDIUM risk research (page 6)
- Section C.3 – Criteria for LOW risk research (page 8)

#### Where indicated

- Section D – LOW risk Fieldwork Declaration (page 9)

<sup>1</sup> A reasonable person would agree that the study includes no issues of public or private objection, or of a sensitive nature.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.education.manchester.ac.uk/intranet/ethics/>

<sup>3</sup> For courses with approved templates see: <http://www.education.manchester.ac.uk/intranet/ethics>

### UG/PGT students and Prof Doc students completing Research Papers only

- Section E.1 – Criteria for LOW risk PGT/UG approval (page 11)

### Supervisors and tutor approvals of LOW risk student research

- Section E.2 – Supervisor confirmation that research matches LOW risk criteria (page 12)
- Section E.3 – Minor Amendments to LOW risk study and supervisor approval (page 13)

It may be appropriate for supervisors and students to review and discuss responses to these questions together.

**NB:** A separate **Fieldwork Risk Assessment form** must be completed as indicated in this RREA, in order to plan how safety issues will be responded to during fieldwork visits. The Fieldwork Risk Assessment form is available on the School of Education ethics intranet. For all projects where this does not apply, a LOW Risk Fieldwork Declaration (Section D) must be completed. Instructions on this and subsequent stages of the RREA process are provided at the end of each following section.

## RESEARCH RISK AND ETHICS ASSESSMENT

### School of Education, University of Manchester

*To be completed by QA administrator*

<b>RIA reference</b>	
<b>Date received</b>	<b>Date approved</b>

### SECTION A - SUMMARY OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL

This section should be completed by the **person undertaking the research**.

<b>A1. Name of Person/Student:</b>	Julie Martin
<b>A2. Student ID (quoted on library/ swipe card):</b>	7546518
<b>A3. Email Address:</b>	<a href="mailto:julie.martin-3@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk">julie.martin-3@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk</a>
<b>A4. Name of Supervisor:</b>	Dr Catherine Kelly
<b>A5. Supervisor email address &amp; contact phone no.:</b>	<a href="mailto:Catherine.Kelly@manchester.ac.uk">Catherine.Kelly@manchester.ac.uk</a> 0161 275 7262
<b>A6. Programme (PhD, ProfDoc, MEd, PGCE, MSc, BA etc.):</b>	D.Ed.Ch.Psychol

<b>A7. Year of Study</b>	1	<b>A8. Full/Part-time</b>	Full-time
<b>A9. Course Code</b>	EDUC		
<b>A10. Title of Project:</b>	An investigation into how girls identified as having Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and staff of one specialist education provision feel pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated.		
<b>A11. Participant Recruitment Start Date:</b>	<i>On confirmation of ethical approval</i>	<b>A12. Submission Date:</b>	May 2015
<b>A13. Proposed Fieldwork Start Date:</b>	1/9/13		
<b>A14. Location(s) where the project will be carried out:</b>	Pupil Referral Unit for KS 3 & 4 pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties		
<b>A15. Student Signature:</b>	Julie Martin 28/6/13		

The following section to be completed by the SUPERVISOR

<b>A15. Assessed Risk Level</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Low	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Medium	<input type="checkbox"/>	High	<input type="checkbox"/>	NRES reqd.
<b>A16. Supervisor Signature</b>								
<b>A17. Date</b>								

#### SECTION B – DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH

This section should be completed by **the person undertaking the research.**

**B1.** Provide an outline description of the planned research (250 words max).

The study will investigate how girls identified as having SEBD currently participate in school, how their views are incorporated into decision making processes and what factors have the greatest positive impact on this.

Information sessions about Appreciative Inquiry (AI) methodology and aims will be delivered to staff and senior leadership at a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) to maximise their understanding of the process and commitment to action and to minimise the likelihood of the rejection of participant's views.

Prior to the research commencing the researcher will also spend a number of weeks in the PRU as a trainee EP to build rapport with the pupils and staff.

Members of school staff from the PRU will attend a focus group and female pupils will attend five 1:1 interviews where data will be collected in the most appropriate way which could include verbally, and/ or visually. Current participatory activities at the PRU will be observed and contextual data recorded.

Member checking will take place regularly and the propositions constructed as a result of the AI cycle verified with all participants before being fed back to staff and senior leadership of the PRU in collaboration with participants where the researcher will act as advocate. This will again be done in the most appropriate way for the participants and visual representations of views could be provided.

Any outcomes resulting from the feedback will be evaluated to discover if changes have been made within the PRU, as will the use of the AI process in affecting change.

**B2. The principal research methods and methodologies are (250 words max):**

A qualitative case study research design using an appreciative inquiry (AI) theoretical research perspective will generate data and enable the researcher to focus on the positive experiences of participants and identify areas of good practice in the setting.

Appreciative inquiry is conceptualised as a model of action research as it is based on actively seeking out and exploring further the best of what is already working well within an organisation and building upon that success.

Transcriptions of the focus group and semi-structured interviews will be analysed using thematic analysis to identify, analyse and report patterns experienced by participants.

Content Analysis of observations and thematic analysis of the research diary and written materials from the PRU will be conducted in order to examine communication further and get at the central aspect of participation.

Although the evaluation sheets will not be analysed further, information gained from them and the findings of the study could indicate the likelihood of the AI approach being used with other vulnerable groups and also parents/ carers to gain more information and develop interventions further.

Evaluation of changes made in the PRU as a result of the AI process will also be conducted.

**B3.** Please indicate which of the following groups are expected to participate in this research:

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Children under 16, other than those in school, youth club, or other accredited organisations.          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Adults with learning difficulties, other than those in familiar, supportive <sup>4</sup> environments. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Adults who are unable to self-consent  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Adults with mental illness   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the researcher        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Prisoners  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Young Offenders  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other vulnerable groups (please detail)  |

**OR**

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | None of the above groups are involved in this study |
|-------------------------------------|---|

**B4.** Number of expected research participants.

10

**B5.** The research will take place (tick all that apply):

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | within the UK  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | within the researcher's home <sup>5</sup> country if outside the UK            |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | wholly or partly outside the UK and not in the home country of the researcher* |

**\* You must also complete a separate Fieldwork Risk Assessment form**

<sup>4</sup> The person with learning difficulties has appropriate support within the setting from accredited support workers or family members.

<sup>5</sup> The researcher's 'home country' is defined as one in which (1) the researcher holds a current passport through birthright or foreign birth registration, (2) a country where the researcher has resident status, or (3) where the researcher holds a permit or visa to work, has a contract of employment, and is not a UK tax-payer.

## SECTION C – RESEARCH RISK ASSESSMENT

The following sections should be completed by the person undertaking the research in discussion with their supervisor/tutor.

### C.0 – Criteria for research classified as HIGH RISK – NRES

- The study involves primary research with adults who are unable to self-consent
- The study involves primary research with NHS patients
- The study involves primary research with prisoners/young offenders

**Students** - If any of these options apply, you should complete an NRES application. See your supervisor for further guidance.

**Supervisors** – Forward this RREA form to [ethics.education@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:ethics.education@manchester.ac.uk) when you are satisfied that the project requires an IRAS application.

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### C.1 – Criteria for research classified as HIGH RISK (tick any that apply)

I/we confirm that this research:

- involves vulnerable or potentially vulnerable individuals or groups as indicated in B3
- addresses themes or issues in respect of participant’s personal *experience* which may be of a sensitive nature (i.e. the research has the potential to create a degree of discomfort or anxiety amongst one or more participants)
- cannot be completed without data collection or associated activities which place the researcher and/or participants at *personal risk*\*
- requires participant informed consent and/or withdrawal procedures which are not consistent with accepted practice
- addresses an area where access to personal records (e.g. medical), in collaboration with an authorised person, is not possible
- involves primary data collection on an area of public or social objection (e.g. terrorism, paedophilia)
- makes use of video or other images captured by the researcher, and/or research study participants, where the researcher cannot guarantee controlled access to authorised viewing.
- will involve direct contact with participants in countries on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office warning list<sup>6</sup> \*
- involves face to face contact with research participants outside normal working hours<sup>7</sup> that may be seen as unsocial or inconvenient\*
- will take place wholly or partly without training or qualified supervision\*
- requires appropriate vaccinations which are unavailable\*
- will take place in locations where first aid and/or other medical support or facilities are not available within 30 minutes\*

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/travel-advice-by-country/>

<sup>7</sup> For example, in the UK, normal working hours are between 8am-6pm, Mon-Fri inclusive.

may involve the researcher operating machinery, electrical equipment, or workplace vehicles, or handling or working with animals at the research location(s), for which they are not qualified, and where a qualified operative or handler is not available to act as supervisor.\*

- ➔ \* IF YOU HAVE TICKED these HIGH risk criteria you must also complete a separate Fieldwork Risk Assessment form
- ➔ IF YOU HAVE ONLY TICKED HIGH risk criteria NOT marked (\*) you MUST complete the LOW Risk Fieldwork Declaration on page 9 of this form

<p><b>A. PGR research</b></p> <p>If ONE OR MORE of the <b>HIGH risk</b> criteria have been selected ethical <b>approval must be sought from a UREC committee</b>. The person undertaking the research and their supervisor should agree this risk assessment and submit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed RREA form</li> </ul>	<p><b>B. PGT/ UG research <u>not</u> reviewing/evaluating professional roles or practice</b></p> <p>If ONE OR MORE of the <b>HIGH risk</b> criteria have been selected ethical <b>approval must be sought from a UREC committee</b>. The supervisor and person undertaking the research should agree this risk assessment and submit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed RREA form</li> <li>• Completed the UREC form.</li> <li>• Completed Fieldwork Risk Assessment form where</li> </ul>	<p><b>C. PGT or UG research reviewing / evaluating professional roles or practice,</b></p> <p>If ONE OR MORE of the <b>HIGH risk</b> criteria have been selected ethical <b>approval must be sought from the School of Education (SoE) Research Integrity Committee (RIC)</b>. The supervisor and student agree this risk assessment and submit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed RREA form</li> <li>• Completed SoE Ethical Approval Application form</li> </ul>
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**NB:** ‘Supporting documents’ include recruitment adverts/emails, draft questionnaires / interview topic guides, information sheets and consent forms.

**The documents listed above should be submitted to:**

- A. Mrs. Debbie Kubiena, Room B3.10 along with your PhD Research Plan for consideration at the PhD/Prof Doctorate Review Panel.
- B. The Quality Assurance Administrator via [Ethics.Education@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Ethics.Education@manchester.ac.uk) **by your supervisor**. In doing so, supervisors confirm that they have agreed the assessed risk level and that the documents are complete and correct. The QA Administrator will arrange authorisation for your documents to be submitted to UREC.
- C. The Quality Assurance Administrator via [Ethics.Education@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Ethics.Education@manchester.ac.uk) **by your supervisor**. In doing so, supervisors confirm that they have agreed the assessed risk level and that the documents are complete and correct. The QA Administrator will forward your completed documents to a member of the SoE RIC committee for approval.



**If no HIGH risk items are ticked supervisors and students should continue to section C.2 on the next page ⇒**

**C.2 – Criteria for research classified as MEDIUM RISK (tick any that apply)**

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I/we confirm that this research:

x	is primary research involving children or other vulnerable groups which involves direct contact with participants <sup>8</sup> .
x	study is on a subject that a reasonable person would agree addresses issues of legitimate interest, where there is a possibility that the topic may result in distress or upset in <u>rare</u> instances.
	is primary research which involves substantial direct contact <sup>9</sup> with adults in non-professional roles*
	is primary research which focuses on data collection from professionals responding to questions outside of their professional concerns.
	is primary research involving data collection from participants outside of the EU or the researcher's home country via direct telephone, video, or other linked communications.
	is practice review/evaluation involving topics of a sensitive nature which are not personal to the participants.
	involves visits to site(s) where a specific risk to participants and/or the researcher has been identified, and the researcher may not be closely supervised throughout*
	requires specific training and this is scheduled to be completed before fieldwork starts, or, training will not be undertaken but the research will be closely supervised by an academic advisor with appropriate qualifications and skills
	requires vaccinations which have been received, or are scheduled to be received in a timely fashion*
	requires face to face contact with research participants partly outside normal working hours <sup>10</sup> that may be seen as inconvenient*
	takes place in, or involves transport to and from, locations where the researcher's lack of familiarity may put them at personal risk*
	may require the operation of machinery, electrical equipment, or workplace vehicles, or handling or working with animals at the research location(s), for which they are not qualified, but such operation or handling will be undertaken under close supervision from a qualified operative or handler*

➔ **\* IF YOU HAVE TICKED these MEDIUM risk criteria you must also complete a separate Fieldwork Risk Assessment form**

➔ **IF YOU HAVE ONLY TICKED MEDIUM risk criteria NOT marked (\*) you MUST also complete the LOW Fieldwork Risk Declaration on page 9 of this form**

<sup>8</sup> This does not include research in locations where children are present if they are not the focus of the research.

<sup>9</sup> For example in focus group or one to one interview in private locations, and not 'market research' which is characterised by brief interaction with randomly selected individuals in public locations

<sup>10</sup> In the UK normal working hours are between 8am-6pm, Mon-Fri inclusive.

If ONE OR MORE of the **MEDIUM risk** criteria have been selected, ethical approval must be sought from the School of Education (SoE) Research Integrity Committee (RIC) and so you should complete the SoE Ethical Approval Application form (available on the School of Education Ethics Intranet).

The supervisor and student should agree this RREA assessment and submit:

- Completed RREA form
- Completed School of Education Ethical Approval Application form<sup>11</sup>
- Completed Fieldwork Risk Assessment form where indicated
- Supporting documents.

**NB:** 'Supporting documents' include recruitment adverts/emails, draft questionnaires / interview topic guides, information sheets and consent forms.

**Document should be submitted for review as indicated below:**

- A. PGR Thesis** - Mrs. Debbie Kubiena, Room B3.10 along with your PhD Research Plan for consideration at the PhD/Prof Doctorate Review Panel.
- B. All other cases** - to the Quality Assurance Administrator via [Ethics.Education@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Ethics.Education@manchester.ac.uk) **by your supervisor**. In doing so, supervisors confirm that they have agreed the assessed risk level and that the documents are complete and correct. The QA Administrator will forward your completed documents to a member of the SoE RIC committee for approval.
- C. If none of the HIGH or MEDIUM risk criteria have been ticked, supervisors and students should continue to section C3 on the next page** ⇒

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<sup>11</sup> This document and guidance for completion can be downloaded from <http://www.education.manchester.ac.uk/intranet/ethics>

### C3 – Criteria for research classified as LOW RISK

---

#### C 3.1 Research not involving human participants

I/we confirm that this research (tick as appropriate):

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>is not of high nor medium risk to the researcher, in accordance with the criteria provided in sections C.1 and C.2 respectively.</b> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | is Secondary research (i.e. it will use material that has already been published or is in the public domain).                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | is Secondary data analysis (i.e. it will involve data from an established data archive)   |

**If you have ticked one of the options in C3.1 above, and C3.2 does not apply, you should now complete section C3.3 ⇨**

#### C3.2 Research involving human participants

I/we confirm that this research (tick as appropriate):

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <b>is not of high nor medium risk to the researcher, or participants, in accordance with the criteria provided in sections C.0, C.1 and C.2 respectively.</b>  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <b>A reasonable person would agree that the study addresses issues of legitimate interest without being in any way likely to inflame opinion or cause distress<sup>12</sup></b>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | is Practice review (i.e. the research involves data collection from participants on issues relating to the researcher's professional role, in a setting where the researcher is employed or on a professional placement)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | is Practice evaluation (i.e. the research involves data collection on a student's professional role, in a setting where the researcher is employed or on a professional placement. The data collected will be used for comparison against national or other targets or standards). |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | is Primary research on professional practice with participants in professional roles conducted in their work setting.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | is Market research (i.e. the research may involve data collection from the general public approached or observed in public locations for the purposes of market investigation).  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | is Primary research using a questionnaire completed and returned by participants with no direct contact with the researcher.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | is part of a research methods course and participant groups are limited to peers, colleagues, family members and friends.  |

#### C 3.3 Research context

I/we confirm (tick as appropriate):

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <b>the location(s) of the research are not listed on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office warning lists<sup>13</sup></b> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <b>the researcher is not in a position to coerce potential participants/secondary data owners</b>                       |

<sup>12</sup> A reasonable person would agree that the study includes no issues of public or private objection, or of a sensitive nature.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/travel-advice-by-country/>

x	Primary or practice research involves <u>no</u> vulnerable group (as indicated in question B3).
X	Primary or practice research will be conducted in a public space or building (e.g. the high street, the University campus, a school building, etc.)

#### D. LOW Risk Fieldwork Declaration

Students not directed to complete the separate Fieldwork Risk Assessment in Section C should tick the items in D.1 or D.2 to confirm the LOW risk nature of their fieldwork visits. Then sign the Declaration in D.3

**D.1 Fieldwork visit items** (If you will not make any fieldwork visits, tick the alternative items in D.2 below.)

I/we confirm:

X	the researcher will not travel outside the UK or their home nation.
X	the fieldwork does not require overnight stays in hotels or other types of public temporary accommodation.
X 3	public and private travel to and from the research location(s) are familiar to the researcher and offer no discernable risk.
X	the researcher will not travel through, or work in research locations which may have unlit areas, derelict areas, cliffs, or local endemic diseases
X	the researcher will carry only necessary personal items when travelling to, and within, research locations.
X	no specific vaccinations are required to undertake this research
X	first aid provision and a trained first aider are available where appropriate
X	the researcher will only operate machinery, electrical equipment, or workplace vehicles, or handle or work with animals at the research location(s) if they are qualified to do so
X	the fieldwork will be carried out within normal working hours <sup>14</sup> at a time convenient to participants.
X	the researcher will not give out personal telephone information to participants, or owners of secondary data resources, in relation to the research project
X	the researcher is fully aware of and sensitive to cultural and religious practices of participant groups, and will act accordingly.
X	primary or practice research will not involve fieldwork visits to private homes.
X	the researcher will provide a regularly updated fieldwork visit schedule to a nominated University contact.
X	the researcher will carry a School of Education Emergency Contact Information Card during all fieldwork visits.

If you are unable to tick all items above, you must complete a separate Fieldwork Risk Assessment form.

#### D.2 No Fieldwork visits items

I/we confirm:

<input type="checkbox"/>	this research does not involve fieldwork visits of any kind
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<sup>14</sup> For example, in the UK normal working hours are between 8am and 6pm Mon-Fri inclusive.

the researcher will not give out personal telephone information to participants, or owners of secondary data resources, in relation to the research project

### PGR Panel Students

If ONE OR MORE of the **LOW risk** criteria above have been selected, ethical approval must be sought from the School of Education Research Integrity Committee. The supervisor and student should agree this research risk assessment and submit:

#### D.3 Researcher Declaration:

**By signing this completed document, I declare that the information in it is accurate to the best of my knowledge and that I will complete any actions that I have indicated I will complete.**

Signature:

Date 26/9/13

Name (in capitals): JULIE MARTIN

Student ID: 75465180

- Completed RREA form
- Completed the School of Education Ethical Approval Application form<sup>15</sup>.
- Completed Fieldwork Risk Assessment form where indicated
- Supporting documents

**NB:** 'Supporting documents' include recruitment adverts/emails, draft questionnaires / interview topic guides, information sheets and consent forms.

Documents should be submitted to:

Mrs. Debbie Kubiena, Room B3.10 along with your PhD Research Plan for consideration at the PhD/Prof Doctorate Review Panel.

⇒ ***UG and PGT research that involves only low risk criteria go to Section E.1 page 12***

### SECTION E – UG/PGT Ethical Approval Application for LOW risk research

Section E.1 to be completed by students. Section E.2 to be completed by supervisors/tutors

#### E. 1 Research ethics criteria

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I/we confirm (tick as appropriate):

<sup>15</sup> This document and guidance for completion can be downloaded from <http://www.education.manchester.ac.uk/intranet/ethics>

### Codes of Practice

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	I/we have read and understood the School of Education Ethical Practice and Policy Guidelines
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	the researcher will abide by the School of Education's Ethical Protocol detailed therein
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	the researcher is aware of and will abide by any organisation's codes of conduct relevant to this research

### Researcher skills/checks

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	all necessary training procedures for this research have been completed
<input type="checkbox"/>	all appropriate permissions have been obtained to use any database or resource to be analysed in Secondary research
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	all relevant enhanced CRB checks have been completed
<input type="checkbox"/>	written permission to be on the site to conduct primary research has been received

### Rights of participants

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	participant information sheets (PIS), consent forms, questionnaires, and all other documentation relevant to this research have been discussed with supervisor/tutor named in A.5
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PIS and consent forms have been confirmed by the supervisor named in A.5, as covering required headings illustrated in the School of Education Participant Information and consent templates, AND as accessible to proposed participant groups.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	the researcher understands the Data Protection Act and the University Data Protection Policy and all data will be handled confidentially and securely, including storage on encrypted devices.

### Research Integrity

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	no data will be collected before approval of the study by the supervisor/tutor
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	the student researcher will immediately report any issues arising during the course of the study that conflict with the School of Education protocol, to the supervisor who has signed the ethics approval and suspend data collection pending advice from that supervisor/tutor
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	the researcher will report any proposed deviation from the research specification outlined in this assessment to the supervisor/tutor to update the current assessment or clarify any need for further approvals BEFORE such changes are made

### Research output

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	the only publication/output from this research will be the assignment or dissertation unless consent has been obtained from participants for further dissemination
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E.2 Supervisor confirmation that research matches LOW risk criteria above.

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When satisfied that the assessment is correct, **supervisors** should complete this section.

For 'low risk' research approval relevant **items in bold must be ticked** and one or more of the specific research criteria as appropriate

**The supervisor confirms:**

x	<b>The submission has been discussed and agreed with the person(s) undertaking the research.</b>
x	<b>The student has had appropriate training and has the skills to undertake this study, or has qualified supervision in place.</b>
x	<b>The research activities outlined in the proposal involve no substantive risks to the student researcher or potential participants.</b>

and one or more of the following as appropriate:

x	Primary or Practice research will not address issues of public or social objection or of a sensitive nature.
x	Information giving and consent taking processes follow School of Education guidance.
	Where fieldwork visits do not correspond to all items in the LOW Risk Fieldwork Declaration, a separate Fieldwork Risk Assessment form has been completed and approved.
	Secondary research assignment/project has appropriate resource or database access permissions.
x	They will act as custodian for data used for any study that results in a publication (Masters dissertation or otherwise) and will arrange for archiving of data within the School for a minimum period of 5 years.

<b>Supervisor's signature:</b>	Catherine Kelly	<b>Date:</b>	01.10.13
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**IF all relevant items in BOLD are confirmed and in addition all specific criteria** relating to primary, practice or secondary research are confirmed as appropriate, **the supervisor should submit:**

- Completed **RREA form**
- Completed **Fieldwork Risk Assessment** form where indicated
- Student research **proposal, or equivalent**, on which the assessment is based
- **Supporting documents**<sup>16</sup>

**Documents should be submitted electronically for archiving and audit purposes**, to the Quality Assurance Administrator via [Ethics.Education@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Ethics.Education@manchester.ac.uk) **by the supervisor**. In doing so, supervisors confirm that they have agreed the assessed risk level and that the documents are

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<sup>16</sup> 'Supporting documents' include recruitment adverts/emails, draft questionnaires/interview topic guides, information sheets and consent forms

complete and correct. The QA administrator will acknowledge receipt of the documents and provide formal confirmation of ethical approval via email to both student and supervisor. Copies of all documents should be retained by the supervisor

### E.3 Amendments to proposed research design for LOW risk research

Any **minor**<sup>17</sup> amendment to low risk approved research submissions should be recorded and signed-off by the supervisor as necessary below. Substantial changes to research will require a reassessment and revised ethical approvals. A revised copy of the RREA showing the approved amendments, and any amended supporting documents, should be forwarded electronically to The QA administrator via [ethics.education@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:ethics.education@manchester.ac.uk). The QA administrator will provide formal acknowledgement of approval of the change by email. A copy should be retained by the supervisor.

#### To be completed if/when applicable:

#### **Minor**<sup>18</sup> amendment to assessed research agreed (1):

##### **Details of amendment**

*This section will record any applications made during the life time of the Project regarding minor changes from what was approved.*

#### SECTION 3 - MINOR AMENDMENT TO RESEARCH PROJECT

##### Application for Approval of Minor Amendment to a Research Study

- Amendments have been made to the research questions. They now read as follows:
- How do school staff and pupils construct and describe successful participation practices in facilitating pupils with SEBDs to express their views regarding their needs, and how do they view this practice as similar and different with girls and boys?
- How are pupils' views regarding their needs incorporated into practice, and how is this similar and different for girls and boys?
- What factors are identified as having the greatest impact on participation in one SEBD provision, and how is this similar and different for girls and boys?

- The semi-structured staff and pupil interview questions have been amended slightly. They now read as follows:

##### Staff focus group

Introduce myself and establish ground rules for the group. Explain the purpose of the meeting- how we can understand the needs of girls with SEBD better and how to support girl's participation as a way of facilitating them to express their needs. Explain confidentiality, anonymity and remind participants of their right to withdraw. Participants understanding of the process will be checked and the option to ask questions given. The discussion will be audio recorded and notes made on flip charts.

I will remind staff of the AI process:

- It is a positive approach

<sup>17</sup> Minor amendments are those that do not alter the character of the research or the participant groups

<sup>18</sup> Minor deviations from previously approved research submissions are defined as those which neither change the nature of the study nor deviate from any participatory research groups previously identified. Supervisors should contact a member of the SoE Research Integrity Committee for advice if in doubt.



- It aims to discover the best of what is already happening in an organisation
  - Themes will be identified and provocative propositions constructed from the girls' interviews
  - Future actions may be planned at a workshop session after the feedback session.
- I would like to start by defining 'participation' with you. When we talk about girls with SEBD participating in school, what does it mean?  
Prompts: What does participation mean in relation to pupils expressing their views regarding their needs?
  - Is this the same for girls and boys?  
Prompts: Do girls and boys express their views regarding their needs differently?
  - How do you as a provision facilitate pupils' expressions of their needs and act on those views?  
Prompts: What works well? Is this the same for girls and boys? How do you act upon their views?
  - Who are the people or organisations that support this work?  
What makes your relationship with them successful? How does it help you and the pupils? Are there any services specifically targeted towards helping girls?
  - What are the core things which contribute to successful work
  - With children and young people with SEBD?
  - With girls with SEBD?
  - Helping girls to participate to express their views on their needs?  
Prompts: What are the facilitators of this? What are the barriers to this?
  - How do you adjust and adapt to pupils' changing needs?  
Prompts: How do you manage to notice and adjust to pupils' needs throughout the day? Is this the same process for girls and boys? How? What are the benefits of doing this? What can be the consequences of not doing this?
  - How do you measure the success of pupils' involvement in support to meet their needs?  
Prompts: What does successful participation look like? What methods are in place to monitor and evaluate success? Is the process the same for girls and boys? How? How do you share best practice?
  - How could the process of participation for girls with SEBD and the ways their views are elicited and acted on be improved?  
Prompts: What participation activities could be happening? How could views be acted upon? What resources would help you to achieve this? Is this the same process for girls and boys?

The discussion will be summarised and responses checked and the opportunity given to participants to ask questions or add information.

#### Pupil interviews

The interview schedules will be piloted to ensure that questions can be clearly understood and that the one hour allocated time is sufficient for effective discussion. Visual supports and technologies will be provided for illustration and recording purposes. The interview will also be audio recorded.

Semi-structured interview schedule pupils (Session 1)

Introduction to the research and explanation of AI process

I will introduce myself and the purpose of the research- how we can improve how girls with SEBD participate in school. After verifying consent and explaining that participants have the right to withdraw I will explain confidentiality and anonymity.

I will then explain the AI process:

- It is a positive approach
- It aims to discover the best of what is already happening in an organisation
- Themes will be identified and provocative propositions constructed from the interviews
- Future actions will be planned at a workshop session

Participants understanding of the process will be checked and the option to ask questions given. I will ensure that participants understand they will lead the process and also that although I cannot promise that the PRU will make all of the changes that they suggest, I will facilitate the process and act as an advocate for them thus increasing the likelihood that this will happen. The interviews will be audio recorded and notes made on flip charts.

A date for the next session will be set in collaboration with relevant members of staff in order to minimise disruption to the girls' learning or other activities happening in the PRU such as reward trips, and to maximise engagement in the research process.

Semi-structured interview schedule pupils (Session 2)

Introduction

As I explained last time, I am here today because I am interested in finding out more about the strengths and needs of girls who have been identified as having SEBD. Many young people who are not able to attend mainstream schools for various reasons are told they have Social, Emotional or Behavioural Difficulties. There are lots more boys than girls who find themselves in this situation and so professionals might feel that they understand their needs more. I would like to find out how girls can be helped to get involved with schools like this one and to have a say in what goes on in them.

I am going to talk about participation which some people say is a process where someone influences decisions about their lives and this leads to change. When I talk about participation I mean you having a say and being involved with things that make a difference to your school experience.

Questions

- I would like to start by defining 'participation' with you. When we talk about participating in school, what does it mean to you?

Prompts: What does it mean in relation to you and other girls expressing your views about your needs? Is this the same or different for boys?

- How has this happened in other schools you have been to?

Prompts: What went on there to help you participate? What did you find most helpful about what the staff did? What did you find least helpful about what the staff did? What would have been a more helpful way? Was it the same or different for boys? How?

- How do staff in the SEC act on your views to meet your needs?

Prompts: What goes on here to help girls participate? Is it the same or different to what goes on for boys? What do you find most helpful about what the staff do? What do you find least helpful about what the staff do?

- How are you asked for your opinions about things here?

Prompts: Can you describe some situations where you have been asked what you think? How has this helped you to make decisions and participate? How could it have been made more helpful? Is this the same or different to how boys are asked? How?

- What makes successful activities feel like they have helped you?

Prompts: Can you describe some activities that have helped you to participate and make decisions? What was so helpful about this activity? How did you know it was successful?

The discussion will be summarised and responses checked and the opportunity given to participants to ask questions or add information.

Member checking will take place at the end of the session and propositions from this part of the AI process will be constructed with the participant in order to verify that they are an accurate reflection of their views.

A date for the next session will be set in collaboration with relevant staff member in order to minimise disruption to the girls' learning or other activities happening in the PRU such as reward trips, and to maximise engagement in the research process.

Semi-structured interview schedule pupils (Session 3)

Introduction

As I explained last time, I am here today because I am interested in finding out more about the strengths and needs of girls who have been identified as having SEBD and I would like to find out how girls can be helped to get involved with schools like this one and to have a say in what goes on in them.

We talked about participation which I mean as you having a say and being involved with things that make a difference to your school experience.

The propositions that we constructed as a result of the last session will be revisited as a reminder of the last interview schedule. We will then move on to the next set of questions.

Questions

- What do you like most about:
- The things you do here?
- The other pupils here?
- The staff?
- The SEC as a whole?

Prompts: Who are the people who help you? How do they help you? How do they help other pupils? Do you get the same or different help to the boys?

- What makes you work well with other people?

Prompts: What are the things that help this to happen? How do these things help you? Do the same things help other girls? Do the same things help the boys? How could you be helped more?

- Can you tell me about a time when you felt that you have been listened to about what you would like to get better at or what needed to change at school?

Prompts: What are the things that helped this to happen? How did these things help you? How could you have been helped more?

- Can you tell me about a time when you have felt part of decisions that have been made about your life?

Prompts: How were your views acted upon? How did this make you feel?

- Can you tell me about a time when you have felt part of decisions that have been made about school life in general, or about your particular needs here in the SEC? Think of a high point, when you felt most successful, engaged and listened to.

Prompts: What made this a high point? How were your views acted upon? How did this make you feel?

- What part of this are you most proud of?

Prompts: Why were you proud? What helped you to feel this way?

The discussion will be summarised and the opportunity given to ask questions or add information. Member checking will take place at the end of the session and propositions from this part of the AI process will be constructed with the participant in order to verify that they are an accurate reflection of their views.

A date for the next session will be set in collaboration with relevant staff members in order to minimise disruption to the girls' learning or other activities happening in the PRU such as reward trips, and to maximise engagement in the research process.

Semi-structured interview schedule pupils (Session 4)

Introduction

As I explained last time, I am here today because I am interested in finding out more about the strengths and needs of girls who have been identified as having SEBD and I would like to find out how girls can be helped to get involved with schools like this one and to have a say in what goes on in them.

We talked about participation which I mean as you having a say and being involved with things that make a difference to your school experience.

The propositions that we constructed as a result of the last session will be revisited as a reminder of the last interview schedule. We will then move on to the next set of questions.

Participants understanding of the process will be checked and the option to ask questions given.

The interviews will be audio recorded and notes made on flip charts.

Questions

- What are the main things which make this SEC work well?
- What helps you to engage with school?
- How is this different for other pupils?

Prompts: What are the things that help this to happen? What are the things that stop this from happening?

- What do they do well here that helps you to participate by supporting you to express your views about your needs?

Prompts: What are the things that help this to happen? What are the things that stop this from happening? Do the same things help and stop this happening for other girls and boys?

- What do you think are your main needs?

Prompts: What would help you to be successful here? What would help you to be successful in other schools? What would help you to be successful in life? What would help boys to be successful?

- How do staff notice if your needs have changed and how do they react to this?

Prompts: What are the things that might make your needs change? How might you let staff know that they have changed? What would be a helpful way for them to react? And is this the same or different for girls and boys? How?

- How is this different to how other people notice your needs have changed and the way they react to that?

Prompts: Which other people might notice your needs have changed? How might they react? What makes staff in the SEC better at noticing girl's needs and responding to that change?

The discussion will be summarised and the opportunity given to ask questions or add information. Member checking will take place at the end of the session and propositions from this part of the AI process will be constructed with the participant in order to verify that they are an accurate reflection of their views.

A date for the next session will be set in collaboration with relevant staff members in order to minimise disruption to the girls' learning or other activities happening in the PRU such as reward trips, and to maximise engagement in the research process.

## Semi-structured interview schedule pupils (Session 5)

### Introduction

As I explained last time, I am here today because I am interested in finding out more about the strengths and needs of girls who have been identified as having SEBD and I would like to find out how girls can be helped to get involved with schools like this one and to have a say in what goes on in them.

We talked about participation which I mean as you having a say and being involved with things that make a difference to your school experience.

The propositions that we constructed as a result of the last session will be revisited as a reminder of the last interview schedule. We will then move on to the next set of questions.

Participants understanding of the process will be checked and the option to ask questions given. The interviews will be audio recorded and notes made on flip charts.

### Questions

- What makes this school different or special from others?

Prompts: What could make it even better?

- If you had a magic wand, how would the ways your views about how you are supported are asked for and girls are helped to participate in decision making in the SEC look like in a years' time?

Prompts: What would help you to achieve this dream? What activities would be happening? How would views be acted upon? Would this be the same or different for other girls and boys? How?

- If a new girl was starting at the school, what would be the best bit of advice you could give them to help them to take part in decisions made regarding them in school?

Prompts: How would you let girls know how they can best participate? How would you suggest they give their views? Would this be the same or different for boys? How?

- If a new member of staff was starting at the school, what would be the best bit of advice you could give them to help them listen to girls and help them to take part in school by acting on their views?

Prompts: How do you let staff know how they can best help you? How would you suggest they act on your views? And would this be the same or different for girls and boys? How?

The discussion will be summarised and the opportunity given to ask questions or add information. Member checking will take place at the end of the session and propositions from this part of the AI process will be constructed with the participant in order to verify that they are an accurate reflection of their views.

A date for a session to feedback all of the propositions from the AI process to the girls will be set with relevant members of staff in order to minimise disruption to the girls' learning or other activities happening in the PRU such as reward trips, and to maximise engagement in the research process

### Supervisor Declaration

I agree that the amendment proposed does not change the character of this research or the participant groups.

I confirm that the research risk assessment for the study as MEDIUM remains.

Supervisor's signature

Date.

Please send applications for amendment to ethical approval for MEDIUM risk research to the

School Quality Assurance Administrator at ethics.education@manchester.ac.uk who will pass on the request to the RIC member who authorised the original application wherever possible.

***Supervisor's signature:***

***Date:***

## 8.23

Appendix 23:

## School of Education

### Ethical Approval Application Form

The ethical approval application form must contain answers to **all** the questions indicated in the boxes below, if they do not apply please state why.

#### SECTION 1 Student Details /Identification of the person responsible for the research

<b>Name of Student:</b>	Julie Martin
<b>Student ID (quoted on library/ swipe card):</b>	7546518
<b>Email Address:</b>	julie.martin-3@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk
<b>Name of Supervisor:</b>	Dr Catherine Kelly
<b>Programme (PhD, Prof Doc, MEd, PGCE, MSc, BA etc):</b>	D.Ed.Ch.Psychol

<b>Year of Study</b>	1
<b>Full/Part-time</b>	Full-time
<b>Title of Project:</b>	An investigation into how girls identified as having Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and staff of one specialist education provision feel pupil participation in decision making and planning regarding their needs can best be facilitated.
<b>Project Start and End Dates:</b>	Will start upon ethical approval and end in May 2015
<b>Location(s) where the project will be carried out:</b>	Pupil Referral Unit for KS 3 & 4 pupils identified as having Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties.
<b>No risk, or acceptable levels of risk (measures documented)</b>	Medium risk
<b>Student Signature:</b>	Julie Martin 28/6/13
<b>Supervisor Signature:** Date:</b>	Catherine Kelly 01.10.13

\*\* Supervisor signature confirms that the student has the relevant experience, knowledge and skills to carry out the study in an appropriate manner

## SECTION 2 PROJECT DETAILS (Please expand boxes to fit answers)

### 2. **Aims and Objectives of the Project**

A. This research aims to discover how participation is conceptualised and what practices are in place to access pupil voice in one specialist SEBD provision. It also aims to discover how pupil views are acted on and to explore how one specialist SEBD provision can increase participation and support the engagement of pupils.

Research Questions:

RQ1: • How do school staff and pupils construct and describe successful participation practices in facilitating girls with SEBDs to express their views regarding their needs, and how is this different to practice with boys?

RQ2: • How are girls' views regarding their needs incorporated into practice, and how is this different to practice with boys?

RQ3: • What factors are identified as having the greatest impact on girls' participation in one SEBD provision, and how is this different to practice with boys?

Research questions have been framed this way to avoid framing girls with SEBD as more problematic than boys but to also draw out any potential differences in practice.

B. What is the justification for the research? (why is it an area of importance/ has any similar research been done)



Although research has been done regarding pupil voice, less has been conducted with young people identified as having SEBD and the literature mainly concerns male pupils, or rather does not concern female pupils specifically. This research focusses on the experiences of girls with SEBD. It also attempts to move towards a more meaningful model of pupil voice by listening to what the participants want to say and then acting upon those wishes, not solely for the benefit of students, but also others involved in their care and education, to inform service development and to accord with Government legislation. This research focuses on the meaningful participation of pupils which could be considered not only more respectful of the rights of children and young people but also strengths based and in many ways preventative of many of the causes or exacerbation of further difficulties for children and young people with SEBD.

C. What are the main ethical issues and what steps will be taken to address them?

The information contained within this proposal has been considered in line with The University of Manchester School of Education Ethical Practice, Policy and Code of Good Research Conduct and (2012.) At all times research will be conducted with respect, competence, integrity and in a responsible manner.

Information sheets will be provided to participants to ensure informed consent is received. Participants will be advised of their right to withdraw from the research at any point without consequence.

The nature and purpose of the research will be made clear from the outset and will also be reiterated at the beginning of the interviews and verbal informed consent to continue sought. Promises will not be made that changes will definitely take place as a result of the research, but the researcher will commit to acting as advocate for the girls' and their views.

Alternative forms of data collection and presentation such as photographs will be made available to participants.

The accuracy of propositions constructed will be checked with participants at the end of each interview and the accuracy of the amalgamated propositions checked before feedback is given to staff and the senior leadership team. The accuracy of transcriptions of the interviews will also be checked with participants at the earliest opportunity.

Confidentiality will be maintained during audio recording and transcription and participants will not be identified in the research project by the researcher.

Information will be stored in accordance with the data protection act.

## 2. Methodology

A. Please outline the design and methodology of the project, including the methods of data collection and the methods of data analysis and the theoretical framework that informs it.

Research Question	Data Gathering Method	Data Analysis Method
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do school staff and pupils construct and describe successful participation practices in facilitating girls with SEBDs to express their</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff focus group</li> <li>Pupil interviews</li> <li>Research diary</li> <li>Materials/ Documentation held by the PRU</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thematic Analysis</li> <li>Thematic Analysis</li> <li>Thematic Analysis</li> <li>Content Analysis</li> </ul>

views regarding their needs, and how is this different to practice with boys?		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How are girls' views regarding their needs incorporated into practice, and how is this different to practice with boys?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff focus group</li> <li>Pupil interviews</li> <li>Documentation</li> <li>Research diary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thematic Analysis</li> <li>Thematic Analysis</li> <li>Content Analysis</li> <li>Thematic Analysis</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What factors are identified as having the greatest impact on girls' participation in one SEBD provision, and how is this different to practice with boys?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff focus group</li> <li>Pupil interviews</li> <li>Research diary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thematic Analysis</li> <li>Thematic Analysis</li> <li>Thematic Analysis</li> </ul>

Appreciative inquiry is conceptualised as a model of action research as it is based on actively seeking out and exploring further the best of what is already working well within an organisation and building upon that success. By identifying the schools' best attributes and encouraging participants to envisage the organisational future, the approach focuses attention on what is valued most in the existing system and provokes curiosity regarding what the future may look like if those values develop further.

An exploratory case study research design using an appreciative inquiry (AI) theoretical research perspective will generate rich data and allow the researcher to focus on the positive experiences of participants and identify areas of good practice in each setting. The use of case study methodology is advocated within the AI framework as each organisation is able to be explored in its own right. Advantages associated with this methodology include the opportunity to explore important factors in the functioning of an organisation and how these factors fit together in a real context (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000).

B. A description of the research procedures/activities as they affect the study participant and any other parties involved.

The participating provision will be identified by the Principal Educational Psychologist from the LA where the researcher will be on bursary placement.

Data will then be collected by the researcher who will interview staff as a focus group and female pupils on a 1:1 basis. Visual data may also be collected if girls' wish to work in this way.

Observations will be made of formal activities where pupils are expected to participate such as reviews and meetings and also less formal day to day activities in the PRU.

Feedback will be given to staff and senior leadership in collaboration with the participants. Visual representations of the girls' views may also be provided.

C. Please state your experience in conducting the research procedures/ activities and provide supporting evidence.

The researcher has nine years' experience of working in a SEBD school with male and female pupils in KS 3 & 4 in the role of Counsellor and Psychotherapist. This was on an individual, group and organisational level which also involved the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of different interventions with staff and parents.

The researcher also worked as a Counsellor with children and young people aged 10-25 in the city where the PRU is based.

Also, whilst on field work placement, the researcher completed an investigation using an AI approach.

**Attach copies of any draft instrument / interview guide / screen prints, and so on.**

### **3. Participants**

A. Give the number of participants; sex; age group and location

Four members of school staff and at least three female pupils aged 11-16 years although the final number is not yet known due to the nature of the setting and participant group. The location will be a PRU for children and young people identified as having SEBD, which is within in the borough where the researcher will be on bursary placement and is in the north west of England.

B Will your project include participants from any of the following groups? (Tick as appropriate)

- Children under 16
- Adults with learning difficulties
- Adults with mental illness
- Those who could be considered to have a particularly dependent relationship with the researcher
- Prisoners
- Young Offenders
- Other vulnerable groups (please detail)

B. If your project includes vulnerable populations please explain why it is necessary to include them in your study, including measures you will take to avoid coercion. Young people under the age of 16 need to be included in this study as the PRU is for KS 3 and 4 pupils. Informed parental consent will be obtained as will pupil assent to be part of the study. Pupils will also be advised and reminded of their right to not take part and to withdraw from the study.

### **4. Recruitment (please append any advertisement you will use)**

A. How potential participants will be:

i) Identified- Participants will be identified by the Assistant Head of the PRU, which has been identified by the Principal Educational Psychologist for the LA where the researcher will be on bursary placement.

ii) Approached and Recruited- Participants will be sent a Participant Information Sheet outlining the aims of the research and purpose of it. They will have a minimum of two weeks to consider taking part and will need to sign a consent form to do so. Those with parental responsibility for pupils will need to sign the consent form, although the researcher will ensure that the young people have agreed to take part by signing an assent form. Inclusion and exclusion criteria will also be applied to applications to participate.

B. How will your recruitment policy avoid putting any overt or covert pressure on the individual to consent?

By advising participants that they are not obliged to take part in the research

By advising participants that they can withdraw from the investigation at any point.

By adhering to confidentiality policies throughout the process.

By assuring anonymity within the research paper.

By allowing potential participants two weeks to consider taking part after receiving the information sheets.

C. How long will the participant have to decide whether to take part in the study?

2 weeks

D. State any payment or any other incentive that is being made to any study participant. Specify and state the level of payment to be made and/or the source of the funds/gift/free service to be used and the justification for it.

None

##### 5. **Risk and Safeguards**

Please outline any adverse effects or risks for participants

A. What is the potential for adverse effects of a physical nature; risks or hazards, pain, discomfort, distress, or **inconvenience**, to participants?

Participants will need to commit to the AI process which involves an investment of time. This will be made clear to stakeholders such as the leadership team at the PRU and also to potential participants in the information sheet.

The information session regarding AI and the staff focus group will be arranged with the PRU and at their convenience to avoid disruption as far as possible.

Pupil interviews will be divided across five sessions and arranged with pupils and staff to avoid disruption to learning and discomfort and to accord with ethical guidance.

B. Will any topics discussed (questionnaire, group discussion or individual interview) be sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting, or is it possible that criminal or other disclosures requiring action could take place during the project?

It is possible that some sensitive issues may be discussed during the group and 1:1 interviews.

C. What is the potential for adverse effects, risks or hazards, pain, discomfort, distress, or inconvenience, of a physical or psychological nature to **you** as the researcher?

It is possible that discussion of such issues could affect me as researcher.

D. What precautions have been taken to minimise or mitigate the risks identified above in A, B, C?

Senior leadership at the PRU and participants will be made aware of the commitment needed for the AI process from the outset.

The interview times will be negotiated with the PRU and participants to avoid disruption and any inconvenience.

The researcher will be available to answer any questions that may arise for participants as a result of the interviews, and to offer any support at the end of the session if needed.

A key worker from the PRU will be identified for pupil participants to speak with if necessary.

Participants will be assured of their anonymity in the write up of the report.

The researcher will attend supervision with her Placement Supervisor and University Supervisor where any issues could be discussed.

## 6. **Consent**

A. Detail how informed consent/ assent will be obtained.

Informed consent will be obtained from participants in writing after a description of the aims of the study and AI as a method of data collection has been given to them by the researcher.

Parental consent will be obtained from the parents/ carers of pupil participants.

Assent will be obtained from the pupil participants.

B. If the participants are to be recruited from a vulnerable groups (3B) give details of the extra steps taken to assure their protection.

Pupils will not be coerced by the researcher or staff at the PRU to take part in the study.

The researcher will work at the level of the pupil, and use alternative forms of data collection and reporting to take into account their preferred method of communication.

The researcher will act as an advocate for the pupils and spend time building rapport with them before data collection commences in order to develop trust and a good working relationship.

The researcher will be flexible when arranging interview times in order to consider the educational needs and other activities that pupils may wish to take part in.

Confidentiality will be maintained at all times and participants reminded of this and also its limitations with regard to child protection issues.

The researcher will adhere to the LA Safeguarding Policy at all times.

**Attach draft Information Sheets & Consent Forms for each participant group.**

**7. Data Protection and confidentiality**

A. Will the pilot study use any of the following activities at any stage?

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Electronic transfer by email or computer networks                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, e-mails or telephone numbers |
| X                        | Publication of direct quotations from respondents                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals        |
| X                        | Use of audio/visual recording devices                                     |
| X                        | Storage of personal data on any of the following:                         |
|                          |   |
| X                        | Manual files  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Home or other personal computers  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | University computers  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Private company computers   |
| X                        | Laptop computers  |

C. Please provide details on the measures you will employ to comply with the Data Protection Act and the University Data Protection Policy?

Manual files will be stored in a secure, locked location.

Any personal information held will be coded for anonymity.

Direct quotations will not be used even if coded if they could identify participants.

Pupils and staff from the PRU will not be identified on photographs if permission to do so has not been given.

D. What measures have been put in place to ensure confidentiality of personal data? **Give details of whether any encryption or other anonymisation procedures have been used and at what stage?**

Electronically stored data will be encrypted and password protected.

Participant's names will be anonymised within the research report.

The name of the PRU and LA will not be identified.

D. Where will the analysis of the data from the study take place and by whom will it be undertaken?

Analysis of data will take place at the researcher's home on a password encrypted computer, university or bursary placement Educational Psychology Service, and will be undertaken by the researcher. Data will be saved on an encrypted data stick.

E. Who will have control of and act as the custodian for the data generated by the study?

Catherine Kelly.

F. Who will have access to the data generated by the study?

The researcher will have access to the full range of the data.  
Participants will have access to the results of the Appreciative Inquiry.  
Staff, senior leadership and participants will be present at the feedback session.  
The PEP and senior leadership from the PRU will have access to the anonymised report in order to inform service delivery.

G. For how long will data from the study be stored?

The data will be stored for five years in accordance with university regulations.

### **8) Reporting Arrangements**

A. Please confirm that any adverse event will be reported to the Committee

Yes

B. How is it intended the results of the study will be reported and disseminated?  
(Tick as appropriate)

- Peer reviewed scientific journals
- Internal report
- Conference presentation
- Thesis/dissertation
- Written feedback to research participants
- Presentation to participants or relevant community groups
- Other/none e.g. University Library

B. How will the results of research be made available to research participants and communities from which they are drawn?

Results will be presented orally and visually as part of the AI process and supported by a written document.

C. What arrangements are in place for monitoring and auditing the conduct of the research?

The researcher will attend regular supervision with University Supervisors, Thesis Supervisors and Placement Supervisors.

The research and information contained within the thesis will be considered in line with The

University of Manchester School of Education Ethical Practice, Policy and Code of Good Research Conduct and (2012) Professional practice guidelines will also be adhered to (BPS, 2006; HCPC, 2008).

D. What are the criteria for electively stopping the research prematurely?

If a Participant requests to withdraw from the research.

If a Participant becomes distressed and the researcher concludes that it would be unethical to continue.

If the researcher is advised by a supervisor to stop the research.

### 9. Sponsorship

Provide information on whether the study is in receipt of any external funding. Confirm who will act as sponsor of the research.

N/A

### 10. Conflict of Interest

Have any conflicts of interest been identified in relation to this project?

No conflicts of interest have been identified in relation to this project.

## SECTION 3 - MINOR AMENDMENT TO RESEARCH PROJECT

### Application for Approval of Minor Amendment<sup>19</sup> to a Research Study

#### SECTION 3 - MINOR AMENDMENT TO RESEARCH PROJECT

##### Application for Approval of Minor Amendment to a Research Study

- **Amendments have been made to the research questions. They now read as follows:**
- **How do school staff and pupils construct and describe successful participation practices in facilitating pupils with SEBDs to express their views regarding their needs, and how do they view this practice as similar and different with girls and boys?**
- **How are pupils' views regarding their needs incorporated into practice, and how is this similar and different for girls and boys?**
- **What factors are identified as having the greatest impact on participation in one SEBD provision, and how is this similar and different for girls and boys?**

- **The semi-structured staff and pupil interview questions have been amended slightly.**

**They now read as follows:**

**Staff focus group**

**Introduce myself and establish ground rules for the group. Explain the purpose of the meeting-**

<sup>19</sup> Minor Amendments are those that do not alter the character of the research or the participant groups



*how we can understand the needs of girls with SEBD better and how to support girl's participation as a way of facilitating them to express their needs. Explain confidentiality, anonymity and remind participants of their right to withdraw. Participants understanding of the process will be checked and the option to ask questions given. The discussion will be audio recorded and notes made on flip charts.*

*I will remind staff of the AI process:*

- *It is a positive approach*
- *It aims to discover the best of what is already happening in an organisation*
- *Themes will be identified and provocative propositions constructed from the girls' interviews*
- *Future actions may be planned at a workshop session after the feedback session.*

- *I would like to start by defining 'participation' with you. When we talk about girls with SEBD participating in school, what does it mean?*

*Prompts: What does participation mean in relation to pupils expressing their views regarding their needs?*

- *Is this the same for girls and boys?*

*Prompts: Do girls and boys express their views regarding their needs differently?*

- *How do you as a provision facilitate pupils' expressions of their needs and act on those views?*

*Prompts: What works well? Is this the same for girls and boys? How do you act upon their views?*

- *Who are the people or organisations that support this work?*

*What makes your relationship with them successful? How does it help you and the pupils? Are there any services specifically targeted towards helping girls?*

- *What are the core things which contribute to successful work*
- *With children and young people with SEBD?*
- *With girls with SEBD?*
- *Helping girls to participate to express their views on their needs?*

*Prompts: What are the facilitators of this? What are the barriers to this?*

- *How do you adjust and adapt to pupils' changing needs?*

*Prompts: How do you manage to notice and adjust to pupils' needs throughout the day? Is this the same process for girls and boys? How? What are the benefits of doing this? What can be the consequences of not doing this?*

- *How do you measure the success of pupils' involvement in support to meet their needs?*

*Prompts: What does successful participation look like? What methods are in place to monitor and evaluate success? Is the process the same for girls and boys? How? How do you share best practice?*

- *How could the process of participation for girls with SEBD and the ways their views are elicited and acted on be improved?*

*Prompts: What participation activities could be happening? How could views be acted upon? What resources would help you to achieve this? Is this the same process for girls and boys?*

*The discussion will be summarised and responses checked and the opportunity given to*

*participants to ask questions or add information.*

#### *Pupil interviews*

*The interview schedules will be piloted to ensure that questions can be clearly understood and that the one hour allocated time is sufficient for effective discussion. Visual supports and technologies will be provided for illustration and recording purposes. The interview will also be audio recorded.*

#### *Semi-structured interview schedule pupils (Session 1)*

##### *Introduction to the research and explanation of AI process*

*I will introduce myself and the purpose of the research- how we can improve how girls with SEBD participate in school. After verifying consent and explaining that participants have the right to withdraw I will explain confidentiality and anonymity.*

*I will then explain the AI process:*

- *It is a positive approach*
- *It aims to discover the best of what is already happening in an organisation*
- *Themes will be identified and provocative propositions constructed from the interviews*
- *Future actions will be planned at a workshop session*

*Participants understanding of the process will be checked and the option to ask questions given. I will ensure that participants understand they will lead the process and also that although I cannot promise that the PRU will make all of the changes that they suggest, I will facilitate the process and act as an advocate for them thus increasing the likelihood that this will happen. The interviews will be audio recorded and notes made on flip charts.*

*A date for the next session will be set in collaboration with relevant members of staff in order to minimise disruption to the girls' learning or other activities happening in the PRU such as reward trips, and to maximise engagement in the research process.*

#### *Semi-structured interview schedule pupils (Session 2)*

##### *Introduction*

*As I explained last time, I am here today because I am interested in finding out more about the strengths and needs of girls who have been identified as having SEBD. Many young people who are not able to attend mainstream schools for various reasons are told they have Social, Emotional or Behavioural Difficulties. There are lots more boys than girls who find themselves in this situation and so professionals might feel that they understand their needs more. I would like to find out how girls can be helped to get involved with schools like this one and to have a say in what goes on in them.*

*I am going to talk about participation which some people say is a process where someone influences decisions about their lives and this leads to change. When I talk about participation I mean you having a say and being involved with things that make a difference to your school experience.*

##### *Questions*

- *I would like to start by defining 'participation' with you. When we talk about participating in school, what does it mean to you?*

*Prompts: What does it mean in relation to you and other girls expressing your views about your needs? Is this the same or different for boys?*

- *How has this happened in other schools you have been to?*

*Prompts: What went on there to help you participate? What did you find most helpful about what the staff did? What did you find least helpful about what the staff did? What would have been a more helpful way? Was it the same or different for boys? How?*

- *How do staff in the SEC act on your views to meet your needs?*

*Prompts: What goes on here to help girls participate? Is it the same or different to what goes on for boys? What do you find most helpful about what the staff do? What do you find least helpful*

*about what the staff do?*

- *How are you asked for your opinions about things here?*

*Prompts: Can you describe some situations where you have been asked what you think? How has this helped you to make decisions and participate? How could it have been made more helpful? Is this the same or different to how boys are asked? How?*

- *What makes successful activities feel like they have helped you?*

*Prompts: Can you describe some activities that have helped you to participate and make decisions? What was so helpful about this activity? How did you know it was successful?*

*The discussion will be summarised and responses checked and the opportunity given to participants to ask questions or add information.*

*Member checking will take place at the end of the session and propositions from this part of the AI process will be constructed with the participant in order to verify that they are an accurate reflection of their views.*

*A date for the next session will be set in collaboration with relevant staff member in order to minimise disruption to the girls' learning or other activities happening in the PRU such as reward trips, and to maximise engagement in the research process.*

*Semi-structured interview schedule pupils (Session 3)*

*Introduction*

*As I explained last time, I am here today because I am interested in finding out more about the strengths and needs of girls who have been identified as having SEBD and I would like to find out how girls can be helped to get involved with schools like this one and to have a say in what goes on in them.*

*We talked about participation which I mean as you having a say and being involved with things that make a difference to your school experience.*

*The propositions that we constructed as a result of the last session will be revisited as a reminder of the last interview schedule. We will then move on to the next set of questions.*

*Questions*

- *What do you like most about:*

- *The things you do here?*
- *The other pupils here?*
- *The staff?*
- *The SEC as a whole?*

*Prompts: Who are the people who help you? How do they help you? How do they help other pupils? Do you get the same or different help to the boys?*

- *What makes you work well with other people?*

*Prompts: What are the things that help this to happen? How do these things help you? Do the same things help other girls? Do the same things help the boys? How could you be helped more?*

- *Can you tell me about a time when you felt that you have been listened to about what you would like to get better at or what needed to change at school?*

*Prompts: What are the things that helped this to happen? How did these things help you? How could you have been helped more?*

- *Can you tell me about a time when you have felt part of decisions that have been made about your life?*

*Prompts: How were your views acted upon? How did this make you feel?*

- **Can you tell me about a time when you have felt part of decisions that have been made about school life in general, or about your particular needs here in the SEC? Think of a high point, when you felt most successful, engaged and listened to.**

**Prompts: What made this a high point? How were your views acted upon? How did this make you feel?**

- **What part of this are you most proud of?**

**Prompts: Why were you proud? What helped you to feel this way?**

**The discussion will be summarised and the opportunity given to ask questions or add information.**

**Member checking will take place at the end of the session and propositions from this part of the AI process will be constructed with the participant in order to verify that they are an accurate reflection of their views.**

**A date for the next session will be set in collaboration with relevant staff members in order to minimise disruption to the girls' learning or other activities happening in the PRU such as reward trips, and to maximise engagement in the research process.**

**Semi-structured interview schedule pupils (Session 4)**

**Introduction**

**As I explained last time, I am here today because I am interested in finding out more about the strengths and needs of girls who have been identified as having SEBD and I would like to find out how girls can be helped to get involved with schools like this one and to have a say in what goes on in them.**

**We talked about participation which I mean as you having a say and being involved with things that make a difference to your school experience.**

**The propositions that we constructed as a result of the last session will be revisited as a reminder of the last interview schedule. We will then move on to the next set of questions.**

**Participants understanding of the process will be checked and the option to ask questions given.**

**The interviews will be audio recorded and notes made on flip charts.**

**Questions**

- **What are the main things which make this SEC work well?**
- **What helps you to engage with school?**
- **How is this different for other pupils?**

**Prompts: What are the things that help this to happen? What are the things that stop this from happening?**

- **What do they do well here that helps you to participate by supporting you to express your views about your needs?**

**Prompts: What are the things that help this to happen? What are the things that stop this from happening? Do the same things help and stop this happening for other girls and boys?**

- **What do you think are your main needs?**

**Prompts: What would help you to be successful here? What would help you to be successful in other schools? What would help you to be successful in life? What would help boys to be successful?**

- **How do staff notice if your needs have changed and how do they react to this?**

**Prompts: What are the things that might make your needs change? How might you let staff know that they have changed? What would be a helpful way for them to react? And is this the same or different for girls and boys? How?**

- **How is this different to how other people notice your needs have changed and the way they react to that?**

**Prompts: Which other people might notice your needs have changed? How might they react?**

***What makes staff in the SEC better at noticing girl's needs and responding to that change?***

***The discussion will be summarised and the opportunity given to ask questions or add information.***

***Member checking will take place at the end of the session and propositions from this part of the AI process will be constructed with the participant in order to verify that they are an accurate reflection of their views.***

***A date for the next session will be set in collaboration with relevant staff members in order to minimise disruption to the girls' learning or other activities happening in the PRU such as reward trips, and to maximise engagement in the research process.***

***Semi-structured interview schedule pupils (Session 5)***

***Introduction***

***As I explained last time, I am here today because I am interested in finding out more about the strengths and needs of girls who have been identified as having SEBD and I would like to find out how girls can be helped to get involved with schools like this one and to have a say in what goes on in them.***

***We talked about participation which I mean as you having a say and being involved with things that make a difference to your school experience.***

***The propositions that we constructed as a result of the last session will be revisited as a reminder of the last interview schedule. We will then move on to the next set of questions.***

***Participants understanding of the process will be checked and the option to ask questions given. The interviews will be audio recorded and notes made on flip charts.***

***Questions***

- ***What makes this school different or special from others?***

***Prompts: What could make it even better?***

- ***If you had a magic wand, how would the ways your views about how you are supported are asked for and girls are helped to participate in decision making in the SEC look like in a years' time?***

***Prompts: What would help you to achieve this dream? What activities would be happening?***

***How would views be acted upon? Would this be the same or different for other girls and boys? How?***

- ***If a new girl was starting at the school, what would be the best bit of advice you could give them to help them to take part in decisions made regarding them in school?***

***Prompts: How would you let girls know how they can best participate? How would you suggest they give their views? Would this be the same or different for boys? How?***

- ***If a new member of staff was starting at the school, what would be the best bit of advice you could give them to help them listen to girls and help them to take part in school by acting on their views?***

***Prompts: How do you let staff know how they can best help you? How would you suggest they act on your views? And would this be the same or different for girls and boys? How?***

***The discussion will be summarised and the opportunity given to ask questions or add information.***

***Member checking will take place at the end of the session and propositions from this part of the AI process will be constructed with the participant in order to verify that they are an accurate reflection of their views.***

***A date for a session to feedback all of the propositions from the AI process to the girls will be set with relevant members of staff in order to minimise disruption to the girls' learning or other activities happening in the PRU such as reward trips, and to maximise engagement in the research process***

**Supervisor Declaration**

***I agree that the amendment proposed does not change the character of this research or the participant groups.***

***I confirm that the research risk assessment for the study as MEDIUM remains.***

***Supervisor's signature\****

***Date.***

***Please send applications for amendment to ethical approval for MEDIUM risk research to the School Quality Assurance Administrator at [ethics.education@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:ethics.education@manchester.ac.uk) who will pass on the request to the RIC member who authorised the original application wherever possible.***

**Supervisor Declaration**

I agree that the amendment proposed does not change the character of this research or the participant groups.

I confirm that the research risk assessment for the study as MEDIUM remains.

***Supervisor's signature\****

***Date.***

Please send applications for amendment to ethical approval for MEDIUM risk research to the School Quality Assurance Administrator at [ethics.education@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:ethics.education@manchester.ac.uk) who will pass on the request to the RIC member who authorised the original application wherever possible.

