



The  
University  
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**“They’ll help you through everything and anything” -  
Young people’s experiences of what  
makes a good day in their  
secondary school**

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## Abstract

Awareness of wellbeing and mental health has continued to grow over the last few years and is frequently discussed within schools, through Government agendas and within the media. Initiatives such as Future in Mind (DoH, 2015) and Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: A Green Paper (DoH/DfE, 2017) influence and shape current discourses, practice and provision.

This study originated from increasing curiosity about how the discourses and current constructs of wellbeing and mental health were filtering down to young people. The aim of the qualitative research was to focus on young people's use of language and constructs about feeling good, alongside an interest in their experiences of being immersed within a mainstream secondary school environment. Further reflections will be discussed in relation to the role of the Educational Psychologist to support children and young people's wellbeing.

Four young people from a Secondary School within a Local Authority in the North of England participated in a focus group. Semi-structured questions of an open nature were asked to explore their views of what makes a good day at school. The focus group was transcribed and analysed using Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Draft themes were then discussed with the young people to check the initial interpretation.

Young people used a range of words and phrases to express their experiences of feeling good or not so good, however the terms 'wellbeing' or 'mental health' were not directly used by any of the young people within this small group.

Analysis of the data highlighted the significant role of relationships, including friendships, family, adults in school, and animals, a sense of achievement, keeping the balance, school experience and whole school environment. Interestingly, young people discussed their experiences across both home and school environments, highlighting the importance of the social model of wellbeing.

**Keywords:** Young People, Wellbeing, Mental Health, Secondary School, Qualitative Research, Social Constructionism, Focus Groups, Thematic Analysis.

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<b>Acronyms</b>	
<b>ACE</b>	Adverse Childhood Experiences
<b>ECM</b>	Every Child Matters
<b>BST</b>	Behaviour Support Team
<b>BPS</b>	British Psychological Society
<b>CAMHS</b>	Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service
<b>CBT</b>	Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
<b>CYP</b>	Child or young person
<b>EHCP</b>	Education Health and Care Plan
<b>ELSA</b>	Emotional Literacy Support Assistant
<b>EHWB</b>	Emotional Health and Wellbeing
<b>EP</b>	Educational Psychologist
<b>EPS</b>	Educational Psychology Service
<b>GCSE</b>	General Certificate of Secondary Education
<b>GDPR</b>	General Data Protection Regulation
<b>FiM</b>	Future in Mind
<b>HCPC</b>	Health and Care Professionals Council
<b>LA</b>	Local Authority
<b>LEA</b>	Local Education Authority
<b>MHST</b>	Mental Health Support Teams
<b>NICE</b>	The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
<b>NHS</b>	National Health Service
<b>OCD</b>	Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
<b>PEP</b>	Principal Educational Psychologist
<b>PTMF</b>	Power Threat Meaning Framework
<b>SEAL</b>	Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning
<b>SENCo</b>	Special Educational Needs Coordinator

<b>SEND</b>	Special Educational Needs and Disability
<b>SEMH</b>	Social, Emotion and Mental Health
<b>SWB</b>	Subjective Wellbeing
<b>TA</b>	Teaching Assistant
<b>TA</b>	Thematic Analysis
<b>TAMHS</b>	Targeted Mental Health in Schools
<b>TEP</b>	Trainee Educational Psychologist
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>UNROC</b>	United Nations Rights of the Child
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organisation
<b>YMHFA</b>	Youth Mental Health First Aid

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## Introduction

Wellbeing and mental health are frequently discussed in the media and throughout a range of professions. There have been a range of government policies and initiatives over the years offering information and guidance on supporting and improving the wellbeing and mental health of children and young people. Initiatives have included: Every Child Matters (DfES, 2004), Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) (DfES, 2005), The Targeted Mental Health in Schools (TAMHS) project, (DCSF, 2008b), The Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce and Future in Mind Report (DoH, 2015) and, more recently, Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: A Green Paper (DoH/DoE, 2017). There continues to be a range of discourses and research exploring wellbeing and mental health and it can be difficult to navigate and interpret all of the complex information. Therefore I hoped that an opportunity to research this area could provide further clarity and a chance to explore the history and context of wellbeing and mental health alongside more recent discourses and guidance. My positionality within this research was drawn towards a relativist ontology and social constructionist lens. The emphasis was on people's sense-making and interpretation of the world, as being constructed and influenced by their relationships and the context in which they are in, rather than concepts existing in their own right in an objective manner (Robson, 2011).

As a Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP), many requests for involvement, particularly from secondary schools, appear to be highlighting children and young people's social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. Through working with the children and young people, I became particularly interested in how the current discourses, initiatives and guidance were influencing their views and experiences. Therefore the first focus of this research is how young people understand and experience feeling good or not so good; what adults may term wellbeing and mental health. The overarching purpose within this research was to privilege the young people's voice and sense making. Through a social constructionist lens, I was interested in hearing their own ideas, experiences and constructs. With this in mind, careful consideration was given to the words and language used within the research questions, initially wanting to explore young people's understanding and experience of wellbeing and mental health but then reflecting on these pre-determined constructs. I carefully considered how to elicit the young people's own constructs, and settled on feeling good and not so good, as more generic and easier to understand terms for the young people.

The second area of focus was to explore what young people found supportive for their wellbeing. An important consideration, highlighted through a systematic review of facilitators

and barriers to young people's positive mental health, suggested that many 'rigorously evaluated interventions more often address priorities not raised by young people themselves' (Oliver et. al., 2008). The FiM agenda also highlights the importance of provision shaped around what matters to children and young people (DoH, 2015), an important aim of this current research study. I used an empathetic-descriptive level of analysis to capture and emphasise the young people's own words, phrases and ideas rather than adding a deeper layer of interpretation, as a researcher, adult and TEP. This created some tensions within the different processes of the research journey, as a researcher, I endeavoured to be sensitive and carefully highlight what I was hearing, at times however, it felt natural to begin to interpret potential meanings. I felt the member checking process within the second focus group enhanced this process to check out my initial interpretations with the young people and attempt to ensure the themes reflected their own experiences. The emphasis was placed on what aspects were working well, underpinned by positive and solution-focussed approaches to psychology, in order to explore and 'promote the protective factors that support resilience and wellbeing for all' (Roffey, 2017: 92).

The processes followed within this research are detailed within seven chapters. From the many discourses around wellbeing and mental health, I began to consider: what is wellbeing and mental health; are they related or different concepts; and how long have these constructs been around? Next I wanted to explore the information and guidance that had shaped our understanding. I was also curious to discover what influence this had on young people's current understanding of feeling good or not so good, and the support they received in school. This will be explored in Chapter One: The Review of the Literature.

Reflecting on how to explore such a vast area, I thought of a range of ways in which to carry out the research. I have always been passionate about empowering the voice of young people, so I chose this population to focus on. I then wondered whether to focus on young people who had, or were currently receiving, extra support; those without any support; or a mix of all young people. I ended up with a small sample of young people with a mix of experiences. Next, my decision was whether to use individual interviews, focus groups, or other more creative means, such as photographs, drawings, and/or diaries; these considerations are detailed in Chapters Two and Three: The Methodology and Procedure.

After facilitating a focus group with four young people, I used Thematic Analysis (TA) (Braun and Clarke, 2006, Braun and Clarke, 2019) to analyse the data collected. Firstly I transcribed the audio recorded focus group and created codes and initial draft themes. I then took the initial draft analysis back to the young people and asked, "This is what I thought I was hearing;

what do you think?" The themes that were identified through these processes, including direct quotations from the young people, are shared in Chapter Four: The Data Analysis and Results.

The next step was to consider the eight themes that were identified: each of the themes were discussed and linked to the review of the literature. The themes included: peer relationships, family support, adults in school, animals and pets, a sense of achievement, keeping the balance, school experience, and whole school environment. These are shared in Chapter Five: The Discussion.

Following this, the reflections, evaluation and limitations of this qualitative research will be shared in Chapter Six. The final chapter, Chapter Seven, discusses the implications for Educational Psychology (EP) practice and considerations for further research.

Throughout the research journey, reflections were made about the evaluative criteria that could be applied to this research. The criteria generally used for more realist and quantitative data, which include reliability, validity and generalisability (Mertens, 2010, Thomas, 2013), did not seem appropriate for a small scale qualitative research study collecting the experiences of only four young people. Therefore several frameworks deemed more suitable for qualitative research, were explored (Anderson, 2017, Braun and Clarke, 2019, Harré, 2004, Lincoln and Guba, 1985, Yardley, 2000, Yardley, 2017). Key criteria included the importance of: applying sensitivity to the context, transparency, coherence, reflexivity, transferability, impact, and ethical considerations. Such frameworks note the importance of a flexible approach to applying such criteria dependent on the position, methodology and processes of the particular research study. The specific criteria used will be discussed in Chapters Three and Five.

To summarise the outline of this research: Chapter One explores the review of the literature. Chapter Two details the methodology considered, followed by Chapter Three the procedures. Chapters Four and Five discuss the data analysis, results and discussion respectively. Chapter Six outlines the reflections, evaluations and limitations of this research. Finally Chapter Seven considers the implications for EP practice and considerations for further research.

### **Terminology used**

**Young people** - Throughout this thesis I will use the term young people to mean secondary aged pupils.

**Wellbeing** - There are several spellings of the word wellbeing, well-being, well being. I have decided to use the term wellbeing to ensure consistency. The use and understanding of wellbeing will be discussed within the review of the literature.

**They** – to protect the anonymity of the participants of this research I have used ‘they’ rather than ‘he’ or ‘she’ due to the limited number of young people in this research and only one male participant.

## **Chapter One: The Review of the Literature**

### **1.1: Introduction**

The following literature review will explore a brief history of wellbeing and mental health, alongside current definitions and discourses. A reflection on wellbeing and mental health in the United Kingdom (UK) will be considered, followed by a review of the key policies and guidance which have influenced the national context. Young people's ideas and understanding around wellbeing and mental health will then be discussed, in addition to the support that they feel is useful within their educational settings. Following this, aims of this research in seeking the views and experiences of children and young people of what makes a good day in their mainstream secondary school, will be explained.

### **1.2: A brief history of wellbeing, mental health and childhood**

In order to understand and reflect on current constructs of wellbeing, mental health and childhood, it is important to consider the influence of history, culture, political and economic agendas. Throughout history, the language and understanding around people's differences, and the perceived continuum of normality and abnormality, have continued to evolve, with some researchers acknowledging that the concept of 'madness may be as old as mankind' (Porter, 2002:10). From origins in spirituality, some people exhibiting differences in their behaviour were believed to be possessed, demonic, and supernatural; notions such as witchcraft predominated in this early history. Following this, the rise of asylums, beginning with Saint Mary of Bethlehem, commonly known as Bedlam, commenced in the late 1400s, with terms such as lunatics and idiocy (Foucault, 1965, O'Reilly & Lester, 2017). The original intention of being placed in an asylum was to be treated, cured and then being freed to leave and return to everyday life. Throughout history, the emphasis focussed on various approaches to treat, cure and rehabilitate an individual. When reflecting on the constructs of sanity and insanity, an article in the London Times (1854) stated 'make the definition too narrow, it becomes meaningless; make it too wide, the whole human race are involved in the drag-net' (Kinderman and Cooke, 2017: 627). Frameworks have since been developed to classify individuals when they begin to experience particular differences and complexities. Subjective decisions are made of whether an individual meets the symptoms of such disorders, often without consideration of the social and relational underpinnings of an individual's experiences (APA, 2013, Kinderman and Cooke, 2017, WHO, 1992). Updates to such classification systems are influenced by the socio-political values and needs of the specific period in time, with current debates emphasising the importance of working with an individual's specific difficulties, rather than focussing on particular diagnostic labels (Kinderman and Cooke, 2017,

Johnstone et. al., 2018). Important reflections have been made that normalisation has become 'one of the great instruments of power' (Foucault, 1995: 184), a debate which continues.

Influential periods of time have also included the introduction of a compulsory education system, increasing opportunities to observe and compare large groups of children. Alongside this, the concept of childhood as a distinct stage of life emerged, with research around typical developmental patterns and stages, which have also changed throughout the years. Such concepts continue to be fluid, complex and multifaceted rather than fixed and universal (O'Reilly and Lester, 2017). Throughout history, there have been substantial shifts in discourses around children and childhood. Early perceptions saw children starting life as evil and needing to be liberated. Following this, children were seen as blank slates, initially being incapable of reasoning and logical thought, needing to be influenced by those around them and therefore needing adults to speak for them. More recently children are viewed as being born innocent, gaining experience from those around them, and are increasingly being encouraged to express themselves as they grow older (O'Reilly and Lester, 2017).

From the position of a relativist ontology and a social constructionist view, discussed further in the methodology chapter for this research, it is important to reflect on the influence of history, culture, societal norms and the role of the political agenda. Such contexts have a significant impact on our current understandings, perceptions and constructs of wellbeing and mental health. This is likely to vary across disciplines, agencies, and through the experiences of different audiences such as: children and young people, parents and carers, and professionals. It is important to promote a greater awareness and understanding of the range of terms used around wellbeing and mental health. Creating a common language across services is suggested to be vital to improve integrated working and reduce barriers (Weare and Gray, 2003, DfES, 2004, Wolpert et. al., 2013), especially with an increasing view that 'child mental health and wellbeing is everybody's business' (DoH, 2015:73). This leads us to consider: what do we mean by wellbeing and mental health and how do we explore such constructs?

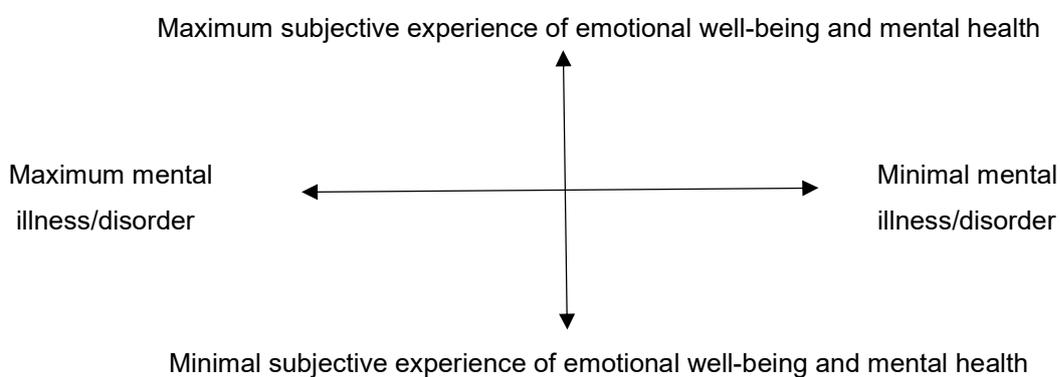
### **1.3: Wellbeing and mental health – what is it?**

The term wellbeing is used frequently in the media, across disciplines and by children, young people and adults. It has been described as one of the least defined concepts in education (Bennett, 2018) and seen as 'fuzzy and intangible' (Watson et. al., 2012:2), 'messy and unstable' (Ereaut and Whiting, 2008: 9). Current ideas of wellbeing tend to be linked to a range of constructs such as self-awareness, empathy, emotional literacy, social skills, resilience and mental health (Ereaut and Whiting, 2008, Watson et. al., 2012). However, it is

suggested that there is ‘no common language for ‘childhood wellbeing’” (DCSF, 2008a: 15). Watson et. al. (2012) propose three main aspects of wellbeing that are important to consider. The first is that wellbeing is experienced subjectively through the lived experience of individuals; how we experience wellbeing can be substantially different from one person to another. It is therefore important not to make assumptions about someone’s wellbeing in accordance with our own subjective experience. The second aspect is that wellbeing is seen as contextual and embedded; people’s wellbeing may vary across situations. Relational aspects are a third consideration, recognising the influence of encounters with other people such as family, school staff and individuals in the local community.

A useful approach advocated through the Youth Mental Health First Aid Training (MHFA-E, 2018) promotes the variable nature of wellbeing and mental health through a Dual-Factor Model (Greenspoon & Saklofske, 2001, Suldo & Shaffer, 2008). The model (Figure 1) highlights the individual’s subjective experience of wellbeing and mental health through one continuum and recognises the potential impact of a mental health illness or diagnosis on the crossing continuum.

**Figure 1: Mental Health Continuum**



The model demonstrates that, even with a potential mental illness or diagnosis, a person can still experience fluctuating wellbeing and mental health, based on their individual circumstances. The model suggests that complete mental health is shown through positive subjective wellbeing and low psychopathology: a sub-group described as symptomatic but content portrays an individual experiencing positive wellbeing despite their diagnosis; a vulnerable group is identified through having low subjective wellbeing and low psychopathology; and finally a more troubled group is suggested to encounter high levels of psychopathology and/or diagnosis and low experienced wellbeing. A limitation of this model relates to the within-person approach, with limited reference to the role of relational and environment factors which may also impact on an individual. Subjective wellbeing is based on a range of self-reported scales, which may be influenced by the period of time and content in

which they were completed. The research is also based on young people based in the United States of America and Canada who are likely to experience different school, community and societal experiences than young people within the United Kingdom.

Patalay and Fitzsimons (2016, 2018) reflect on the idea of wellbeing and mental health as potentially different constructs, with different factors affecting the levels of wellbeing or psychopathology, in the case of mental illness. Using data from 12,347 children in the Millenium Cohort Study, Patalay and Fitzsimons (2016) suggested that subjective wellbeing was linked to: parental, sibling and peer relationships; feelings of belonging; and environmental factors. Whereas factors such as: gender (being female); ethnicity (being white); having a lower cognitive ability, learning and communication difficulties; a chronic illness; a lower income; and family structure, including living in a single-parent household, were associated with higher levels of mental illness.

Furthermore, NICE (2009) outlines social and emotional wellbeing as encompassing three key areas: firstly emotional wellbeing, as being happy and having confidence and not feeling depressed; secondly, psychological wellbeing, as having control and autonomy over your own life including skills in problem solving, resilience, attentiveness and being involved with other people; and thirdly, social wellbeing, as including positive relationships avoiding disruptive, violent and bullying behaviour. Such factors may all influence the Dual-Factor Model (Suldo & Shaffer, 2008) in relation to how we subjectively experience our own wellbeing.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) definition, frequently cited, describes 'a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.' (WHO, 2014:1). It is important to consider that the 'normal' stresses of life may vary widely across families and communities, including opportunities for and the availability of well-paid work. Some communities may leave young people simply trying to stay safe in a neighbourhood with a high level of social issues. In contrast, other young people may be growing up in more affluent areas which may place extremely high expectations on performing well in education (WHO, 2014).

Despite these models and discussions, a medicalised within-person discourse of wellbeing and mental health, originating from a more realist stance and psychiatric discourse, often underpins current policies and services (Crowe, 2000, O'Reilly and Lester, 2017, Roffey, 2018). Research highlights the dangers and potential risk of marginalising individuals through 'reducing the complex interplay of biological, psychological, individual, social, societal, behavioural, neurodevelopmental, cognitive and cultural factors to genetic or biomedical

markers' (O'Reilly & Lester, 2017: 312) or making assumptions of an underlying 'internal, biochemical fault' (Crowe, 2000:70). Crowe (2000) questions the scientific validation and ethics of the diagnostic lens, challenging the concept of a criteria with key aspects of behaviour which classifies people as disordered (APA, 2013, WHO, 1992). Such reflections consider the impact that a diagnosis can have on an individual's sense of self. However, it is important to recognise that, for some individuals, a diagnosis can raise awareness, understanding, validate their experiences, and also offer access to a range of support services. Language within such medical models is generally focussed on mental health rather than wellbeing, disorders and labels for the individual, and language such as 'cure, care and recovery' (Beresford, 2002: 583). Within this perspective, the emphasis is on an individual being diagnosed and treated, with an emphasis on self-help, therapy and, increasingly, online resources to support individuals (Watson et. al., 2012, Callaghan et. al., 2017, DoH/DfE, 2017, Roffey, 2018).

Alternatively, a social model of wellbeing and mental health presents a more interactionist view, recognising the importance of an individual's interaction within a social context (Beresford, 2002, Billington, 2019). Such perspectives encourage discussions on the role of nurture alongside nature and place emphasis on creating a holistic approach to supporting individuals (Weare and Gray, 2003). Models such as the ecological systems framework (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) can highlight the different levels of support which may offer the most impact: from the individual at the centre, their family, school and community influences; to more holistically reflecting on the societal, national and international impacts on how we view and support everyone's wellbeing and mental health. Further approaches highlight a collective rather than individualistic perception of wellbeing, acknowledging that our own and other people's experiences are profoundly interdependent. This approach suggests that 'wellbeing is not and never can be an individual affair' (O'Toole, 2019: 16-17).

The Power Threat Meaning Framework (PTMF) (Johnstone, et. al., 2018) has recently been developed by the Division of Clinical Psychology within The British Psychological Society (BPS). The PTMF proposes an alternative perspective from the current emphasis on medicalised discourses around wellbeing and mental health, particularly for individuals accessing more specialist support. In a move away from criteria used within the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (Fifth edition) (DSM V) (APA, 2013) and International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, 10th Revision (ICD-10) (WHO, 1992) towards a more social and holistic model of wellbeing and mental health. The PTMF acknowledges the role of environmental, social and cultural contexts and reframing within-person discourses. The PTMF recognises the complexities of people's lives

and the importance of their experiences. The framework places emphasis on people's thoughts, feelings and behaviour and repositions 'distress as a meaningful, functional and understandable response to life circumstances' (Johnstone et. al., 2018:6). The PTMF considers of the impact of subjective experience, values, ethics and social justice; moving away from pathology and towards an understanding of complex coping strategies and survival mechanisms. The PTMF also reflects on the concept of ideological power which underpins how we might begin to understand, experience and interpret distress, both individually and within the groups that we may identify with. Using the concepts of power, threat and meaning the PTMF reflects on four key questions;

- 'What has happened to you? (Power)
- How did it affect you? (Threat)
- What sense did you make of it? (Meaning)
- What did you have to do to survive?' (Actions and behaviour) (Johnstone, et. al., 2018: 9).

The authors acknowledge the evolving nature of the framework and the large cultural and paradigm shift such an approach requires; however the core team involved remain optimistic that the PTMF creates important debates and discussions amongst all involved within mental health services, including the service users. Several limitations of this new framework have been recognised and discussed. These include feedback on the largely academic and inaccessible language and information provided, with aims to create a more accessible and user friendly guide to the key concepts, especially for young people or individuals with additional needs. In addition, some people have challenged the core group that have developed the framework, as being from a narrow group that lacks diversity, with minimal engagement from individuals with backgrounds of complex mental health experiences. The importance of applying such a framework with caution and sensitivity was also raised, in relation to those individuals who may not have reflected on their previous experiences of potential challenging or traumatic events (Griffiths, 2019).

Wellbeing and mental health are complex constructs that are multi-faceted and subjectively experienced. Whilst models and frameworks for wellbeing and mental health can aid understanding and incorporate a range of factors which may impact on an individual's life, it is difficult to promote a holistic approach of an individual's unique and complex life experiences through such reductionist models. Through a social constructionist approach, an individual can help to share their rich and detailed narrative on their own life experiences, many of which may include smaller and nuanced situations, which may not be included through pre-

determined frameworks or models. Watson et. al., (2012) reflects that 'wellbeing is a social construct that is fluid in nature and has an ever-evolving and contextual set of definitions' (Watson, et. al., 2012:25). Wellbeing can be explained through 'what a group, or groups of people, collectively agree makes a good life' (Ereaut and Whiting, 2008: 1). The recognition of wellbeing and mental health over a spectrum or continuum, which can vary over time, context and the individual, can help to broaden a more reductionist medicalised view of mental health. It is important to acknowledge, that for some individuals with complex needs and high levels of distress, specialist support may be required.

#### **1.4: Wellbeing and mental health in the United Kingdom**

In 2007, it was highlighted that the UK was amongst the lowest rated countries for achieving positive wellbeing and mental health in the United Nations Children's Fund Report on Wellbeing in Rich Countries (UNICEF, 2007). Children and young people were reported to be less fulfilled and happy with their lives in comparison with other countries included in this research. The measures used within the report have been criticised for not reflecting an accurate and objective measure of wellbeing; with wide ranging rankings within the different perceived dimensions of wellbeing across different countries and admitted issues of 'aggregating survey data across different nation states' (Watson et. al., 2012: 81). However, such research has increased the emphasis of national and international agendas to improve wellbeing and mental health, and accentuates views of 'an emergent crisis in children and young people's mental health' (Humphrey, 2018: 4) which is often portrayed through the media. Recent headlines such as 'Mental health issues in young people up sixfold in England since 1995' (The Guardian, 2018) and 'One in five children could be at risk of mental health issues, study suggests' (The Independent, 2018), predominate the news reported through the press, television, radio and social media. Humphrey (2018) questions such headlines, debating whether there is an increase in mental health difficulties or whether there has been a change in the way wellbeing and health is viewed and discussed, therefore heightening the awareness of potential mental health issues. In addition, Humphrey (2018) reflects on the increase in cuts to services due to austerity measures which have impacted on the shortage of provision, rather than a perceived increase of need. Through a Freedom of Information Request, Young Minds (2016) found over 50% of money allocated by the Government for children's mental health services within the first two years of funding was used on other priority areas.

In contrast, research by Thomson and Katikreddi (2018) suggested an improvement in mental health throughout the generations, with 'positive changes in social, economic, and mental health policy in the last century' (Thomson and Katikreddi, 2018: 142). Recent figures from

children's wellbeing measures (ONS, 2018) reported that 79.2% of 10-15 year olds indicated that they had high levels of satisfaction with their lives, reported through large scale survey methods to capture wellbeing and mental health. However, from 2015-16, 14.7% young people identified with symptoms of mental ill-health, through self-reported scores on the strengths and difficulties questionnaire.

### **1.5: The national context – key policies and guidance**

Over the past few years, numerous policies and associated guidance have played a fundamental role in defining wellbeing and mental health and determining how such concepts are recognised and understood. There have been several shifts in thinking, with initial policies recognising the impact of society, communities, family circumstances and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) (Burstow, et. al., 2018, DfE, 2018b, DoH, 2015), on children and young people's wellbeing. Language has been focussed on the right to be valued and have supportive nurturing environments, with individuals being encouraged to fulfil their potential (Callaghan et. al., 2017, DfES, 2004, Watson et. al., 2012).

Recognising the influence of early life experiences on children and young people's development, and resulting wellbeing and mental health, continues to be explored. The term Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) (Felitti et. al., 1998) are suggested to include the impact of direct instances of physical, emotional and sexual abuse, alongside indirect experiences. Within the research literature, indirect experiences incorporate household or family dysfunction including: parental conflict, domestic abuse and violence, substance misuse, family members' mental illness, and family members involved with the criminal justice system. The impact of a family's home and local community environment, and factors linked to poverty, were also recognised. ACEs have been associated with poorer wellbeing, mental health, related health conditions and even premature death rates (Felitti et. al., 1998, Hughes et. al., 2017). Research suggests that being exposed to four or more ACEs increases several health risks, including mental health (Hughes et. al., 2017). In addition, experiencing numerous ACEs have been linked to a higher likelihood of experiencing substance and alcohol misuse, sexual risk-taking behaviours (multiple partners), and instances of violence and self-harm. It is important to promote awareness, understanding and compassion for individuals who may have experienced a range of adversities for a variety of reasons. However, similar to wellbeing, the construct of ACEs has no clear definition and research studies have included a range of adversities, which are not always directly comparable with alternative studies (Kalmakis and Chandler, 2014, Lacey and Minnis, 2020). Much of the recording of ACEs within research can be simplistic; often an individual's perceived experience of different adversities are counted, with little information on the timing, severity or duration of such

experiences. Therefore two individuals may have a similar ACE score but very different life experiences. Caution also needs to be taken that the ACEs research is not interpreted through a deterministic lens; multiple ACEs do not always mean that it is inevitable to have poor outcomes. Like many frameworks and models, ACEs can be reductive and do not use a holistic account of an individual's life experiences. In addition, much of the ACE's research used retrospective self-reported accounts, taken at one period of time, and focusses on individuals and families. It is important to recognise the wider impact of inequality and poverty (Lacey and Minnis, 2020).

Statistics have highlighted the impact of a family's income on predictions of wellbeing and mental health, and have suggested that children and young people from families with a low income were four times more likely to experience mental health difficulties than those from higher income families (Burstow et. al, 2018). Further influences explored included: children's early relational attachments and instances of neglect, bullying, homelessness, being a young carer, and the impact of the pressures of unrealistic high expectations on children and young people (Burstow, et. al., 2018). Intergenerational patterns of ACEs, and resulting difficulties, have also been recognised, with parents often noting that their own experiences influenced their parenting styles. A powerful description from one parent states 'a kid sitting in the window for her whole childhood...because it's too dangerous to go outside...now it's my kids sitting in the window' (Woods-Jaeger et. al., 2018:774), with other parents sharing their hypervigilance to potential threats for their own children based on their own difficult childhood experiences. Such instances emphasise the impact of multi-faceted difficulties that continue to affect families. Many parents also shared their desire and determination to have higher aspirations for their own children, despite continual experiences of economic deprivation, poverty, and communities that are deemed unsafe for children to play in. This highlights the importance of multi-agency community-based support (Woods-Jaeger et. al., 2018).

Every Child Matters (DfES, 2004), which implemented the 2004 Children Act (HM Government, 2004), encouraged inter-agency working in order to focus on five outcomes: staying safe, enjoying and achieving, being healthy, making a positive contribution, and achieving economic wellbeing; to promote the wellbeing of children. Following this, The Children's Plan (DCSF, 2007) highlighted the notion of supporting children's wellbeing and mental health in order to instil good habits for later life, placing emphasis on providing parents with skills to support their children, enhancing children's personal and social skills and reducing more negative behaviours.

Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) (DfES, 2005) was developed and implemented across primary and secondary schools from 2005. It focused on personal and

interpersonal skills through promoting self-awareness, being able to manage feelings, having motivation, learning empathy and developing social skills, reflecting Goleman's original framework of Emotional Intelligence (Goleman, 1995). Interestingly the SEAL strategy was rolled out across schools before the initial pilot evaluations were completed. Evaluation of SEAL remains inconclusive and revealed a mixed picture across schools, with suggestions that it failed to make a significant impact on social and emotional skills and mental health; with these outcomes partly being due to differences in implementation; and staff skill levels and time to embed such approaches; especially in more complex secondary school environments (Humphrey, et. al., 2010).

The Targeted Mental Health in Schools (TAMHS) project, supporting children aged five to thirteen, (DCSF, 2008b), focussed on children perceived to be experiencing, or at heightened risk of developing, mental health difficulties. TAMHS was developed to enhance the support available through the SEAL programmes (DfES, 2005) being taught in schools. TAMHS aimed to be flexible and innovative towards local needs, responding to children's and communities' unique circumstances. Approaches used within the TAMHS project aimed to follow evidence-based practice and were intended to integrate with more intensive support offered by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Additionally, self-help booklets were created for primary and secondary aged children and young people (DCSF, 2008b). A National evaluation of TAMHS was carried out by Wolpert et. al. (2013). The evaluation used quantitative and qualitative methodology to gather information from children and young people, professionals and parents. Overall the TAMHS programme was well-received across the groups, with decreases in emotional and behavioural difficulties being identified in primary schools by pupils and teachers, sought through a survey method to capture their views. The picture gathered in secondary schools appeared more complex, and differing views were elicited from pupils and teachers. Factors included the size and organisation of secondary schools, including a move away from an approach that might be characterised as being more pupil-focussed in primary, to a more subject-focussed approach in secondary schools. Interestingly, practice in secondary schools appeared to follow more locally developed approaches based on practice-based, rather than evidence-based, practice. The research concluded that offering a framework for schools, rather than a 'prescriptive, one size fits all approach' (Wolpert, et. al., 2013) appeared to be a more effective model of support for schools, allowing them to be innovative, flexible and tailor their approaches to local needs.

The Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce, consisting of Education, Health and Social Care professionals, was created to identify the potential barriers children and young people may face in receiving the support that they need. The Future in

Mind (FiM) (DoH, 2015) report outlined the work of the Taskforce and has been viewed as 'a welcome national recognition of the need to make dramatic improvements in mental health services' (DoH, 2015:8). FiM (DoH, 2015) highlighted the importance of early intervention, preventative work and promoting the resilience of children and young people through a 'whole child and whole family approach' (DoH, 2015:3). This is underpinned by a social model of wellbeing and mental health; emphasising the importance of developing the workforce and improving access to care and support for the most vulnerable young people.

More recently there has been an increased focus on medicalised language and a pathological view of mental 'illness', difficulties and 'disorders of the brain' (Callaghan et. al., 2017: 115) with claims that 'mental health must have equal priority with physical health' (Department of Health, 2014:4). Such approaches view mental health as a medical problem to be treated within the individual, with greater emphasis on reducing risk and keeping people well, in order to reduce socioeconomic problems. This repositions an individual's mental health as a cause of problems and creates the danger of perceiving individuals either as a burden or resilient in their ability to overcome mental health difficulties. This shift in language has had an influential impact on the lens that wellbeing and mental health is viewed through and the subsequent availability and scope of support. Callaghan et. al. (2017) suggests that 'children's wellbeing is reduced to health and brain development [and] family relationships are reduced to parenting', omitting the role of the social context, poverty, working hours, inequalities, academic pressures and bullying, amongst other factors; with the risk that we are teaching children and young people to 'accept their lot rather than challenge, question, subvert and change the structures of society' (Watson, et. al., 2012:66). A debate that warns of the dangers of reducing problems to an individual, emotional or psychological level rather than recognising the wider implications of the impact of community, societal and political influences (Edwards and Imrie, 2008). Further discourses suggest a move towards 'disembedded individualisation in society' (Edwards and Imrie, 2008: 341), where less emphasis is placed on a social, family and community-based culture but towards a more individualistic focus, whereby the importance is placed on an individual's responsibility for their own wellbeing.

Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: A Green Paper (DoH/DoE, 2017), increasingly appeared to place emphasis on medicalised, pathological and more realist approaches (Roffey, 2018), with the focus being on within-child and more reactive support. This support includes 'treating' children with Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and counselling based approaches, based on clinical services, through Mental Health Support Teams (MHST). There is scant reference to the potential circumstances underpinning mental health difficulties and limited reference to research on constructs such as 'resilience' and

'protective factors'. Multi-agency teams linked to school settings are envisioned to offer early intervention in a timely manner; respond to children and young people's needs as they arise; and identify the most appropriate professional needed to support them. It is proposed that the MHSTs will include 'educational psychologists, school nurses and counsellors, local authority troubled families teams, social services, peer networks, service user forums, and voluntary and community sector organisations' (DoH/DoE, 2017: 22) and be supervised by mental health staff based within the National Health Service (NHS). Further priorities include: every school identifying a Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health to oversee support and provision, including being able to advise and signpost to a range of services; and the aim of reducing waiting times to four weeks for more specialist mental health services. Furthermore, the FiM (DoH, 2015) and Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision (DoH/DoE, 2017) agendas highlight the importance of whole school approaches, citing 'the school environment is well suited to a graduated approach' (DoH/DfE, 2017:10), without providing much clarity about what this might look like (Roffey, 2018).

### **1.6: Embedding support for wellbeing and mental health in schools**

Increasingly, emphasis has been placed on the role of schools to support and promote children and young people's wellbeing and mental health. The responsibility for school mental health provision is supported by Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) services and CAMHS. The SEND Code of Practice (DfE, 2015) has revised language from social, emotional and behavioural needs to social, emotional and mental health needs, changing perceptions and interpretations of children's strengths and needs (DfE 2015, Roffey et. al., 2016) The Code of Practice (DfE, 2015) also places an increased emphasis on schools to provide a graduated response to identify and meet these needs for children and young people.

Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (2018) (DfE, 2018b) offers non-statutory guidance to schools. The guidance outlines school's responsibility for supporting children and young people with mental health needs and advises where schools can offer support and when to seek more specialist support. The guidance outlines the importance of developing a whole school culture, recognising risk and protective factors including ACEs. Factors include: separation and loss; changes in life circumstances, such as family dynamics; or a change of environment, such as moving house or school; traumatic experiences, such as safeguarding concerns, accidents and bullying; and finally, other traumatic incidents, which include natural disasters and terrorist attacks. The guidance also emphasises working collaboratively with other agencies and professionals.

The importance of the school environment was highlighted as a fundamental aspect to support all children and young people (Weare and Gray, 2003, Spratt et. al., 2006, Weare and Nind, 2011), particularly an environment that ‘fosters warm relationships, encourages participation, develops pupil and teacher autonomy, and fosters clarity about boundaries, rules and expectations’ (Weare and Gray, 2003:7). The concept of school connectedness was also highlighted (Patalay and Fitzsimons, 2016). Whole school approaches are viewed as essential to promote emotional wellbeing (DfES, 2005, DfE, 2018b, Roffey, 2018, Vostanis et. al., 2013, Weare and Nind, 2011). Weare and Gray (2003) suggest whole school approaches can present as more complex and less common in secondary schools.

Research suggests that schools, especially in their central role in the lives of children and families, are often the initial place where concerns are shared (Vostanis, et. al., 2013). Many schools use a ground-up approach, tailored to the individual school, supported by Child Mental Health and Educational Psychology Services. Concerns have been raised around the limited availability of specialist training for staff, including strategies to support difficult behaviour (Spratt et. al., 2006, Vostanis, et. al., 2013). Several schools have reported a trend towards more reactive than preventative approaches, some of which were seen as ‘fragmented initiatives’ (Spratt et. al., 2006) with children and young people needing to fit into the system more effectively. Many interventions that have been used are less prescriptive and more flexible, personalised for the individual with limited use of evidence-based practice. Schools tend to rely on Government initiatives, despite many lacking in their evaluation of effectiveness (Vostanis, et. al., 2013).

Wolpert et. al. (2013) suggested that ‘the most sustainable models of school-based mental health provision will be those that centrally involve school staff in delivery’ (Wolpert et. al., 2013:272). Research is beginning to suggest that school staff are at least as effective as external professionals at leading and implementing interventions with children and young people (Vostanis et. al., 2012, Wolpert et. al., 2013). EPs can have an influential role in supporting staff to promote and respond to the holistic development of a child or young person and can act as ‘a key therapeutic resource for young people’ (Mackay, 2007:16). Recommendations from research recognise the importance of a whole school approach (Weare and Gray, 2003), explicitly teaching social and emotional skills, promoting teacher’s confidence and competence, early identification of potential difficulties, and developing partnerships with parents, carers and the local community. However, the limitations of this research include: it being based on a case study of only five Local Authorities; a review of the literature which was carried out without a rigorous inclusion procedure (Weare and Gray, 2003,

Watson et. al. 2012); and interviews were only carried out with professionals who already had an interest in social and emotional learning approaches.

A critique of these views is that we are increasingly developing a therapeutic culture which emphasises a 'pessimistic tone that privileges damage, vulnerability, and fragility' (Ecclestone, 2007: 464) which perceives children and young people as 'somehow lacking [in their] capacity to deal with emotions, and that it is the school's job to make good this deficit' (Coleman, 2009: 290). As such, assumptions are made of children and young people's emotional deficiencies and needing to learn skills of emotional wellbeing alongside the more traditional learning environment. Such views suggest that we are sheltering children and young people from experiencing typical emotional development through a range of emotions which can help them to develop motivation, persistence and resilience (Craig, 2009, Watson et. al., 2012). Some schools also echoed similar tensions of focussing on wellbeing rather than attainment (Spratt et. al., 2006). Recent approaches of this nature have the potential to diminish individuals as active agents; and can create a cultural vocabulary and underlying assumptions around appropriate ways to feel and respond, suggesting that this culture 'not only pervades education but that education is the main site for reinforcing it' (Ecclestone and Hayes, 2009:380). Currently, it does appear that many schools are aiming to provide integrated support for wellbeing and mental health alongside traditional subject-based learning. It can seem difficult to separate wellbeing from the fundamental aspects of learning and development. However, it is important to reflect the views of alternative perspectives such as Ecclestone and Hayes (2009), in promoting a more holistic and positive perception of children and young people: focusing on their abilities, skills and achievements, and reframing discourses that have the potential to become deficit focussed within an educational environment.

### **1.7: Promoting the voice of children and young people**

Children and young people will have their own thoughts, views and preferences for support around their own wellbeing and mental health, which are likely to differ from that of adults. The importance of listening to the voice of children and young people and following person-centred approaches and services continues to be promoted (United Nations General Assembly, 1989, DfE, 2015, Sanderson, 2016). The United Nations on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (United Nations General Assembly, 1989), highlights the importance of children having the right to be able to express their opinions and have these opinions taken into account, with the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (DfE, 2015) advocating that we 'must have regard to the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person' (DfE, 2015:19). Listening, in this respect, can be described as 'the process of bringing voices into visibility and allowing them to be acknowledged and understood' (Watson, et. Al. 2012: 113).

The process of listening includes ways of speaking with, and means of collecting, children and young people's experiences, which can involve flexible multi-sensory methods. Person-centred methods of eliciting experiences need to be carefully planned and responsive to individual needs. Ensuring that we capture the authentic voice of a child or young person, requires reflections on children's ability to articulate their thoughts and feelings and understand the questions being asked of them. It is also important to recognise the power balance often created in research environments, with children and young people's desire to say the right thing or behave appropriately in a given situation (Watson, et. al., 2012).

Children and young people are viewed as reflexive experts in their own lives, able to construct and interpret meaning and participate in decision-making (Newton and Ponting, 2013). Opportunities to have a say, be listened, be respected and valued can enhance young people's wellbeing, especially when their ideas and preferences are acted upon (Anderson and Graham, 2016). It is crucial to elicit and understand the experiences of young people who are immersed within secondary school environments, acknowledging that 'adolescents and young adults, if given the opportunity, are curious, engaged and innovative' (Kleinert and Horton, 2016: 2356). This allows services to be more responsive to the needs and preferences of children and young people. Creative and innovative working models to work collaboratively with children and young people to plan and implement services is slowly increasing.

### **1.8: Children and young people's concepts of wellbeing**

It is important to reflect on children and young people's constructs and understanding of wellbeing. Young people's descriptions of wellbeing included 'wellbeing is good food, good mind, good think, every good thing' (Gillett-Swan, 2014: 72). Children and young people were aware of the complexity and positive and negative dimensions of wellbeing (NSWCCYP, 2007 Roffey, 2017). Children's concepts of wellbeing included feeling valued and safe, the capacity to act morally, and having opportunities to make choices and exert influence in everyday situations (Fattore et. al., 2007). An Australian child-centred study, exploring the views of children aged eight to fifteen, identified three fundamental themes: agency, security and a positive sense of self (NSWCCYP, 2007, Roffey, 2017). An additional six themes within this research included: 'activities, adversity in children's lives, material and economic resources, physical environments, physical health, social responsibility and moral agency' (NSWCCYP, 2007: 2). Although originating in Australia, and based on 126 children and young people and with a higher proportion (85) being female, the research highlights the importance of identifying what children and young people's views of wellbeing are, and whether their concepts have similarities with adult's views and assumptions.

Research has identified several important factors in children and young people's views of wellbeing. These were identified through three main themes which appear to be reflected in the research literature: firstly, the quality of positive relationships with family, friends, pets and teachers (Dex and Hollingworth, 2012, DCSF, 2008a, Gillett-Swan, 2014, Roffey, 2017); secondly, the quality of the environment, including schools, home and local community (DCSF, 2008a); and thirdly, notions of the self and freedoms, which incorporated health, education, and being able to make choices (CCE, 2017, DCSF, 2008a, Dex and Hollingworth, 2012, Foley et. al., 2012, Gillett-Swan, 2014). Related to these three key themes, children and young people also voiced their concerns about the impact of not having key people to support them, family conflict, being different or not having access to the same things as their friends, and not having safe places to play outside (DCSF, 2008a). Further concepts reflected on the subjective experiences of the self, self-esteem and coping strategies (CCE, 2017, Foley, et. al., 2012). Another Australian study considering the voice of young people with disabilities, found that their construct of wellbeing incorporated: being valued, respected, supported, and included. It was important to them that they were viewed as capable, and encouraged to develop their self-respect and self-esteem (Foley et. al., 2012).

As demonstrated through this research, and similar to adult's conceptions of wellbeing, there was no one definition or a specific set of factors that explained children and young people's constructs of wellbeing. Different structures and themes continue to be explored in relation to children and young people's views, which are likely to continue to change and evolve as our internal and external influences also change. Many studies tend to explore children and young people's constructions alongside those of adults, making it difficult to determine their distinct voices (DCSF, 2008a). In addition, many of the studies exploring children's views of the construct of wellbeing (Appendix 1) have been carried out internationally, including within Australia, Spain, Belgium, Finland Turkey and England, Wales and Scotland in the UK. This research continues to be influenced by the different cultures and education systems within these countries. Less research appears to have been carried out solely within the UK, specifically within England, which has different education systems from both Scotland and Wales.

### **1.9: Children and young people's school experiences**

With the increasing emphasis on promoting wellbeing in schools, it is also important to explore what young people feel is supportive. Children and young people's views of school were captured and outlined in the FiM Report (DoH, 2015), which highlighted that they valued staff with the right training, skills and experience with a range of interventions and support. Children and young people noted the importance of the staff's approach, including: being relaxed,

flexible, approachable and trustworthy; staff who listen and empower their voices to be heard (Anderson and Graham, 2016, Beynon, 2019, Fletcher, et. al., 2015). Further concepts included the idea of mutual respect (Anderson and Graham, 2016, Beynon, 2019), opportunities to work with peers (Baker, 2013, Duckett et. al., 2008), calm classrooms (Beynon, 2019), support during exam periods, (Beynon, 2019), and the use of positive feedback and reward systems (Baker, 2013, Fletcher et. al., 2015). Additional supportive strategies in schools included a physical environment that was well-maintained with effective resources and equipment to support learning activities (Baker, 2013, Duckett et. al., 2008). Children and young people valued opportunities to be involved in wider aspects of the school and take part in decision-making processes (Anderson and Graham, 2016), such as being a school representative, to support their sense of belonging within the school community. They also spoke highly of joining extra-curricular activities such as sports clubs (Beynon, 2019, Duckett et. al., 2008).

Difficult experiences which had the potential to negatively impact on their wellbeing, included being bored, irritated or frustrated at school, with the extremes of being fearful, through instances of bullying. Young people also reported perceived high levels of pressure from teachers to achieve academically, which highlights the need for a sensitive balance of having high expectations of children and young people without creating high levels of pressure that could have negative implications for their wellbeing. Some young people felt schools were highly regulated, with high levels of surveillance compared with prison settings (Duckett et. al., 2008), which could create feelings of disrespect and injustice, from the school rules and related discipline. Young people also perceived school uniforms as suppressing their individuality and self-expression.

Some children and young people welcomed opportunities to explore emotional wellbeing during lessons, through discussing current ideas and experiences, promoting a supportive school culture and appropriate coping skills (Kidger et. al., 2009). This may help to reduce the potential stigma that can be experienced by children and young people who go on to access more specialist mental health services (Watsford and Rickwood, 2015). Language around 'mental health' was often seen as negative, with a more medicalised view of being mentally ill, rather than a view of the wellbeing and mental health continuum that we all experience throughout our lives. While young people accessing more specialist support explained that 'it was good to speak to a person who saw me as a whole person rather than just a medical condition' (Gordon and Russo, 2009: 43).

Many of the studies exploring young people's views of school have taken place in several different countries, and have also used a range of methodologies including quantitative, mixed

methods and qualitative approaches. An interest in local research using qualitative methods to elicit the voice of young people appeared quite limited currently, despite the creative approaches being developed around the world.

### **1.10: What helps young people to feel good in their secondary school?**

Considering the review of the literature and my positionality as a researcher, a social constructionist lens and social model of wellbeing and mental health underpins this research. This study originated and evolved from increasing curiosity on how the discourses and current constructs of wellbeing and mental health were filtering down to children and young people. Much of the current research spans across different countries and different times (Appendix 1). Wellbeing and mental health awareness and agendas have continued to grow over recent years and I wondered how much of an impact this may be having on the current constructs generated by young people. Some studies have used mixed methods designs or a mix of young people with adults, less research appeared to focus purely on young people's voices. For these reasons, I felt this current research could complement and perhaps build on the existing research, providing an up to date and local picture of the views of a small group of young people in Northern England. The participating school was also in a coastal and rural location, perhaps adding a different context and environment to research involving inner-city urban schools.

As a TEP, I endeavour to work with and learn from the children and young people I work with and the systems they are immersed within. This research is based on an interpretivist approach, exploring young people's constructs, attempting to develop shared meanings and an understanding of the young people's perspectives (Thomas, 2013). I felt it was important to challenge our own assumptions by listening to and reflecting on the minority discourses of young people. I was particularly interested in a strengths-based and preventative approach of supporting young people's wellbeing, and aimed to enhance my knowledge and understanding of the support young people value. I was passionate about capturing an 'insider' view of the complex systems that young people are part of, including their mainstream secondary school environment and local communities. I hoped that the supportive factors that these young people identified could have the potential to support other young people's wellbeing, either through a graduated response to mental health or within whole school approaches. The research also links into the Local Authority's (LA) Children and Young People's Plan 2017-2020 and EP Service priorities of promoting good health and wellbeing for children and young people. The research aimed to explore the following research questions, through a qualitative study, from the perspective of the young people themselves.

### **1.11: Research questions**

When considering the research questions, the initial phrasing included exploring the young people's understanding and experience of wellbeing and mental health. However, reflections on using these constructs raised tensions of using pre-defined terms rather than supporting the young people to share and develop their own constructs. I hoped to create the most general terms possible, without unduly influencing their responses, in language that was easily accessible for the young people. I settled on feeling good or not so good, hoping to emphasise their own vocabulary. The emphasis was on what helped them to feel good or experience a good day in school, based on solution focussed approaches, aiming to elicit what happened when things worked well, whilst also acknowledging that young people may also reflect on what happened on days when they did not feel so good or experienced a day in school that was not as good.

The research questions were:

- What is young people's understanding and experience of feeling good and not so good?
- What do young people find supportive in secondary schools for their wellbeing?
- How can Educational Psychologists (EPs) support this and what are the implications for EP practice?

### **1.12: Summary**

Within this review of the literature the history of wellbeing and mental health has been discussed in relation to the impact this has had on current discourses. The national context has been explored; outlining key policies, agendas and guidance, which have shaped current provision. Following this, the importance of consulting with children and young people has been highlighted in relation to wellbeing and mental, including their rights to have their views heard and valued, and how this can inform service priorities and provision. Finally the aims of the current research have been outlined.

## **Chapter Two: The Methodology**

### **2.1: Introduction**

During this chapter, I will reflect on my positionality and values as a researcher and share how this has influenced the direction that the research has taken. I will discuss how the methodological approaches were chosen, including the alternative approaches that were considered. The rationale for eliciting the perspectives of young people and encouraging their participation in the research will then be shared. The use of a qualitative approach, focus groups, and semi-structured questioning to capture the views and experiences of the young people involved in the research, will be explored. Finally, I will reflect on the ethical thread running throughout the research process.

### **2.2: Ontological and epistemological position – a relativist approach and a social constructionist perspective**

Reflecting on our own position as a researcher is an important consideration during the research process. This position influences the decisions and preferences we are inclined to explore, the methodological approaches we consider, and the questions we are interested in studying. Being reflective involves looking back on the decisions we made, processes we followed, our interpretations and is likely to include the evaluation of such journeys. Complementing this, being reflexive in research consciously acknowledges our own values, constructions, influences and agendas, and how these may have impacted on and shaped the research.

Our ontology reflects our perception of reality and existence (Corcoran, 2017, Mack, 2010). During this research, particularly for the focus on wellbeing and mental health, I was drawn towards a relativist ontology. From a relativist stance 'different constructions of the world can be judged only in relation to each other and not by comparison with some ultimate standard or truth' (Burr, 2003:58), which made sense to me for such concepts. Thus appreciating that 'the world does not come ready-made in categories of events, and types of objects but that order is imposed on the world through our linguistic description of it' (Burr, 2003: 89). Relativism emphasises the use of frames of reference to understand concepts. These frames of reference are influenced by the particular period in time or history, our cultural background, understanding of conceptual frameworks, morals, values, language, and the context in which we live. The focus is on an individual and unique subjective experience based on our own experiential knowledge. As such 'conflicting positions have equal claims to truth, each

according to their own perspective or point of view' (Baghranian, and Carter, 2019:1). This perspective also recognises that 'situations are fluid and changing rather than fixed and static' (Cohen et. al., 2011:57), which seemed particularly relevant for constructs such as wellbeing and mental health.

In contrast, realism places its emphasis on one objective distinct reality, at the extremes of this ontological position, identifying facts, causes and effects 'independently of human engagement' (Corcoran, 2017:28). Within this perspective, assumptions are made that the social world can be studied using similar methods to natural science, using value-free causal links. Claims tend to be made of the scientific knowledge being accurate, objective, certain and valid (Mertens, 2010). I find the realist ontology difficult to comprehend in relation to complex human experiences. However, many models of wellbeing and mental health arise from a more realist view and through a within-person lens. This cultivates approaches based on the medical model, often being deficit-focussed, with pathological and reductionist language. Such perspectives often include scales of 'normal' or 'abnormal' with 'criteria' for meeting diagnosable conditions and the use of language such as illness, disorder, disease and treatment. As a Trainee EP, I feel more comfortable undertaking a holistic approach, seeking to understand the many discourses and taking into account the social and environmental factors that are usually influencing a person's or family's current situation. Therefore, through a social model of wellbeing and mental health, emphasis is placed on subjective experiences, the relational nature of human beings, and the acknowledgement of power within majority and minority discourses.

Following on from the relativist ontology, the epistemological approach underpinning the research is social constructionism. Epistemology is our perception of how we acquire knowledge and understanding. Through a social constructionist lens, 'meaning does not exist in its own right; it is constructed by human beings as they interact and engage in interpretation' (Robson, 2011:24). With foundations from Berger and Luckmann (1966), social constructionism acknowledges the changing nature of constructs which are embedded within our society, recognising that 'all ways of understanding are historically and culturally relative...and are dependent upon the particular social and economic arrangements prevailing in that culture at that time' (Burr, 2003:4). Within a social constructionist view, individuals construct their own knowledge and realities, based on their own perceptions in relation to their context, including families, communities, culture and the wider society that we are all influenced by (Terry, Hayfield, Clarke and Braun, 2017). Gergen (2001) explains the role of social constructionism as opening up a 'space for all voices, methods and practices (Gergen,

2001: 427), whilst acknowledging the importance of self-reflexivity on the types of discourses that we create.

Rather than perceiving wellbeing as a distinct truth that exists with distinct categories of feeling good or not so good, this research reflects on the origins of the construct of wellbeing, how it has changed over time, and how it appears to have multiple interpretations by a range of people and contexts. I felt it would be extremely valuable to hear and explore the young people's current constructs of feeling good and not so good, and the language that is meaningful to them. In addition, I hoped that this glimpse into their interpretation and understanding could also identify a range of ways that they felt they could be supported in a secondary school setting. I felt such research could help to develop a shared understanding, with this small group of young people, within this specific period of time and context, and provide a useful insight. This insight could also highlight the importance of creating opportunities to work with young people to help to shape their future provision.

### **2.3: Qualitative research**

The research utilised a qualitative approach and open questions to explore the rich and detailed descriptions provided by the young people; key themes from their experiences were identified and interpreted. I felt strongly during the research process that the focus was on qualitative approaches, 'not asking individuals to rank, score or measure against prefigured categories of what others decide is wellbeing' (Watson, Emery and Bayliss, 2012:119) but to explore the constructs of young people, based on their own individual experiences, circumstances and contexts. I reflected on a comment by one young person who explained 'once I was asked a complete questionnaire but I did not understand the questions so I just said "yes" and "no" where I thought I should' (Kay, Tisdall, Davis and Gallagher, 2012: 3). I felt it was important to use an approach that empowered young people to share their perceptions and highlight the experiences that they wished to emphasise and felt were important.

### **2.4: Encouraging young people's participation**

I felt capturing the young people's perspective and attempting to engage them in the research was paramount for reflecting on how secondary schools could support them. I felt it gave them a voice, empowered them, gave them some agency and I hoped that it could support them to shape their own school community (Davis, 2012). Through the eyes of social constructionism people 'are capable of critically analysing the discourses which frame their lives, and to claim or resist them according to the effects they wish to bring about' (Burr,

2003:86). I aimed to capture how young people reflected on the current discourses around wellbeing and mental health within their school environments. Through these values I wanted to invite young people to be 'active participants' (Fraser, Lewis, Ding, Kellet, and Robinson, 2004:100) within the research.

I hoped the young people could undergo a participatory role within some aspects of the research, promoting learning with, and from, the young people during the focus group (Fraser et. al., 2004). I aimed to work collaboratively with them during the pilot stage. Unfortunately, due to aspects beyond my control, I was unable to recruit any young people to participate in the pilot work. I also felt it was important to have their participation at the data analysis stage, and felt this could be used to check out the interpretation and analysis that was created through the research processes. While not fully participatory or as immersive as I aspired towards, I felt this created some opportunities for the young people who took part in this research to help to shape and interpret the themes that were identified.

Reflecting on my own values that influenced this research, I endeavoured to work collaboratively with, listen to, and empower children and young people to share their views and experiences, as promoted through the UNROC (United Nations General Assembly, 1989) and the SEND Reforms (DfE, 2015). I felt children and young people could be actively share their experiences, providing valuable insights of their own perspectives and the contexts they were immersed within. I was also reflexive of the numerous factors that may influence their perceptions, as reflected within the ontology and epistemology of this research. I acknowledged the potential power balance and tried to recreate a more even distribution through actively listening, trying to interpret and understand the young people's constructions and, where possible, check my interpretations with them. I was reflexive about my own constructs, reflected on the language I used, whilst attempting to minimise any assumptions I had of the young people's constructs. I was genuinely interested in how they perceived their school community, particularly their ideas on what worked well to support them, moving towards a more solution-focussed dialogue. I valued working with young people, attempted to recognise their competence and aimed to create new opportunities and ideas from their perspective (Fraser et. al., 2004). Throughout the research process, I aimed to consider the five questions outlined by Billington (2006) which I have always valued whilst working as a TEP. The questions help us to reflect by asking, 'How do we speak of children? How do we speak with children? How do we write about children? How do we listen to children? How do we listen to ourselves (when working with children)?' (Billington, 2006: 8), which I hope permeate this research.

## **2.5: Focus group dynamics**

From a social constructionist perspective, it seemed quite natural to explore the approach of a focus group. I hoped to capture the social interactions, processes and engagement within a group to explore constructs such as 'wellbeing' and 'mental health', from the viewpoint of the young people embedded within the secondary school environment, culture and ethos. Burr (2003) suggests that 'when people interact, it is rather like a dance in which they are constantly moving together, subtly responding to each other's rhythm and posture' (Burr, 2003:99) and I hoped that a focus group would create an environment to capture this interpersonal dance. Parker (2005) also suggests 'collective activity produces a different kind of consciousness' (Parker, 2005: 67), whereby individual's experiences are embedded within the social context and interactions with others.

Focus groups were deemed to be an insightful method to capture the dynamics within a group; to create a broader and collective voice from a small sample of young people in one secondary school. I thought that a small group context may be a more ethical, comfortable and supportive way of capturing some of the young people's thoughts and views. Kitzinger (1994) highlights several advantages of using focus groups within research. Focus groups can encourage discussion with and amongst the participants, recognising that 'group work ensures that priority is given to the respondents' hierarchy of importance, their language and concepts, their frameworks for understanding' (Kitzinger, 1994: 108). The benefits of the dynamics within a group can mean more confident members can potentially support more inhibited members of the group, to begin to join in with discussions, perhaps developing on initial comments made (Kitzinger, 1994). I felt discussions could follow different directions, with the participants agreeing or disagreeing with some of the aspects of secondary school that they felt were supportive. Focus group approaches can also help us to explore the dynamics, interaction, and norms within the group, discussing what information is shared, whilst also reflecting on what is not said or included. During the research process it was useful to note some of the similarities and consensus between the comments within the group, whilst acknowledging some of the individual differences between the members, which contributed to the larger story of the group. Overall, I felt a focus group would encourage the exploration of a potentially sensitive topic that the research was aiming to capture through a group situation, where a range of experiences could be shared and discussed.

However, potential limitations of a focus group approach could include young people undermining other young people's perceptions. Therefore it was important to give careful consideration to the influence of majority, or more dominant voices, and the impact this may have had to marginalise some of the quieter, or more passive, members of the group. As a

researcher, it was important to try to create a sensitive balance to ensure that all young people could be heard and to gather a range of experiences. I reflected on my role and skills as a facilitator to carefully and sensitively support the needs of the individuals, whilst being able to manage the potentially dominant voices within the group. I felt it was essential to create ground rules with the young people, including the importance of confidentiality within the group (examples shared in Appendix 8). I thought carefully about the instant nature of the conversation and how to safeguard young people from sharing too much personal information, further detailed in the procedures chapter. I experienced some initial worries over ensuring the information gathered would be useful and insightful, by following the young people's direction whilst also being able to reflect on the original research questions. I aimed to be transparent as a researcher. While facilitating the group, I emphasised my genuine interest in what the young people thought and what they were willing to share, whilst acknowledging as a researcher that I was an adult, and not a direct member of the group, and the potential power balance this could create as the 'researcher' and the 'researched'.

## **2.6: The nature of questions - semi-structured and open**

I felt some anxiety in creating questions that would enable young people to express their views and experiences of wellbeing and mental health in their school environment, without trying to influence or pre-empt the words and language they might use. I reflected on attempting to be sensitive with questions, and aimed to use open questions and phrases such as 'tell me...' I felt it was important to highlight that I was not looking for right or wrong 'answers', and I emphasised that I was simply interested in the young people's views and experiences. I reflected on the words 'wellbeing' and 'mental health' being used in the title of the research on the information sheets provided to both the young people and their parents and carers. I debated on the need for transparency within the research whilst wondering whether this influenced or filtered through to the young people. I valued focussing on what was working well in schools, aiming to understand how I could capture and extend this to support children and young people. The participating school initially voiced some concerns over the group voicing negative feedback about the school, so I highlighted that the focus of this research was on what was or could work well, whilst acknowledging young people may share both positive and negative experiences. I reflected on the potential bias that this could create for the young people's experiences, but also felt it was important to work within a more solution-focussed framework, to recognise and build on what was currently working well.

## **2.7: Alternative approaches considered**

I explored a range of different methodologies whilst designing this research. I developed a preference for qualitative research, with focus groups and a thematic analysis (TA) approach, as discussed above. However, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was considered as a way of capturing young people's lived experiences within their secondary school settings. IPA 'assumes a chain of connection between a person's talk and their thinking and emotional state' (Smith, Osbourn and Larkin, 2007: 54). Such analysis acknowledges that many people have difficulties expressing their thoughts and feelings, which may be especially apparent within research around a more sensitive topic, such as wellbeing and mental health. Therefore it is important for a researcher to interpret the young people's emotional states, alongside their conversation, and what they are willing to disclose during the research process. IPA recognises the individual nature of the experience and I felt this would be more complex within a focus group.

Epoche, sometimes referred to as bracketing (Smith, Osbourn and Larkin, 2007), is the process of attempting to create a distance between our assumptions and preconceived ideas. This includes bracketing our own biases and cultural views, in order to better understand and interpret the shared experiences of others. This can be challenging and acknowledging such feelings, through field notes, can help to set these to one side during the initial research process whilst talking with participants. Such concepts are often critiqued for how realistically we are able to bracket our own perceptions and assumptions in the moment and within the research. I felt as an adult, and through my profession as a TEP, it would be increasingly difficult to bracket my own assumptions, in attempts to reflect deeply on the young people's emotional states, during their discussions. I also felt that this would be extremely difficult within a group dynamic, where several young people would be interacting and the conversations may change and move quite quickly. Therefore, I felt a broader and, therefore, perhaps not such an in-depth approach, such as TA, could support a small range of perspectives to be explored, alongside the social context offered through a focus group. I felt a TA approach would provide some meaning for the participants as a small group which could also be shared with the secondary school and LA. I felt this would form a pragmatic and sense-making aspect of the research, allowing an insight into the perspectives and experiences of young people.

Discourse analysis was a further approach that I was interested in, and although I was interested in the language used by the participants, it was not the only focus that I hoped for the research (Parker, 2005). I was not as interested in a detailed analysis of language as I

was in the constructs and experiences of the young people, in relation to the context of their secondary school.

I was really interested in participatory research, however felt that the timescale and ethical processes would limit the time and resources available to conduct the research within this approach. Ethical processes meant that the approval of the University and LA was only granted towards the end of the summer term (Appendix 2). Identifying a school, exploring key contacts, discussing the research, gaining participants and consent, alongside the pressures of staff in a secondary school took several weeks to organise, meaning time available to gather and analyse the data felt quite restricted.

## **2.8: Ethical considerations**

An ethical thread runs throughout the research process, including being reflexive about my own values as a researcher and how this impacted on my decision making. I value working with children and young people, trying to listen and hear their voices, whilst being respectful, honest and transparent. Whilst working with children and young people, I endeavoured to share the reasons why I was speaking with them, processes that I was following, and the next steps for supporting them. I felt it was important to remain true to my values throughout the research process and I saw ethics as a 'vital part of the whole recipe' (Fraser et. al., 2004:102). The ethical principles of respect, honesty, fairness and sympathy, were particularly relevant and useful to guide and reflect on during this qualitative research (Holloway and Jefferson, 2000, Fraser et. al., 2004). The British Psychological Society (The BPS, 2010), Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC) (HCPC, 2016), University and LA ethical guidelines were adhered to throughout the research process.

Gaining access to a sample of young people felt like one of the biggest considerations and challenges of the research. To carry out the research, I had to invite a school to take part, ask school staff to help with the recruitment of participants, and make arrangements to facilitate the focus groups on their school site. I tried to be mindful of school staff's high workloads and pressure, whilst attempting to balance this with the timeframes of being able to organise and complete the research. This included eliciting the young people's views and collecting the data, analysing, and then member-checking the data. This was an incredibly anxiety-invoking period; trying to organise these aspects whilst endeavouring to be sensitive to the needs of the school and the participants.

Informed consent was considered throughout the research process. I was careful to ensure that I sought their parents' and the young people's consent, through opt-in methods.

Information sheets (Appendix 3, 4) and accessible consent forms (Appendix 5) were produced to inform potential research participants, and their parents and carers, about the aims and processes of the research. As the children participating within the research were under sixteen years of age, where a parent did not give permission for their child to participate in the research, but the child wished to, the child was unable to take part. Where a parent gave consent for their child to participate in the research, but the child did not wish to, the child did not take part. The right to withdraw at any stage was clearly stated within all information produced and reiterated verbally in a child-friendly manner on the day of the focus group. I carefully monitored the young people's wellbeing while speaking in the group. I made visual stop and pause cards (Appendix 6) that the young people could touch if they were not able to say this verbally during the focus groups. I believed it was important that the young people were able to comfortably to share their experiences and perceptions, opting for a more informal and fun approach. I valued transparency whilst trying not make assumptions about, or direct, their own constructs.

## **2.9: Summary**

Throughout this chapter I have reflected on my positionality as a researcher, the rationale and aims of the research, and methodological approaches considered. The benefits and limitations of using focus groups and semi-structured questions have been highlighted. The ethical thread running throughout the research process, including steps taken at different stages in the research to adhere to ethical principles to support and empower the young people involved, has been discussed. The next chapter will detail the procedural stages of carrying out the research.

## **Chapter Three: The Procedure**

### **3.1: Introduction**

Within this chapter, I will discuss the procedures used to carry out the research. This will include: the context for the research; the planned pilot work; the selection and recruitment of participants and the characteristics of this group; and the processes that were followed to facilitate the focus groups. I will outline each step of the data analysis which followed the Thematic Analysis (TA) approach (Braun and Clark, 2006, Braun and Clark, 2019, Castleberry and Nolen, 2018). In addition, I will reflect on the evaluative criteria used to review the quality of this research.

### **3.2: Context for this research**

The school where the research took place was in a rural location with a large catchment area of small towns and villages. A large proportion of pupils accessed transport, including buses or taxis, to get to and from school; some pupils could walk from their local area. The school had established systems for pastoral support for the young people, including inclusion, pastoral and safeguarding staff who took the lead for supporting children with a range of social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs. The school had received a 'good' Ofsted rating. I initially contacted the Head of Inclusion and Safeguarding and Welfare Manager of this secondary school to ask if they would be interested in taking part in the research. I sent initial information (Appendix 7) and then met with the Safeguarding and Welfare Manager to explain the aims of the research, sharing copies of the information sheets and consent forms (Appendix 3-5). Following this initial discussion, the research proposal was raised at a team meeting by the Safeguarding and Welfare Manager. The Head of Inclusion then agreed that the research could be carried out with pupils from this school. In discussion with the school staff, we negotiated which young people would be invited to take part in the research. I felt it was important to invite a range of young people, some of whom may have received some additional support in school and others who may not have received any additional support, to reflect a varied sample. We agreed that a mix of male and female participants would be beneficial to represent potentially differing viewpoints. Initially I was hoping to target Year Nine pupils, as young people who had experienced over two years being immersed in the setting, however through discussions with the school staff, this was not possible due to these pupils beginning to access their General Certificates of Secondary Education (GCSE) materials. We settled on Year Eight pupils who still had over twelve months experience within the setting and who would be able to come out of two lessons to participate in the focus groups,

without it having a detrimental effect on their learning, an important ethical consideration. After these processes had been followed, the school then agreed to take part in this research and supported the organisation and recruitment of participants.

### **3.3: Research participants**

The selection and recruitment of participants was facilitated by the Safeguarding and Welfare Manager. Young people were selected through a convenience sample (Mertens, 2010). The school supported the aim of attempting to gain a balanced sample of participants which was discussed during the initial meeting. The aim was to invite ten young people to take part in the research. This included five female and five male participants, who had experienced varying levels of support available within the school.

Due to the participants being under sixteen years of age, the Safeguarding and Welfare Manager initially spoke with parents or carers of the selected participants over the telephone to explain the research, using initial information discussed with the school (Appendix 7). Out of the ten parents and carers initially contacted by the school, seven agreed for their child to be invited to take part in the research project. Information sheets and consent forms (Appendix 3-5) were then sent, via the post, to the seven young people and their parents/carers to review and consider whether they would like to participate in the focus group. Clear instructions on how to return the forms, and contact details for any questions they had, were provided. As found in other focus group research, the recruitment of participants felt like one of the most challenging aspects (George, 2013, Krueger and Casey, 2015). It was an anxiety provoking period of time, awaiting responses and consent forms, and trying to ensure an appropriate group size to reflect a range of views.

Out of the seven participants, five returned their consent forms and wished to take part in the research. One participant no longer wished to take part and had contacted the school directly to decline the invitation, another participant never returned the consent form, a further participant was ill and absent from school on the day of the first focus group. Therefore, the remaining four young people took part in the focus group for this research. The sample of research participants included one male and three female participants. All participants attended the same mainstream secondary school and all were currently in Year Eight. One of the participants had received regular support in school; one had received some support around internet safety; one young person had received a small amount of pastoral support around friendships; and the remaining young person had not received any additional support in school. This research includes a small sample of young people and therefore reflects the views and experiences of this small group.

### **3.4: Pilot work**

I planned, prepared and aimed to complete a pilot study with two young people. I had hoped that this pilot work would include reviewing and reflecting on information provided prior to, and during, the focus group such as: appropriate questions; preparation ideas; resources ideas, including photos, pictures or objects. I aimed to consult with them on how to make young people feel at ease, including exploring potential ice breakers, how to build a rapport, and considerations of an appropriate place and time for the focus group to take place. I also wanted to check out the idea of keeping a short diary or making a collage prior to participation in the focus group, for reflection purposes and to aid the discussion. If this could have taken place, the data collected during the pilot work would have been used to undertake a trial of the stages of TA. Unfortunately due to school capacity, timescales, and availability of potential young people to take part, I was unable to complete the pilot work as planned. However, I reflected on research of a similar nature that had been carried out within the literature review, alongside my experience as a TEP, and used this to inform the procedures for this research.

### **3.5: Procedure – stages of facilitating a focus group with young people**

After much deliberation over whether it would be more appropriate to carry out individual interviews or a focus group, a focus group was selected to offer the perceived protection of the small group for this potentially sensitive topic. This would allow more confident members of the group to speak when they felt they wanted to contribute, whilst also offering potentially quieter members of the group the safety of their peers to voice their opinions.

Confidentiality aspects included all individual information remaining anonymous and this was explained to the participants, verbally and in writing, through the information sheets and consent forms (Appendix 3-5). It was also clearly outlined that the information gathered through the focus groups, including the identified themes and some direct quotations, would be shared with the participating school and LA.

When facilitating the focus group, I reflected on the processes and dynamics within the group. I endeavoured to develop a rapport with the group, providing them with space to explore their thoughts, views and ideas (Mertens, 2010). I aimed to gather a balanced view, whilst acknowledging that there tends to be a natural divide of more confident participants willing to share their views, and more reserved members of the group who may need more time or support to voice their experiences (Thomas, 2013). The role, as a researcher and facilitator, was to promote the discussion between the participants of the group, in order to attempt to elicit the young people's views.

Prior to the focus group, participants were asked to record their thoughts either in a diary, or collage, or take photos of what helped them to have a good day in school; allowing them some time to reflect on the factors that could support them. I was conscious that adults may influence these initial thoughts in discussions with the participants, however I felt that the benefits would outweigh the potential impact of adult influence. I also reflected that it is likely that young people will naturally have had conversations with adults that may have influenced and shaped their constructs. When meeting for the first time in the focus group, the four young people had chosen not to share or complete this optional stage prior to attending on the day.

Careful considerations were made to plan the different stages within the focus group. It was important to create a fun, informal and relaxed atmosphere to support the young people to feel confident to share their views and experiences. Considerations of seating, resources and questioning were reflected on throughout the research process. I provided a range of activities and resources to enable young people to relax, get to know each other and myself as a researcher, providing each young person an opportunity to talk during the early stages of the research. Seating was arranged around a table of supportive resources, young people were able to choose where to sit and swapped their seating position on the second focus group. I promoted an informal chat to begin with about their day so far and what lesson they were missing. Following this, I asked each young person to create their own name label which helped each young person to feel part of the group, I also created a name badge to model this process. I supplied fidget toys which all young people used during the discussions, I also provided post-it notes and pens, visual pictures, and snacks, to create a friendly and approachable atmosphere. I felt having something to do alongside talking helped to aid discussions. I created ice breaker activities to support participants to relax and share some simple experiences before the main questions were asked, this enabled each young person to have a further turn at talking.

I carefully designed questions with consideration of the use and complexity of language, I acknowledged the ages and potentially different levels of understanding that the participants may have. I gave the young people opportunities to ask their own questions and create their own ground rules, which included respecting everyone's views even when they may be different to our own. I emphasised the notion of there being no right or wrong answer, in a move away from traditional teacher-pupil relationships that they were most used to, in attempts to reduce any instances of a power imbalance.

I experienced some dilemmas and tensions when planning the research stages. The main concerns were that young people would feel worried or would be limited in sharing their ideas and experiences. I had not met with the young people prior to the focus group, therefore I

knew very little about them or how comfortable or confident they may feel taking part in the discussions. I was also a little worried that by allowing young people to prioritise their own ideas, and to some extent control the direction of the discussions, that the aim of the research and research questions would not be answered either fully or partially. I also felt apprehensive about the use of a Dictaphone to record the young people's discussions and whether this would impact on their willingness to share their ideas and experiences. However, none of the young people within this small group appeared concerned about the device. I wondered whether such technology was more commonplace to this generation of young people who access similar technology on a regular basis through their mobile phones, computers and school equipment such as tablets.

To introduce the focus group, I explained the research using the information sheets (Appendix 2) that they had already been sent; I then created ground rules with the young people (Appendix 8). I was explicit about only sharing information that the young people were comfortable with and not too personal in nature. I also raised awareness of confidentiality within the group and not sharing any personal information outside of the group. To explain this I used the toothpaste analogy (detailed in Appendix 13), that once we say something, or share information, we cannot then take it back, with the aim of providing a powerful visual method for the young people to consider prior to speaking within the group. An ice breaker activity was then used to build rapport within the group. Each participant was asked to choose an emotions card (examples provided in Appendix 13) and, if they felt comfortable, share how they felt to be part of the group and part of the research, in an attempt to relieve any initial anxieties. I modelled this activity first as the researcher, choosing one of the emotions cards and sharing my own feelings. Kitzinger (1994) highlighted the influence of group exercises to encourage participants to interact and engage with each other. Several pictures were placed in the room as visual cues to aid discussion; this included emotion faces, pictures of schools, children playing, lessons, trees and patterns, to try and depict a range of thoughts and feelings that the children may have been experiencing. I aimed to use pictures of a more abstract nature, in attempts not to lead the discussions in a particular direction. I also provided some post-it notes, paper and felt tip pens for the young people, or myself as the researcher, to record any key points that arose; attempting to capture some of the main discussion points, specific words used, and also to give the young people some ownership over the focus group.

I designed a focus group interview schedule (Appendix 9) to outline a basic structure, whilst adapting to the needs of the group. Semi-structured questions of an open nature (Appendix 10) were posed to the group, which provided the flexibility to follow the participants' discussion. Participants were encouraged to ask their own questions within the group and, to some extent,

steer the flow of the discussion following their own experiences and perceptions, whilst being mindful of attempting to explore the research questions. Reflecting on Krueger's categories of questioning for focus groups, I aimed to create a flow through the questions asked, which included opening, introductory, transitional, key, and ending questions (Breen, 2006, Krueger, 2015). A series of prompt extension questions (Appendix 10) were used to encourage the participants to expand on their answers (Parker, 2005). I carefully reflected on the language and constructs used with the young people, through the questioning and discussions, aiming to reduce my influence on their own language use. The focus group took place in a private room within the secondary school setting. The focus group discussion was audio recorded on a Dictaphone and transcribed. All information was stored on a secure laptop, within a secure drive, and destroyed once the research had been completed and passed by the University. All data gathered and stored complied with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 (HM Government, 2018).

After an initial exploration and analysis of the data, a second focus group was carried out (using resources from Appendix 17-21). I reflected that when transcribing the interviews into written form, it was likely that some of the meaning or intention was lost or misinterpreted. The aim of the second focus group, was to provide the young people with the opportunity to reflect on the first group session and further discuss the initial draft themes created, whilst posing the question; "This is what I thought I was hearing; what do you think?" Taking the initial analysis back to the young people I hoped to minimise some aspects of misinterpretation, and allow for clarification, through a member check process. Appendix 12 details the main stages, including reflections, of the research.

### **3.6: Thematic Analysis**

The step by step process of Thematic Analysis (TA) (Braun and Clarke, 2006, Braun and Clarke, 2019) was used to analyse the data gathered during the focus groups. Although six phases were used to analyse the data collected, this was a flexible and not a strictly linear process, where it was 'iterative and recursive' (Terry, et. al., 2017:11), moving back and forth between the stages in attempts to reflect on the constructs. An inductive approach, originating from the data collected, was used during the development of the codes and themes during the TA process, whilst acknowledging the review of the literature. During the TA process, underpinned by the relativist and social constructionist lens, the emphasis was on trying to capture and tell the young people's story rather than uncovering any underlying truth. The research aimed to capture the subjective experiences of the young people, whilst being reflexive on the role of the researcher within this process. Braun and Clarke (2019) describe the process of 'journeying, not arriving' (Braun and Clarke, 2019: 592) which seemed pertinent

to this research. A reflexive TA approach was used, attempting to reflect on each stage of the analysis whilst recognising my influence as a researcher, through my positioning, values, choice of methods and decisions and interpretations throughout the analysis process.

The six phase model (Appendix 11) consists of:

- Familiarisation with the data
- Generating codes
- Constructing themes
- Reviewing potential themes
- Defining and naming themes
- Producing the report

The first focus group took approximately three days to transcribe (Appendix 14). The second focus group, took approximately four days to transcribe (Appendix 22). Familiarisation, immersion and repeated engagement with the data is the first step within TA, allowing for the original transcript to be read and re-read to begin to understand the discussions that took place within the focus group. This included reflecting, asking questions, being curious and keeping notes and ideas relating to the data set as a whole. It was important to note the dynamics within the focus group, including any interruptions, dominant discourses and minority voices (Parker, 2005).

During the second phase of the TA process meaningful labels, known as codes, were assigned to specific elements of the data, which identified and included all aspects of interest (Appendix 15, 23). Codes were used to reflect the different aspects of speech and interactions between the participants (Kitzinger, 1994). This stage helped to organise the data into early patterns. Semantic codes attempted to capture the explicit meaning in the data, whereas latent codes attempted to capture and interpret the meaning, or ideas underpinning, the explicit words. Both levels of analysis were used throughout this stage to generate codes that created meaning and related to the research questions (Appendix 15, 16 detail this process).

During phase three, an 'active process of pattern formation and identification' (Terry, et. al., 2008:16) took place. The codes were combined and clustered together to create potential possibilities of initial theme ideas (Appendix 16, 24). Initial themes were constructed that depicted the young people's discussions, and which told a coherent story, about the data which had been gathered. These themes linked to the original research questions being explored. Thematic maps (Appendix 17, 25), were created to show the themes and subthemes through a useful visual medium (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Reviewing, refining and naming the final themes took place during phase four and five of TA. Themes were

clarified, rejected, and subthemes were created, in attempts to best reflect the interpretation of the data (Appendix 12 details some of the reflections during this process). During these stages the themes were compared to the original data and coding process, alongside the research questions. Naming themes reflected the content and nature of each area. It was important to reflect on the 'extensiveness, intensity and specificity' (Breen, 2006) of the young people's comments and consider the inclusion of direct quotes which best supported and justified why each set of themes was created (Appendix 18, 26).

This research used an empathetic-descriptive level, in an attempt to provide a rich description and empower young people to share their perspectives and experiences of wellbeing and mental health. A deeper critical-hermeneutic interpretative level, offering a 'deeper understanding of the participant's experience' (Willig et. al., 2008: 8), was carefully considered; however it was felt that it would be incredibly difficult to separate the researcher's knowledge and understanding as an adult and TEP, from the young person's language and experiences. I aimed follow a reflexive TA approach (Braun and Clarke, 2019), which involved prolonged immersion in the data, reflecting on decisions made (Parker, 2005) and being aware of the impact of my own knowledge, understanding and values in relation to wellbeing and mental health (Terry, et. al. 2017).

### **3.7: Exploring the quality and trustworthiness of qualitative research**

When reviewing research of a qualitative nature, several criteria and guidelines have been developed (Anderson, 2017, Braun and Clarke, 2019, Harré, 2004, Lincoln and Guba, 1985, Yardley, 2000, Yardley, 2017). However, due to the nature of qualitative research it can be difficult to identify a fixed framework that would fit all varieties of studies. Therefore a flexible and considered approach is usually undertaken, to best apply the guidelines that fit the individual research study. I will consider some of the frameworks below and discuss the aspects which appear to resonate within this research. A common framework that is often used within qualitative research is by Lincoln and Guba (1985). They highlight the role of credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability and authenticity to explore the quality of the research. Anderson (2017) outlines six main criteria to be considered: reflexivity; coherence through the methodology chosen; transparency of the sample selection and data collection processes; discussion of member checking approaches; reflections on ethical considerations; and exploration of transferability. Similarly, Yardley (2017) outlines four main dimensions for evaluating research of a qualitative nature, including 'sensitivity to context, commitment and rigor, transparency and coherence, and impact and importance' (Yardley, 2017: 295). Braun and Clarke (2006) also created a fifteen step checklist for assessing the quality of TA which was used during the process of data analysis. This includes: accuracy

during the transcribing process; a comprehensive and thorough coding process; the identification of coherent themes, and the interpretation of data analysis which tells a story, using illustrative quotations and extracts from the data. Many of these processes are demonstrated and outlined within the appendices.

From these frameworks, the key aspects which I felt were particularly pertinent to this research included the importance of reflexivity, outlining my positionality as a researcher and how this may have impacted my interpretations at different stages of the research. Sensitivity to context, which included knowledge of the literature and consideration of the context such as, when and where the research took place and who was involved. Commitment and rigor through being immersed within the data and following the processes of TA. I aimed to be transparent and coherent about the processes, including: the procedures, data analysis and links to the existing literature. I aimed for an ethical thread, enhanced by my reflections and reflexivity behind the sensitive design of the research. Opportunities for member checking were enhanced through the creation of a second focus group to review the initial interpretations. Finally, the importance of the purpose of the research, the impact it could have and the transferability. Reflections on these key areas, are included in Chapter Six.

### **3.8: Summary**

This chapter offers an overview of the procedures carried out during this research. The context of the research and selection and characteristics of participants have been shared. Processes and considerations made to successfully facilitate the focus groups are discussed. The six main stages of Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) are highlighted. Finally approaches to evaluate research of a qualitative nature are outlined.

## **Chapter Four: Data Analysis and Results**

### **4.1: Introduction**

This chapter outlines the analysis of the data collection. To frame this chapter, it is useful to reflect on the original research questions. The first question was 'What is young peoples' understanding and experience of feeling good and not so good?' This was fuelled by a curiosity of how language and constructs about wellbeing and mental health were filtering down to young people. The aim was to explore the type of words and phrases young people used to talk about feeling good or not so good, without making assumptions or providing them with pre-defined constructs from the existing literature, media or political agendas.

The second research question was 'What do young people find supportive in secondary schools for their wellbeing?' This was explored through open-ended questions and a discussion about what helped the young people to feel good in school or experience a good day in school. Main themes and subthemes were identified through the process of Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006 Braun and Clarke, 2019). Each theme and related subtheme will be discussed, including reflections on, and interpretations of, the young people's constructs within each area, including direct quotations of their words and phrases, to illustrate their views.

This chapter answers these questions in the reverse order. To begin with, the themes that were created from the young people's discussions of what supported them in school, will be discussed. Then from these discussions the types of words, phrases and language the young people used to explore their own constructs around feeling good, or not so good, will be explored. To reflect on the young people's words, phrases and constructs, two Word Art visual pictures were created (Appendix 27, 28), detailing the language that was extracted from their conversations.

### **4.2: Identified themes - capturing the young people's voice**

When setting out the aims and structure of this chapter, my main emphasis was to capture the young people's voice and how I could represent what I felt they wanted to share during this research. The identified themes relate to constructs that the young people appeared to form through their discussions with each other, related to their own experiences, and the situations and contexts that they had been immersed within. After the first focus group, the initial draft themes were taken back to the young people to reflect on, the discussion was framed by

asking “This is what I thought I was hearing; what do you think?” I found this stage of the research fascinating, especially how they interpreted, amended and built upon their initial comments and discussions. They appeared to particularly value hearing their own words read back to them. I felt that they valued speaking with an impartial visitor to their school who they could share their views in a more open arena without my prior knowledge of school staff, systems and with an almost naïve view of their current context. From this second focus group, the young people’s additional ideas and comments were added to the initial draft themes. Themes were amended and re-organised to reshape the story. Similar to a lot of qualitative research, this was no easy task and, as discussed within the methodology chapter, it was a flexible and iterative process which involved moving back and forth between the different stages of the TA. This included reading and re-reading the transcripts, re-visiting the coding, revising the draft themes, and several hours of reflection, to check that the interpretation appeared to reveal what the young people were trying to share. Throughout each stage, amendments were made as my thoughts changed in relation to the original transcripts, and as I reflected on the young people’s discussions. The following analysis shares the themes which I felt were prominent and pertinent. It was also important to try and ensure that the minority voices were also captured. Within each of the themes there are some views which may belong to one or two of the young people, which felt like an important experience to highlight.

After much deliberation, eight themes were identified, with twenty three subthemes, outlined in Table 1 below. The following themes attempt to explore the young people’s views and experiences of what helps to make them feel good and experience a good day in school.

<b>Table 1 – Themes and Subthemes Identified</b>	
<b>Themes</b>	<b>Subthemes</b>
<b>1. Peer relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendships</li> <li>• Getting on and falling out</li> <li>• Bullying</li> </ul>
<b>2. Family support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents/carers</li> <li>• Wider family</li> <li>• Online interactions</li> </ul>
<b>3. Adults in school</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support in lessons</li> <li>• Teacher relationships</li> <li>• Emotional support – Pastoral and Student Support</li> </ul>
<b>4. Animals and pets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bond with pets</li> <li>• Responsibility for caring for animals</li> </ul>
<b>5. Sense of achievement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being good at something</li> <li>• Trying something new</li> </ul>
<b>6. Keeping the balance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interests and free time</li> <li>• Self-awareness and empathy</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coping with feelings</li> </ul>
7. <b>School experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enjoyment</li> <li>• Making choices</li> <li>• Respecting rules</li> <li>• Getting rewards and stamps</li> </ul>
8. <b>Whole school environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School day</li> <li>• Uniform</li> <li>• School funding and resources</li> </ul>

Each theme is discussed below with direct quotations from the young people and reflections on their constructs. Thematic maps (Appendix 25, 26) were created to visually explore each theme and subtheme; related direct quotations from the transcript were included as examples.

### 4.3: What do young people find supportive in secondary schools for their wellbeing?

**Key** – Focus Group One (FG1), Focus Group Two (FG2), line number (Line) as detailed in the transcripts included in the appendices.

#### 4.4.1: THEME ONE – PEER RELATIONSHIPS



**Figure 2: Peer Relationships Thematic Map**

Relationships with similar-aged peers was highlighted as extremely important by the young people. They valued having close friendships with other young people, who they could spend time with, confide in and receive support from. They were also proud to share how they supported other young people in their friendships. The young people identified times of difficulties within their friendships but appeared to view this as the normal ups and downs of relationships. However some young people also identified experiencing incidents of bullying, a construct which they seemed to view as separate as they felt it was outside, and more extreme than, the normal variations in relationships with others. Through interpretation of their conversations, three subthemes were identified: friendships, getting on and falling out and bullying.

#### **4.4.1i – Friendships**

Young people spoke of the importance of having a best friend, or close friends, who they were able to trust and confide in, they shared “I turn to my closer friends... I feel like I can tell them anything” (FG1, Line 99). Their constructs of friendships appeared to include a long term connection with a person who had similar interests, one young person explained “So me and (name), we’re into, like, roughly the same stuff” (FG2, Line 502). They valued their friendships and appeared to view friendships as essential for feeling good and experiencing a happy life. One young person stated “I think friends mean a lot; I think you can’t go through life without friends....You can but you’d have a really bad life....You’d be a bit sad” (FG2, Line 48). Another person, in the second focus group adding “I think having moral support is really good, being able to, like, turn to people” (FG2, Line 9).

#### **4.4.1ii – Getting on and falling out**

The young people appeared to recognise and identify with the concept of healthy relationships and friendships. Young people discussed being able to solve some of their differences within their friendships, and being able to ask for help from adults at home, or at school, if they felt they needed additional support. One young person shared their experience “We were really good friends, me and (name) are really close, just like me and (name), and me and her had fallen out over something, like, really silly, it was just like really silly. (Name) helped by sorting it out, like taking her to, like, resolve it, so she took her to student support and then we got it sorted out” (FG2, Line 26). I reflected on how important it seemed to be for young people to be able to maintain their friendships and resolve any difficulties they may be experiencing. One young person explained their perspective; “So say me and (name) fell out and then, like, we never sorted it out, and tomorrow I wouldn’t want to come to school because I’d be upset” (FG1, Line 234). Another young person shared “I’ve got a friend who’d fallen out with a friend and one of my best friends was stuck in the middle of it; she was, like, completely stuck. I was, like, just ignore it for a bit” (FG2, Line 30), explaining her advice to a friend. Young people also spoke of feeling uncomfortable with friends that were a bit ‘clingy’ or overbearing; they appeared to recognise the need for space and a range of peers within their friendship circles. One young person explained “She used to be, like, ‘oh what’s wrong? What’s wrong? What’s wrong?’ like all the time and it got really annoying, and that’s one of the reasons why we’re not friends anymore” (FG2, Line 152). This appeared to relate to the importance of having a healthy balance within friendships, recognising the needs of others and being able to offer support to friends, whilst also being able to have different interests, a wider group of friends and having opportunities to have distance from friends when needed.

#### 4.4.1iii – Bullying

It seemed important to distinguish between everyday falling out between friends and what the young people termed as 'bullying'. The young people clearly spoke of bullying as a distinct construct. While some young people explained that they had directly experienced instances of bullying, others shared that they had not been bullied but were aware of such instances, through their friendships with other young people. It appeared important to one young person in particular, who felt that they had experienced bullying, that the absence of the perceived bully, they noted "When my bully is not here" (FG1, Line 11), was an important factor of having a good day in school. One young person expressed their personal experiences of bullying, sharing "There's this one girl who I literally can't stand, we don't get on at all, ever since this one accident [incident], and erm, she started being really mean to me, and started being real, like, really personal; then other people joined in, so it was like a group, but then it sort of worked out for a little bit because our parents got involved, but then it just goes back again, but I think having your friends around is a lot, lot better" (FG2, Line 37). Again this seemed to demonstrate the importance of adult support for some young people, when relationships became more inappropriate and were perceived as victimising.

Despite these difficult instances, some young people appeared to have developed empathy in their relationships, including with potential bullies. One young person reflected compassionately that other young people were likely to have reasons for their own behaviour. They explained "My mum and dad say to me, that the only reason bullies bully you is because they're going through pain at home, so I just used to cut my bullies a bit of slack sometimes. Like I just be like, whatever, because you don't know what they are going through at home" (FG2, Line 35). This seemed to reflect a mature attitude to difficult experiences, with parental guidance being very supportive to discuss the possibilities of other young people, who may have experienced challenges within their own lives.

Young people were had also developed the construct of online bullying sharing that "You could also get, like, bullied through your phone" (FG2, Line 295). During this discussion they spoke of the protection and guidance of their parents and carers, sharing the age at which they were allowed to get their own mobile phone: one young person explained that "My mum and dad said that I couldn't have a phone until I was twelve" (FG2, Line 307). They also discussed their preference for social media platforms and apps that they were allowed to access. One young person stated "I've got TikTok etc. but I'm not allowed Instagram but there's no point in me having it anyway" (FG2, Line 322).

#### 4.4.2: THEME TWO – FAMILY SUPPORT



**Figure 3: Family Support Thematic Map**

All young people from this small group spoke of their parents and carers, wider family, and online interactions, which supported them to feel good in school. These aspects created the subthemes within this theme. One young person explained “Sometimes you can turn to your people at home as well” (FG1, Line 113) which I felt gave a glimpse into the wider support available for some young people from their family members and home context. I felt that they valued the support that was available to them and recognised how this helped them to cope with a range of situations that they were managing as they were growing older, both inside and outside of school.

##### **4.4.2i – Parents and carers**

Young people seemed to be encouraged by the support and positive affirmations from their parents and carers. One young person shared “On the school days my mum has to get me up” (FG1, Line 201) and another exclaimed “My mum was really proud of me” (FG1, Line 307). With one young person it felt as if you could almost hear their parents’ advice coming through their experiences and views: they reflected on their hormones having an impact on their behaviour, and being taught skills of empathy and reflection towards other young people’s feelings and experiences. The young person seemed confident in their own abilities to cope with difficult situations, such as issues within friendships, and seemed to know that support and help from adults was there if they needed it. This young person spoke a lot about the support from her father and the positive and encouraging relationship they seemed to have, stating “My dad does, he gives me support if I’m having a bad day” (FG2, Line 116).

#### 4.4.2ii – Wider family

Some young people spoke highly of their relationships with other members of their family: one young person told the group “I like texting my sister... I think, like, texting her and telling her my feelings and stuff like that, and it kind of helps me and supports me” (FG1, Line 152). Another young person spoke of a recent holiday to visit their wider family, who lived abroad, and shared “My aunty ... I went to stay with her for a few days and that, like, made me feel better” (FG1, Line 153), adding that she regularly spoke with her older cousins on the phone and through online apps, they explained “She’s just always there and we do yoga buddies, we do yoga together” (FG2, Line 113). The connection and availability of family members seemed to be valued by young people and they felt it helped to support them to feel good.

#### 4.4.2iii – Online interactions

Online interactions were also identified as important to these young people. One young person said “It’s, like, really nice having your phone at school because at lunch, say if something happens, because when I found out I got into Set Three Maths, I was really excited, because I was doing really bad in my Maths, erm, so I, like, instantly text my mum, because she got work, but she can text in-between her clients because of her job, she replies quite fast and it’s like easy to communicate with other people” (FG1, Line 168). Another young person added “That’s probably the only reason I have a phone, is so that if anything goes wrong, or if I’m upset, I can just text my mum or dad and tell them what’s gone on” (FG1, Line 170). Within the second focus group, a young person was excited to reveal “I love texting people. It’s awesome” (FG2, Line 352). The availability and instant nature of being able to get in touch with people at home seemed important to all young people within this small group. They seemed reassured that they could reach out to a supportive adult if they needed to, share their positive or negative news, and stay in communication with people at home for any changes to their day.

#### 4.4.3: THEME THREE – ADULTS IN SCHOOL

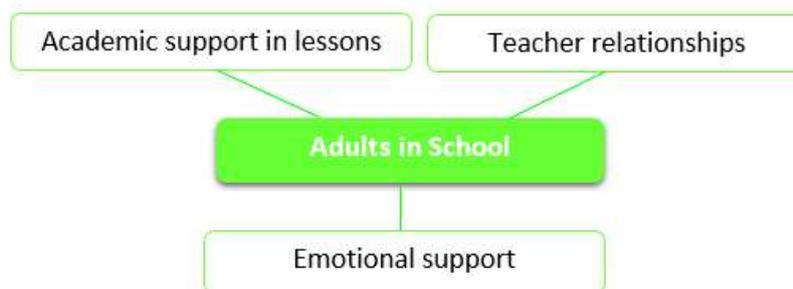


Figure 4: Adults in School Thematic Map

Young people spoke of the support they received from adults in school; three main areas were identified through their discussions. Firstly, the support that they received in lessons for their learning and to support their academic progress; secondly, the relationship they had developed with some of their teachers; and thirdly, being able to access emotional support in school, if they felt they needed it. One young person noted “I think teachers influence, like, what I enjoy and stuff” (FG2, Line 185). They went on to expand on how the approach of the teacher, and the content of the lesson, could influence the choices they would make when they came to choosing their options for their GCSEs. This young person also highlighted how they checked their timetable the night before to check when their preferred lessons and teachers would be.

#### **4.4.3i – Support in lessons**

Young people valued a supportive approach, where teachers spent time explaining concepts and new ideas to them, reduced tasks down into manageable and meaningful steps, and managed the pace of the lesson appropriately. The young people shared examples of when teachers did this well: one stated “Our teachers in [Physical Education] P.E., they can be quite supportive sometimes...” (FG1, Line 44), “They motivate us...they say keep doing this, come on! They push us to our limits” (FG1, Line 46), with another young person commenting on a different teacher “He’ll always try and help you learn how to do it” (FG1, Line 76).

In contrast, another young person commented on some lessons they felt were not as supportive; they explained that “Basically, he gives us the questions, then he’s, like, do it, then he gives us, like, three minutes to do, like, six questions, then he just writes all the answers, he doesn’t explain it” (FG2, Line 82). Another young person added “He doesn’t give us chance to work them out, like, we’re not learning anything” (FG2, Line 82). The young people appeared able to understand and reflect on what helped them with their learning in a range of lessons and valued the teacher’s approach to scaffold and model the next steps in tasks. The young people seemed knowledgeable about their strengths and weaknesses in learning and what they needed help with.

#### **4.4.3ii – Teacher relationships**

The importance of the approach and style of the teacher seemed equally, if not more, important than the lesson subject or content. Young people commented that they preferred teachers who were fun, had a good sense of humour and who were flexible in their approach and understanding of their needs. Young people explained that it was important that the school staff had “Like, good personalities, like, you don’t just want them to be, like, just get on

with your work” (FG2, Line 70) and how it was important to them that they had “A good relationship with a teacher. You don’t want them to be too strict or something” (FG2, Line 71), adding “I think it’s some of the jokes.... he’s just really funny” (FG2, Line 68).

#### 4.4.3iii – Emotional support

The young people knew where to go for emotional support in school if they felt they needed someone to talk with. The young people appeared to have positive views of the Pastoral and Student Support systems within the school, and explained how they were able to go themselves, or help friends, to access this additional support. From this small group of young people, there appeared to be minimal stigma, if any, about accessing support from the familiar staff within these systems. One young person explained “Student Support support us quite a lot, and Pastoral. Say if you go through, like, problems, say at home, or friendship problems, or feel like, I don’t know, if your pet’s died or if you feel sad. It’s just somewhere to go that will make sure you’re alright and so you can get back on your feet” (FG1, Line 87), further comments included “...Or coming to, like, Pastoral or Student Support because you know they’ll help you through everything and anything” (FG1, Line 97). Young people appeared to be caring and supportive towards their friends if they needed additional support; one young person shared “I’ve got a friend called (name), I don’t know what’s going on or anything, but she sometimes comes to Student Support and she always comes back happy” (FG1, Line 319). Such comments seemed to demonstrate that such support systems were established, perceived positively, easy to access, and supportive for a range of young people.

#### 4.4.4: THEME FOUR – ANIMALS AND PETS



Figure 5: Animals and Pets Thematic Map

When taking the draft themes back to the young people, animals often dominated the discussion for the focus group and they felt they wanted to share this as a distinct theme. Two key aspects, created as subthemes, seemed to relate to this theme: the bond with their pets and the responsibility for caring for these animals.

#### 4.4.4i – Bond with pets

The importance of animals was emphasised during several discussions amongst the young people, including the bond with their pets at home. One young person shared with the group “It might sound weird but I go to, like, my animals and stuff, so like, my dog or my ferrets” (FG1, Line 113). Another young person added in the second focus group “This might sound like a really stupid, like, thing but when I’m, like, either down or, like, upset or angry, I always, like, go and see my horse or ride my horse, because I know my horse can’t talk back, and like, it can’t give me attitude” (FG2, Line 124). Some young people also spoke of being able to release their feelings and reduce any frustrations they were facing whilst spending time with animals; one young person explained “We’ve just got a puppy at my house, so when I’m with him, I always, like, I don’t know, but you just calm down. It’s only a baby and he’s just full of joy, so you can’t help but not be happy with him” (FG1, Line 120).

#### 4.4.4ii - Responsibility for caring for animals

The young people’s caring role with animals also seemed to play a prevalent role during the discussions; one young person shared “I go to hedgehog rescue every single Sunday” (FG2, Line 227) and another told the group “I enjoy rescuing cats because we rescued them twice from my yard” (FG2, Line 242). Being able to get outside with the animals was also emphasised such as “Riding my horse...it gets me out” (FG1, Line 129, 131) and “I like walking my dogs” (FG1, Line 135). They appeared to get great satisfaction from being able to look after the range of animals that they encountered and I wondered if this linked to giving something back and using their caring skills to support something else.

#### 4.4.5: THEME FIVE – A SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT



Figure 6: A Sense of Achievement Thematic Map

The young people seemed to refer to two different aspects within this theme. Firstly they shared that they felt that it was important to “do something you’re really good at” (FG1, Line 38) and, secondly, some of the young people talked about their sense of achievement when they tried something new, especially when they were then able to master a new skill or activity.

#### **4.4.5i - Being good at something**

Young people discussed their achievements both inside and outside of school, including academic aspects such as test results, sporting activities in P.E. or specific subjects; one young person excitedly shared “I was really proud of myself, although I am good at science, erm, still one of the highest marks, only dropped one or two, so I got like second or third highest out of the entire year” (FG1, Line 290). Young people discussed topics or lessons that they felt they had existing knowledge and understanding about and how it made them feel good in school when the lessons involved “Something you know a lot about” (FG1, Line 40), perhaps giving them the chance to confidently demonstrate their knowledge and understanding to themselves and others.

#### **4.4.5ii - Trying something new**

The second subtheme related to the young people feeling a sense of achievement when they tried something new; one young person commented “I’m proud of myself when I’ve tried to do something for a new time” (FG1, Line 302), then expanded on their experiences by sharing “I can’t do it the first time, but then my dad will show me, and then I feel better about myself, because now I don’t need my dad’s help” (FG1, Line 304). They appeared to relate to their experiences of mastering new skills, trying out new activities and learning from the experience of others. The young people spoke of constructs, such as feeling proud of themselves, which may link to their intrinsic motivation, to be pleased and satisfied by their own abilities. However, for some young people trying something new appeared to feel more daunting and challenging; one young person stated “It’s really hard to try something new” (FG2, Line 170), demonstrating the individual strengths, needs and preferences of each young person.

#### 4.4.6: THEME SIX – KEEPING THE BALANCE



**Figure 7: Keeping the Balance Thematic Map**

The name for this theme took some time to decide on; it was a theme that appeared to encapsulate things that were important to, and for, the young people. This included the subthemes: interests and free time, self-awareness and empathy, and coping with feelings. The name changed from managing everyday life, emotional literacy, keeping the balance, wellbeing, creating equilibrium, and beyond education. I finally settled on ‘keeping the balance’, which seemed to give some meaning to this theme.

##### **4.4.6i - Interests and free time**

Young people appeared to benefit from being able to lose themselves in activities that they enjoyed or found satisfying, which I interpreted as those activities which developed flow or enabled them to relax. The activities discussed ranged from chores, looking after animals, listening to music, or watching different TV programmes with their families. Young people told the group “I like playing rugby, or playing my Xbox, I quite like playing shooting games” (FG1, Line 133). Another young person commented “All the things in my spare time, [are] with animals and in my garden, so basically my brothers really into, like, gaming and stuff like that, but I’m really into animals” (FG2, Line 219), they then shared the chores they did at home and added “I like doing them though, it calms me down, I love doing chores” (FG1, Line 199). I reflected on young people being able to switch their thoughts from school and their education to enjoying other aspects of their life; a skill that can help to create a healthy work-life balance.

##### **4.4.6ii - Self-awareness and empathy**

Young people appeared to be developing their self-awareness; at twelve years old they were beginning to recognise their own, and other people’s, emotions and different factors that may impact on how they feel at a given time. Individual reflections included “I have, like, a completely different voice, so when I’m really happy, I have a high voice, then I’m really quiet when I’m annoyed” (FG2, Line 257). Another young person disclosed “I think I have some,

like, anger issues a little bit, because when I'm angry I find it really hard to calm down" (FG2, Line 252). Their skills in recognising other people's emotions and experiences were also developing. One young person highlighted "I just used to cut my bullies a bit of slack sometimes, like, I just to be, like, whatever! Because you don't know what they are going through at home" (FG2, Line 35). The young people appeared to hint towards their resilience and the normality of life's ups and downs, as they explained "Obviously loads of people are going to have bad days at some point" (FG1, Line 320). Some young people were also able to share some of the self-regulation, calming and coping strategies which informed the next subtheme.

#### 4.4.6iii - Coping with feelings

Young people discussed different strategies for coping if they had experienced a difficult situation or a bad day in school. Other people, such as: siblings, parents and carers, their hobbies, and participating in enjoyable activities both at home and at school, featured within their constructs of coping. Some strategies linked to releasing their feelings externally, such as "Sometimes I find it easy, if you, erm, get like a piece of paper, write down what's happened and then tear it up and put it on the fire and watch it go up in flames" (FG1, Line 146) and "I like doing kickboxing. At home we have this dummy and I like taking my anger out on my dummy" (FG1, Line 141). Being able to switch focus, such as "The fact that I can literally, just like, walk down to my yard and just forget about everything" (FG2, Line 18), appeared to be a further strategy. Young people also appeared to be supported through adults modelling their own feelings and frustrations and the way they positively cope with them; one young person shared "...If I'm having a bad day I just go and sit in the car with him (dad) and we just scream out music" (FG2, Line 119), linking into the role that adults play in supporting the development of coping skills.

#### 4.4.7: THEME SEVEN – SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

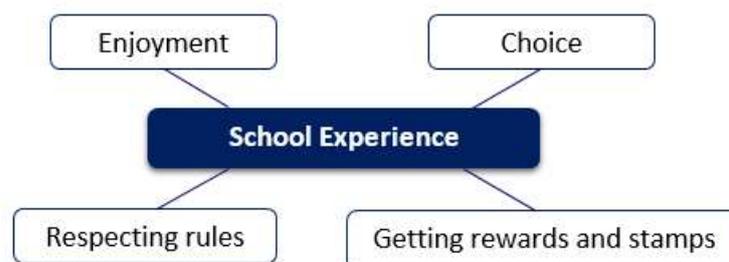


Figure 8: School Experience Thematic Map

This theme encapsulates the young people's day-to-day experiences within their time in school including the lessons that they engage in. Within this theme, four subthemes were identified: enjoyment, choice, respecting rules within the school, and receiving rewards and stamps.

#### **4.4.7i – Enjoyment**

The construct of enjoyment was identified through comments such as “I just retain information about science because I like it” (FG1, Line 294), and another young person added “When you have good lessons...” (FG1, Line 32). “So like, say, P.E., Drama” (FG1, Line 34) and “I like it in P.E. when we do Just Dance” (FG1, Line 17). Another young person agreed and stated “Oh yeah, that’s awesome!” (FG1, Line 18). Young people appeared to have clear preferences for their favourite types of lessons and felt that enjoyment of certain subjects helped them engage in their learning, and also helped them to feel good in school.

#### **4.4.7ii - Making choices**

The young people included some elements of making choices within the first focus group, however there were just a few brief comments. Therefore choices was one theme I really wanted to clarify in the second focus group. They felt it was important to be able to make some choices throughout their school day, and particularly liked to have some choice within their lessons. Young people shared “I like it when you get to choose who you work with” (FG2, Line 499). Another young person added “Yeah, choosing where you sit is quite good because, like, you can either say ‘Right I’d like to relax a bit this lesson but I’ll get on as well’, but so you can sit with your friends” (FG2, Line 509). Many secondary schools have seating plans and I reflected on the careful considerations that may need to be made, perhaps giving some element of choice throughout the school day. Young people also appreciated a choice of what to have for their lunch, through options such as bringing their own food in a packed lunch, or being able to choose from a range of options at school. Young people particularly referred to enjoying certain types of food available during school break times such as “The pizza’s so nice, [and] the paninis and wraps...if I haven’t had any breakfast then I’ll have a breakfast wrap” (FG2, Line 521). I felt that the young people’s wellbeing was being supported through having instances of freedom and control over their school day.

#### **4.4.7iii - Respecting rules**

The young people within this research were clear on the rules of the school and were eager to follow them and not get into trouble. They discussed the school behaviour policy; one young person explained that “You get either written warnings, stamps...” (FG1, Line 56). Another

young person happily commented “I’ve not got any written warnings this year” (FG1, Line 57). Another young person added their concerns about getting into trouble within school, explaining “I’d lost my science book in my science class, and I was really worried about it and I was scared I’d get in big trouble. I’ve never been in trouble before” (FG1, Line 85). Abiding by the rules therefore helped the young people to feel better and more settled in school.

#### 4.4.7iv - Receiving rewards and stamps

Building on the previous sub-theme, the young people identified the reward system which was in place in school as another factor that helped them to feel good in school; one young person stated “It makes you actually want to behave and get stamps” (FG1, Line 68). The young people discussed the range of items they could save up for by collecting their reward stamps that they received in lessons; they explained “Say you come into school late and it’s, like, halfway through the year, and you forget a pen or something, you can go and buy a pen or pencil or equipment. It’s only, like, ten stamps or something and you get about ten stamps a day” (FG1, Line 69). They appeared to like the option to have access to new resources to support their learning if they needed it during the school day. The rewards they were able to select got mixed reviews from the young people; they liked some of the options, however felt that either the amount, or type, of reward you could select could be improved. One young person reported “It’s good for, like, the Amazon thing, because you can get, like, anything, but five pounds, what are you going to get for five pounds...” (FG2, Line 477). Another young person added “In Year Eleven you can get stuff off, like, your prom dress” (FG2, Line 491), and they thought this was a useful incentive to work towards. The rewards seemed to link to the young people’s extrinsic motivation: that they were more likely to engage and focus in their learning through external rewards that they knew were available to them if they behaved in appropriate ways.

#### 4.4.8: THEME EIGHT – WHOLE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

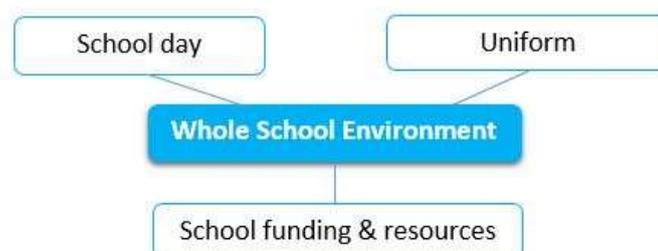


Figure 9: Whole School Environment Thematic Map

This theme relates to the environment of the school and is divided into three subthemes: the school day, school uniform and school funding and resources.

#### **4.4.8i - School day**

Young people commented on the early start time of their school day and explained that they would prefer it “If school started a bit later, because... yeah, because I’m, like, done in” (FG1, Line 188/189). Due to the rural location of this secondary school, many young people were transported by buses or taxis which meant some of their school days could feel longer due to their journey times to and from school. I wondered how the amount of sleep and feeling tired impacted on their wellbeing and engagement in their learning during their school day. Young people enjoyed the novelty of finishing early or having opportunities for fun built into their time in school. One young person commented “I think on Fridays we should have like a fun day and so you get to, like, eat like ice cream in class or something” (FG1, Line 282). Further discussion included their chance to have an early finish on the last day of term; one person laughed as they said “I think we should have a half day every Friday” (FG2, Line 364). In contrast another young person commented “But then it wouldn’t be a novelty on the end of term would it?” (FG2, Line 366). The young people enjoyed their early finishes at the end of term, or slight changes to their timetables, to support them to feel good in school, perhaps giving them something to look forward to after a busy week or school term.

#### **4.4.8ii - Uniform**

Young people discussed their preference for the alternative uniform they had in their school throughout the summer months. They appeared to prefer the more relaxed and comfortable top they were able to wear; they added “I like the summer because we don’t have to wear our school ties” (FG1, Line 212) and identified that “It takes me about five minutes to get ready in the summer uniform” (FG2, Line 374). The usual uniform within this school was a very formal shirt, tie and blazer jacket; I wondered what impact this may have on some learners within the school who may be more sensitive to clothing textures.

#### **4.4.8iii - School funding and resources**

Young people seemed to value the school’s environment, cleanliness and they demonstrated a sense of pride in looking after their school. The young people discussed the cleanliness of the school as an important factor, and stressed their frustration with chewing gum being under a lot of the school desks, “If you stick your hands under this desk, this one is clean, but normally it is filled with chewing gum. It’s disgusting” (FG1, Line 262). In addition, the young people within this small group appeared to have some understanding of the pressure on the

school's finances, budgets and funding and the impact that this had on the school's environment, including the building and resources. They explained "I think we should, like, renovate the walls because a lot of the walls are just falling apart, like the paint's peeling off" (FG1, Line 251). They commented "This school is poor, we need to save the glue sticks" (FG2, Line 402). The young people's constructs around school funding appeared to be related to the physical building and the equipment and resources that were available to them; they shared their preferences for some of the things they would like to have in school, "We really need lockers" (FG2, Line 386). Another young person added "When I was younger I said to my mum, I want to go to High School because I want a locker" (FG2, Line 387).

#### 4.5: Young people's constructs of feeling good or not so good

One of the questions for this research included exploring young people's understanding of the constructs of feeling good or not so good, what adults often term wellbeing and mental health. Young people used a range of words, phrases and language about their experiences of feeling good, having a good day or having a bad day. Table 2 below details the words taken from the transcript which appeared to reflect their ideas.

Table 2 - Words and Phrases Used by Young People		
	First Focus Group	Second Focus Group
<b>Good Days and Feeling Good</b>	Excited, amazing, cry with happiness, satisfying, did well, proud, ecstatic, emotional, intrigued, feeling better about myself, full of joy, did, like, really well, made me feel better, glad, excited because I can do it	We should have a fun day, awesome, novelty, speciality, positive, vibes of positive energy, when you're not ill, something to look forward to, decent day, the day just goes really fast, enjoy
<b>Bad Days and Feeling Not So Good</b>	Bad day, getting back on your feet, panicking a bit, emotional, makes sure you're alright, you know they'll help you through everything and anything, I'm, like, done in, upset, I literally wanted to start crying, obviously loads of people are going to have bad days at some point, worried, scared,	I'm really OCD about stuff, panic, stress you out, bored to blooming death, don't like, can't stand, horrible, bored, hide away, feel like the world is turning against you, misfit, crashes and burns, NR which means 'no reply', it's like a really long day

For this part of the research, I was really interested in how the constructs of 'wellbeing' and 'mental health' were filtering down and how they were experienced by young people. Interestingly, within this small group the words 'wellbeing' or 'mental health' were not used during this research study. This may have been due to the questions asked, the direction of

the discussion, or the experience of these four young people. Nonetheless, it was an interesting aspect of this research. Word Art visual representations of the words and phrases used during the two focus group discussions (Appendix 20, 21, 27, 28), provide an insight into some of the language used during the conversations with young people. Young people used phrases along a wide spectrum to describe feeling good, which ranged from feeling “Excited” (FG1, Lines 170, 236, 304, FG2, Line 189), “Amazing” (FG1, Line 314), “Full of joy” (FG1, Line 122), to “Feeling better about myself” (FG1, Line 306), “Glad” (FG1, Line 302), “A decent day” (FG2, Line 560), “Satisfying” (FG1, Line 280) to “When you’re not ill” (FG2, Line 529) and “Made me feel better” (FG1, Line 155). Such language and constructs seemed to relate to the typical range of feelings that we all may experience with different variations and intensities depending on the situation and context.

The words used to describe feeling not so good or experiencing a bad day appeared to reflect a range of everyday experiences, emotions, reactions and responses to challenges and difficulties. One young person commented “Obviously loads of people are going to have bad days at some point” (FG1, Line 322). Their own words and phrases included being “Scared” (FG1, Line 85), “Worried” (FG1, Line 85), “Upset” (FG1, Line, 172, FG1, Line 234) to “I’m, like, done in” (FG1, Line 189), “Feel like the world is turning against you” (FG2, Line 542) and interestingly a “Misfit” (FG2, Line 543) which appeared to demonstrate the importance of fitting in with others, especially with their peers. Some more medicalised language and constructs which were used to describe their feelings and experiences included “I’m really OCD about stuff” (FG2, Line 170), ‘Panic’ (FG1, Line 190, FG2, Line 170), and “Stress” (FG2, Line 297).

The young people appeared to have developed a good understanding and some emotional literacy about emotions and feelings, and they tended to speak of such expressions of emotions in relation to the context and relationships with others.

#### **4.6: Summary**

This chapter reflects on the young people’s discussions during the focus groups of this research. Young people appeared to use a range of words, phrases and constructs to describe feeling good or not so good, mainly relating to everyday feelings and experiences. However, none of the young people within this study used the words ‘wellbeing’ or ‘mental health’. When exploring what helped them to experience a good day in school, eight main themes were identified with twenty three subthemes. The main themes included peer relationships, family support, adults in school, animals and pets, a sense of achievement, keeping the balance, school experience and whole school environment. As a TEP and researcher I felt that many of the young people’s reflections and insights were valuable to

learn from in attempts to gain an insider view of their current experiences and immersion within a mainstream secondary school. In addition some of their words were very powerful when considering their views of feeling good and experiencing a good day.

## **Chapter Five: The Discussion**

### **5.1: Introduction**

Within this chapter, I will reflect on the qualitative nature of this research and the aim of exploring the voice of young people. The discourses, language and constructs used by the young people about feeling good and having a good day will be explored. Following this, the themes identified within this research study will be discussed in relation to the existing research literature. Current frameworks and guidance around wellbeing, mental health and resilience will also be discussed, followed by a conclusion of the research.

### **5.2: Qualitative research exploring young people's voice**

This research study aimed to explore young people's constructs about feeling good and having a good day in school. As discussed in previous chapters, research is beginning to focus its attention on seeking the perspective of children and young people directly, through a range of methods. The focus of this research was to use qualitative approaches, aiming to create a more flexible and holistic approach, to gather rich data through discussions with the young people. This provided the young people with opportunities to shape the discussion, share their own experiences and emphasise aspects which were important to them. Initial draft themes were identified from their discussions and then taken back to the young people to review the initial interpretation. Young people's comments and feedback from the draft themes helped to reshape the thematic analysis and final themes. Several re-drafts of the themes took place in an attempt to capture what I felt the young people were trying to express.

During the research process I found the young people's words very powerful. As a TEP, I have reflected on some of the words and phrases that they used, which has impacted on my practice. One young person, insightfully shared "Coming to, like, pastoral or student support because you know they'll help you through everything and anything" (FG1, Line 99), an aspect for which I felt the participating school should be commended. I felt it was incredibly important that young people had somewhere to go, with people they trust, where they felt valued, listened to, and supported to help resolve any difficulties that they experienced. This may be crucial for young people who, for a whole range of complexities, may not have such support systems within their home environments. I also felt that this research empowered these four young people to share their views and experiences, a process which they were keen to engage in and appeared to enjoy. They all appeared to relish the opportunity to be listened to in a non-judgemental and open manner by an adult external to their school system. After the

second focus group, they asked whether there would be additional sessions for them to be involved in, which suggested scope for further research with young people.

A range of professionals continue to strive to empower young people to share their views and experiences, and explore ways in which service planning and development can be informed by the very young people it seeks to support. Research recognises the impact and benefits of young people being able to express their views and experiences and influence key decisions that relate to their own settings (PHE, 2015). This emphasises the 'need to hear directly from children about what affects their sense of well-being' (McAuley et. al., 2018: 462), whilst enabling education to be 'tailored to the self-identified needs of young people' (Woolfson et. al., 2009).

### **5.3: Young people's use of language and constructs**

This research was interested in how current discourses, discussions and agendas around wellbeing and mental health were filtering down to young people. As reflected in the review of the literature, young people used a range of positive and negative constructs relating to wellbeing, and seemed to acknowledge the fluctuating nature of feeling good or not so good (Goswami, 2012, Gillett-Swan, 2014). One young person from the focus group of this research study commented "Obviously loads of people are going to have bad days at some point" (FG1, Line 322). Young people used a range of constructs reflecting different emotions that they felt. Ideas such as feeling glad, satisfied, proud, feeling better about themselves, and fitting in, represented some of their positive constructs. The constructs they expressed to explain some of their more negative experiences included feeling upset, worried, scared, feeling like the world was against them at times, and feeling "Done in" (FG1, Line 189, FG2, Line 349), when they became overtired. At times, young people appeared to use more medicalised constructs such as panic, stress and OCD (Appendix 28). Similarly, a systematic review of young people's views, found that young people appeared to relate better to language around 'feeling sad, lonely, depressed or troubled' (Oliver et. al., 2007: 778), rather than using terms such as 'mental health'. Although this research was over ten years old, these young people associated mental health with mental illness. Likewise, one young person, during the focus group within this research, stated "I'm not mental" (FG2, Line 256) when discussing their feelings and reactions to a situation. Although this was the only glimpse of using any words relating to 'mental', I wondered whether this negative association permeated through other young people's constructions of language, and whether there was any potential stigma that still relates to terms such as mental health.

Research exploring young people's discourse around feeling good, or not so good, highlights the importance of using constructs that are meaningful for young people, that they can easily understand, and which relate to their own experiences. A shared understanding can be enhanced by creating opportunities to empower young people to design, lead and establish frameworks to support their own peer group. Furthermore, in the research literature some young people had awareness of the influence of wider factors that could shape their views, thoughts and feelings about topics such as wellbeing and mental health. In one study, a young person commented 'What's portrayed in the media shapes what people tend to think. The media is based on getting the biggest story to make the most amount of money' (Newton and Ponting, 2013:87), which highlighted this awareness.

#### **5.4: Identified themes**

The young people who took part in this research appeared to view feeling good and experiencing a good day as multi-faceted. They spoke of a range of areas which influenced how they felt, what they experienced and whether they felt supported. Similar to other social models of wellbeing and mental health (Beresford, 2002, Billington, 2019), young people also discussed feeling good from their individual responses, in relation to others and the impact of environmental factors, such as their home and school environments. The focus of this research was on a strengths-based and solution-focussed approach of what was working well, and naturally at times, by explaining what helped; this also identified approaches and areas which could be further improved. The following section will explore the eight main themes identified from the research with the young people, which included:

- Peer relationships
- Family support
- Adults in school
- Animals and pets
- A sense of achievement
- Keeping the balance
- School experience
- Whole school environment.

Relationships with others appeared to be one of the salient constructs that was emphasised by the young people and this was also reflected within the research literature (Gillett-Swan, 2014, Roffey, 2017, Sixsmith et. al., 2014). One young person commented "I think having moral support is really good, being able to, like, turn to people" (FG2, Line 9). The young people valued their relationships with peers, members of their family, adults within their school

and their pets and animals at home. Within the research literature, young people commented 'that humans in general – in a time of need – will band together like our natural instincts would' (Cocking, et. al., 2018: 8). Having people who valued their strengths, interests and competencies (Graham et. al., 2017) and 'the need to be listened to, heard and understood' (Oliver et. al. 2007:785), was also highlighted. Reflecting on theories of attachment (Ainsworth et. al., 1978, Bowlby, 1953, Fonagy, Gergely, and Target, 2007 Geddes, 2006), young people appeared to thrive when they had a secure base and containment from a familiar and trusted adult, who was able to attune to their emotional strengths and needs. They were then able to settle, learn about their emotions, and build meaningful relationships with others, essential elements of being able to experience a good day at home and at school. Securing such positive relationships with others has been linked to greater happiness (Diener and Seligman, 2002) and wellbeing (Goswami, 2012). As children progress through adolescence and develop into young adults, their natural transition from parents and carers as primary support givers, tends to shift emphasis towards their relationships with similar aged peers (DCSF, 2008a). This important transition, that is likely to occur whilst they are immersed within a secondary school environment, can provide a powerful insight into the influence of a range of people within young people's lives and the support such attachments can provide. Each of the main themes will now be discussed in relation to the existing research.

### **5.5.1: THEME ONE - PEER RELATIONSHIPS**

Within the theme of peer relationships, three subthemes were identified: having friends, getting on and falling out, and bullying. Young people were drawn towards other people with similar interests, values, and whom they saw regularly (Dunsmuir, Dewey and Birch, 2019). Many children spoke of their close friendships or best friends (McAuley et. al., 2012) sharing 'they're not like adults, they think the same way as you' (DCSF, 2008a: 44). Other research suggested that the quality rather than quantity of friendships is associated with happiness (Demir and Weitekamp, 2007). Creating a balance of unstructured, alongside more structured, groups and activities, appeared to be important to young people to develop their friendships, such as time to play at each other's houses, experience trips out together, and quality time talking and sharing similar interests.

Young people spoke highly of the support they received from their friends and acknowledged the ups and downs of friendships as part of typical relationships. Gillett-Swan (2014) highlighted the importance young people placed on other people's perceptions of them, alongside how they related and responded to others. Similar research found that young people expressed 'you want to be normal basically, everybody wants to be normal' (Kidger, et. al., 2009: 11). It is through friendships that children and young people begin to learn how

to predict and interpret the intentions, thoughts and feelings of other people; helping them to develop skills in sharing, negotiation, considering an alternative perspective, and conflict resolution (DCSF, 2008a, Dunsmuir, Dewey and Birch, 2019).

Young people either had direct experience of bullying or could relate to a friend's experience. One young person explained that 'you want to get back to school to see your friends, but there are some other people there that you don't want to see' (DCSF, 2008a: 47). Young people spoke of the support they were able to access from adults, either parents, carers, or adults in school, during such instances. Research exploring the impact of bullying suggested young people can experience higher levels of loneliness, low self-esteem, anxiety, low mood and depression, all of which have been related to lower levels of wellbeing (Goswami, 2012). The challenges of adults, included having to delicately deal with young people who can be 'really quite vicious with their comments' (Cocking, et. al, 2018: 10). It can be important to reflect on wider societal issues, such as discrimination, including: racism, sexism, homophobia, and extremism, which may form some of the undercurrents to some young people's perceptions.

Further opportunities to support young people with their peer relationships and friendships has been identified by a range of research (Cocking et. al., 2018, Kidger, et. al., 2009, Oliver et. al., 2007). Some young people expressed: 'I think another student would be able to help...more than the teachers will on certain situations' (Cocking et. al., 2018: 8). However, some young people were worried about their confidentiality when speaking with other young people (Kidger, et. al., 2009). Creating approaches such as: buddying systems, peer mentoring, and peer listening, within school systems, may support some young people (Cocking et. al., 2018). To implement such models, sensitive discussions about boundaries, roles, trust and confidentiality would need to be considered.

### **5.5.2: THEME TWO - FAMILY SUPPORT**

Within the theme of family support, three subthemes were identified: the role of parents and carers, wider family members, and the importance of online interactions for some young people. Interestingly, young people highlighted their relationship with their family as the most significant relationship, in a large scale survey study of secondary-aged pupils (Goswami, 2012) and within further studies eliciting children's perceptions of wellbeing (DCSF, 2008a, González-Carrasco et. al., 2019, Sixsmith et. al., 2007). This incorporated family environments in which young people felt cared for, listened to, and were able to jointly make decisions (McAuley et. al., 2012, Sixsmith et. al., 2007). One young person shared 'I love it when she spends time with us, we get her whole attention, it makes you feel cared for' (DCSF, 2008a: 36). Roffey (2017) also emphasised the importance of positive relationships with family as

being crucial to wellbeing. Similarly, Patalay and Fitzsimons (2016) found links between higher parental life satisfaction and positive child wellbeing. The importance of the family as a secure base cannot be underestimated. Children and young people also included wider family members such as siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles, in their supportive relationships at home (DCSF, 2008a, McAuley, et. al., 2012). Young people reported the close relationships with their grandparents sharing that 'they would go to the ends of the earth' (McAuley et. al., 2012:454) to support them, such as supporting their journeys to and from school, talking to them, and providing any resources that they might need. It is important to consider factors such as: family and parental wellbeing and mental health; a good work-life balance to ensure valuable time is spent together as a family in today's busy lifestyles; and the impact of environmental factors, such as housing and income (McAuley et. al., 2012).

However, it is also important to note that some young people may not have such support from their family members for a whole range of reasons. This may include lack of support for young people who are not living in their parental home, or those who have parents with their own mental health needs (Oliver et. al., 2007). Arguments with parents and bullying from siblings was also associated with lower subjective wellbeing (Patalay and Fitzsimons, 2016). The development of positive and secure attachments with others as a blueprint for future relationships is important to reflect on, especially for young people who have experienced difficult early life and childhood experiences (Oldfield, et. al. 2016). Such research also highlights how influential the role of schools can be within the lives of these young people, where a trusted supportive adult in school may be one of the most important adults in their lives. Research on ACEs (Burstow et. al, 2018, Felitti et. al., 1998, Hughes et. al., 2017) explores the potential impact of family dysfunction, parental conflict, domestic abuse and violence, substance misuse, family members' mental illness, or involvement with the criminal justice system; this includes the effects of physical, emotional and sexual abuse on the development of children and young people. Young people's access to a range of opportunities can also have a large influence on their levels of wellbeing. The role of holistic whole family approaches are likely to be beneficial for some families, ensuring a collaborative approach, to build a family's strengths, with agencies working together within identified areas of need (Burstow et. al., 2018). This may include support for their own mental health, substance misuse, and social factors, such as financial and housing considerations.

Interestingly, young people also emphasised the importance of access to their mobile phones to keep in contact with others, particularly their family members. This included sharing positive experiences such as exam results and achievements in their school day, and they felt reassured that a parent and carer could be contacted if they needed them. Some research

acknowledges 'a love-hate relationship with social networking sites' (Newton and Ponting, 2013: 83). This included the positive aspects of aiding communication and socialisation with others, whilst warning of the addictiveness, gossip and potential for online bullying. Limited research appears to have explored the supportive aspects of mobile phones, therefore this could be a useful area to further explore.

### **5.5.3: THEME THREE – ADULTS IN SCHOOL**

The theme of adults in school was broken down into three subthemes: access to support in lessons; the importance of teacher relationships; and the accessibility and availability of emotional support, which included Pastoral and Student Support systems. Coleman (2009) highlighted the importance of enhancing the wellbeing of the school as a community, with a focus on increasing staff morale, awareness, training and support in relation to emotions of young people and staff within these systems (Coleman, 2009, Kidger, et. al., 2009). Being treated fairly, feeling valued and the concept of reciprocal respect, whereby young people both respect the adults in school, but also receive respect from them in return, was valued by young people (Graham et. al., 2016, Graham et. al., 2017, Kidger, et. al., 2009). Schools that have 'high expectations of all students and staff, and a belief that all students matter equally' (Bennett, 2017:7) create the foundations to a positive and respectful school culture.

The importance of accessing support in lessons was shared amongst the young people in the focus group. Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural learning theories highlight the importance of mediation in learning, through social interaction and scaffolding by others. This enabled young people to grasp key concepts and feel comfortably challenged to achieve the next steps in their learning, through differentiated support (Graham et. al., 2016, Kuurme, & Carlsson, 2010). They also valued being taught 'in creative and engaging ways' (Graham et. al., 2016: 374, Kidger, 2009). Further research reflects on promoting pedagogical practices that consider critical and experiential learning in relation to young people's own experiences, promoting the idea of a 'lived curriculum' (O'Toole, 2019: 18).

Young people noted the influence of student-teacher relationship on whether they experienced a good day in school. Graham et. al. (2017) discussed the importance of space and time for conversations to take place, including the role of genuine 'talking, listening, hearing, acknowledging and responding' (Graham et. al., 2017: 450). I wondered how often such opportunities were available in the current fast paced education system with high expectations of achievement within a range of curriculum subjects (Kidger, et. al., 2009). Young people cherished informal opportunities to speak with teachers and shared that they preferred teachers with "good personalities, like, you don't just want them to be, like, 'Just get on with

your work” (FG2, Line 70). Further research on teachers’ perspectives highlighted the importance of the way they related and responded to students, through modelling positive interpersonal skills, with one teacher commenting that ‘it’s got to be part and parcel of everyone’s teaching’ (Kidger et. al., 2010: 925). This indicated that ‘positive relationships were the bedrock of school life’ (Graham, et. al., 2016:374). Reflecting on the importance of staff’s own wellbeing and mental health, research stated ‘are the teachers alright, to make sure the kids are alright?’ (Gallard, 2018: 32), recognising the huge pressures on school staff to support children and young people, including their learning, development, and wellbeing. It is important that staff feel that they have the right skills and proactive strategies to support their work, including opportunities to engage in training and share good practice. This is especially important when young people display difficult and challenging behaviour, in relation to their complex needs (Spratt et. al., 2006, Vostanis, et. al., 2013, Weare and Gray, 2003).

Finally, being able to access additional emotional support was valued by the young people. They spoke positively of speaking with adults in the established pastoral systems within school when they were experiencing difficulties and felt that they needed extra support. They spoke confidently of the adults within these systems being able to help with everything and anything, through a non-stigmatising system of available support, where trust and confidentiality were of upmost importance (Graham et. al., 2016, Kidger, et. al., 2009). Research has highlighted the importance of the familiarity of school staff in delivery of pastoral approaches, who are also an integral part of the whole school system (Wolpert et. al., 2013, Woolfson et. al., 2009). Whilst alternative perspectives within research recognise that for some young people a more neutral relationship with an outsider to the system can be beneficial. The benefits of outsider support include: opportunities to vent, be honest, and share any systemic worries and concerns, with a person judged to be more impartial, and less reactive to their views, than if they were immersed within the same system (Cocking et. al., 2018).

Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: A Green Paper (DoH/DoE, 2017), has initiated the roll-out of multi-agency Mental Health Support Teams linked to education settings, offering early intervention approaches for young people. Staff linked to this new initiative tend to be external to the school setting and it will be interesting to see how such teams can be embedded within existing school systems. It will also be important to continue to elicit young people’s views of such approaches within the impact evaluations.

#### **5.5.4: THEME FOUR – ANIMALS AND PETS**

Young people highlighted the importance of animals in their lives and wanted to emphasise this as a distinct theme. They spoke highly of the bond they had developed with their animals,

with a 'strong sense of pets providing companionship and emotional support' (McAuley et. al., 2012: 454). Further research found similar links of the role of animals and pets and their positive impact on wellbeing (Sixsmith et. al., 2007, Gillett-Swan, 2014). Young people turned to their pets when they felt happy, sad or angry, and when they needed emotional support (Purewal, et. al., 2017). Research exploring the benefits of Animal-Assisted Therapy (A-AT) suggests that, similar to relationships and attachments to people, young people can build up a bond with animals through feelings of trust, respect, loyalty and security (Geist, 2011, Mandrá, 2019). Animals have been suggested to help some young people to de-escalate and begin to regulate their emotions through their sense of connection, whereby animals act as the consistent attachment figure, can attune to young people in distress and help to co-regulate them. Research has suggested that dogs can provide 'all the desirable qualities of a best friend (listening, empathetic, physical, comfort)' (Geist, 2011:249) and can help to increase 'feelings of happiness, security and self-worth' (Geist, 2011: 251).

The importance of distractions and engaging in a preferred activity was also found to be a powerful approach for coping with the challenges of life (Cocking et. al., 2018). Research exploring the influence of animals and pets on young people's wellbeing is somewhat limited, with mixed results, often with studies cited as having limited quality to their methodology. However, research within this area has suggested associated links between animal ownership and higher levels of positive emotions, self-esteem and resilience, and lower levels of stress, loneliness, anxiety and depression (Purewal, et. al., 2017). Young people also shared their enjoyment of the responsibility and caring role of having pets and other animals to look after, either through walking their dogs, riding their horses, or hedgehog rescue. Similar research indicated links with caring for animals and positive behaviour outcomes and responsibility (Purewal, et. al., 2017). This would be an interesting area to explore further.

#### **5.5.5: THEME FIVE – A SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT**

Two subthemes were identified within young people's discussions around experiencing a sense of achievement: being good at something, and opportunities for trying something new. Being good at something was experienced both inside and outside of school, and linked to young people's own sense of achievement. This included both their own intrinsic motivation of mastering a new skill, and also the extrinsic motivators of the school reward systems. A school trialling extra-curricular activities to support young people's wellbeing, through tasks such as cooking and bicycle repair, noted the young people's sense of achievement during these sessions. Young people reported the impact that the sessions had on their 'self-worth, feeling useful, feeling more relaxed, being able to make clearer decisions' (Erasmus, 2017:1). Other research highlighted the importance of mastery and feelings of competence (Fattore,

et. al., 2007, NSWCCYP, 2007, Roffey, 2017). Opportunities for trying something new was also highlighted but with mixed views. Some young people felt eager to experience new challenges; however, other young people explained that they could worry about their ability to cope with something new. The concept of support within new experiences seemed to be prevalent, which may link to the theme of adult support. The NHS (2020) promotes the idea of learning and trying something new, through its Five Ways to Wellbeing framework.

### **5.5.6: THEME SIX - KEEPING THE BALANCE**

Keeping a balance appeared to reflect a variety of supportive strategies that young people used to interpret and cope with different of events and situations in their lives, some of which could be perceived as more challenging. Three subthemes were identified: the importance of interests and free time, self-awareness and empathy, and coping with feelings.

Constructs identified within this theme included young people having a range of interests and ways in which to spend their free time. Popular activities included: listening to music (Oliver et. al., 2007), physical activity (Fattore et. al., 2007, Oliver et. al., 2008), time with animals, outdoor activities, computer games, and watching television with their families (Gonzalez er. al., 2019). Wells et. al. (2003), through their systematic review of the literature, highlighted that many school intervention programmes fail to include 'improving pupil's ability to enjoy life, to laugh at themselves and the world, or to develop emotionally and spiritually' (Wells et. al., 2003: 216), which were recognised as key components of positive wellbeing and mental health. Further research identified the negative impact that lack of opportunities for leisure interests (González-Carrasco et. al., 2019, Oliver et. al., 2007), can have on subjective wellbeing.

In addition, some young people appeared to be developing their own self-awareness and empathetic skills. Increased emotional literacy was linked with the ability to acknowledge the fluctuating nature of wellbeing, including feelings of happiness, sadness and anger, and the ability to self-regulate during these times (Gillet-Swan, 2014, Graham, et. al., 2017). Some young people felt that they needed further lessons focussing on emotional development and wellbeing, alongside a whole school culture that valued such aspects (Kidger, et. al., 2009). Young people shared some of their ideas for coping strategies and felt that developing such skills (Woolfson et. al., 2009) enhanced their 'ability to cope with the ups and downs of life' (Oliver et. al., 2007: 785).

### **5.5.7: THEME SEVEN – SCHOOL EXPERIENCE**

Four subthemes were identified within school experience: the importance of enjoyment, making choices, respecting rules, and getting rewards and stamps. Research linked young people's enjoyment and satisfaction in school with their levels of wellbeing (Huebner and Gilman, 2006). Young people highlighted the importance of having opportunities for experiencing enjoyment and engagement in their learning. Research has suggested that experiencing a very high school satisfaction can 'promote an upward spiral' (Huebner and Gilman, 2006: 148) of creating further increases in wellbeing, whereas for young people who dislike school their wellbeing could be negatively impacted (Huebner and Gilman, 2006). Although based on self-reports, this research demonstrates the importance of young people's perceptions and experiences of school and the impact that this can have on their wellbeing.

Young people also felt being able to make a range of choices in their school day could support them to experience a good day. Supportive choices included where and who to sit with in class, and what they ate for lunch. Dex and Hollingwood (2012) also identified the importance of choice across a range of domains including the young people's values, lifestyle, use of time, music, art and culture, clothing, use of technology, and having freedom and responsibility. In addition, Fattore et. al. (2007) highlighted the importance of autonomy and agency; this included opportunities for young people to exert influence over their own lives and act morally according to their own values.

Young people within the focus group appeared to have a clear understanding of the school rules and wanted to adhere to them; they worried if they felt they had broken a rule and also made judgements about other young people who broke school rules. Many schools have a balance of proactive and reactive strategies, which are essential to ensure young people feel safe, secure, and experience a sense of belonging. This highlights the importance of school connectedness with 'students and staff taking pride in their school, valuing themselves and the institution they were part of' (DfE, 2017:37). Guidance suggested that the best schools created positive school cultures with shared values of reasonable expectations that all school members understand and adhere to (DfE, 2017). This included 'an ethos of good behaviour, where pupils treat each other, and staff, with respect; understand the value of education; and appreciate the impact that their actions can have on others' (FiM, DoH, 2015: 37). It is important that schools develop 'approaches tailored to the particular needs of their pupils' (DfE, 2018:6), which may vary across regions, areas and the communities in which the schools are situated. The school environment was viewed as a fundamental aspect for supporting young people, particularly in secondary school settings (Spratt et. al., 2006, Weare and Gray, 2003, Weare and Nind, 2011). Whole school approaches that promote relationships, and

support the integration of the young person, family and school staff, can support the wellbeing of all involved through collaborative working. Young people also valued reward systems being in place, which recognised their effort and positive behaviour when they adhered to the school rules (DCSF, 2008a, Kidger, et. al., 2009, DCSF, 2008a). Young people valued the importance of motivational reward systems that were consistently adhered to, with opportunities for them to be part of the decision making within such systems (Fletcher et. al., 2015).

#### **5.5.8: THEME EIGHT - WHOLE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT**

Within the theme of the whole school environment, three subthemes were identified: the school day, uniform, and school funding and resources. Young people commented on the length and structure of the school day, with many having to travel on the bus to school; this resulted in a very early start to their school day. There appears to be limited research and evidence associated with later school times for adolescents, and related positive impacts on their wellbeing. One study explored the impact of a greater amount of sleep and a decrease in depressive symptoms (Marx et. al., 2017). This is an area that would be interesting to explore further, although due to systemic structures it would be difficult to change. Young people commented on feeling “Done in” (FG1, Line 189, FG2, Line 349) after getting up early for school, with such feelings likely to impact on their motivation, engagement and positive feelings for the day ahead. Young people also reported enjoying the novelty of an early finish, usually at the end of term, and looking forward to changes to their normal timetables. Other research has found that young people valued having a say in their school day (Anderson and Graham, 2016, Dex and Hollingwood, 2012), have opportunities to socialise (Baker, 2013), and experience unstructured times in their school day (Beynon, 2019).

A further subtheme related to having to wear a formal school uniform, with a preference for a more informal and comfortable alternative summer top, and enjoyment of the novelty of non-uniform days. This was also described within the review of the literature, where young people shared that they wished uniform policies were less strict (Kidger, et. al., 2009) and also felt that school uniform limited their identity and self-expression (Duckett et. al., 2008). School funding and resources was another subtheme identified from the young people’s discussions. Awareness of the school being “Poor” (FG2, Line 400) and having limited resources was reflected in their discussions. Further research also found that children and young people valued their school environment, and hoped for more facilities and resources (DCSF, 2008a, Dex and Hollingwood, 2012, Fattore et. al., 2007). Schools continue to voice their concern about the impact of financial pressures and the impact this is likely to have on the young people, school staff and school environment.

## **5.6: Themes summary**

From the eight themes discussed, many of the aspects were related to other research with young people. This included the importance of relationships, with friends, family members and school staff. Enjoyment of school was a further factor, with creative and flexible lessons to engage young people in their learning, and differentiated support to meet their individual needs. Promoting a school-life balance, with opportunities for free time and pursuing interests, including the ability to manage and regulate a range of emotions and experiences, was also explored. Themes which appeared to have limited related research included: the positive role of mobile phones for keeping in touch with family members, the role of animals and pets, school start times and related tiredness, and how school financial pressures were impacting on young people. It would be interesting to research such areas further.

## **5.7: Wellbeing, mental health and resilience**

As discussed in the review of the literature, over the years there has been a range of positions and frameworks related to wellbeing and mental health. When reflecting on the young people's discussions within the current research, their constructs and experiences about feeling good or not so good appear to link to a broader and more social model of wellbeing, taking into account their relationships, social context and environment. Reflecting on the position that 'poor mental health can reduce life chances' (Burstow et. al., 2018), could it be also said that poor life chances reduces mental health? The social model of mental health provides a holistic view of the range of factors which can impact on the constructs of wellbeing and mental health, not least the social opportunities that are available to young people, to provide good foundations, skills in resilience, and the basis of feeling safe and secure. With a focus on the concept of resilience, five key areas are discussed, including the role of personal, relational, economic, identity, and social capital, to enhance our ability to cope with the challenges of life. Recognition of the importance of such areas within periods of transition were also highlighted.

The resilience framework is a useful model which highlights the role of risk and protective factors. Like wellbeing and mental health, resilience has a range of definitions. Constructs around resilience tend to include the ability to cope, bounce back and succeed within life's challenges and adversity (Hart & Blincow, 2007, PHE, 2014, Windle, 2010). Approaches promoting resilience recognise the importance of building on the strengths around young people. The seven C's of resilience suggest core concepts that can support young people (Ginsburg and Jablow, 2011). The role of competence, confidence, connection, character, contribution, coping and control, form this framework; aspects of which appeared to relate to

the themes and discussions within this research study. Recent debates have challenged assumptions of an individual, innate and fixed nature of resilience, and emphasised the role of more dynamic, collective and community-based approaches (Burstow, et. al, 2018, Cocking et. al., 2018, PHE, 2014).

Within the constructs of wellbeing, mental health and resilience, it seemed to be important to reflect on the role and impact of the different systems around an individual. The ecological systems framework (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) can complement this process. The layers of this framework represent: the person's individual needs within the centre, the role of their family, and local community, within the micro level. The communication and relationship between these systems is explored through the mesosystem. The relationships within indirect aspects, such as extended family members and parental working patterns, is explored through the exosystem. The influence of cultural values, beliefs and ideas and society is explored within the macrosystem. Finally the role of changes and transition periods that may occur throughout a lifetime, including aspects such as family dynamics, are acknowledged by the chronosystem. This framework promotes the notion of multifaceted constructs with a wide range of influential factors. It is interesting to note the importance of interpersonal processes within and between these different systems, including the key relationships and attachments that are formed with a range of familiar key people. Using such a framework, the emphasis can be placed on community resilience, shared experience, shared identity and 'creative and spontaneous ways of supporting each other' (Cocking et. al., 2018: 4). Similar to constructs around wellbeing and mental health, it is important to reflect on wider influences within the local community and the society that we are immersed within, otherwise 'the notion of resilience risks becoming little more than sociological Prozac, if it does not challenge existing structural inequalities' (Cocking, et. al., 2018: 9). Such a position highlights the notion of social justice principles: 'the objective of creating a fair and equal society in which each individual matters, their rights are recognized and protected, and decisions are made in ways that are fair and honest' (Oxford Reference, 2020).

The publication, *Investing in a Resilient Generation* (Burstow, et. al, 2018), raises ambitious plans to re-prioritise the importance of preventative approaches, with emphasis on tackling the causes, rather than consequences, of mental health difficulties. Burstow et. al. (2018) identified 'four key building blocks for building a resilient generation'. These include: the importance of positive family, peer, and community relationships; minimising adverse experiences and exclusions; creating opportunities for mentally friendly education and employment; and responding early and effectively to the first signs of distress (Burstow et. al., 2018). The discussions within this framework recognise the importance of exploring the roots

of difficulties: the role of preventative approaches with an emphasis on 'nurturing the next generation (Burstow et. al., 2018: 8). The framework also highlights that 'the best services are those that are co-designed by young people and their families' (Burstow, et. al., 2018: 9). Research also suggests the benefits of enhancing resilience for all the members of the school and/or home community (Cocking et. al., 2018), recognising the impact of ACEs, adult mental health, housing, education, and employment.

### **5.8: The Power Threat Meaning Framework**

A further useful framework that seems to resonate with the current research is the Power Threat Meaning Framework (PTMF). This framework asks what has happened to the individual as a starting point for exploring and understanding people's experiences and reactions in a complex array of potential circumstances. The PTMF emphasises that 'we all have a right to describe our experiences in the way that makes most sense to us' (Johnstone et. al., 2018:18), focusing on strength, survival, and human experience, with a move away from pathological and diagnostic narratives. The positioning of the PTMF accentuates the role that relational, social, cultural and material aspects have on our life experiences. The PTMF explores four powerful questions: 'What has happened to you, how did it affect you, what sense did you make of it and what did you have to do to survive?' (Johnstone, et. al., 2018: 9). Alongside creating spaces to discuss a person's strengths and story, the PTMF encourages a move towards trauma-informed approaches that can support, not only the individuals that have experienced the most complex and challenging life experiences, but one which can also help all young people, and also the staff who endeavour to support them. Such approaches promote the role of empathy and the understanding of a range of factors which may underpin potential difficulties. These may include the role of ACEs, social injustice, community and societal influences, and the role of current national and international political discourses and agendas.

### **5.9: Conclusion**

The position of this research helps to reframe 'the wellbeing agenda away from more narrowly focussed to broader, more holistic and universal approaches' (Graham et. al., 2017, Johnstone et. al., 2018). The underpinning relativistic approach provided 'a moral and political strength in its capacity to provide a lever of resistance against reality claims' (Parker, 1998: 32). In addition, the social constructionist lens reflects on the constructs 'wellbeing' and 'mental health', as terms that change over time; that are influenced by political, societal, social and individual values and agendas. As professionals, it is important to give careful consideration to the language we use with young people. This includes not making judgements and

assumptions on the words and phrases that they may use, but aiming to develop a shared understanding. Within this research, young people appeared to have a broad understanding of wellbeing; they reflected on the typical feelings and experiences that we all encounter, and they recognised the ups and downs of life. They also seemed to understand the idea of feeling good in context: recognising the impact of relationships and the environment on their subjective feelings and experiences.

Young people seemed to benefit from a range of supportive factors that helped them to experience a good day in school. Predominantly, positive, consistent and secure relationships with their friends, family, adults in school, and pets, appeared to be at the heart of their discussions. The importance of peer relationships and close friendships was seen as an essential aspect of growing up; this included how to fix and maintain friendships when they experienced difficulties. An emphasis on a positive work-life balance, to provide key opportunities for children and young people to spend quality time with familiar adults, especially their parents and wider family members, was a further factor.

Many young people have multiple opportunities and access to a range of after-school extra-curricular activities which can have their benefits, but it is also important to recognise the importance of spending some time together as a family. Simple activities that were valued by young people included: time to watch favourite TV programmes together; complete jobs and chores as a family; visit parental places of work; and holidays, incorporating opportunities to spend time with wider family members. The role and therapeutic benefits of animals was highlighted by young people; all young people within this focus group had animals and pets at home of which they spoke highly. They shared experiences of being able to confide in their pets, their animals helping them to switch off from any difficulties, and the importance of caring for, and developing a sense of responsibility for, someone else in their lives.

The importance of the teacher-student relationships, especially in secondary schools, where children interact with numerous members of staff throughout the school day, was paramount to them experiencing a good day in school. Person-centred teaching approaches, which recognised young people's unique strengths and needs, including in their emotional and academic development, was also important to them. Furthermore, some young people felt it was important to develop a sense of achievement in some areas of their lives, with encouragement to engage in new experiences to widen their horizons.

The research literature highlights the importance of working collaboratively with a range of Education, Health and Social Care services to support young people, their families and local communities to address any difficulties or adversities that families may be facing. It can be

important to challenge any disempowering within-person discourses, through promoting more holistic social models of wellbeing and mental health that broaden the avenues for understanding and support. Highlighting the ‘complex interactions involved in whole-system change’ (Burstow, et. al., 2018: 37), with EPs playing just one part within these complex interactions. I felt it was important to reflect on the African proverb: ‘it takes a village to raise a child.’

### **5.10: Summary**

This chapter has reflected on young people’s use of language and constructs in relation to feeling good and experiencing a good day. Identified themes have been discussed in relation to the existing research literature. Links between the wellbeing, mental health and resilience frameworks have been explored, including more recent frameworks hoping to promote preventative and holistic approaches for supporting young people.

## **Chapter Six: Reflections, Evaluation and Limitations**

### **6.1: Introduction**

The following chapter reflects on the research journey and ethical thread running throughout this study. The quality of this research will be examined in relation to criteria outlined for reviewing qualitative research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, Braun and Clarke, 2006, Yardley, 2000, 2017 and Anderson, 2017). Finally the limitations of this research will be considered.

### **6.2: Learning journey as a researcher**

The research journey highlighted a number of important considerations, decision points and reflections. Throughout the research process, I gave careful consideration to the balance of empowering the voice of the young people, whilst acknowledging the ethics concerned with the construct of childhood; a group perceived as vulnerable within today's society. In addition, I reflected on the processes around consent from the school, parents and young people themselves. One such example included one young person who did not attend school on the day of the focus group and who did not make any further contact. The assumption was made that they did not wish to take part, which may not accurately reflect their actual views.

Careful considerations were given to the creation of a fun and informal atmosphere for the young people. This included: visual stimuli in the form of pictures placed on the table to create a more relaxed environment, ice-breaker style activities (Appendix 13), time to ask questions and share experiences as a group and sensory and fidget toys, which all young people used during the discussions. Young people also relished the snacks brought in to support a relaxed atmosphere. Feedback from the young people about the processes of the research were generally positive.

As a facilitator, I acknowledged the potential influence of my power as the researcher. I attempted to carefully balance supporting the discussions, whilst reflecting what I thought I was hearing. On a few occasions, I felt I may have accidentally led the conversation, as I almost joined in as a part of the continuing dialogue. At times it felt a bit unnatural that I wasn't sharing my own ideas but simply repeating the young people's ideas back to them. Young people seemed empowered by hearing their words read back to them during the draft themes stage within the second focus group; this appeared to provide the acknowledgement of being heard. This also seemed to engage them further in the conversation, to either repeat their initial ideas, build on them or, at times, change direction slightly. Young people also appeared to feel

comfortable to challenge other's views in an appropriate manner to share their differing opinions in certain areas. I will now reflect on the perceived quality of the research that was carried out.

### **6.3: Evaluating qualitative research**

As discussed within the introduction and procedure chapters, there are several frameworks, to evaluate the quality and trustworthiness of research. Key areas which particularly appeared to resonate with this research included: reflexivity, sensitivity to context, transparency, coherence, ethical thread, member checking, and the purpose, impact and transferability of the research. I will reflect on each of these dimensions below.

### **6.4: Reflexivity**

I aimed to be a reflexive researcher; I clearly identified the values, ontological and epistemological position that influenced this research. I outlined the research design which included considerations and decisions that were made about the methodological approaches used, alongside any constraints that were experienced. I aimed to clearly explain how the sample of participants were selected, and how subsequent data was collected, including the limitations that may have resulted from these choices. I also acknowledged that the themes that were been created were my interpretations of the young people's constructs.

### **6.5: Sensitivity to context**

Yardley (2000) emphasises the importance of sensitivity to context through knowledge of the existing literature, and the processes of the research, including the participants, settings and data collected. Within this research I provided an extensive review of the literature. This included the current assumptions, dominant narratives and complex perspectives that framed the constructs of wellbeing and mental health. Within the process of the research I carefully considered the views, experiences and constructs discussed amongst the young people, whilst also being reflexive of my own values and positionality as an adult, and the impact that this may have on my interpretations. I was also conscious that the young people were speaking about their school environment whilst being on the premises of their school and the potential influence this may have had on their ability to honestly share their views and experiences. Within this research an inductive approach was used to sensitively analyse the data; the discussion of the young people was prioritised rather than any pre-determined structures or frameworks.

## **6.6: Commitment and rigour**

Yardley (2000) suggested that commitment can be achieved through 'prolonged engagement with the topic' (Yardley, 2000:221), alongside immersion in the data, whilst demonstrating competence with the methods employed. This was achieved through the extensive reading throughout the research, especially in relation to the literature review and discussion chapters. In order to plan the research, particular attention was focussed on the methodology and procedures to ensure that the research could be completed successfully. I followed the processes and steps within TA, carefully reading the guidance provided by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2019), to transcribe, code and interpret the data from the focus groups. This process was carried out over several weeks to re-read, re-interpret and reflect on my interpretations and identification of themes, in relation to the original data. To demonstrate rigour, the data collection and analysis processes were clearly outlined. TA can be suggested to reduce the original rich data collected into individual themes. Therefore I aimed to carefully include illustrative quotes from the young people in attempts to reflect the richness of their discussions.

## **6.7: Transparency and coherence**

To reflect on the transparency and coherence, Yardley (2000) outlines the importance of clearly reporting the procedures, the presentation of the data, and ensuring the clarity of the discussion of the results, linked to existing research and theory. I aimed for transparency throughout the research process, sharing research aims with school staff, parents and the young people themselves. I attempted to clearly detail this within the procedures chapter. Within the data analysis, I created visual thematic maps which clearly linked the themes and subthemes with direct quotations from the young people. All transcriptions, processes of coding, and of creating themes, were also included within the appendices to demonstrate transparency. I linked themes identified within the research to a range of aspects within the existing research literature.

## **6.8: Ethical thread**

I felt that one of the most imperative considerations when evaluating the quality of this research was the ethical thread, starting with the decisions made to plan the research, the processes involved in empowering the young people to share their views and experiences. The process began with the research proposal and ethical application stage. This included: processes for consent, transparency to ensure participants knew the research processes and were able to confidently ask questions, sensitively encouraging their honesty in their discussions, and considerations of reporting their views and experiences.

## **6.9: Member checking**

Within this research, member checking or credibility was supported through taking back the initial analysis to the participants, to establish a 'correspondence between the way the respondents actually perceive social constructs and the way the researcher portrays their viewpoints' (Mertens, 2010: 388). I found this part of the process very influential, allowing young people to add to, amend, or change, their initial ideas as they wished between their discussions within the group. This aimed to create 'a reality which readers recognise[d] as meaningful to them' (Yardley, 2000:222) and minimise any misinterpretation.

## **6.10: Purpose, Impact and Transferability**

I aimed to present an insightful, rich and detailed description of the young people's views, from the small sample size and individual school that was used. In this respect, this research offers a snapshot view from a small group of young people in one secondary school. However I hoped that some of the themes could potentially be applicable to other young people, without making assumptions that such a generalisation was possible. Empowering young people's voice was the main aim of this research: supporting the young people to share their views, experiences and constructs of feeling good or not so good, alongside sharing what aspects help them to have a good day in school. Much of the current research in this area is international, uses mixed methodologies, and tends to use a range of adult and young people's views, which can result in it being difficult to hear the distinct voice of the young people. There are some similarities between this research and other studies, which strengthens current research in these areas. In addition, several new ideas were also identified that were difficult to find in other research. This research also supported my professional journey as a TEP: to find out more and reflect on current discourses around wellbeing and mental health. Throughout this process, I have discovered further information about the origin of such constructs, learnt about the influences of societal and political change, and this has encouraged me to be more reflexive on my own values and positionality as a researcher and psychologist.

## **6.11: Limitations of this research**

This research study is based on a small group of four young people in one secondary school. Initially, ten participants were selected by the school and invited to take place in this research. Seven young people then agreed to take part; however, only five consent forms were received, and, following this, only four young people were able to take part on the day of the focus group. Selection bias would need to be considered for the young people that were initially considered.

Unfortunately, the initial plans for pilot work were not carried out as planned, due to school capacity and timescales. Pilot work would have been useful to improve on my facilitator style within the focus groups. While I tried to reflect on the young people's ideas and comments, with further practise I could have encouraged deeper exploration of their ideas, and at times, reduced the odd leading question, or statement that I made in the moment, as the conversations and discussions flowed. During the focus group, attempts were made to encourage young people to elaborate and add depth to their answers, through questions such as "anything else?" or "can you tell me a bit more?" However, some young people within this group found it difficult to expand on their initial comments, this has also been found in similar research with children and young people (McAuley et. al., 2012). I will use the learning from this research journey to reshape any future opportunities for research: reflecting carefully on questions asked and language used; thinking about timing considerations; and perhaps creating a pre-group meeting to help with any initial questions and to reduce any anxieties, although young people within this focus group appeared confident to join in discussions.

I considered the use of a fellow researcher to explore and reflect on the codes and themes used, but felt that this would counteract the reflective and reflexive focus of this research, from a thorough immersion in the data. Also the timescales to complete the research would have been limited to ensure that this additional process was meaningful.

This research represents only one interpretation of the data. Due to the nature of qualitative research, the analysis and interpretation could be completed in a range of ways. I aimed to be reflective and reflexive about the processes I went through as a researcher, however I acknowledge that my own positionality and interpretation of the data may differ significantly from another researcher's.

## **6.12: Summary**

This chapter reflects on my journey as a researcher, the consideration of evaluative aspects of research of a qualitative nature, and the potential limitations of the research.

## **Chapter Seven: Implications for Educational Psychology Practice and Considerations for Further Research**

### **7.1: Introduction**

This research journey has highlighted several implications for EP practice which will be discussed below. These include: the importance of empowering the voice of young people, promoting a holistic narrative around young people, strengthening staff understanding and wellbeing, supporting whole school approaches, and working collaboratively with other professionals and services.

### **7.2: Empowering the voice of young people**

This research has highlighted the importance of consulting with young people about their views and experiences. As an EP, it is important to continue to develop a flexible and responsive approach to empower children and young people to share their views and have their ideas heard and listened to, especially around issues that matter to them and impact on their lives. In this instance it has provided insight into what some young people find supportive for their wellbeing and what helps them to experience a good day in school. It would be useful to explore further creative opportunities to work and research collaboratively with young people, to incorporate their ideas and perspectives when planning the priorities for service development and target support and resources into areas that are emphasised as important by them. It could also help to reduce assumptions about how policy and agendas filter through to children and young people.

### **7.3: Promoting a holistic narrative**

It is important to reflect on the different frameworks and narratives that may surround children and young people, their families and education settings. EPs can help to reframe the discussions around children and young people, away from within-child and medicalised discourses, towards wider social models of understanding, which incorporate the role and impact of relationships, social interactions and environmental factors. It is imperative to be guided by our values and ethical principles when reflecting on, and, at times challenging, more dominant discourses. Cochoran (2017) highlights the importance and 'potential to disrupt the status quo, to interrogate processes and practices that can...be insensitive to issues of power, politics and prejudice' (Cochoran, 2017: 30) which can be an important aspect of working sensitively with a range of professionals and a variety of settings. The Power Threat Meaning Framework (Johnstone, et. al., 2018) provides insightful guidance to help a range of

professionals to reflect on the way in which they approach complex situations. The PTMF has developed useful questions to frame discussions. Such frameworks can redistribute power to the individual, on their own lives and life story, rather than being subject to narratives provided by others, which at times can have a somewhat negative and reductive impact on a person's life.

#### **7.4: The role of strengths-based and solution-focussed approaches to psychology**

The use of a strengths-based, solution-focussed approach to explore what is working well for young people, can help to build on supportive approaches and promote areas of good practice. Concepts such as resilience and the social model of wellbeing and mental health, can offer a more positive and holistic narrative; celebrating the range of support available in schools, whilst trying to complement such approaches with additional ideas and support that young people themselves value.

#### **7.5: Strengthening staff understanding and wellbeing**

Providing dedicated time for reflection, supervision and training is of utmost importance for school staff, especially for those who are supporting young people with complex needs (Barnardo's, 2019). The EP role can support school staff through supervision-based approaches, such as the Circles of Adults (Wilson and Newton, 2006) and Reflective Teams (Andersen, 1987), to enhance their understanding of the young people that they work with and support their staff-student relationship. In addition, such structures can ensure that staff have mechanisms to support their own wellbeing, create a time and space to reflect and learn from current practice, allow them to share any concerns, and learn through collaborative problem-solving approaches.

Further aspects of the EP role can include raising awareness of the complexities of wellbeing and mental health, through staff training. Explaining a range of psychological paradigms and theories can help to enhance school staff's understanding and enable them to reflect more holistically on any concerns. Promoting systemic practice, through the ecological systems framework by Bronfenbrenner (1979), can help to promote a range of supportive strategies for young people, their families and communities. The impact of whole school systems, classroom based approaches and more individualised coping strategies can be discussed alongside the importance of working closely with families and local communities. Through an attachment lens, the importance of the interactions and relationships within and between these systems can be explored. This can highlight the role of developing key relationships within young people's lives, both at home and at school. This can ensure that young people have

key adults whom they can build up trust and rapport with, to support them to navigate the challenges of life. This may include: providing a secure base and sense of belonging to help young people to feel safe; adults that are able to offer attunement to support them to develop their emotional literacy and self-regulation skills; and offering a source of containment if young people begin to experience distress, through working through any upsetting experiences together. For many young people, the availability of consistent key adults in their life can be of utmost importance to support them overcome any difficulties that they may be experiencing and to reach their full potential as adults. An EP's role can help to promote understanding and facilitate discussions to help young people, school staff and families to engage in joint problem solving approaches to best meet the underlying needs of the young person and the systems around them.

### **7.6: Supporting whole school approaches**

Research exploring whole school culture, climate and ethos, continues to permeate the literature; determining what this looks like in a range of schools brings a variety of complexities. As an EP, it is important to recognise the uniqueness of each school system and individualise support according to each setting, depending on the strengths and needs of their own young people, staff, buildings and environment, local community, and current influencing policies and guidance, recognising that there is unlikely to be a one size fits all approach. This can include the whole school community, and its approaches and understanding of the constructs of wellbeing and mental health, and the dynamics of the adults in the school and the support systems in place. The range of children and young people from diverse communities may vary in their own values, understanding and knowledge, which can also influence the school culture. EPs can help to facilitate discussions with different members of the school systems, and also promote networking opportunities with other schools, to share good practice, supportive ideas and new innovations. EPs can also support young people to share their ideas about what they find most helpful and supportive to inform whole school approaches.

### **7.7: Promoting collaborative working**

The importance of EPs working collaboratively and holistically with a range of education, health and social care services to support children, young people, their families and education settings, has been highlighted. This can be especially important when services are stretched and struggling to meet the needs of families; by creatively working together, more bespoke packages of support could be provided to best meet the particular needs of each family and young person. Regular reviews could encourage support to be available or reduced as needed. Such approaches can also recognise and encourage the importance of supportive

relationships at home, in discussions with parents, ensuring that they know where to access support if they need it, to then be able to better support their own children.

### **7.8: Considerations for further research**

I would aspire towards exploring opportunities for participatory research with children and young people, whilst recognising the limitations of time, consent, ethical considerations and young people's capacity to engage in complex research processes. I feel it is important to reflect on research capturing a specific moment in time, therefore it is always useful to continue to refresh current views and good practice. This current research was limited to four young people within one secondary school. It would be useful to carry out further focus groups with more young people across different settings to inform their current provision. It would also be interesting to further research some of the themes where there was less research literature. I was particularly interested in the role of animals, mobile phones and the impact of school funding on the wellbeing of young people.

### **7.9: Summary**

The role of the EPS in supporting the wellbeing of young people, staff and whole school systems has been considered. This can include empowering the voice of the young people, supporting staff to understand the complexities of a range of situations through training and supervision, whilst also promoting approaches to support their own wellbeing. The importance of EPs seeking opportunities to work with other professionals and services has been highlighted. Considerations for future research are also discussed.

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## Appendix 1 – Review of the Literature for Research on Young People’s Views

Appendix 1 - Research studies exploring the voice of young people in relation to wellbeing and mental health				
Reference	Participants	Methodology/Methods	Key Findings	Limitation considerations
Anderson, D. L. & Graham, A. P. (2016) Improving student wellbeing: having a say at school, <i>School Effectiveness and School Improvement</i> , 27 (3), 348-366.	Australian study. Qualitative: semi-structured interviews with 89 principals and teachers, focus groups with 606 children and young people from primary and secondary groups. Quantitative: online survey with 9975 primary and secondary students and staff.	Mixed Methods Design: Critical discourse analysis of key policies. Qualitative: focus groups and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative: online survey. Dissemination: presentation of findings and professional development with schools.	Students valued the importance of having a say, being listened to, having rights, a democratic school environment and being respected. Alongside feeling happy, safe, loved and healthy. Having a say included the areas of 'pedagogy, discipline, welfare, and social aspects of school life'. Students expressed tensions between having a say, being listened to and having meaningful participation in schools.	Based on research that was carried out in Australia therefore different systems, cultures, communities are likely to be observed. Sample included three Catholic school regions only.
Baker, M. (2013) <i>An Investigation To Identify Factors That Promote And Demote Mental Health In Schools</i> . Thesis. The University of Birmingham.	14 Schools (infant to secondary including 2 special schools) 361 staff members and 219 children and young people.	MacDonald and O'Hara's (1998) Ten Element Map used as an audit tool. Focus groups with the children and young people. Pupil and staff responses were transcribed and the data was analysed through thematic analysis.	Part of a Targeted Mental Health project.  Pupil views of what supports their wellbeing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance of specific areas within the school environment and outside areas which included the attractiveness of the setting.</li> <li>• Positive feedback, rewards and reward systems.</li> </ul>	Administration of the audit tool was carried out by the researcher and six EPs within the team. Data across school settings not limited to one phase of education. Follow up evaluation forms had a limited return rate. Interpretation mainly by individual researcher with some discussions with supervisor.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The role and emotional importance of members of staff.</li> <li>• Opportunities to socialise and the actions of peers.</li> </ul>	Complexity of concepts and language used in the audit tool for children, especially the younger children, which could have led to difficulties in understanding the framework.
Beynon, C. (2019) Supporting the mental wellbeing of children and young people in the school environment: a qualitative study. <i>The Lancet</i> , 394, S25.	Based on schools in Wales. Six focus groups, 62 pupils (33 girls and 29 boys), aged 5–18 years.	Focus groups exploring the wellbeing needs of children at the schools. Thematic Analysis to analyse the data.	Themes included: good relationships and respect between pupils and staff; being able to raise concerns without worries; prompt response to any incidents of bullying; time for unstructured activities and lunch; feeling supported for the preparation for tests and exams; effective pupil voice systems; staff supporting calm classrooms; prioritising pupil and staff well-being; monitoring staff changes and responding to this; use of support services to support wellbeing; celebrating diversity; and supporting pupil transition. The themes identified by the children influenced the Wales Healthy School Scheme criteria.	Based on schools in Wales. Limited sample of 62 children. Ages ranged from five to eighteen, differences may have been present within different age ranges.
Children's Commissioner for England (CCE) (2017) <i>Children's Voices A review of evidence on the subjective wellbeing of children with mental health needs in England</i> . CCE: London.	Literature review of 8 studies (14 originally identified). Children under the age of 17. Children identified as having mental health needs.	Rapid review of the literature – studies published from 2007 onwards. Focussing on qualitative research around the subjective views, experiences and voice of children in England.	Children's concepts of mental health or mental illness were generally quite negative with some aspects of stigma. Children's had limited awareness of mental health services. Their experiences fell into several areas: their awareness, barriers and accessibility, confidentiality and trust, participation and meaningful engagement. Studies around children's wellbeing highlighted the role of: self-esteem and subjective experiences of (self-) stigma, relationships, self-efficacy and coping	Ten week schedule for rapid literature review. A 'guided' approach was used rather than a systemic literature review. Studies with adults and children's views were not included.

			(strategies), self-reliance, turning to others, drugs and alcohol, self-harm and suicide, sports and outdoor activities, creative lessons, young children.	
Cocking, C., Sherriff, N., Aranda, K., & Zeeman, L. (2018) Exploring young people's emotional well-being and resilience in educational contexts: A resilient space? <i>Health, 1-18.</i>	109 Young People (11-19 Years old).	Participatory approach using an engagement exercise and participant steering groups. Focus groups and interviews. Thematic Analysis.	Four main themes were identified: engagement with resilience, individual resilience strategies, social and/or collective resilience strategies and the role of schools/services in promoting resilience.	The use of a resilience framework which may need further consideration of social and relational factors. Only based in the south of England.
Coombes, L., Appleton, J. V., Allen, D., & Yerrell, P. (2013) Emotional Health and Well-being in Schools: Involving Young People. <i>Children &amp; Society 27, 220-232.</i>	8 focus groups in 5 secondary schools. Year 10 pupils.	Qualitative approach using Framework Analysis. 'Familiarisation, identifying a thematic framework, indexing, charting, mapping and interpretation'.	Four main themes were identified: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meaning of emotional health and wellbeing (EHWB) for young people,</li> <li>• Schools' commitment to EHWB policy,</li> <li>• Curriculum omissions,</li> <li>• Talking about EHWB.</li> </ul>	Difficulty generalising findings to the whole population of young people. Thematic analysis and interpretation limitations – e.g. potential misrepresentation by researchers.
Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCFS) (2008a) <i>Childhood Wellbeing, Qualitative Research Study</i> , London: Counterpoint Research.	Children and young people in Years 3, 7, 9 & 11. Parents and carers.	Focus Groups using visual stimuli – photographs.	Key Factors in a good/content childhood included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The influence of the Family</li> <li>• The influence of Friends</li> <li>• The influence of schools and teachers</li> <li>• 'Other' influences</li> <li>• My child/young person and a good/ content childhood</li> </ul>	Parents, carers, children and young people's views. Appeared difficult to find the distinct voice of the young people at times.
Dex, S. & Hollingworth, K. (2012) Children's and young people's voices on their wellbeing, CWRC	11 UK studies and 9 non-UK studies were found that explored what children understand about their wellbeing.	Rapid literature search - qualitative methods and surveys using open-ended questions.	Three category framework used to group findings which included: the quality of relationships (parents, friends, wider family, pets, teachers, others), quality of the environment (home, school, neighbourhood) and self and	The impact of the age of the child on their understanding and concepts of wellbeing needed to be further explored.

WORKING PAPER No. 16. CWRC: London.	Children up to 18 years old. Mainly focussed on UK studies. Research published after 2000.		freedoms (health, education, choices, psycho-social).	Children's understanding of language in research, especially survey methods. Qualitative studies with small sample sizes generally used.
Duckett, P., Sixsmith, J., & Kagan, C. (2008) Researching Pupil Well-Being in UK Secondary Schools: <i>Community psychology and the politics of research. Childhood, 15 (1)</i> , pp.89–106.	557 pupils (Year 8 & 10) and 24 staff members.	Multiple methods which included: semi-structured in-depth interviews with pupils and adults, experiential school walks with pupils, written work with pupils, and weekly diaries with pupils.	Young people perceived that positive aspects to support their wellbeing included supportive relationships, including trust and respect, with teachers and peers, curriculum with opportunities to develop and work with friends, good resources and environment within the school, involvement and sense of belonging in school, decision making and a sense of control. Negative aspects included teacher pressures on academic success, regulations and school rules, dissatisfaction with school uniform, disrespect, bullying from peers and teachers, ineffective anti-bullying strategies. Staff's factors included: social relationships, differed with sense of achievement (in contrast to pressure seen by young people), staff saw uniform and anti-bullying strategies as positive aspects.	Tensions with Local Education Authority (LEA), young people reported inappropriate behaviour of school staff and lack of support for incidents of bullying. Ethics of research and sensitive dissemination discussed.
Fattore, T., Mason, J., & Watson, E. (2007) Children's conceptualisation(s) of their well-being. <i>Social Indicators Research, 80 (1)</i> , 5–29. Fattore, T., & Mason, J. (2017) The	Australian Study. Children, aged 8-15 years old, from rural and urban areas within New South Wales, Australia. 126 children completed the first stage, 95 in the	Participatory Action Research. Individual or group semi-structured interviews (dependent on children's preference), three stages: firstly to identify key themes, secondly to further explore dominant themes, thirdly, task-orientated	Children generally identified positive emotional states with wellbeing. These included: happiness, excitement and feeling calm but they also identified with being sad or angry. Key concepts included autonomy, keeping safe and feeling secure, having a positive sense of self, access to material resources, the physical environment and home, activities and keeping active.	Based on children in Australia, with different systems, culture and environments to the UK. Voluntary participation could mean some children and their families were more likely to be included than others.

Significance of the Social for Child Well-Being. <i>Children &amp; Society</i> , 31 (4), 276-289.	second stage and 56 in the third stage.	project exploring themes important to the individual.		
Fletcher, A., Fitzgerald-Yau, N., Wiggins, M., Viner, R. M., and Bonnell, C. (2015) Involving young people in changing their school environment to make it safer. <i>Health Education</i> , 115 (3/4), 322–338.	4 London-based secondary schools. 112 young people, 20 staff, 7 members of the senior management team and 14 student and 9 staff action group members.	Semi-structured interviews with school managers, action group members and facilitators, focus groups with students and staff, and observations.	Schools used new action groups to help to promote student involvement in decision making, with promotion of a school flexible approach rather than a one-size fits all approach. This included changes to behaviour and rewards policies, introduction of a new student-led school blog, implementation of restorative practices, extending tutor times to support social and emotional learning, planning an away day for students (to improve relationships and raise aspirations), effective use of CCTV.	NVivo software used to transcribe, this may miss some of the knowledge and interpretation of the data that comes with reading and re-reading. Only used schools rated as satisfactory or better with Ofsted.
Foley, K., R., Blackmore, A. M., Girdler, S., O'Donnell, M., Glauert, R., Llewellyn, G., & Leonard, H. (2012) To Feel Belonged: The Voices of Children and Youth with Disabilities on the Meaning of Wellbeing. <i>Child Indicators Research</i> , 5 (2), 375–391.	Australian study. 20 children and young people (9 girls and 11 boys aged 8 to 16 years old) 3 children had Down syndrome, 7 autism spectrum disorder/ Asperger's syndrome, 6 cerebral palsy, one a vision impairment and 3 had an intellectual disability for which the cause was unknown. All children attended mainstream or education support centres in mainstream settings.	Focus groups and an open coding method. Underpinning questions included "What is important for a good life?" and "What are the barriers (or what gets in the way) of having a good life?" Methods included group and one-to-one discussions, group brainstorming, drawing pictures with felt pens and writing lists on large pieces of paper.	Six themes were identified: the importance of good friends, family factors, anxiety relating to performance at school, coping strategies/ resilience, and personal growth and development.	Small sample size, with limited numbers of children within each area. Research is based on Australian children in different schools, environments and with different policies and guidance to the UK.

<p>Fraine, B., Landeghem, G. V., Damme, J. V., &amp; Onghena, P. (2005) An Analysis of WellBeing in Secondary School with Multilevel Growth Curve models and Multilevel Multivariate Models. <i>Quality and Quantity</i>, 39 (3), 297–316.</p>	<p>Belgium study. 3788 children were followed in 53 secondary schools in Flanders, Belgium.</p>	<p>Longitudinal Study. Wellbeing questionnaire that was administered four times over children’s time in secondary school. The items referred to four themes: interest in learning tasks (8 items), relationship with teachers (10 items), liking the school (4 items) and attentiveness in the classroom (10 items).</p>	<p>Student wellbeing was found to be highest at the end of the first grade and lowest at the end of the sixth grade. Large differences experienced between different students. Some students within the sample showed an increase in wellbeing.</p>	<p>Only measuring aspects described on pre-determined questionnaire, no qualitative data. Little information regarding which factors relating to wellbeing declined. Little consideration for wider factors relating to relationships and environments. Self-reported questionnaire completed on one day; wider impacts on this day may have influenced the results. Children that changed schools or repeated a grade were excluded from the research.</p>
<p>Gillett-Swan, J. (2014) Investigating Tween Children's Capacity to Conceptualise the Complex Issue of Wellbeing. <i>Global Studies of Childhood</i>, 4 (2), 64-76.</p>	<p>Australian study, based in South East Queensland. Children aged 8-12 years old, 31 female, 23 male across five schools. 4-6 children per group.</p>	<p>Qualitative methods, verbal, written and illustrative activities. Session one - children describing wellbeing, session two - analysing their descriptions through thematic grouping, session three - defining wellbeing. Hermeneutic/relational approach to data analysis with an interest in the links between the data.</p>	<p>11 themes were identified in children’s concepts of wellbeing. Children acknowledged wellbeing as positive, negative and fluctuating. Children’s conceptualisations of wellbeing developed over time (involvement within three sessions for research).</p> <p>Three main themes of:  <b>Social (relationships)</b> - other people, groups, animals and objects, positive, negative or neutral affectations, family, friends and peers, other people, animals, global, and spiritual aspects, how others perceived them.  <b>Psychological (self)</b> - self-concept, self-care, self-protection, self-perception, self-regulation and management (behaviour) and effort. Personal qualities, feelings – positive, neutral and negative.  <b>Physical (health)</b> - physical health and fitness, nutrition, negative aspects of</p>	<p>Children tended to focus on the events, circumstances and interactions that were based on the child’s most recent experiences and memories. Based in one region of Australia. Relevance of findings to UK children could be debated. Small sample size could mean it is difficult to generalise these findings to other children.</p>

			health, and health care. Wellbeing insurance, food and fitness.	
González-Carrasco, M., Vaqué, C., Malo, S., Crous, G., Casas, F., & Figuer, C. (2019) A Qualitative Longitudinal Study on the Well-Being of Children and Adolescents. <i>Child Indicators Research</i> , 12 (2), 479-499.	Study based in the North East of Spain. Children were 9-16 years old. 9 primary and secondary schools. 940 children completed questionnaire, 100 children participated in focus group and individual interviews.	Longitudinal study, focus groups and individual interviews, psychometric scales of subjective well-being. Exploring influence of subjective wellbeing on young people's concepts of wellbeing. Content analysis.	Five categories were identified: interpersonal relationships, which refers to having good or bad relationships with family, friends and other people, health, leisure activities, the school domain and personal aspects.  Older children reported more factors for both positive and negative aspects of wellbeing.	Only a two year data collection period. Difficult to generalise finding, specific cultural group in North East Spain. Individual interviews only with oldest year group.
Goswami, H. (2012) Social Relationships and Children's Subjective Well-Being. <i>Social Indicators Research</i> , 107 (3), 575-588.	English study. 4,673 children, from years 6, 10 & 11. 53% female, 47% male. 82.2% white British, 2% self-identified with a disability, 10% with a learning difficulty.	National survey with children in secondary schools across England. Questionnaire was piloted with young people first. Data analysed through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).	Young people were generally happy in their lives and experienced positive relationships with their family, friends and neighbours, with only small incidents in negative experiences with friends, bullying and unfair treatment.	Self-reported questionnaires, pre-determined concepts. Quantitative data, young peoples needed to score their experiences rather than shared detailed descriptions.
Graham, A., Powell, M., Thomas, N., & Anderson, D. (2017) Reframing 'well-being' in schools: The potential of recognition. <i>Cambridge Journal of Education</i> , 47 (4), 439-455.  Graham, A., Powell, M., A., & Truscott, J. (2016) Facilitating student well-being: relationships do	Australian Study. Quantitative phase: Online Survey 3906 primary students and 5362 secondary students and 70 staff.  Qualitative phase: 67 focus groups with 606 secondary aged students and 89 individual interviews with teachers and principals	Mixed methods design Phase 1 – Policy Analysis of key relevant local, state and Commonwealth policy regarding well-being.  Phase 2 – Qualitative: Semi-structured interviews and focus groups with semi-structured open-ended questions, mind mapping of the students' ideas on large sheets of paper by the researchers.	Conceptualisation of well-being as multidimensional, made up of physical, social, emotional, psychological and spiritual interests.  Three key themes from young people's views, well-being as 'being', 'having' and 'doing', relationships and a sense of agency featured centrally throughout the themes.  Young people's emphasis was on on friendships, including the impact of any difficulties on their wellbeing, being valued and treated fairly by school staff	Research based on children from Australian Catholic schools.  Recognition theory used as a theoretical basis from the discussions – impact of being theory/ researcher led.  NVivo software used for analysis and identifying themes – could limit researcher's familiarity and reflections on the data.

<p>matter, <i>Educational Research</i>, 58 (4), 366-383.</p> <p>Powell, M., Graham, A., Fitzgerald, A., Thomas, R., &amp; White, N. (2018) Wellbeing in schools: What do students tell us? <i>The Australian Educational Researcher</i>, 45(4), 515-531.</p>		<p>Phase 3 – Quantitative: Online survey</p> <p>Phase 4: Analysis and presentation of findings and professional development for schools.</p> <p>Theoretical basis – childhood studies and recognition theory (Honneth) – being cared for, respected and valued.</p>	<p>and relationships which supported a sense of connectedness.</p>	
<p>Kidger, J., Donovan, J. L., Biddle, L., Campbell, R., &amp; Gunnell, D. (2009) Supporting adolescent emotional health in schools: a mixed methods study of student and staff views in England, <i>BMC Public Health</i>, 9, 403.</p>	<p>Quantitative: 296 Schools (2 schools from every Local Education Authority area in England)</p> <p>Qualitative: 8 English secondary schools. Student focus groups (27 groups, 154 students aged 12-14, 4-8 students) and staff interviews (12 interviews, 15 individuals)</p>	<p>Mixed methods approach. Postal questionnaire focussed on Emotional Health and Wellbeing (EHWB) questions asked how high a priority EHWB was in the school (choice of five responses from very low to very high), whether a list of EHWB topics were taught in lessons, and if a range of other EHWB related activities or support were provided such as on-site counselling, links with external agencies, relevant policies and teacher training (respondents were asked to tick yes/no in each case). Qualitative methods were used to explore staff and students' views regarding current and potential</p>	<p>Most schools provided support for bullying and improving emotional health in lessons. 'Approximately 1/3 covered self-harm or depression. At least 80% provided an on-site counsellor, a drop-in health service, a peer support service and support groups for vulnerable students. Less than 50% provided any training for staff members involved in delivering EHWB work, and only 26.5% provided emotional health training for teachers in general'.</p> <p>Focus groups - Three main themes identified - <b>Emotional health in the curriculum</b> – difficulties and lack of EHWB material and teaching, preferences for external experts to teach topics, some stigma for discussing or experiencing difficult emotions.</p> <p><b>Support for those in distress</b> - importance of having someone to talk to, expressed the lack of accessible and confidential supports within schools, the</p>	<p>Varied role of staff that were interviewed in each school. School staff chose which pupils were invited to join the focus groups. Inter-rater reliability between two researchers, some differences in interpretation – whether concepts were a main theme or subtheme. 25.3% return rate of questionnaires – schools who responded where more interested in EHWB. Varied amount of focus groups and interview within each school. Potential role of group conformity within the focus groups.</p>

		<p>emotional health provision in schools. Data was analysed thematically, following a constant comparison approach. Initial coding frame used to analysis additional transcripts.</p>	<p>importance of accessible safe spaces and reducing the stigma of support.</p> <p><b>Physical and psychosocial environment</b> – importance of schools supporting emotional health through whole-school changes and a supportive culture, improving the physical environment. Reducing difficulties from negative experiences such as bullying by peers, difficulties within relationships with teachers and academic work.</p>	
<p>Kuurme, T., &amp; Carlsson, A. (2010) The Factors of Well-Being in Schools as a Living Environment According to Students' Evaluation. <i>Journal of Teacher Education for Sustainability</i>, 12 (2), 70-88.</p>	<p>5 schools and 185 Estonian students. 5 schools and 161 Finnish students. 8<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> forms with data gathered from 2006-2008.</p>	<p>Qualitative phenomenological method. Semi-structured open questionnaire. Analysed by qualitative content analysis.</p>	<p>The meaningfulness of school appeared to be the most important factor in the students' evaluation of their school experiences, alongside a cooperation orientated atmosphere. Diminished by the routine hierarchical working system and bad relations. Themes included: school is good and interesting, personal qualities, school is tormenting and pointless, people in school.</p>	<p>Impact of culture, differing education systems, policies etc. Questionnaire method offering some constructs by the researcher.</p>
<p>Lee, B., &amp; Yoo, M. (2017) What accounts for the variations in children's subjective well-being across nations? A decomposition method study. <i>Children and Youth Services Review</i>, 80, 15-21.</p>	<p>Data from 16,940 12-year-old children from: Algeria, Nepal, Estonia, Spain, Colombia, Turkey, Ethiopia, South Korea, Germany, England, Romania, Norway, Poland, and South Africa.</p>	<p>Children's Worlds Project Data from 54,000 children aged 8, 10, and 12 years old from 18 countries around the world in 2013–2016. Decomposition method. Subjective wellbeing (SWB) was measured by a modified version of the student life satisfaction scale (Huebner, 1991). Seven factors that are known to be important for children's well-being including leisure,</p>	<p>Cultural differences suggested for SWB. Romania appeared to have the highest level of SWB and South Korea had the lowest SWB. Freedom to choose and self were the most important factors in determining a country's overall level of children's SWB. Some influence by factors such as leisure, environment, and relationships on children's SWB. Learning and money appeared to have negligible effects on children's SWB.</p> <p>South Africa and Turkey showed higher levels of leisure; South Korea had the lowest level of leisure. Ethiopia, South Korea, and South Africa have lower</p>	<p>Potential of cultural bias across methods of reporting wellbeing. Most of original questionnaire items were developed for the Western culture.</p>

		environment, learning, money, relationship, freedom to choose, and self.	satisfaction scores on the environment. For Learning, Germany, England, Poland, and Estonia showed lower levels of satisfaction. Norway, South Korea, and England showed higher levels of material well-being. Norway and Spain reported the highest levels of relationship. Romania reported the highest levels in freedom to choose and self; South Korea reported the lowest levels in both of the areas.	
McAuley, C., & Layte, R. (2012) Exploring the Relative Influence of Family Stressors and Socio-Economic Context on Children's Happiness and Well-Being. <i>Child Indicators Research</i> , 5 (3), 523-545.	Irish study. 8,568 children, aged 9, and their families.	Longitudinal study. Growing Up in Ireland study. Subscale of the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (Second Edition) Happiness and Satisfaction Subscales were used as an index of the child's happiness Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) completed by the child's mother as a measure of emotional and behavioural problems Range of other scales used and compared through latent class analysis.	Aim to explore the relationship between children's perceived happiness, family stresses and the socio-economic context of the family. Family stressors were found to explain more (56.4 %) of the total variance explained in children's happiness than the measures of the family's socioeconomic status (23.1 %). Higher level of stressful circumstances included: 'high levels of parent child-conflict; children with a high level of social and emotional problems; parents with a high preponderance of clinical depression; parents with low self-efficacy and a considerable proportion (25 %) with little or no contact with wider extended family'.	Only focussed on two factors on children's happiness and satisfaction. Many different scales used, reliability and validity of each scale used may need to be explored. Explores associated links between factors, very difficult to establish cause/effect type statements from complex families with a range of factors.
Navarro, D., Montserrat, C., Malo, S., González, M., Casas, F., & Crous, G. (2017) Subjective well-being: What do adolescents say? <i>Child &amp; Family Social</i>	Spanish Study. 10 focus groups (8 to 10 participants), 9-15 years old, lowest and highest subjective wellbeing scores – two separate groups.	Longitudinal study – over two years. Questionnaire/scales used to determine low and high levels of subjective wellbeing (SWB). Focus groups were asked questions and provided	Children scoring lower in SWB tended to highlight relationships with friends and ensuring their basic needs were covered, whereas those scoring higher tended to highlight family relationships and not having problems.  Three main themes across age ranges:	Focus groups took place within school environment. Aspects linked to power in research may need to be considered. Participants shown pre-determined constructs of wellbeing after their initial

<p>Work, 22 (1), 175-184.</p>		<p>with statements to create debates amongst the participants. Content analysis used.</p>	<p><b>Family relationships</b> - importance of not having problems with parents or family in general, resolving problems with them, receiving help from them, not getting upset or arguing with them, and having good communication with them. For primary school participants, it is important to spend time with the family and share good times together.</p> <p><b>Relationships with friends</b> - to receive affection, support, appreciation and help; and to enjoy being with their friends, which includes playing and doing leisure activities together.</p> <p><b>Health</b> - good health, including feeling healthy and not being sick, taking care of yourself and eating.</p> <p><b>Age-related themes</b>          Feelings towards yourself (11-12)          Life aspirations (11-12, 12-13)          School related aspects (10-11, 11-12)          Technology (9-10, 11-12)          Interpersonal relationships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the fact that others respect them and listen to them (10–11-year-old group).</li> <li>• good relationships in general (9–10-year-old group).</li> <li>• relationships with girlfriends or boyfriends (9–10-year-old group).</li> </ul> <p>Needs met (food, drink, a home) – (10-11)          Most participants discussed school aspects reducing their wellbeing rather than supporting it. Adolescents' perception of this education system was related to a feeling of dissatisfaction.</p>	<p>discussion potentially reframing their ideas.</p>
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<p>Newton, J., &amp; Ponting, C. (2013) Eliciting Young People's Views on Wellbeing Through Contemporary Science Debates in Wales. <i>Child Indicators Research</i>, 6 (1), 71-95.</p>	<p>Welsh Study. 6 schools/colleges were chosen to participate. 129 participants between the ages of 16 and 19, 53 % male and 47 % female. Ethnicity: 89 % considered themselves to be British, 3 % of other European descent, and a further 3 % were of Asian descent. The remaining 5 % did not specify their ethnicity. 4 % lived in households where no-one was employed, 6 % were from a single parent family and 1.5 % were teenage parents.</p>	<p>The Techniquet Contemporary Science Debate (CSD) which is an inclusive discussion method where groups of young people discuss a particular topic based on a number of interactive activities, props, story and information cards. The use of post-it notes to record individual's thoughts on what wellbeing means to them. Categorising the post-it notes into common groups on flipchart paper. Researchers make written notes on participants' comments. Voice recorders used to capture sound bites. The use of crib sheets, where pupils could note some prompts to assist feeding back to the larger group. Story cards - anonymised accounts of individual's real life experiences of certain aspects of wellbeing. Groups read through the cards before selecting one or two cards that resonated strongly with them (i.e. cards they found interesting, shocking, agreeable or disagreeable).</p>	<p>Young people identified: people in their lives (friends, family), and aspects of socialising (sports, money, food, music, health, fast-food, education and alcohol).</p> <p><b>Friends and family</b> – 'foundation of wellbeing; they are "what your life is built around, important form of emotional support, instrumental to helping you socialise, giving you confidence to set up new relationships and also shaping your moral standards'.</p> <p><b>Sport</b> - also came up under the categories of 'hobbies', 'lifestyle', 'wants' and 'things to do'</p> <p><b>Money</b> - route to independence, providing agency, security and allowing access to basic needs, lack of money seen as powerlessness and stress.</p> <p><b>Food and health</b> – basic needs and a foundation for living well.</p> <p><b>Music</b> - crucial role that technology (mp3 players, TV, internet) played in facilitating access to music and how to relate to each other and socialise (i.e. going clubbing, listening to music).</p> <p><b>Fastfood</b> – knew it wasn't necessarily a healthy choice but part of teenage life.</p> <p><b>Education</b> - traditional pathway towards security by providing access to a good job, money and the ability to buy your own home</p> <p><b>Alcohol</b> – socialising, providing confidence, fun and a way of letting go</p>	<p>NVivo software used to support analysis. Welsh study, different education systems to England. Group discussion may reduce minority voices by hearing the majority or more confident voices.</p>
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<p>Sixsmith, J., Gabhainn, S. N., Fleming, C., &amp; O'Higgins, S. (2007) Childrens', parents' and teachers' perceptions of child wellbeing. <i>Health Education, 107</i> (6), 511-523.</p>	<p><b>Phase 1</b> – All children aged 8-12, from 4 rural school settings (1 girls, 1 boys and 2 mixed gender schools)</p> <p><b>Phase 2</b> – 8 children aged 8-12 years.</p> <p><b>Phase 3</b> – 8 different children at a different school.</p> <p><b>Phase 4</b> – 7 parents and 6 teachers.</p>	<p>Participatory approach based on the “draw and write” technique, children were encouraged to take photographs rather than draw and they also participated in data analysis.</p> <p><b>Phase 1</b> – 623 photographs taken by children assigned into groups of 50 by researchers.</p> <p><b>Phase 2</b> – children categorised photos in groups and named them.</p> <p><b>Phase 3</b> – further children from a different school. The categories developed in Phase 2 were represented by a flashcard with the category name and previously chosen example photograph. The children were asked to arrange the categories into a pattern by fixing the flashcards onto a double sheet of A1 paper in any way they chose, they could also add any categories that they felt were missing.</p> <p><b>Phase 4</b> – parents and teachers at a different school completed phases 1 to 3, categorising and checking all photographs taken by the original children.</p>	<p>Teachers schema – home, family and friends, categories perceived as more important were placed in closer proximity to these three central features.</p> <p>Parents schema - family, home, support and friends, all categories were depicted as linked and connected, as it was perceived that children need the totality for wellbeing.</p> <p>School had a stronger emphasis in adult’s conceptions.</p> <p>Children’s schema - family” (closely followed by “animals and pets” and “sports and soccer”) was considered the most important with flowers and clock the least important for wellbeing. 23 categories being presented in a hierarchy. Centrality of family is in concurrence with both parents and teachers, friends and pets was emphasised by children.</p>	<p>Different groups of children were involved in the categorisation and the schema development phases, whereas single groups of both teachers and parents completed both sets of tasks. Subjective grouping by a small group of participants. Difficulties generalising from the findings.</p>
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<p>Thoilliez, B. (2011) How to Grow up Happy: An Exploratory Study on the Meaning of Happiness from Children's Voices. <i>Child Indicators Research</i>, 4 (2), 323-351.</p>	<p>Spanish study. 817 boys and girls, aged 6 to 12, in primary school settings.</p>	<p>Biographical methodology. Field work at three public and two privately-subsidized Spanish primary schools involving students from first to sixth grades.</p> <p>Explored: a) what makes children feel happy, and b) how can we use this information for education.</p> <p>Questionnaires and interviews. Quantitative analysis.</p>	<p>Findings – subjective feelings of positive affect decreased as child got older, no significant differences were found for gender.</p> <p>Seven factors were identified that made children happy and sad in their lives.</p> <p><b>Family</b> (33.23%) includes positive feelings, birth of themselves or their siblings and cousins, family love and care, being together and difficult experiences lived punishments, loss, bereavement and parent's divorce. <b>Friendship</b> and peer relationships (19.98%), includes being positively accepted by their friends or being rejected or experiencing difficulties with their peers. <b>School performance</b> (7.21%), includes school achievements and school failures. <b>Parties and special occasions</b> (15.63%) includes birthdays and Christmas, being remembered, receiving presents, and/or having fun with their family and friends. <b>Spare time and obligations</b> (9.70%), experience some tensions between wanting to have free time to play with friends or watch TV, and meeting school obligations. <b>Illness and injuries</b> (5.54%), includes sad such as breaking an arm or a leg, falling in the playground, or falling off a bike. <b>Morality and values</b> (6.83%), includes happy experiences such as helping and</p>	<p>Subjective self-reported. Pre-defined questions – e.g. around relationships. Spanish study – different culture and education systems to the UK.</p>
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			sharing with others, or as sad memories such as lying or insults. <b>None</b> (1.88%) includes children who didn't report any unhappy or sad experiences in their daily lives.	
Uyan-Semerci, P., & Erdoğan, E. (2017) Child Well-Being Indicators Through the Eyes of Children in Turkey: A Happy Child Would be One Who... <i>Child Indicators Research</i> , 10 (1), 267-295.	Turkish Study. 562 children from different age groups - questionnaires. 40 focus groups with approximately 10 children.	Mixed methodology. Questionnaires aiming to discover the factors that make a child happy in four domains and unhappy in two domains, for material well-being they are asked both. The children were not asked about what made an imaginary child happy or unhappy.  Focus groups were held afterwards to evaluate answers to the questionnaire and expand on initial answers/add domains.	Eight domains were identified: Material Well-being, Education, Health, Risk and Security, Housing and Environment, Participation, Relations and Subjective Well-Being.  'A happy child was perceived as one who feels fit and strong; who has positive mood; who can go to vacation and trips, and who does not wear old clothes; who has a room and a table in her/his house; has high grades in the school which has a clean and big garden where s/ he can do sports; lives in a family with no risk of drugs, fighting and violence; realizes a hobby that s/he likes; spends time with her/his family and her/his friends; and is loved by her/his friends'.	Difficult to generalise. Self-reported wellbeing. Based in Turkey, cultural differences.
Williams, S. L. (2013) <i>Promoting Children's Mental Health At A Whole-School Level Using Action Research</i> . Thesis. The University of Birmingham.	Mainstream primary school. Year 3-4 (4 pupils), year 5-6 (6 pupils), 8 Parents and 2 staff.	Action research and a mixed-method approach. First phase - a scoping exercise – questionnaire (quantitative). Second phase - focus groups (qualitative) methods. Analysed through thematic analysis. MacDonald and O'Hara's (1998) Ten Element Map underpins the research.	Four key themes: individual characteristics, the role of other people, opportunities for active participation, and environmental factors.  Schools felt that mental health promotion should be carried out by specialist services.	Only 8 out of 32 schools returned questionnaires. Framework underpinning the research rather than more of an inductive approach. Only one primary school and small number of participants used.

<p>Woolfson, R., Woolfson, L., Mooney, L., &amp; Bryce, D. (2009) Young people's views of mental health education in secondary schools: A Scottish study. <i>Child: Care, Health and Development</i>, 35 (6), 790-798.</p>	<p>Schools based in the west of Scotland. Three secondary schools. 44 pupils (21 girls, 23 boys) within 9 focus groups. 773 pupils completed a questionnaire.</p>	<p>Exploratory study. Mixed methods. Focus groups and questionnaires.</p>	<p>Important for mental health education to be delivered by a familiar adult such as a class teacher and someone with personal experience. 'Most young people felt that it was important to teach mental health education through school trips to relevant places such as a hospital or science centre. Learn about mental health in their usual class group. People talking about the subjects, group discussions, using role-play, videos, designing posters and practical activities. They viewed it as useful to participate in activities with familiar people'. Not helpful – writing from the board and unfamiliar people. Mixed views about reading from books alone.</p>	<p>Scottish based study. Research is based on only three secondary schools. Smaller number of participants in focus groups.</p>
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## Appendix 2 – Ethical Approval Letter



Downloaded: 20/05/2020  
Approved: 13/06/2019

Beverly Arnott  
Registration number: 170109895  
School of Education  
Programme: DEdCPsy

Dear Beverly

**PROJECT TITLE:** Supporting wellbeing and mental health in secondary schools - young peoples perspectives  
**APPLICATION:** Reference Number 025372

On behalf of the University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on 13/06/2019 the above-named project was **approved** on ethics grounds, on the basis that you will adhere to the following documentation that you submitted for ethics review:

- University research ethics application form 025372 (form submission date: 27/05/2019); (expected project end date: 30/06/2020).
- Participant information sheet 1060040 version 2 (27/05/2019).
- Participant information sheet 1060034 version 2 (27/05/2019).
- Participant information sheet 1060033 version 2 (27/05/2019).
- Participant information sheet 1062705 version 1 (27/05/2019).
- Participant consent form 1060041 version 2 (27/05/2019).
- Participant consent form 1060035 version 2 (27/05/2019).

If during the course of the project you need to [deviate significantly from the above-approved documentation](#) please inform me since written approval will be required.

Your responsibilities in delivering this research project are set out at the end of this letter.

Yours sincerely

David Hyatt  
Ethics Administrator  
School of Education

Please note the following responsibilities of the researcher in delivering the research project:

- The project must abide by the University's Research Ethics Policy: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/rs/ethicsandintegrity/ethicspolicy/approval-procedure>
- The project must abide by the University's Good Research & Innovation Practices Policy: [https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/po/po/poly\\_fs/1\\_6710661/file/GRIPPolicy.pdf](https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/po/po/poly_fs/1_6710661/file/GRIPPolicy.pdf)
- The researcher must inform their supervisor (in the case of a student) or Ethics Administrator (in the case of a member of staff) of any significant changes to the project or the approved documentation.
- The researcher must comply with the requirements of the law and relevant guidelines relating to security and confidentiality of personal data.
- The researcher is responsible for effectively managing the data collected both during and after the end of the project in line with best practice, and any relevant legislative, regulatory or contractual requirements.

## Appendix 3 – Participant Information Sheet

### Young Person’s Information Sheet

*(Adults please read this with the young people and feel free to contact me for any additional information if needed)*

#### SUPPORTING WELLBEING AND MENTAL HEALTH IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS INFORMATION ABOUT TAKING PART IN THE RESEARCH STUDY

This information tells you what you need to know about taking part in some exciting research. My name is Beverly Arnott and I am currently a Trainee Educational Psychologist working within the Educational Psychology Service at the XXX Council and studying at The University of XXX. You are being invited to take part in a research project that will be carried out as part of my Training.

<p><b>What is the research about?</b></p> <p>I am interested in what supports young people to feel good while they are in school. I would like to talk to a group of young people to ask about some of the words you might use about feeling good and also to hear your views and experiences of what helps to make a good day in school. This research will then be shared with school, XXX Council and The University of XXX. I may even consider publishing this research.</p>	
<p><b>What will happen if I take part?</b></p> <p>You have been invited to take part in two focus groups. The first group will take place in November 2019. The second group is likely to take place during November or December 2019. Each group should last for no longer than one hour. There should be between six and eight people in the group. During each group, I will ask a few questions about your views and experiences. There will be no right or wrong answers, I will just be interested in what you think. You can answer as many questions as you would like to. Some people in the group might feel comfortable to answer all of the questions; other people might be a bit quieter and only want to join in with one or two questions and this is ok.</p> <p>After the first group I will listen to what you have told me and try to put this information into themes, I will then bring these themes back to you to see what you think. This will be the second focus group; you can tell me if I have understood what you were telling me. I will ask a few more questions and listen to your views again. I will then put all the information together from both groups.</p>	
<p><b>What will happen to this information and will it be kept confidential?</b></p> <p>I will record the conversations on a Dictaphone - a tape recorder, to help me to listen carefully and try to understand what you all tell me. I will keep the recording safe and only I and my research tutor will listen to it. I will write up the conversations on my computer. Some of the words or sentences you say might be included in the research but no one will know who has said them. All of your information, including what you say to us, will be stored safely and will be made anonymous (so that no one knows who you are and what you have said). Once I have finished my research I will delete the recordings.</p>	

<p><b>Do I have to take part and what if I change my mind?</b></p> <p>You only have to join the group to talk with me if you want to. 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 do not want to speak to me, or if you change your mind once you have started, you can let me or a familiar adult know that you don't want to anymore. You do not have to give a reason.</p>	
<p><b>What are the possible benefits and disadvantages of taking part?</b></p> <p>We really value young people's views and opinions about their experiences in school. By taking part in the research, you will be sharing useful ideas of how secondary schools can support other young people to feel good in school. There are no expected disadvantages of taking part in the research. Some young people may feel a little bit worried about joining the group but I will try to make it fun and informal.</p>	
<p><b>What will happen to the information you gather in the research project?</b></p> <p>Your views and experiences of your secondary school will be collected as part of the research. Collecting this information from the group will help us to understand what helps young people to feel good in school. This will be shared with the school, the Education Inclusion Service and the Local Authority to help with future work to support children and young people's wellbeing and mental health. The results will also be shared within The University of Sheffield and via <a href="https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/">https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/</a> where my doctoral thesis will be available online once the research has been completed and passed by The University. I may consider publishing this research if the opportunity arises.</p> <p>It is likely that other researchers may find the information collected in this research useful in answering future research questions. We will ask for your consent for your data to be shared in this way.</p>	
<p><b>What is the legal basis for processing my personal data?</b></p> <p>According to data protection legislation, we are required to let you know that the legal basis we are applying in order to process your personal data is that 'processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest' (Article 6(1)(e)). Further information can be found in the University's Privacy Notice <a href="https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general">https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general</a>.</p> <p><b>Who is the Data Controller?</b></p> <p>The University of Sheffield will act as the Data Controller for this study. This means that the University is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly.</p>	
<p><b>Who can you talk to if you want to know some more information?</b></p> <p>Your parent/s or carer/s should be able to answer your questions, and they know how to contact us. You can also talk to XXX at school.</p>	

Thank you for taking the time to read this information  
and I look forward to meeting you if you decide to take part in this project!

**Contact for further information:**

This project has been approved via the Department of Education's ethics review procedure. The University's Research Ethics Committee monitors the application and delivery of the University's Ethics Review Procedure across the University.

**Researcher**

XXX XXX - (Email address provided)  
Trainee Educational Psychologist  
Educational Psychology Service  
XXX Council

**Research Supervisor**

XXX XXX - (Email address provided)  
Professor of Educational and Child Psychology  
Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology  
The University of XXX

## **Appendix 4 – Parent/Carer Information Sheet**

### **Information Sheet for Parents and Carers**

**Title of Research Project:** Supporting Wellbeing and Mental Health in Secondary Schools – Children and Young People’s Perspectives

My name is Beverly Arnott and I am currently a Trainee Educational Psychologist working within the Educational Psychology Service at the XXX Council and studying at The University of XXX. Your child is being invited to take part in a research project that will be carried out as part of my Training. This work will be overseen by a research supervisor from the University. To help you to decide whether or not your child can take part, the following information will explain why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please feel free to contact me if there is anything that is not clear, if you would like any further information or have any questions. Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

#### **What is the project’s purpose?**

The research aims to explore how secondary schools can support young people’s wellbeing and mental health. The research is interested in young people’s understanding and views of wellbeing and mental health and what they find supportive in their school environment. A lot of research in this area has gained adults views but there is not as much research asking children and young people what they think.

#### **Why has my child been invited to take part?**

We are really interested in your child’s views and what they have to say about their experiences in their secondary school. Children spend a lot of time in school and how they feel when they are there is really important.

#### **Does my child have to take part?**

It is up to you and your child to decide whether or not they would like to take part. Your child’s participation is voluntary and they have the right to withdraw from the research at any time and do not have to give a reason. If you do decide that they can take part you will be given this Parent’s Information Sheet and the Children’s Information Sheet to keep, and you and your child will be asked to sign a consent form.

#### **What will my child have to do if they do take part?**

The research will take place at XXX School. A familiar member of School Staff will be available throughout this time if any of the children need to speak to someone. I will ask each child to create a drawing, simple collage or take some photos to help them to think about some ideas of what helps them to feel good in school, they do not have to share this if they do not want to. About a week after this they will be invited to join a small group of six to eight children. This is called a focus group.

During the first focus group a child-friendly information sheet will be read with the group at the beginning to ensure they understand the research process and I will encourage them to ask any questions they have throughout the discussions. Several open questions will be asked to explore the children’s views, there will be no right or wrong answers, and I will simply be interested in finding out about their views and experiences. Children can choose if they want to answer the questions or join in with any discussions taking place. The focus groups will be prearranged by school and myself and will take place during a convenient time during their school day. The groups will take up to one hour each time. The focus group discussions will be audio recorded for analysis and will be anonymised - no names will be used.

After this first group, I will listen to the recording, transcribe what the children said and create themes. I will then bring this back to them in a second focus group, of the same children, to share what I have created and ask them ‘this is what I thought I heard, what do you think?’. This is a second opportunity for the children to

add to, change and help me to understand their views. This will create a chance for them to be honest and open about their experiences. I will then thank them all for taking part in this research.

I will follow a similar process to add the additional information and create further themes from this second group. This may include the use of direct quotations, however these will be anonymised and not identify who made the comments. The findings will be shared through a written research summary and an optional opportunity to meet with me in person to share this with the children.

#### **Will my child be recorded, and how will the recorded media be used?**

The audio recording of your child within the focus group made during this research will be used only for analysis. The audio recording will be saved onto a secure laptop that is encrypted and password protected. Only the researcher and the research supervisor will have access to the original recordings. Your child will not be personally identifiable in any written documents, evaluations, reports or publications - names will not be used. No other use will be made without your written permission. Please note that due to the nature of how data is collected and the implications of confidentiality we will not be able to share with you your child's contribution of specific information.

#### **What are the possible benefits and possible disadvantages or risks of taking part?**

We really value children and young people's views and opinions about their experiences in school. Whilst there are no immediate benefits for children taking in the project, by taking part in the research, your child will be contributing valuable ideas and experiences about how secondary schools can support other children and young people to feel good in school. There are no anticipated disadvantages of taking part in the research. Some children may feel a little bit worried about joining the group but I will try to make it fun and informal to put them at ease.

#### **What will happen to the results of the research project?**

Your child's views and experiences of their secondary school will be collected as part of the research. Collecting this information will help us to explore children's views of what helps them to feel good in school. This will be shared with the individual school, the Education Inclusion Service and the Local Authority to help inform ongoing work to support children and young people's wellbeing and mental health. The results will also be shared within The University of Sheffield and via <https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/> where my doctoral thesis will be available online once the research has been completed and passed by The University. I may consider publishing this research if the opportunity arises.

Due to the nature of this research it is likely that other researchers may find the data collected to be useful in answering future research questions. We will ask for your explicit consent for your data to be shared in this way.

#### **Will taking part in this project be kept confidential?**

All the information that we collect about you and your child during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Your child will not be personally identifiable in any reports or publications.

Very occasionally, if a child discloses information that for safeguarding reasons affects their safety, it is the researcher's duty to pass this sensitive information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead within their school. The researcher will explain this to the children before any discussion commences; that all information will remain confidential *unless* they share anything that causes concern for their *personal safety*.

All data will be stored in accordance with The University of Sheffield's data protection policies and procedures (Further information is available at <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general>). Following completion and assessment of the research project, all data will be destroyed. The data will not be used in any future research.

### **What is the legal basis for processing my personal data?**

According to data protection legislation, we are required to inform you that the legal basis we are applying in order to process your personal data is that 'processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest' (Article 6(1)(e)). Further information can be found in the University's Privacy Notice <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general>.

### **Who is the Data Controller?**

The University of Sheffield will act as the Data Controller for this study. This means that the University is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly.

### **What if something goes wrong?**

It is unlikely that anything will go wrong during our involvement. It is not anticipated that your child would become upset during the focus group, however if this is the case, the focus group will be stopped, and your child will be supported by the appropriate familiar adults within the school. The researcher is experienced at working with children and holds a full and valid DBS check that can be seen upon request.

Should you wish to raise a concern please contact Beverly Arnott (Researcher) or Professor Tom Billington, Research Supervisor via the contact details below. Should you feel that the complaint has not been handled to your satisfaction you can contact the Academic director for the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology, Dr XXX via email at (Email address provided), or by telephone on XXX , who will then escalate the complaint through the appropriate channels.

### **Who has ethically reviewed the project?**

This project has been approved via the Department of Education's ethics review procedure. The University's Research Ethics Committee monitors the application and delivery of the University's Ethics Review Procedure across the University.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information and I hope that you consider taking part in the project.

### **Contact for further information:**

#### **Researcher**

XXX XXX – (Email address provided)  
Trainee Educational Psychologist  
Educational Psychology Service  
XXX Council

#### **Research Supervisor**

XXX XXX - (Email address provided)  
Professor of Educational and Child Psychology  
Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology  
The University of XXX

## Appendix 5 – Parent/Carer and Child Consent Form

**Title of Research Project:** Supporting Wellbeing and Mental Health in Secondary Schools –  
Children and Young People’s Perspectives

<i>Please tick the appropriate boxes</i>	Parent	Child
<b>Taking Part in the Project</b>		
I have read and understood the project information sheet dated October 2019 and/or the project has been fully explained to me. (If you will answer No to this question please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to take part in the project. I understand that taking part in the project will include participating in a focus group. Children are free to answer as many questions as they comfortable to, should they not wish to answer any particular question or questions, they are free to decline. I agree for my/my child’s responses to be audio recorded for the purposes of the research. The recording will be deleted after the research project has been finalised.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time; I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part and there will be no negative consequences if I choose to withdraw.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>How my information will be used during and after the project</b>		
I understand my personal details such as name, phone number, address and email address etc. will not be revealed to people outside the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand and agree that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs. I understand that I will not be named in these outputs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand and agree that other authorised researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand and agree that other authorised researchers may use my data in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs, only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>So that the information you provide can be used legally by the researchers</b>		
I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials generated as part of this project to The University of Sheffield.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Names of person/s giving consent [printed]      Signature      Date

Name of child [printed]      Signature      Date  
*Taking part in the focus group*

Name of Researcher [printed]      Signature      Date

**Project contact details for further information:**

**Researcher**

XXX XXX - (Email address provided)  
Trainee Educational Psychologist  
Educational Psychology Service  
XXX Council

**Research Supervisor**

XXX XXX - (Email address provided)  
Professor of Educational and Child Psychology  
Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology  
The University of XXX

## Appendix 6 – Visual Pause and Stop Cards

## **Appendix 7 – Initial Information for School**

### **Supporting wellbeing and mental health in secondary schools – young peoples’ perspectives**

I am hoping to carry out research with the aim of exploring how secondary schools can support young people’s wellbeing and mental health. The research is interested in young people’s understanding and views of wellbeing and mental health and what they find supportive in their school environment.

**NB: Ethics approval has been granted by The University of XXX and XXX Council.**

#### **Rationale:**

- ❖ Links into the Local Authority’s (LA) **Children and Young People’s Plan 2017-2020, which highlights promoting good health and wellbeing for children and young people.**
- ❖ The Educational Psychology Service is currently working closely with School Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCo) to compile a **graduated response to Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)** for primary and secondary schools.
- ❖ A multi-agency pilot project of **Wellbeing Workers** is being trialled within three pilot schools, through the collaboration of Education and Health Services. Aligned with the vision of Mental Health Support Teams (MHST).
- ❖ **Children and young people’s voice within development and implementation of services.**
- ❖ Many **requests for EP involvement**, particularly within secondary schools appear to be highlighting children and young people’s social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs.

#### **My current research questions are:**

- ❖ **What is young people’s understanding and experience of wellbeing and mental health?**
- ❖ **What do young people find supportive in Secondary Schools for their wellbeing and mental health?**
- ❖ **How can EPs support this? /Implications for EPs.**

**Two parts** – firstly to try to understand how young view wellbeing and mental health – as a continuum, as separate concepts, within the medical model and within person or as a more holistic social model understanding an individual’s circumstances, background, community, society influences etc.

**Secondly trying to view the school for young people’s perspectives** – what does it feel like in school from their experiences, rather than adults making assumptions that young people benefit from certain aspects – may bring up things like the importance of friendships, staff approaches, technology – being able to use their phones etc??

Interested in a strengths based approach (positive and solution focussed approaches to psychology), with an emphasis on **what happens when things are working well**. Exploring things that schools can do, for every child or young person to ‘promote the protective factors that support resilience and wellbeing for all’ (Roffey, 2017: 92) alongside providing young people with a sense of agency in their own lives.

#### **Pilot Session:**

- ❖ Discussion with 2-3 young people

- ❖ To **check questions** are appropriate.
- ❖ Feedback for the **processes** – making young people feel at ease, encouraging views to be shared, considerations of time and place.
- ❖ Whether different **resources** could help – photographs, pictures, objects or word cards (wellbeing, mental health) to support the discussions.
- ❖ Keeping a **short diary, making a collage** to reflect on own views and experiences prior to the focus group.
- ❖ Trying out **analysis** – possible involvement of the young people?

**Main research:**

- ❖ Hopefully 6 to 8 young people. I will be aiming to speak to young people aged thirteen or above (in year nine or above).
- ❖ **First focus group** – ask questions (semi-structured questions of an open nature), I will record and transcribe the discussion. Allowing the discussion to follow the participants lead, letting the young people take some agency on the direction of the discussion while being mindful of the research questions.
- ❖ Possibly the use of an additional person (from the Education Inclusion Service) to record observations within the focus group, who said what, any dominant voices, chance of quieter voices to share their views, compare initial thoughts and reflections.
- ❖ **Second focus group** – take back initial analysis - ***‘this is what I thought I was hearing – what do you think?’*** Providing young people the opportunity to reflect on the first group session and allowing them to share any additional comments or views.
- ❖ Record and transcribe any additional views/more in-depth discussions.
- ❖ Use thematic analysis to incorporate second focus group to create themes from the information gathered. This may include direct quotations (anonymised) from participants will be included alongside links to the literature to justify and support each theme.

Findings of the research will be shared with the hosting secondary school, the Education Inclusion Service within the LA in which the research took place and to fellow Trainee Educational Psychologists at The University of Sheffield. My final thesis will be available online via the White Rose website: <https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk>. I may consider publishing the research.

**Beverly Arnott**  
Trainee Educational Psychologist

**Contact for further information:**

**Researcher**  
XXX XXX  
Trainee Educational Psychologist  
XXX Service  
XXX Council

**Research Supervisor**  
XXX XXX  
Professor of Educational and Child Psychology  
Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology  
The University of XXX

## **Appendix 7 Continued – Initial Information for School**

### **Potential Research information: (for sharing with young people)**

Would you like to take part in some research exploring what helps young people while they are in school? I would like to talk to a group of young people to ask about their views and experiences of what helps to make a good day in school. This research is being carried out as part of my Training as Trainee Educational Psychologist at The University of XXX. I am also working within the Educational Psychology Service at the XXX Council.

The research would involve taking part in two focus groups. There will be between six and eight people in the group. The first group will take place in November 2019. The second group is likely to take place in November or December 2019. Each group should last for no longer than one hour. During each group, I will ask a few questions about your views and experiences. There will be no right or wrong answers, I will just be interested in what you think. You can answer as many questions as you would like to. Some people in the group might feel comfortable to answer all of the questions; other people might be a bit quieter and only want to join in with one or two questions and this is ok.

After the first group I will listen to what you have told me and try to put this information into themes, I will then bring these themes back to you to see what you think. This will be the second focus group; you can tell me if I have understood what you were telling me. I will ask a few more questions and listen to your views again. I will then put all the information together and create themes from both groups and share these with you.

Please let your teacher/member of staff (name provided) know if you are interested in taking part in this research and they will give you further information.

Thank you for reading/listening to this information.

## **Appendix 8 - Ground Rules Created with Young People**

- ❖ Don't talk when other people are talking
- ❖ Be respectful
- ❖ Respect other people's opinions
- ❖ Don't be insensitive
- ❖ Don't be upset by other people's words
- ❖ Confidentiality – keeping the information in the room

## Appendix 9 - Focus Group Interview Schedule

### Welcome and introduction to the group

- Introduce myself and role.
- Explain research focus – exploring what helps young people to feel good in school.
- Read through information sheet – highlighting the use of the voice recorder, only answering questions that you want to, can leave at any time if you don't want to join in any more, stop or pause cards if don't feel able to say this – other people to also respect this.

### Ground Rules

- Confidentiality
- Supporting young people to explore and formulate their own ground rules (Possible examples – not talking over each other, respecting each other's views, letting everyone having a turn at speaking etc.).

### Resources

I asked you to have a think about what makes you feel good in school before you came to the focus group today, you did not have to do this and you do not have to share this if you don't want to but I thought it might help with your ideas today.

I have also put out a few pictures that might help the discussion today, have a look and see what you think, you can use these if you want to.

### Questions

- I have some questions but really want to focus on your ideas and experiences so please feel to discuss these ideas as a group. Focus on there are no right or wrong answers, I am just interested in what you think.
- Please ask me questions if you need to, if you don't understand, if you'd like to share some other ideas.

**Next focus group** – I will create themes from what we have discussed today and bring them back to see what you think. Please attend if you can to help shape this research with your views – not mine!

**Thank you for taking part, please contact me if you need to afterwards or you can speak to a member of the support team if you need to.**

## Appendix 10 – Potential Focus Group Questions

### Opening

- Can you tell me about times when you've had a good day at school? (when, what, who, how, why it happened?) (Write or draw if little response)
- What helped with this?

### Introductory

- What supports/helps you to feel good while you are in school?

### Transition

- What helps to turn a bad day in school into a good day in school?

### Key

- Can you tell me about the types of things that can help you to have a good day in school?
- Who might be able to support you in school?
- What things outside of school can make you feel better inside of school?
- Have you got any ideas that could make school even better? What would an ideal school that made you feel good be like?
  
- What words would you use to describe this? 'feeling good'
- What words or phrases come to mind when you think about feeling good?
- What words do you use to talk about how you are feeling?
  
- Are you aware of anything school is trying to do to help kids to feel good?
- What do you think about the new Wellbeing Workers in school?

### Ending

- Is there anything that has not been talked about today which you feel is important to add?
- Is there anything else you'd like to tell me?
- Have you got any further things to add or ask?
- Would you like to share one word or thing that you have enjoyed about the focus group today?

### Additional Prompts/Questions (If Required):

- Can you tell me more about that?
- That's really interesting... can you tell me a bit more?
- I wonder if you could expand on that...
- How would you describe it to someone who knew nothing about it?
- Can you give any/any more examples?
- What other ways can you think of that?
- The point that .... has made is really interesting – can anyone add anything else about this? Does anyone else have a similar experience they would like to tell us?

## Appendix 11 - Phases of Thematic Analysis

(Taken from Braun and Clarke, 2006)

Phase	Description of the process
<b>1. Familiarising yourself with the data</b>	Transcription of the original data, reading and rereading the transcription, noting down and generating provisional analytic ideas
<b>2. Generating initial codes</b>	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
<b>3. Searching for themes</b>	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
<b>4. Reviewing themes</b>	Checking in the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic map of the analysis.
<b>5. Defining and naming themes</b>	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells; generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
<b>6. Producing the report</b>	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

## Appendix 12 – Reflections along the Research Journey

Table 4: Steps and reflections completed during the data collection and analysis		
Date/s	Stage	Reflections
6.7.19, 7.6.19	Initial emails sent to school.	Sent initial information and enquiries to a secondary school, after discussion with the SENCo to enquire whether they would like to take part in the research.
14.6.19, 26.9.19	Emails sent to Service Manager.	Shared research proposal information, including University ethical approval once this was granted.
16.7.19	Discussion and LA ethical approval process with LA Service Managers.	Discussion with Service Managers about research proposal and whether ethical approval would be granted through the LA protocols. The Service Managers were very interested in the research and were keen for it to go ahead.
16.7.19 10.9.19, 12.9.19, 24.9.19	Emails sent to school.	Further emails to school informing ethics had been granted through the University and through LA ethics procedures. Arranged suitable time to meet with key contact in the school.
30.9.19	Initial discussion with school.	I met with the key contact in the school to discuss the research and provided the initial information forms to leave with them for further consideration. The information was shared at their managers meeting for consideration.
10.10.19	Telephone conversation with school.	School agreed they were happy to take part in this research. They agreed to Year Eight students who were not yet accessing GCSEs. They would initially contact the parents of five males and five female students to invite their young people to take part in the research. A mix of five children who has accessed support and five young people who had not would be included. School would contact the parents and then send the details of families who wished to take part.
15.10.19	Received names and contact details of initial potential participants.	Ten families were contacted by the school to invite their son or daughter to take part in the research. Seven families consented for their son or daughter to be sent further information and to take part in the research.
16.10.19	Sent information sheets and consent forms out to participants.	An introductory letter, information sheet, consent form and a stamped addressed envelope, to return the consent forms to the EP team administrative team, were sent to each young person with clear instructions of what to complete if they wished to take part in the research.
6.11.19, 11.11.19	Collected consent forms from LA office.	Collected completed and signed consent forms from the EP office, the administrative team alerted me via email when consent forms had been received in the post.
16.11.19	Sent out letters to participants.	I sent an individual letter to each young person that had consented to take part in the research informing them of the

		date and time of focus group. All young people had returned a signed consent form.
25.11.19	Facilitated the first focus group.	First focus group with the four young people. They engaged well and had some good ideas and views during the discussion. Appeared comfortable and generally confident to speak in the group. All young people shared their views at different points in the discussions. Some young people sensitively raised different views to their peers at times. Young people seemed willing to take a risk to share their thoughts and experiences with statements such as “It might sound weird but...” and “This might sound like really stupid...” followed by disclosing their experiences to the group, other group members responded in a supportive way to their ideas or views.
28.11.19, 29.11.19, 5.12.19	Transcription of the first focus group voice recording, checked, read through and proof read.	<p>Initial reflections on the focus group included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendships seemed to be important to the young people, having someone to talk to and confide in.</li> <li>• A sense of achievement and being proud of themselves seemed to be shared.</li> <li>• The role of the teacher’s approach, being fun, flexible, knowing the individuals (playing dingbats), not being too strict e.g. if they are late, at an appointment, gentle encouragement to have a go and think for themselves.</li> <li>• School environment seemed important including the availability of equipment, and the cleanliness of classrooms and toilets areas.</li> <li>• Student support and pastoral systems mentioned as somewhere to go for support, they seemed comfortable to do this without stigma.</li> <li>• School rewards systems, stamps seemed important to them.</li> <li>• The important of support from people at home including parents, aunts, sisters, cousins etc.</li> <li>• Access to their phones, having contact with family members if they needed to. Also access to their music and games, online access e.g. Formula One.</li> </ul> <p><b>Language and constructs</b> – young people used words such as happy, intrigued, on top of the world, proud, ecstatic, emotional, amazing, feeling better about myself, getting back on your feet.</p>
5.12.19, 6.12.19 9.12.19 & 10.12.19	Coded the first focus group transcription data.	<p>Felt immersed in data at a smaller level, step by step analysis, some interpretation at both semantic/ descriptive and latent/interpretation.</p> <p>Codes were identified and perhaps changed slightly as I read through the data, initial links made, analysing data in a greater depth/detail. Tiring but interesting, enjoyed finding</p>

		<p>out more, I can hear young people's comments in my head as I was reading through, reflecting on understanding and interpretation of what their words might mean to them. Looking forward to exploring my interpretation further with them and involving them further in the research. Thinking ahead of how to involve them in sharing findings whilst remaining anonymous.</p> <p><b>Language and constructs:</b> makes sure you're alright, getting back on your feet, you know they'll help you through everything and anything, full of joy, made me feel better (staying with an aunt), excited, I'm like done in (referring to being tired), started panicking a bit, bad day, upset, excited, I literally wanted to start crying, satisfying, did, like, really well, cry with happiness, glad, excited because I can do it. I feel better about myself, I feel on top of the world, amazing, obviously loads of people are going to have bad days at some point, bad day.</p>
10.12.19	Met with University research supervisor.	Discussed and reflected on processes and decisions made during the transcription, initial coding activities and next steps.
10.12.19, 11.12.19	Checked room availability for second focus group with the school, drafted and sent participant letters.	Conscious of time related to the administrative tasks for the research. I felt it was important to write letters to inform them of my next visit directly rather than sending a message through school. They all commented that they had enjoyed receiving the first letter with their name on, therefore I created an individual letter for each young person to inform them of the date and time of the second focus group.
10.12.19, 11.12.19, 12.12.19	Identified initial themes, added quotations from young people's comments to reflect on the themes created.	Tried to ensure that draft thematic maps were clear and made sense. Looking forward to reviewing initial ideas and interpretations from the young people.
12.12.19, 13.12.19	Created draft thematic maps to share and discuss with young people. Created initial word art images. Printed all resources ready for second focus group.	Aimed to make materials visual and easy to understand. Learnt how to use a free Word Art programme and attempted to capture all words that related to feeling good or not so good, used by the young people during initial focus group. Helped to immerse myself in the focus group data further, re-reading, re-checking, highlighting key codes and draft themes. Definitely an iterative process.
16.12.19	Discussed draft thematic maps and initial themes with	Young people seemed eager to meet with me again and were interested in the draft themes that I had created. Reading back some of their comments in the focus group

	participants during second focus group.	seemed very powerful for them; some young people commented 'that was me' or 'I said that'.
<b>2.1.20,</b> <b>3.1.20,</b> <b>6.1.12,</b> <b>7.1.20</b>	Transcribed second focus group voice recording, checked, read through and proof read.	During the second focus group the young people seemed to agree with most of the themes I'd come up with. They tended to develop or repeat what they had previously said, in relation to the themes. Animals and pets were emphasised and they wanted to ensure this was reflected as an important way that they coped with their emotions, experiences and helped them to feel good about their lives.
<b>10.1.20,</b> <b>16.1.20,</b> <b>17.1.20</b>	Coded the second focus group transcription data. Checked coding and grouped codes.	<p>Found this process really useful to reflect on transcript data, trying to interpret what the codes related to and how I could begin to group them together and make sense of what I thought the young people were trying to communicate.</p> <p>I felt that I was beginning to identify and interpret a mix of descriptive and latent themes. At times using my experience as a TEP to support my interpretation, being aware of my positionality throughout the data collection and analysis process. This included the words/terms I was using to elicit meaning, for example, I used 'leisure time' and the young person questioned this which was useful. We then renamed to free time as I was trying to use the young people's own terms and language where possible.</p> <p>Reflections during this stage included;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendship groups, young people seemed to try and solve any difficulties within the group first before seeking or asking for additional help.</li> <li>• Young people seemed to understand the benefits and disadvantages of having phones and being able to interact with people online. They shared the fun and laughs they experienced with friends through sharing videos online but were also aware of the potential of bullying. One young person has had some support around online safety. Other young people were the ones that commented on this aspect. One young person also mentioned their parent's guidance around what they were allowed to access.</li> </ul>
<b>17.1.20,</b> <b>23.1.20,</b> <b>24.1.20</b>	Added to themes, re-drafted the themes created within the first focus group.	Tried to identify themes that reflected the data and what young people had shared within the focus groups. I naturally seemed to use both descriptive and latent ideas. Whilst I aimed to use an inductive approach, within TA, from the young people's views, I was aware and reflexive that my positionality and prior knowledge appeared to influence some of the ideas of themes that I identified. Such as the importance of scaffolding and modelling by school staff.

		<p>It was difficult within some themes and areas discussed to determine discrete categories, some of the young people's words could overlap into different themes. I tried as thoroughly as possible to make them mutually exclusive, however due to the interpretative nature of qualitative research this could also be difficult. It was useful to reflect on the actual words and phrases the young people used in attempts to interpret their constructs around the different topics that they shared.</p>
<b>24.1.20</b>	<p>Re-read the steps of thematic analysis.</p>	<p>Re-read the thematic analysis processes outlined Braun and Clarke (2006) and the more recent Reflecting on Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2019). Reflecting on the thematic analysis process including the steps I had completed so far and potential next steps and considerations. Reflexive considerations of my own positionality and values as a researcher and how this could have shaped some of my interpretations. For example, the importance of the relationship between the young person and teacher to support them.</p>
<b>30.1.20</b>	<p>Re-drafted themes, moved two subthemes as they did not seem to quite fit within the overall theme. Re-read transcriptions to reflect on themes created compared with whole data set. Drafted the results chapter from the themes that were identified.</p>	<p>After another review of the themes created so far, I amended them slightly as I did not feel some of the subthemes fit within the overall theme. It seemed to help to have time away and then a revisit to the themes to reflect on them. I also changed three of the names in an attempt to better reflect the aim of that theme. I definitely seemed to be going backwards and forwards between the themes and writing stage, this seemed to encourage reflection on the young people's quotations, reflections on the focus groups and my interpretations of their discussions. I also considered the many ways of interpreting and organising the themes within qualitative research. I was hoping to find an interpretation of the discussion that could be told through the themes that were created. Almost like a story of the journey the discussions took. It was hard to decide a finish point as the process could continue and follow different directions. I was happy that the themes gave voice to the young people and their priorities within their discussions.</p>

## Appendix 13 - Transcription of Focus Group Introductions and Warm-up Activities

Key:

R – Researcher, P – Participant

### Focus Group One

**Introductions and ice breaker activities:**

**R: If we think of some ground rules, so as part of this group, when we're talking what might be a nice ground rule?**

P: Don't talk while other people are talking.

**R: Brilliant, so don't talk while other people are talking, so taking it in turns.**

P: Be respectful.

**R: Brilliant, by respectful, we mean sometimes people might have different views to yours and that's absolutely fine or you might think I agree with them or I don't and that's absolutely fine as well.**

P: Respect each other's opinions.

**R: Definitely.**

P: ...because some people don't do that.

**R: I want you today to be quite honest but think just about what you are saying as well, so if you don't agree with someone then...**

P: Don't be insensitive.

**R: Definitely.**

P: Don't be upset by people's words.

**R: Lovely. I want it to be a nice group today and have a nice chat and get your ideas down. One of the things today I want to mention is confidentiality, so what we do speak about in here, because it's part of the research try and keep it within this group. So if someone does say something about themselves or their background or something that's happened, try and keep it in this group if you could do please.**

P: I know everyone here except (name).

P: I know everybody here.

P: I know everyone here.

**R: Leading on from that, I'm going to start with an activity that might feel a bit strange, so just go with me. I'll start with (name) over here.**

P: Toothpaste?!

P: I hate toothpaste, I'm sorry.

**R: That's fine.**

**R: I'm going to let you all take it in turns, just squeeze a bit into that box. Put in as much or as little as you like.**

P: Oh I'm doing it next.

P: Then I'm doing it.

**R: When you've finished can you pass it to (name) please.**

P: Just squeeze.

P: Squeeze, squeeze.

P: Are you meant to make your own pile?

P: Oh.

**R: It's fine, do it however you want.**

P: I'm going to make a pile in the middle because I'm special.

P: I was going to do that.

P: Oh well.

[all young people have a turn and some giggles as they do it]

**R: Right I'm going to have a turn as well and this is just to get us to think about, when we're talking, so this is us talking [as I squeezed the toothpaste], so this is our words come out, so my words are going to go really messy around here and all over the place. [young people gasp then giggle as I squeeze a lot across the box]. When you've said something do you think you can put it back in there?**

P: No

P: No

**R: So I just wanted to make you think, when you are talking today, some of the things you are saying, maybe don't make it too private**

P: People might take it to heart.

**R: Yes, so just be a bit sensitive with each other, I want you to be a nice group and good friends to each other and just remember once the words have come out of your mouth, they can't go back in, so just have a little think and maybe don't make it too private today. I've put your names on today just to help me but that won't go into the research. So I might, as part of the research, when I write it up, I might use some of your words but I wouldn't say...(name) said or (name said). I'll just put in the words. With school as well, I might share some of the things you say today with school but again, they won't know who it is. So that was just to get you to think about some of the words you might say today.**

P: Ok.

**R: So I thought we might just start, because you said some of you did not know each other. So who would like to go first? [got some conversation starter dice out]**

P: Can I have pink?

P: Can I have purple?

**R: Shake the dice and there's little questions on each one, you can all have a turn and get to know each other a little bit. Throw the dice and answer the question. It's just a bit of a silly game.**

P: What kind of ice cream do you like? Is that to me?

**R: Yes.**

P: Oh erm, vanilla, its not my favourite but I like it.

**R: Ok, who else would like a go?**

P: Me.

**R: What's your question?**

P: What game do you like to play? What game do we mean?

**R: Any game...it might be on your phone, it might be a ball game...**

P: I like playing Harry Potter Trivia.

P: That is so good!

**R: Brilliant, that sounds good. Right then (name) what colour would you like?**

P: Who is your best friend? Oh er, my best friend is (name), he is here today but he's not been in lessons.

**R: Ok so your best friend is (name). What colour would you like?**

P: Can I get purple please.

**R: Purple, there you go.**

P: Thank you. [throws dice] What sport do you like? What as in like anything?

**R: Anything, like anything at all.**

P: I like horse riding.

P: Me too.

**R: Oh right, brilliant. Ok one more little job. [As I got out a selection of bear emotions cards]**

P: A Bear.

**R: I wondered, when I first sent the letters out and invited you to be part of the research, how did you feel?**

P: Nervous.

P: Anxious.

P: My mum kind of brought the letter out and was like here's a letter for you and I was like what do you mean a letter for me, because my sister sometimes gets them.

**R: Ah ok.**

P: So I then opened and it said mum I don't understand this.

**R: Ok, so you might have been a bit confused? A bit nervous you said over there too.**

P: Yer and then she was like do you want to do it and I said yer why not.

P: It's a rare occurrence for me to get letters so I was a sort of bit excited, because I was like ooh I've got a letter. Yer because normally the only time I get a letter is around my birthday, which was last week.

**R: Ok so you might have thought it was a birthday card instead of a letter?**

P: Yer.

**R: How about you (name) how did you feel?**

P: Kinda happy because I get to skip lessons.

**R: Ok, so you've all missed Maths today so was that quite good?**

P: Yer.

P: I like Maths.

**R: I was when I first knew I had to do some research, I was a bit excited. A little bit nervous because I thought I need to make this is ok and a bit puzzled just making sure it goes right and getting everything organised and trying to and trying not to forget anything. So that was my feelings along with how we are all feeling today**

**R: So like I said, I want it to be a bit fun today and nice and chatty. So if I start by putting the ground rules up there [in vision of all young people]. I've also put some post it notes out, so if there's anything you don't quite want to say today you might want to write a note about it and that's absolutely fine. I've put some pictures out that might help you as well.**

## **Focus Group Two**

**Introductions and ice breaker activities:**

**Introduced the Bear Cards to check-in with the young people and ask how they are feeling about joining the group today.**

P: because I'm missing PE but then I was kinda glad because I've hurt my foot so it was a bit like...[used a hand gesture flat and moving side to side].

**R: Ok, so a bit of mixed feelings, so a bit 50/50, you quite like PE don't you?**

P: Yer I like sporty subjects.

**R: Ok would anyone else like to share?**

P: I was excited because I get to miss a lesson that I don't really like that much and it's nearly the end of term, so I think everyone's just quite excited because its nearly the two week holiday.

**R: Absolutely, so you're all looking forward to the holiday are you? Anyone else, would you like to share how you're feeling today.**

P: I'm feeling alright.

**R: I've also brought my dice today, who would like to choose?**

P: Please can I have blue. (dropped the dice). I think it doesn't like me.

P: When is your birthday?

P: Its (date).

**R: Right, anybody else?**

P: What was the strangest dream you ever had, erm.... I don't know.

**R: You can pick a different question if you don't want that one?**

P: Shall I roll it again (rolled the dice again). What subject do you like? P.E.

P: You are missing PE.

P: I know.

**R: Right, who would like to go next?**

P: Can I have green please (rolled a dice). - Where would you like to travel?

P: Erm, I'd like to go to America, because, like, I'm really into horses so I'd like to like to live on a ranch and also, like, think the accent is ace, like the mall, I'd really like to go to a mall, I don't know why.

**R: Ok so you like all the American..**

P: I like America.

P: I'm going to America.

R: What colour would you like?

P: Orange.

**R: Orange did you say? There you go.**

P: Do you have a pet? I have a little brown jack Russell...

P: Aww

P:... who's small and looks very cute when he got his jumper on.

P: He is, he's so cute and he's called (name).

P: He's got a little jumper.

P: How do you know?

P: because me and (names) little sister are really good friends.

P: Oh, how old is (names) sister.

P: A year younger.

P: She's in Year Seven.

P: Oh right.

## Appendix 14 - Transcription from First Focus Group

### Key:

R – Researcher, P – Participant

### Line

### Number:

1.(Initial few minutes on ground rules, ice breakers, feelings about joining the group – not yet transcribed but will do this and add to methodology-procedure chapter).

**2.6:55**

**3.R: Thinking about school, can you tell me about when you've had a good day at school? What might have happened?**

4.P: What was the question sorry?

**5.R: Can you tell me about times when you've had a good day at school?**

6.P: Err, do you want me to go first?

7.P: I'll go first...

8.P: Ok

9.P: Erm, when, sometimes when I have RE lessons.

**10.R: Ok, tell me about RE, what happens, what makes it a good lesson?**

11.P: Because, I don't know, I just enjoy it or like non-school uniform day is quite good.

**12.R: Ok, anything else, tell me about a good days at school...**

13.P: I enjoy it when all my friends are there and when my bully is not here.

**14.R: Ok so when your friends are there and your bully isn't there?**

15.P: I enjoy it when, when erm, when I've got PE because I quite like PE, erm and when I've got Maths because we get these sort of puzzles and when my friends are there.

**16.R: Ok: friends for you as well, interesting, can anyone tell me anything more?**

17.P: I like it in PE when we do Just Dance.

18.P: Oh yer, that's awesome

19.P: Oh that's the best

**20.R: Ok, tell me about Just Dance...**

21.P: So basically, whenever it's raining, we always do just dance inside.

22.P: Sometimes we do trampolining, yer, which is good as well.

23.P: Yer but anyway, we do just dance, and basically all the girls go in the hall and then they like put the music and like this person dancing on the screen, and then we've all got to follow, its real funky the song and you always get a laugh.

**24.R: It does sound really good.**

25.P: It brings you closer to your friends really, doesn't it. Basically, the app just dance, it's basically that, they use like it, on the computer, like on google. Erm, you work in like groups, well you can choose to be in groups and stuff, but like sometimes if they put a good song everyone will sing along and stuff.

26.P: Oh so you can sing along as well? Oh that sounds really good fun.

27.P: I like doing trampolining in PE because it quite good fun to just feel quite weightless and if you can do flips, it's quite good, it good fun, although it makes you dizzy, it just good fun to be moving quite quickly.

28.P: Yer, sometimes if we have a free period, we will go and do trampolining but can do what you like in it.

**29.R: Ok, so when you can do what you like that's good as well?**

30.P: Yer, yer, yer (from three different young people) so like you can do flips and stuff.

**31.R: Ok, right... anything else you can think of, about what makes good day? So you've got home from school...**

32.P: When you have good lessons...

**33.R: What would good lessons look like?**

34.P: So like say PE, Drama...

35.P: No, what would a good lesson look like..

**36.R: That's fine...**

37.P: As in like?

**38.R: So what would happen?**

39.P: So like you got good test results or something?

40.P: Yer or like say in PE you do something you like or in Maths, you do something you're really good at, or...

41.P: Yer, something that just makes you feel good about yourself?

42.P: Something you know a lot about, so you can like...

43.P: Or you do a like a quiz and you win the quiz or something.

44.P: Something that makes you feel proud of yourself.

**45.R: Excellent I like that. Is there anything in those lessons that supports you or helps you to do that?**

46.P: Erm, teachers, our teachers in PE they can be quite supportive sometimes

**47.R: What do they do that is supportive?**

48.P: They motivate us, they say keep doing this, come on.

49.P: They push us to our limits.

**50.R: Oh right...**

51.P: We like the PE teachers when they got us to come in when it's raining.

**52.R: Ok...**

53.P: ...and just that they never like go 'come on you can do better than that?' they just try and do it like, so that they don't ever, like they know you can try better but they don't speak to you like straight, they just oh like try and do this differently, you just find it a lot easier to do.

54.P: They are quite willing to give stamps out and stuff, they are not like 'oh well you have to earn it'.

**55.R: Ok so what are stamps? What happens with stamps?**

56.P: You've got like a planner. (you get rewards and stuff). You get either written warnings, stamps...

57.P: I've not got any written warnings this year.

58.P: I aint had any written warnings ever!

**59.R: Have you got lots of stamps?**

60.P: Last year I got, like over a thousand I think.

**61.R: Oh goodness me!**

62.P: Oh yer, same.

63.P: You can trade them in at the end for stuff, so you can buy like pencils, (yer I got a voucher) or footballs, or speakers.

64.P: The speakers are boring.

65.P: I got one last year. They're alright, they don't work that well.

66.P: Yer, I was going to say they do work, but they're not like... but in the end, if you were going to buy them from the shop they would probably be like twenty quid. So the fact that you get them for stamps...

67.P: If you're good that you get actual rewards.

68.P: It makes you actually want to behave and get stamps.

69.P: Say you come into school late and it's like half way through the year and you forget a pen or something, you can go and buy a pen or pencil or equipment. It's only like ten stamps or something and you get about ten stamps a day.

70.P: ten?

71.P: I get ten a day.

72.P: I get about 40.

73.P: I get about 30.

**74.R: So you can save them up and get something little? Or save them for a long time and get something bigger?**

75.P: I've never got them, as I always have the right equipment, but like some people don't and they have to come in and get like a pen.

76.P: Once I did because my mum put had put the wrong pencil case in my bag.

**77.R: Is there anything else that supports you in school? What helps make it a good day?**

78.P: When we're doing Trampolining, and the PE Teachers, they like, if you're trying to learn how to do a flip or something, because you've got, there's four different Olympic trampolines with maximum of like seven people on each one, and erm you've got one that's people who think they are, like, really bad, one that think they are not really bad but they're a bit below average, one that's above average and one that's quite good. If you're trying to learn a new skill, like if you're learn how to do a somersault or a backflip, erm, he'll always try and help you learn how to do it, because he gets this karate belt and wraps it around your waist to helps you turn your body in the air.

**79.R: Oh wow!**

80.P: I did that at my gymnastics, so I know what you mean.

81.P: I know what you mean, I've done that before.

**82.R: So that's really good it is?**

83.P: ...but like my friends support me and stuff.

**84.R: OK, what do your friends do, how do your friends help you?**

85.P: So I've got a best friend called (name) and I was doing, erm, I'd lost my science book in my science class, and I was really worried about it and I was scared I'd get in big trouble. I've never been in trouble before and she was like oh no don't worry about it, I'll talk to him and she actually went up to him and started to talking to him about it and was like look I'm really sorry but my friends can't find her book and she hasn't taken it home, so I don't see why there's a problem.

**86.R: So she'd spoken to the class teacher for you and that helped did it?**

87.P: Yer.

**88.R: Excellent, has anybody else got any ideas what helps in school?**

89.P: Er, Student Support, support us quite a lot and Pastoral. Say if you go through like problems, say at home or friendship problems. Or feel like, I don't know, if your pets died or if you feel sad. It's just somewhere to go that will makes sure you're alright and so you can get back on your feet.

**90.R: Lovely, that sounds really good. Have they got quite nice people in there as well?**

91.P: Yeh,

92.P: Yeh.

**93.R: So that's pastoral and student support. Anything else that helps you in school?**

94.P: Like, they're quite supportive if you come in late for some reason. Like you went to the dentist, like they're not exactly... the teachers won't be really annoyed.

95.P: Yer and if you've been at student support or pastoral and, erm, and you come in late for a lesson and your teacher asks for a note, your teacher will have to give you a late mark, if student supportive haven't given you a note, they will remove the written warning for you.

**96.R: Ok, so that's supportive as well, so you're not getting into trouble?**

97.P: Last year my friend came in, she's a different friend, she is on holiday at the moment, but she came in with a written warning, erm, for her mobile and my old tutor teacher said he'd remove it but then he couldn't because it was a another science teacher. So he was gonna remove it but then sadly he couldn't, so he was willing to remove it if he could.

**98.R: So he was trying to if he was able to? That sounds good as well. If you're having a bit of a bad day at school, and you've come in and everything is going a bit wrong. What helps to turn it around, helps to make it into a better day?**

99.P: If you have your friends there, they can support you through stuff, you can talk to them, or a TA or Teacher, or coming to like pastoral or student support because you know they'll help you through everything and anything.

**100.R: Oh lovely.**

101.P: I tend, well basically, I turn to my closer friends, so like (two friend's names) or my best friend (friend's name) and just like, I feel like I can tell them anything, along as they don't tell anybody else, it just helps to be able to know that they are there.

**102.R: Absolutely, that sounds really good.**

103.P: For me it helps to go erm, with my friends to our Head of Year, who is also my Maths teacher (teacher's name), and he gives us these like puzzles that are called dingbats...

104.P: dingbats.

105.P: ...which are sort of like, you know catchphrase, the show catchphrase, it's sort of like those, but it often like, not a picture, sometimes it's like an arrangement of letters, like one of them he had today was the word 'win' with three 'e's next to it. Like 'win with ease', he says you've got to say what you see.

**106.R: Ah right.**

107.P: and he'll sometimes give us clues to them but he'll sometimes think that we should be able to get it on our own, he won't give us clues. He'll sometimes and I don't think (Head of Year) makes them, I think it's a website that makes them and that you can specify what you want them to be. Today there was a Maths one, which was a big ten, with a one in the zero, to a power of six, which was, was supposed to be 'one in a million'.

**108.R: Brilliant.**

109.P: It sort of just tests your logic skills, to see if you can observe stuff.

**110.R: Ok, so you like those do you?**

111.P: Yes.

112.P: If I'm having a bad day, I like... I'll sometimes buy a pizza.

**113.R: Is that in school or at home?**

114.P: In school, because I'm very into food. It's just like a cheese pizza but it's really nice.

115.P: Sometimes you can turn to your people at home as well, so it might sound weird, but sometimes if I have like a bad day, I don't necessarily want to talk about it to my parents. It might sound weird but I go to like my animals and stuff, so like my dog or my ferrets.

**116.R: Oh I like that, I've got a cat at home and I quite like that if I'm having a bad day.**

117.P: I'm getting a hamster.

118.P: Guess what, I've got kittens at my yard.

**119.R: Oh have you?**

120.P: Yer, they're like two weeks old. They're so cute!

**121.R: That's quite calming sometimes, it helps you relax doesn't it, after a bad day.**

122.P: We've just got a puppy at my house, so when I'm with him, I always like, I don't know but you just calm down. It's only a baby and he's just full of joy, so you can't help but not be happy with him.

123.P: What kind of dog is it?

124.P: Cocker spaniel.

125.P: Oh I like them!

**126.R: They're full of energy aren't they!**

127.P: My cousin has got a springer as well.

128.P: Springers are the same.

129.P: So you've got animals at home.

**130.R: I wonder is there anything else out of school that helps sometimes.**

131.P: Riding my horse.

132.P: Yer.

133.P: Yer, it gets me out.

**134.R: Ok, so we've got three horse riders here, haven't we.**

135.P: I like playing rugby, or playing my xbox, I quite like playing shooting games. Like, once I had quite a bad day at rugby, I got teased by some of my teammates and I just came home and played on my xbox after training and killed a load of people, it was good fun.

**136.R: Ok.**

137.P: I like walking my dogs.

138.P: Yeh.

139.P: Oh your dogs are nice.

140.P: They are, they're so cute, your dog is so cute though.

141.P: I like doing kickboxing, at home we have this dummy and I like taking my anger out on my dummy.

142.P: I sometimes wish I had one of them.

143.P: Basically, recently when I went to South Africa, I met my aunty (name), my mum's cousin, and she's really into, like, yoga and stuff, so I did couple of lessons and ever since I've been so into yoga, I try and do it every night.

**144.R: So yoga helps as well. Anything else that you can think of? I wonder if there's any people that might help you, either at home or at school?**

145.P: My nan, texting my nan.

146.P: Sometimes I find it easy, if you, erm, get like a piece of paper, write down what's happened and then tear it up and put it on the fire and watch it go it go up in flames.

**147.R: I bet that feels great doesn't it!**

148.P: I do that, I'll write down if someone annoys me and I'm like right, I'll write down your name and it's going in the fire.

149.P: It's like you've told somebody but then they aren't going to tell someone else.

**150.R: I think that's a lovely idea. Any other ideas?**

151.P: I like watching strictly with my parents.

152.P: I like watching I'm a celebrity.

153.P: Oh that's good....get me out of here.

154.P: I like texting my sister, because my sisters, like, a bit older now, and she's mainly in her room doing work and stuff like that, so she doesn't have enough time, to like, to see her family. But I think like texting her and telling my feelings and stuff like that and it kind of helps me and supports me.

155.P: When I went away, my cousins were really annoying me, erm, so my aunty has/had her own house in South Africa, so I went to stay with her for a few days and that, like, made me feel better.

**156.R: So sometimes other relatives in your family...**

157.P: Yer, just to get away from the ones which annoy you.

**158.R: What were you going to say (young person's name)?**

159.P: Erm, I'm quite big on cars and motorsports and stuff, so I've done if I'm like bored at break or something or if I'm bored at home. I'll just go on my phone and I'll look on Formula One Instagram pages to see, like, if there's anything going on interesting, like if there's been like a crash or if someone's doing well in qualifying or in a race or something.

**160.R: Are you allowed your phones at break times or lunch times?**

161.P: At breaktimes, yer

**162.R: Does that help sometimes?**

163.P: Sometimes listening to music and stuff.

164.P: You're not allowed them in lessons unless you've been told that we can.

165.P: Or just like playing a game you're very good at. I don't know...

166.P: I have this game called Shadow Fight, were you can get, like, loads of different weapons, and armour and helmets, you can get magic, and you can erm... and there's this guy that's released demons accidently and he has to go through different places in this world and that they took all his flesh, so now he's just a shadow. There's six acts with six different demons, there's Lynx which is the first one, hermit the second, butcher the third, err wasp the forth, the fifth which is the one I'm on now, and then shogun is the last one.

**167.R: Oh that's sounds really technical.**

168.P: You've got to try and beat people up and knock them out.

169.P: Why do you keep beating people up?

170.P: Sometimes I listen to music on the bus, and it's like really nice having your phone at school because as lunch, say if something happens, because when I found out I got into set three Maths, I was really excited because I was doing really bad in my Maths, erm, so I like instantly text my mum, because she got work, but she can text in-between her clients because of her job, she replies quite fast and it's like easy to communicate with other people.

**171.R: So you like if you can get in touch with someone at home if you need to as well?**

172.P: That's probably the only reason I have a phone, is so that if anything goes wrong or if I'm upset I can just text my mum or dad and tell them what's gone on.

**173.R: Is it nice to know they are just there if you need them?**

174.P: It also helps you've got a club afterschool or something that's come up at school that you have to deal with, like if there's been a sudden sports game or something on, because tonight there's a football match, that was apparently only organised on Friday and the people playing it, that have been selected to play in it, have only found out today.

**175.R: Oh right...**

176.P: So one boy said that he come this morning but he can't come because he's got to pick his sister up from school, erm, and but, I think he found out he needs to pick his sister up from school, because he text his mum or he text his dad.

**177.R: Ok, so you can get things sorted out quickly if you need to as well?**

178.P: Umm, yeh.

179.P: My mums like that, so like if I get invited to a friend's house, or like say if someone wants to come to mine to see my horse. My mums like yes they can come or no they can't come.

**180.R: Ok, so you can let them know straight away.**

181.P: Yer and I can find out whether my sisters been to school or not, so I know whether to get into school and whether I'm been picked up or not, so like tomorrow she's got a scan for something, so I've got to walk home but like I'll probably forget that.

**182.R: Ok, so someone needs to remind you on the phone and that helps sometimes? I wonder if you've got any other ideas of what could make school even better?**

183.P: No bullies!

**184.R: Ok, no bullies.**

185.P: Yer.

186.P: We should chew in lessons.

187.P: No.

188.P: If school started a bit later, because...

189.P: Yer, because I'm like done in.

190.P: ...because I was a bit late to bed so I only woke up this morning about 40 minutes before I had leave to go to my bus and I started panicking a bit.

**191.R: What time does school start here?**

192.P: We, I have to get on the bus at 8 and I get up at like half seven.

193.P: You have to get up at half past eight?

194.P: No I have to get up at half past seven.

195.P: I have to get up at 7am like.

**196.R: So you have a long journey in sometimes, on the bus?**

197.P: Yer...and then in the end because I have loads of animals and chores to help out with my mum and dad.

198.P: You have chores?

199.P: Yer loads of them, I have to do six hours on weekends.

200.P: I do nothing.

201.P: I like doing them though, it calms me down, I love doing chores but anyway...(shush) I always get in like really late, then I have to have my tea and do my animals and stuff. So like the other day I was up I was up 16 hours and then I was at school the next day.

**202.R: Gosh, that's a long day isn't it?**

203.P: It makes weekends worth it, but on the weekends, like, I always wake up early and so like I'll wake up at six and have to get up, but then on the school days my mum has to gets me up and I go like go away, I don't want to get up.

**204.R: Especially in the winter when it's dark? (oops, slightly leading question by me!)**

205.P: Yer, I think but when somethings... sorry (as another young person starts to talk).

206.P: In the winter it's quite bad getting up early because it's still dark. Like my alarm goes off at quarter past six but I normally like just doze for half an hour then get up a quarter to seven ish.

207.P: This morning my alarm went off at half six and I got up at like half seven (talking over each other a bit).

208.P: ...and then it just feels like oh I should still be asleep, because its dark, it's really dark.

209.P: You're not the only one.

210.P: That's why I just find it easier to get up in the summer because it's light and it's like ok its daytime now let's get up.

**211.R: ok so it makes it a bit easier?**

212.P: I like the summer because we don't have to wear our school ties. We have like a red...

213.P: Yer we have a nylon polo shirt.

**214.R: Oh, do you have a different top in a summer?**

215.P: They're not really polo shirts are they...

216.P: No it's like a sporty material.

- 217.P: They used to be proper polo shirts, made out of just pure cotton, but now they're like, I don't know how to describe it.
- 218.P: They're like sporty, so like sweat proof basically. They've got like little holes in. They expect everyone to sweat in a summer.
- 219.R: So you have a different top in the summer, is that better or is it worse?**
- 220.P: Better.
- 221.P: Oh, better, it takes me five minutes to get ready.
- 222.P: It still takes me ten minutes to get ready because I wear a skirt in a summer because you always have to have your legs covered but I've got really big trousers.
- 223.P: Why do you have to have your legs covered?
- 224.P: I don't know.
- 225.P: I had a short version and got told off.
- 226.P: You don't actually have to, I've seen a lot of year sevens without.
- 227.P: Yer, they all get in trouble.
- 228.P: I think what makes it worse is, when you come into school, you already don't like school, like for me school is like a chore.
- 229.P: I thought you liked chores?
- 230.P: Yer, I do but not like school ones.
- 231.P: Ok
- 232.P: So basically I don't really enjoy it, I don't know, it's not really boring as some lessons I really enjoy but it's a bit like, I don't exactly get up and go 'yey it's a school day'. It's more like 'oh it's a school day'
- 233.P: I'm always like that.
- 234.P: ...but I think what makes it worse is if you've had a bad day previously. So say me and (name) fell and then, like, we never sorted it out, and tomorrow I wouldn't want to come to school because I'd be upset because me and (name) fell out.
- 235.P: ...but we wouldn't.
- 236.P: I always get excited when we find out we have like a day off school. Like today, I got really excited, my History teacher, before (name) joined the tutor. We was talking about something and the people on desk duty came round and said, it was like a note about something, and he made this lie up saying that we had the day off school, when we actually didn't, and I got so excited, me and my friend was like, oh we can make so many plans. Then ten minutes later he said, you do realise that was a lie. And I got, I literally wanted to start crying.
- 237.R: Oh dear, so you like the odd day off school. Is there anything else that could make school better? Any ideas you have?**
- 238.P: If you could, I don't why but if we've got gym stuff outside but it would be better if we could have some more on there...
- 239.P: We have should some gymnastics stuff..
- 240.P: Yer, and bring your horse to school day.
- 241.P: Yer some more activities.
- 242.P: Some people are allergic to horses.
- 243.P: No like bring your pet to school day? Or like, ooh my lizard.
- 244.P: There's only one reason for not being able to bring your pet into school because people can be allergic to them.
- 245.R: If you could have some ideas that could actually happen...**
- 246.P: School start later and finish like ten minutes...
- 247.P: Like on Fridays, I think, because some schools, there's not that many that does this though, but like on Fridays they start at like 10 and end at like 2pm. I think that should happen
- 248.P: I think we should erm be allowed, I think we should have better equipment.
- 249.P: Yer it's all rubbish
- 250.R: Ok what type of equipment?**
- 251.P: I think we should like renovate the walls because a lot of the walls are just falling apart, like the paints peeling off.
- 252.P: We could just repaint them.
- 253.P: Yer, that's what I meant.
- 254.P: Maybe clean the toilets up because the toilets are disgusting.

- 255.P: They are, they shove the toilet roll in the actual toilet thing, it's disgusting.
- 256.P: All the girls' toilets are all grotty though. There's always like, nobody flushes the toilet, you don't want to see other peoples..
- 257.P: Yer they get blocked by stuff, like blood.
- 258.P: Blood, why would there be blood in the toilet?
- 259.P: (name) think about the female anatomy.
- 260.P: (Giggles from two young people).
- 261.R: Ok so you want the toilets to be a better, anything else in school, in the lessons?**
- 262.P: Not so much the lessons, the best thing to do, well not do, is stick your hands under the desks, because if you stick your hands under this desk, this one is clean, but normally it is filled with chewing gum. It's disgusting.
- 263.P: Most desks in the classroom are covered in chewing gum.
- 264.P: It needs to be like wiped clean. It is disgusting.
- 265.P: In America they have got different kind of punishment for different things. Sometimes in America, I've read in books, where they'll have kids go around classroom and like chisel gum off the bottom of the desk.
- 266.R: Ok, would that make school better or worse?**
- 267.P: Well I suppose it would really...
- 268.R: Just one minute he's making an interesting point here. (Some young people talking over another in the background).**
- 269.P: It would make the desks cleaner and it would make people not want to misbehave but if they've heard, oh in detention you have to scrape chewy from the bottom of the desks. Then it would make people go ok so I'm not going to misbehave, so I don't have to do that.
- 270.R: So if you had a job to do if you didn't follow the rules, that could make school a bit better?**
- 271.P: Normally in detention...
- 272.P: Sorry, I understand where you are coming from and I think it's, like, a good idea, but then at the same time school is for work and to make you get better at education and stuff like that. School shouldn't be, like, for chores, like getting chewing gum off the table and loads of people would be like...
- 273.P: That's going to make me, like, want to move schools (said at the same time as above).
- 274.P:... I'm moving school and then the school would shut down and then that's like what's the point in that?
- 275.R: Ok, that's just different ideas.**
- 276.P: I think they should do more fire drills because we've hardly had any of them.
- 277.P: I don't think we've had one this year yet.
- 278.P: We had one last year.
- 279.P: Yer, we had like one last year.
- 280.P: I would actually not mind scraping the desks of chewy. It might sound weird but, no it's not like the manky bit, it's just like it would be satisfying.
- 281.P: Yer, I suppose.
- 282.P: I think on Fridays we should have like a fun day and so you get to, like, eat like ice cream in class or something.
- 283.P: They did that last summer didn't they?
- 284.P: We'd need a sick bucket, if we're eating loads of sweet stuff.
- 285.P: No, literally ice cream isn't that sweet, you can get ice cream that isn't that sweet.
- 286.R: I wonder, some of things we've been talking about today is about feeling good in school. I wonder what words or phrases you might use about feeling good.**
- 287.P: Ecstatic.
- 288.P: Happy.
- 289.P: You feel like proud of yourself.
- 290.P: Yer, like last year, I did, like, really well on a science test and I quite like science and I only dropped, like, three marks out of the entire test, and erm, I asked my teacher if I could take a picture of it and at the end of the lesson I sent it to my parents and was like 'yey look what I've got on this test' and they were like 'yey well done you, you're so clever'.
- 291.R: How did that make you feel? What types of words might you use with your parents?**

292.P: I was really proud of myself, although I am good at science, erm, still one of the highest marks only dropped one or two. So I got like second or third highest out of the entire year.

**293.R: You must have worked really hard then?**

294.P: Yer, so I'm quite good at science and I just retain information about science because I like it, but yer.

**295.R: Any other words or phrases, so you've come to school and you've had a really good day.**

296.P: Emotional.

297.P: Emotional, why?

298.P: Yer because you'd be happy.

299.P: Why would you cry over school?

300.P: Yer but, do you know when you're in year eleven or ten, whatever year you do your GCSEs?

301.P: You could cry with happiness.

302.P: You could cry if you like got an A plus or an A star and you'd start crying because you'd know you've done really well and you'd be so glad that you'd actually listened in lessons and stuff like that.

**303.R: Anything at home when you're feeling quite good about yourself? Any words?**

304.P: I'm proud of myself when I've tried to do something for a new time, I don't know, when like my dad's said, I don't know, like chop down that tree and then I've like chopped down the tree, I get like real excited because I can do it.

**305.R: Ok, So when you've finished something.**

306.P: ...because my dad, we live in quite a big house with quite a big garden so there's always like some chores to do, and when my dad says (name) go and run that barrow up the hill or go and... I don't know, like go and muck out the chickens, or go chop that branch down for me, and like I've never done it before, but then like, I can't do it at the first time, but then my dad will show me and then I feel better about myself, because now I don't need my dad's help.

**307.R: Excellent, so you've managed to do it on your own?**

308.P: Yer, just to say I don't really chop down trees.

309.P: The other day, it was actually yesterday, I had a riding lesson and my horse took off with me, but he was being really good after that and he's done a really nice canter and my mum was really proud of me. I then sat on my horse, which I'd not sat on for three months, I'd gone riding with her and I was so happy about it.

**310.R: Brilliant, that sounds really good. Any other ideas or words?**

311.P: I was really happy, no I was very... ecstatic when I managed to jump 50 metres no cm on my horse.

312.P: Intrigued.

**313.R: Brilliant, so you've done some jumps as well, that's quite high isn't it. Any other words or phrases you might use.**

314.P: Amazing

315.P: Intrigued

316.P: I feel on top of the world.

317.P: You wish!

318.P: (The young people laughed).

**319.R: You might use that sometimes.**

**320.R: Have you heard of anything else the school is doing to help other children or young people? Any good ideas you think they've got?**

321.P: I've got a friend called (name), I don't know what's going on or anything but she sometimes comes to student support and she always comes back happy.

322.P: Do you know if you have a bad day, like obviously loads of people are going to have bad days at some point, erm but if you have a bad day, I think it's really good that you talk to somebody. I have bad days all the time for like personal stuff and I think it's good when I talk to my friends and stuff, because it just, yer it just helps.

**323.P: Have you heard about the new wellbeing workers in school?**

324.P: No and shakes of head from all young people.

**325.R: Well I think it's nearly three o'clock so we'll finish for today. I want to say a really big thank you for coming today, its really helped me.**

**326.** So what I'll do next, I'm going to take all the information, I've got the recordings here, my next job is to type it all up, so that might take me a little while. I'll try and come back, I will either be just before Christmas or it might be just after. If I can come back to you with some themes and I'll make some little diagrams and things. If I can bring that back to you with some of the things you've told me today, would that be ok, would you all like to come back, meet with me and just check, you might say actually you've not understood that right...would that be ok?

327.P: (all wanted to come back).

## Appendix 15 - Initial Codes Created from Transcription of First Focus Group

### First Focus Group - Coding of Data

Code	Transcript  (Highlighted numbers indicated time on the recording, used to reflect back on the conversation)
Subject of lesson (RE)	<p><b>R: Thinking about school, can you tell me about when you've had a good day at school?</b></p> <p>P: What was the question sorry?</p> <p><b>R: Can you tell me about times when you've had a good day at school?</b></p> <p>P: Err, do you want me to go first?</p> <p>P: I'll go first...</p> <p>P: Ok</p> <p>P: Erm, when, sometimes when I have RE lessons.</p>
Enjoyment Clothes	<p><b>R: Ok, tell me about RE, what happens, what makes it a good lesson?</b></p> <p>P: Because, I don't know, I just enjoy it or like non-school uniform day is quite good.</p>
Friendships Absence of bullying	<p><b>R: Ok, anything else, tell me about a good days at school...</b></p> <p>P: I enjoy it when all my friends are there and when my bully is not here.</p> <p><b>R: Ok so when your friends are there and your bully isn't there?</b></p>
Enjoy subject (PE, Maths) Puzzles Friendships	<p>P: I enjoy it when, when erm, when I've got PE because I quite like PE, erm and when I've got Maths because we get these sort of puzzles and when my friends are there.</p> <p><b>R: Ok: friends for you as well, interesting, can anyone tell me anything more?</b></p>
PE/Subject Just Dance Awesome/best – Enjoyment?	<p>P: I like it in PE when we do Just Dance.</p> <p>P: Oh yer, that's awesome</p> <p>P: Oh that's the best</p> <p><b>R: Ok, tell me about Just Dance...</b></p>
PE inside Just Dance Trampolining Enjoyment Fun/having a laugh	<p>P: So basically, whenever it's raining, we always do just dance inside.</p> <p>P: Sometimes we do trampolining, yer, which is good as well.</p>

<p>All girls? Music/dancing Computer/Multi-sensory/interactive</p>	<p>P: Yer but anyway, we do just dance, and basically all the girls go in the hall and then they like put the music and like this person dancing on the screen, and then we've all got to follow, its real funky the song and you always get a laugh.</p>
<p>Friendships/forming friendships Computer/internet Working in groups Choice Music/singing Fun/enjoyment</p>	<p><b>R: It does sound really good.</b></p> <p>P: It brings you closer to your friends really, doesn't it. Basically, the app just dance, it's basically that, they use like it, on the computer, like on google. Erm, you work in like groups, well you can choose to be in groups and stuff, but like sometimes if they put a good song everyone will sing along and stuff.</p> <p><b>R: Oh so you can sing along as well? Oh that sounds really good fun.</b></p>
<p>Trampolining/PE Fun Feeling weightless Movement (flips) Good Challenge? Freetime at school. Choice? Control?</p>	<p>P: I like doing trampolining in PE because it quite good fun to just feel quite weightless and if you can do flips, it's quite good, it good fun, although it makes you dizzy, it just good fun to be moving quite quickly.</p> <p>P: Yer, sometimes if we have a free period, we will go and do trampolining but can do what you like in it.</p> <p><b>R: Ok, so when you can do what you like that's good as well?</b></p>
<p>Flips/movement</p>	<p>P: Yer, yer, yer (from three different young people) so like you can do flips and stuff.</p> <p><b>R: Ok, right... anything else you can think of, about what makes good day? So you've got home from school...</b></p>
<p>Enjoyment?</p>	<p>P: When you have good lessons...</p> <p><b>R: What would good lessons look like?</b></p>
<p>Certain subjects (PE, Drama – more practical?)</p>	<p>P: So like say PE, Drama...</p> <p><b>10:00</b></p> <p>P: No, what would a good lesson look like..</p> <p><b>R: That's fine...</b></p>
<p>Achievement</p>	<p>P: As in like?</p> <p><b>R: So what would happen?</b></p> <p>P: So like you got good test results or something?</p>
<p>Enjoyment/interests/achievement</p>	<p>P: Yer or like say in PE you do something you like or in Maths, you do something you're really good at, or...</p> <p>P: Yer, something that just makes you feel good about yourself?</p>
<p>Feeling good</p>	<p>P: Something you know a lot about, so you can like...</p>
<p>Knowledge</p>	<p>P: Or you do a like a quiz and you win the quiz or something.</p>
<p>Winning/competition?</p>	

<p>Pride/feeling good</p> <p>School staff/teachers Adult support</p> <p>Motivation from others/encouragement High expectations?</p> <p>Liking teachers/protection? Being inside</p> <p>Adult approach - communication Gentle encouragement? Different not right/wrong Scaffolding/modelling next steps</p> <p>Reward systems Staff engagement in school policy? e.g. rewards. Recognition of effort? Links to school systems.</p> <p>Own rewards/punishments (Part of the school system?) Not getting in trouble</p> <p>Never getting in trouble/not breaking the rules</p> <p>Rewards</p> <p>Same as peers?</p> <p>Rewards/receiving material rewards – to take home Choice Motivating rewards</p>	<p>P: Something that makes you feel proud of yourself.</p> <p><b>R: Excellent I like that. Is there anything in those lessons that supports you or helps you to do that?</b></p> <p>P: Erm, teachers, our teachers in PE they can be quite supportive sometimes</p> <p><b>R: What do they do that is supportive?</b></p> <p>P: They motivate us, they say keep doing this, come on.</p> <p>P: They push us to our limits.</p> <p><b>R: Oh right...</b></p> <p>P: We like the PE teachers when they got us to come in when it's raining.</p> <p><b>R: Ok...</b></p> <p>P: ...and just that they never like go 'come on you can do better than that?' they just try and do it like, so that they don't ever, like they know you can try better but they don't speak to you like straight, they just oh like try and do this differently, you just find it a lot easier to do.</p> <p>P: They are quite willing to give stamps out and stuff, they are not like 'oh well you have to earn it'.</p> <p><b>11:09</b></p> <p><b>R: Ok so what are stamps? What happens with stamps?</b></p> <p>P: You've got like a planner...</p> <p>P: you get rewards and stuff.</p> <p>P: You get either written warnings, stamps...</p> <p>P: I've not got any written warnings this year.</p> <p>P: I aint had any written warnings ever!</p> <p><b>R: Have you got lots of stamps?</b></p> <p>P: Last year I got, like over a thousand I think.</p> <p><b>R: Oh goodness me!</b></p> <p>P: Oh yer, same.</p> <p>P: You can trade them in at the end for stuff, so you can buy like pencils, (yer I got a voucher) or footballs, or speakers.</p> <p>P: The speakers are boring.</p> <p>P: I got one last year. They're alright, they don't work that well.</p>
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<p>Choice/motivating rewards</p>	<p>P: Yer, I was going to say they do work, but they're not like... but in the end, if you were going to buy them from the shop they would probably be like twenty quid. So the fact that you get them for stamps...</p>
<p>Earning/recognition of effort?</p>	<p>P: If you're good that you get actual rewards.</p>
<p>Material rewards Earning rewards/ motivating rewards Useful rewards/ availability of equipment/support to follow the rules. Useful rewards Not getting into trouble</p>	<p>P: It makes you actually want to behave and get stamps.</p> <p>P: Say you come into school late and it's like half way through the year and you forget a pen or something, you can go and buy a pen or pencil or equipment. It's only like ten stamps or something and you get about ten stamps a day.</p>
<p>Amount of rewards Comparison Fairness? Comparison to peers Amount of rewards/ comparison to peers</p>	<p><b>12:08</b></p> <p>P: ten?</p> <p>P: I get ten a day.</p> <p>P: I get about 40.</p> <p>P: I get about 30.</p>
<p>Following rules/ opportunities to overcome problems</p>	<p><b>R: So you can save them up and get something little? Or save them for a long time and get something bigger?</b></p> <p>P: I've never got them, as I always have the right equipment, but like some people don't and they have to come in and get like a pen.</p>
<p>Being able to make mistakes? Having the right equipment</p>	<p>P: Once I did because my mum put had put the wrong pencil case in my bag.</p> <p><b>R: Is there anything else that supports you in school? What helps make it a good day?</b></p>
<p>PE/Trampolining Fun subject? Differentiation of needs? Individualised support Adult support Achievement Supporting next steps</p>	<p>P: When we're doing Trampolining, and the PE Teachers, they like, if you're trying to learn how to do a flip or something, because you've got, there's four different Olympic trampolines with maximum of like seven people on each one, and erm, you've got one that's people who think they are, like, really bad, one that think they are not really bad but they're a bit below average, one that's above average and one that's quite good. If you're trying to learn a new skill, like if you're learn how to do a somersault or a backflip, erm, he'll always try and help you learn how to do it, because he gets this karate belt and wraps it around your waist to helps you turn your body in the air.</p> <p><b>R: Oh wow!</b></p>
<p>Links to home/clubs Achievement Comparison to peers</p>	<p>P: I did that at my gymnastics, so I know what you mean.</p> <p>P: I know what you mean, I've done that before.</p> <p><b>R: So that's really good it is?</b></p>
<p>Friendships/ Support from peers/friends</p>	<p>P: ...but like my friends support me and stuff.</p> <p><b>R: OK, what do your friends do, how do your friends help you?</b></p>

<p>Support (and protectiveness) from friends/close friends Emotions – worried/scared Not getting into trouble Confiding Following rules Negotiation with adults? Relationship with teacher</p>	<p>P: So I've got a best friend called (name) and I was doing, erm, I'd lost my science book in my science class, and I was really worried about it and I was scared I'd get in big trouble. I've never been in trouble before and she was like 'oh no don't worry about it, I'll talk to him' and she actually went up to him and started to talking to him about it and was like look I'm really sorry but my friend can't find her book and she hasn't taken it home, so I don't see why there's a problem.</p> <p><b>R: So she'd spoken to the class teacher for you and that helped did it?</b></p>
<p>Support systems – student support and pastoral Discussing problems, bereavement, sadness Safe/supportive place Bouncing back/resilience?</p>	<p>P: Yer.</p> <p><b>R: Excellent, has anybody else got any ideas what helps in school?</b></p> <p>P: Er, Student Support, support us quite a lot and Pastoral. Say if you go through like problems, say at home or friendship problems. Or feel like, I don't know, if your pets died or if you feel sad. It's just somewhere to go that will make sure you're alright and so you can get back on your feet.</p> <p><b>R: Lovely, that sounds really good. Have they got quite nice people in there as well?</b></p>
<p>Understanding teachers Flexibility of teachers Being fair/flexible with rules. Willingness to help, understanding of teachers Listening to young people? (latent).</p>	<p>P: Yeh,</p> <p>P: Yeh.</p> <p><b>14:44</b></p> <p><b>R: So that's pastoral and student support. Anything else that helps you in school?</b></p>
<p>Supportive friendships Talking to peers or adults Help available – student support/pastoral Understanding Bouncing back</p>	<p>P: Like, they're quite supportive if you come in late for some reason. Like you went to the dentist, like they're not exactly... the teachers won't be really annoyed.</p> <p>P: Yer and if you've been at student support or pastoral and, erm, and you come in late for a lesson and your teacher asks for a note, your teacher will have to give you a late mark, if student support haven't given you a note, they will remove the written warning for you.</p> <p><b>R: Ok, so that's supportive as well, so you're not getting into trouble?</b></p>
	<p>P: Last year my friend came in, she's a different friend, she is on holiday at the moment, but she came in with a written warning, erm, for her mobile and my old tutor teacher said he'd remove it but then he couldn't because it was another science teacher. So he was gonna remove it but then sadly he couldn't, so he was willing to remove it if he could.</p> <p><b>R: So he was trying to if he was able to? That sounds good as well. If you're having a bit of a bad day at school, and you've come in and everything is going a bit wrong. What helps to turn it around, helps to make it into a better day?</b></p> <p><b>16:00</b></p>

<p>Supportive close friends Confidentiality with friends Availability of peers/friends Talking</p>	<p>P: If you have your friends there, they can support you through stuff, you can talk to them, or a TA or Teacher, or coming to like pastoral or student support because you know they'll help you through everything and anything.</p> <p><b>R: Oh lovely.</b></p>
<p>Key members of staff – Head of Year (pastoral), familiarity of staff, informal times – puzzles, building rapport?</p>	<p>P: I tend, well basically, I turn to my closer friends, so like (two friend's names) or my best friend (friend's name) and just like, I feel like I can tell them anything, as long as they don't tell anybody else, it just helps to be able to know that they are there.</p> <p><b>R: Absolutely, that sounds really good.</b></p>
<p>Regular contact Encouragement Relationships through activities (indirect talking – latent?).</p>	<p>P: For me it helps to go erm, with my friends to our Head of Year, who is also my Maths teacher (teacher's name), and he gives us these like puzzles that are called dingbats...</p> <p>P: dingbats.</p>
<p>Gentle encouragement, promoting independence/learning/ having a go. Flexibility Building relationships/rapport? Recognising interests/tuning into young people's skills and abilities. Sense of achievement? Time and effort of staff? Promoting own ability/recognising skills.</p>	<p>P: ...which are sort of like, you know catchphrase, the show catchphrase, it's sort of like those, but it often like, not a picture, sometimes it's like an arrangement of letters, like one of them he had today was the word 'win' with three 'e's next to it. Like 'win with ease', he says you've got to say what you see.</p> <p><b>R: Ah right.</b></p> <p>P: and he'll sometimes give us clues to them but he'll sometimes think that we should be able to get it on our own, he won't give us clues. He'll sometimes and I don't think (Head of Year) makes them, I think it's a website that makes them and that you can specify what you want them to be. Today there was a Maths one, which was a big ten, with a one in the zero, to a power of six, which was, was supposed to be 'one in a million'.</p> <p><b>R: Brilliant.</b></p>
<p>Promoting skills</p>	<p>P: It sort of just tests your logic skills, to see if you can observe stuff.</p> <p><b>R: Ok, so you like those do you?</b></p> <p>P: Yes.</p>
<p>Food, comforting? Choice. Money/buying things</p>	<p><b>18:00</b></p> <p>P: If I'm having a bad day, I like... I'll sometimes buy a pizza.</p> <p><b>R: Is that in school or at home?</b></p>
<p>Nice food, making choices</p>	<p>P: In school, because I'm very into food. It's just like a cheese pizza but it's really nice.</p>
<p>People at home/family Animals, confiding confidentially, chance to reflect?</p>	<p>P: Sometimes you can turn to your people at home as well, so it might sound weird, but sometimes if I have like a bad day, I don't necessarily want to talk about it to my parents. It might sound weird but I go to like my animals and stuff, so like my dog or my ferrets.</p>

<p>Wanting animals, nearby animals</p>	<p><b>R: Oh I like that, I've got a cat at home and I quite like that if I'm having a bad day.</b></p>
<p>Animals, distractions (Latent)</p>	<p>P: I'm getting a hamster.</p>
<p>Interest in animals</p>	<p>P: Guess what, I've got kittens at my yard.</p>
	<p><b>R: Oh have you?</b></p>
	<p>P: Yer, they're like two weeks old. They're so cute!</p>
	<p><b>R: That's quite calming sometimes, it helps you relax doesn't it, after a bad day. (Oops perhaps a leading question...)</b></p>
	<p><b>19:00</b></p>
<p>Distractions, sense of fun/happiness? Enjoyment (Calming/therapeutic role of pets?)</p>	<p>P: We've just got a puppy at my house, so when I'm with him, I always like, I don't know but you just calm down. It's only a baby and he's just full of joy, so you can't help but not be happy with him.</p>
<p>(Group interest)</p>	<p>P: What kind of dog is it?</p>
<p>Enjoyment</p>	<p>P: Cocker spaniel.</p>
	<p>P: Oh I like them!</p>
<p>Wider family</p>	<p><b>R: They're full of energy aren't they!</b></p>
<p>(Connection within the group)</p>	<p>P: My cousin has got a springer as well.</p>
<p>Animals/pets</p>	<p>P: Springers are the same.</p>
	<p><b>R: So you've got animals at home. I wonder is there anything else out of school that helps sometimes.</b></p>
<p>Pets/hobbies</p>	<p>P: Riding my horse.</p>
	<p>P: Yer.</p>
<p>Outside environment</p>	<p>P: Yer, it gets me out.</p>
	<p><b>R: Ok, so we've got three horse riders here, haven't we.</b></p>
<p>Hobbies, interests, sports, computer games, play, Bullying/teasing, distraction, fantasy v reality (escapism?) Fun</p>	<p>P: I like playing rugby, or playing my xbox, I quite like playing shooting games. Like, once I had quite a bad day at rugby, I got teased by some of my teammates and I just came home and played on my xbox after training and killed a load of people, it was good fun.</p>
<p>Walking/outside/pets/exercise</p>	<p><b>R: Ok.</b></p>
	<p>P: I like walking my dogs.</p>
<p>Pets</p>	<p>P: Yeh.</p>
<p>Fondness of animals</p>	<p>P: Oh your dogs are nice.</p>
	<p>P: They are, they're so cute, your dog is so cute though.</p>

<p>Hobbies, sports, expression/releasing emotions</p> <p>Wider family, holidays, yoga, exercise, routine? (every night), role models (latent?)</p> <p>Wider family – grandparents</p> <p>Releasing emotions/tensions/confidentiality</p> <p>Releasing difficulties, dealing with situations, creating an end point? Difficulties with other people Confidentiality, trust.</p> <p>Interests, family, downtime? Enjoyment Play/leisure time (distractions),</p> <p>Family contact, communication through phones/technology, support from older siblings, expressing feelings, availability of someone to talk to, sharing keeping feelings. Holidays, wider family (pros and cons), staying away from home, a break, special time with an adult? (interpretation) Space/getting away from difficulties/tensions.</p> <p>Interests, distractions, coping with boredom, access to phones/internet, occupying mind?</p>	<p>P: I like doing kickboxing, at home we have this dummy and I like taking my anger out on my dummy.</p> <p>P: I sometimes wish I had one of them.</p> <p>P: Basically, recently when I went to South Africa, I met my aunty (name), my mum's cousin, and she's really into, like, yoga and stuff, so I did couple of lessons and ever since I've been so into yoga, I try and do it every night.</p> <p><b>R: So yoga helps as well. Anything else that you can think of? I wonder if there's any people that might help you, either at home or at school?</b></p> <p>P: My nan, texting my nan.</p> <p>P: Sometimes I find it easy, if you, erm, get like a piece of paper, write down what's happened and then tear it up and put it on the fire and watch it go it go in flames.</p> <p><b>R: I bet that feels great doesn't it!</b></p> <p>P: I do that, I'll write down if someone annoys me and I'm like right, I'll write down your name and it's going in the fire.</p> <p>P: It's like you've told somebody but then they aren't going to tell someone else.</p> <p><b>R: I think that's a lovely idea. Any other ideas?</b></p> <p>P: I like watching strictly with my parents.</p> <p>P: I like watching I'm a celebrity.</p> <p>P: Oh that's good....get me out of here.</p> <p>P: I like texting my sister, because my sisters, like, a bit older now, and she's mainly in her room doing work and stuff like that, so she doesn't have enough time, to like, to see her family. But I think like texting her and telling my feelings and stuff like that and it kind of helps me and supports me.</p> <p>P: When I went away, my cousins were really annoying me, erm, so my aunty has/had her own house in South Africa, so I went to stay with her for a few days and that, like, made me feel better.</p> <p><b>R: So sometimes other relatives in your family...</b></p> <p>P: Yer, just to get away from the ones which annoy you.</p> <p><b>R: What were you going to say (young person's name)?</b></p> <p>P: Erm, I'm quite big on cars and motorsports and stuff, so I've done if I'm like bored at break or something or if I'm bored at home. I'll just go on my phone and I'll look on Formula One Instagram pages to see, like, if there's anything going on interesting, like if there's been like a crash or if someone's doing well in qualifying or in a race or something.</p>
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<p>Rules</p> <p>Music, interests</p> <p>Rules, permission</p> <p>Phones, games, being good at something, sense of achievement?</p> <p>Interests, games, importance of play/escapism, fantasy, (creating flow?). Routines/structure/predictability/rules in games? Sense of achievement (on fifth level).</p> <p>Escapism Power?</p> <p>Questioning aggression/violence? Music, access to phone/technology/internet/own interests. Communication with home/parents. Instant nature of texts/links to home. Sense of achievement/Improvement/sharing excitement/emotions Protection (if something happens – good in this instance). Feeling safe/protected, communication with home/parents Support for/sharing feelings – upset/reassurance?</p> <p>School changes, communication with home, involvement in the school – e.g. clubs, permission from parents</p>	<p><b>22:00</b></p> <p><b>R: Are you allowed your phones at break times or lunch times?</b></p> <p>P: At breaktimes, yer</p> <p><b>R: Does that help sometimes?</b></p> <p>P: Sometimes listening to music and stuff.</p> <p>P: You're not allowed them in lessons unless you've been told that we can.</p> <p>P: Or just like playing a game you're very good at. I don't know...</p> <p><b>23:00</b></p> <p>P: I have this game called Shadow Fight, were you can get, like, loads of different weapons, and armour and helmets, you can get magic, and you can erm... and there's this guy that's released demons accidentally and he has to go through different places in this world and that they took all his flesh, so now he's just a shadow. There's six acts with six different demons, there's Lynx which is the first one, hermit the second, butcher the third, err wasp the forth, the fifth which is the one I'm on now, and then shogun is the last one.</p> <p><b>R: Oh that's sounds really technical.</b></p> <p>P: You've got to try and beat people up and knock them out.</p> <p>P: Why do you keep beating people up?</p> <p>P: Sometimes I listen to music on the bus, and it's like really nice having your phone at school because as lunch, say if something happens, because when I found out I got into set three Maths, I was really excited because I was doing really bad in my Maths, erm, so I like instantly text my mum, because she got work, but she can text in-between her clients because of her job, she replies quite fast and it's like easy to communicate with other people.</p> <p><b>R: So you like if you can get in touch with someone at home if you need to as well?</b></p> <p><b>24:00</b></p> <p>P: That's probably the only reason I have a phone, is so that if anything goes wrong or if I'm upset I can just text my mum or dad and tell them what's gone on.</p> <p><b>R: Is it nice to know they are just there if you need them?</b></p> <p>P: It also helps you've got a club afterschool or something that's come up at school that you have to deal with, like if there's been a sudden sports game or something on, because tonight there's a football match, that was apparently only organised on Friday and the people playing it, that have been selected to play in it, have only found out today.</p> <p><b>R: Oh right...</b></p>
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<p>Reminders via phones Wider family responsibilities Communication with home/parents</p>	<p>P: So one boy said that he come this morning but he can't come because he's got to pick his sister up from school, erm, and but, I think he found out he needs to pick his sister up from school, because he text his mum or he text his dad.</p>
<p>Communication with home/parents Speed of response Permission from parents/carers Friendships out of school Interests put of school</p>	<p><b>R: Ok, so you can get things sorted out quickly if you need to as well?</b></p> <p>P: Umm, yeh.</p> <p>P: My mums like that, so like if I get invited to a friend's house, or like say if someone wants to come to mine to see my horse. My mums like yes they can come or no they can't come.</p> <p><b>R: Ok, so you can let them know straight away.</b></p>
<p>Sibling support Reminders of changes Links/communication with home/parents Staying informed</p>	<p>P: Yer and I can find out whether my sisters been to school or not, so I know whether to get into school and whether I'm been picked up or not, so like tomorrow she's got a scan for something, so I've got to walk home but like I'll probably forget that.</p> <p><b>R: Ok, so someone needs to remind you on the phone and that helps sometimes? I wonder if you've got any other ideas of what could make school even better?</b></p>
<p>Bullying/friendship difficulties</p>	<p>P: No bullies!</p> <p><b>R: Ok, no bullies.</b></p> <p>P: Yer.</p>
<p>Chewing gum/own preferences</p>	<p>P: We should chew in lessons.</p> <p>P: No.</p>
<p>Start time of school</p>	<p>P: If school started a bit later, because...</p>
<p>Tiredness, needing rest</p>	<p>P: Yer, because I'm like done in.</p>
<p>Managing own needs, worry, transport to school, responsibility, independence – e.g. getting ready for school.</p>	<p>P: ...because I was a bit late to bed so I only woke up this morning about 40 minutes before I had leave to go to my bus and I started panicking a bit.</p> <p><b>R: What time does school start here?</b></p>
<p>Getting the bus/transport, getting up in a morning, times to get up  (Comparison with peers)</p>	<p>P: We, I have to get on the bus at 8 and I get up at like half seven.</p> <p>P: You have to get up at half past eight?</p> <p>P: No I have to get up at half past seven.</p> <p>P: I have to get up at 7am like.</p> <p><b>R: So you have a long journey in sometimes, on the bus?</b></p>
<p>Chores, animals, responsibility, helping family (Sense of</p>	<p>P: Yer...and then in the end because I have loads of animals and chores to help out with my mum and dad.</p>

<p>achievement – helping others) (Interest in peers) Time, 'have to' (rules?) commitment? Lack of responsibility/more freedom, child v growing older? Enjoyment, calming activities, responsibility, sense of achievement, routine?, animals, effort, home and school balance Sleep, tiredness, choice, parents support/encouragement</p>	<p>P: You have chores?  P: Yer loads of them, I have to do six hours on weekends.  P: I do nothing.  P: I like doing them though, it calms me down, I love doing chores but anyway...(shush) I always get in like really late, then I have to have my tea and do my animals and stuff. So like the other day I was up I was up 16 hours and then I was at school the next day.  <b>R: Gosh, that's a long day isn't it?</b>  P: It makes weekends worth it, but on the weekends, like, I always wake up early and so like I'll wake up at six and have to get up, but then on the school days my mum has to gets me up and I go like go away, I don't want to get up.</p>
<p>Sleep, alarms, responsibility/getting up for school</p>	<p><b>R: Especially in the winter when it's dark? (oops, slightly leading question by me!)</b>  P: Yer, I think but when somethings... sorry (as another young person starts to talk).  P: In the winter it's quite bad getting up early because it's still dark. Like my alarm goes off at quarter past six but I normally like just doze for half an hour then get up a quarter to seven ish.  P: This morning my alarm went off at half six and I got up at like half seven (talking over each other a bit).</p>
<p>Sleep, waking hours Darkness (I may have led this though, oops). (Comparison to peers)</p>	<p><b>27:00</b>  P: ...and then it just feels like oh I should still be asleep, because its dark, it's really dark.  P: You're not the only one.</p>
<p>Preferences</p>	<p>P: That's why I just find it easier to get up in the summer because it's light and it's like ok its daytime now let's get up.  <b>R: ok so it makes it a bit easier?</b></p>
<p>School uniform – different in summer, ties, shirts, fabric Casual?</p>	<p>P: I like the summer because we don't have to wear our school ties. We have like a red...  P: Yer we have a nylon polo shirt.</p>
<p>School tops  Fabric</p>	<p><b>R: Oh, do you have a different top in a summer?</b>  P: They're not really polo shirts are they...  P: No it's like a sporty material.</p>
<p>Change in fabric/cotton</p>	<p>P: They used to be proper polo shirts, made out of just pure cotton, but now they're like, I don't know how to describe it.</p>

Sporty tops, lighter/cooler?	P: They're like sporty, so like sweat proof basically. They've got like little holes in. They expect everyone to sweat in a summer.
<b>R: So you have a different top in the summer, is that better or is it worse?</b>	
Preferences/more informal tops?	P: Better.
Getting ready for school	P: Oh, better, it takes me five minutes to get ready.
School uniform/rules/choice	P: It still takes me ten minutes to get ready because I wear a skirt in a summer because you always have to have your legs covered but I've got really big trousers.
Rules	P: Why do you have to have your legs covered?
Understanding of rules	P: I don't know.
Rules/getting told off	P: I had a short version and got told off.
Comparison to peers	P: You don't actually have to, I've seen a lot of year sevens without.
Getting in trouble/school rules	P: Yer, they all get in trouble. P: I think what makes it worse is, when you come into school, you already don't like school, like for me school is like a chore.
Enjoyment/liking school Chore	P: I thought you liked chores?
School chores	P: Yer, I do but not like school ones. P: Ok
Enjoyment (lack of) Motivation? Perception of the school day?	P: So basically I don't really enjoy it, I don't know, it's not really boring as some lessons I really enjoy but it's a bit like, I don't exactly get up and go 'yey it's a school day'. It's more like 'oh it's a school day'
(comparison to peers)	P: I'm always like that.
Friendship difficulties Resolving problems/fixing friendships Feeling upset Issues carrying over to next day Importance of maintaining friendships	P: ...but I think what makes it worse is if you've had a bad day previously. So say me and (name) fell and then, like, we never sorted it out, and tomorrow I wouldn't want to come to school because I'd be upset because me and (name) fell out. P: ...but we wouldn't.
Time at home/home school balance? Leisure time Communication within school. Jokes/sarcasm/tricks, Friendships – out of school Choice – making plans	P: I always get excited when we find out we have like a day off school. Like today, I got really excited, my History teacher, before (name) joined the tutor. We was talking about something and the people on desk duty came round and said, it was like a note about something, and he made this lie up saying that we had the day off school, when we actually didn't, and I got so excited, me and my friend was like, oh we can make so many plans. Then ten minutes later he said, you do realise that was a lie. And I got, I literally wanted to start crying.
	<b>R: Oh dear, so you like the odd day off school. Is there anything else that could make school better? Any ideas you have?</b>

<p>Outside activities, exercise Gymnastics equipment, exercise Animals, interests, choice, linking home to school Activities Interests, differences/individuals needs Links with home/animals/interests Allergies/individual needs/reasons for rules</p>	<p>P: If you could, I don't why but if we've got gym stuff outside but it would be better if we could have some more on there...</p> <p>P: We have should some gymnastics stuff..</p> <p>P: Yer, and bring your horse to school day.</p> <p>P: Yer some more activities.</p> <p>P: Some people are allergic to horses.</p> <p>P: No like bring your pet to school day? Or like, ooh my lizard.</p> <p>P: There's only one reason for not being able to bring your pet into school because people can be allergic to them.</p> <p><b>R: If you could have some ideas that could actually happen...</b></p>
<p>School start and finish times/length of school day End of week</p>	<p>P: School start later and finish like ten minutes...</p> <p>P: Like on Fridays, I think, because some schools, there's not that many that does this though, but like on Fridays they start at like 10 and end at like 2pm. I think that should happen</p>
<p>Equipment/resources  Better equipment</p>	<p>P: I think we should erm be allowed, I think we should have better equipment.</p> <p>P: Yer it's all rubbish</p>
<p>School environment, paint/walls</p>	<p><b>R: Ok what type of equipment?</b></p> <p>P: I think we should like renovate the walls because a lot of the walls are just falling apart, like the paints peeling off.</p>
<p>Sense of belonging/pride?</p>	<p>P: We could just repaint them.</p>
<p>Cleanliness</p>	<p>P: Yer, that's what I meant.</p> <p>P: Maybe clean the toilets up because the toilets are disgusting.</p>
<p>Looking after places, cleanliness</p>	<p>P: They are, they shove the toilet roll in the actual toilet thing, it's disgusting.</p>
<p>Cleanliness, looking after places</p>	<p>P: All the girls' toilets are all grotty though. There's always like, nobody flushes the toilet, you don't want to see other peoples..</p>
<p>Cleanliness</p>	<p>P: Yer they get blocked by stuff, like blood.</p>
<p>Understanding needs</p>	<p>P: Blood, why would there be blood in the toilet?</p> <p>P: (name) think about the female anatomy.</p>
	<p>P: (Giggles from two young people).</p>
	<p><b>31:00</b></p>
	<p><b>R: Ok so you want the toilets to be a better, anything else in school, in the lessons?</b></p>

Cleanliness/looking after their school	P: Not so much the lessons, the best thing to do, well not do, is stick your hands under the desks, because if you stick your hands under this desk, this one is clean, but normally it is filled with chewing gum. It's disgusting.
Cleanliness	P: Most desks in the classroom are covered in chewing gum.
Roles and responsibility	P: It needs to be like wiped clean. It is disgusting.
Responsibility/rules and punishment	P: In America they have got different kind of punishment for different things. Sometimes in America, I've read in books, where they'll have kids go around classroom and like chisel gum off the bottom of the desk.
Following rules	<b>R: Ok, would that make school better or worse?</b>
	P: Well I suppose it would really...
Pride in school?	<b>R: Just one minute he's making an interesting point here. (Some young people talking over another in the background).</b>
Following rules and consequences/ punishment.	P: It would make the desks cleaner and it would make people not want to misbehave but if they've heard, oh in detention you have to scrape chewy from the bottom of the desks. Then it would make people go ok so I'm not going to misbehave, so I don't have to do that.
Behaviour in school	<b>R: So if you had a job to do if you didn't follow the rules, that could make school a bit better?</b>
Choices	P: Normally in detention...
Behaviour/ consequences	P: Sorry, I understand where you are coming from and I think it's, like, a good idea, but then at the same time school is for work and to make you get better at education and stuff like that. School shouldn't be, like, for chores, like getting chewing gum off the table and loads of people would be like...
Education/role of school	P: That's going to make me, like, want to move schools (said at the same time as above).
Not for chores/lack of responsibility for school environment? Adults v child's role?	P:.. I'm moving school and then the school would shut down and then that's like what's the point in that?
Choice of school/ environment/entitlement for cleanliness?	<b>R: Ok, that's just different ideas.</b>
Student voice/ preference/control?	P: I think they should do more fire drills because we've hardly had any of them.
Safety/following procedures.	P: I don't think we've had one this year yet.
Knowledge of procedures/feeling safe	P: We had one last year.
	P: Yer, we had like one last year.
Differences between young people, pride in environment/cleaning?	P: I would actually not mind scraping the desks of chewy. It might sound weird but, no it's not like the manky bit, it's just like it would be satisfying.
	P: Yer, I suppose.

Fun/ food/ flexibility/ Fridays – transition to the weekend?	P: I think on Fridays we should have like a fun day and so you get to, like, eat like ice cream in class or something.
Sense of fun in school?	P: They did that last summer didn't they?
Food/ sweets, indulgence?	P: We'd need a sick bucket, if we're eating loads of sweet stuff.
Food preference	P: No, literally ice cream isn't that sweet, you can get ice cream that isn't that sweet.
Words – positive	<b>R: I wonder, some of things we've been talking about today is about feeling good in school. I wonder what words or phrases you might use about feeling good.</b>
Sense of achievement/doing well, Subjects enjoyment, testing, competitiveness, parental involvement, praise from parents, sharing achievements with home	P: Ecstatic.  P: Happy.  P: You feel like proud of yourself.  P: Yer, like last year, I did, like, really well on a science test and I quite like science and I only dropped, like, three marks out of the entire test, and erm, I asked my teacher if I could take a picture of it and at the end of the lesson I sent it to my parents and was like 'yey look what I've got on this test' and they were like 'yey well done you, you're so clever'.
Feeling proud/sense of achievement, competitiveness, rank amongst peers.	<b>R: How did that make you feel? What types of words might you use with your parents?</b>  P: I was really proud of myself, although I am good at science, erm, still one of the highest marks only dropped one or two. So I got like second or third highest out of the entire year.
Being good at something, knowledge of own abilities, enjoyment and interest in subjects	<b>R: You must have worked really hard then?</b>  P: Yer, so I'm quite good at science and I just retain information about science because I like it, but yer.
Positive and negative 'emotional'	<b>R: Any other words of phrases, so you've come to school and you've had a really good day.</b>
Happiness	P: Emotional.  P: Emotional, why?
Cry – negative assumption?	P: Yer because you'd be happy.  P: Why would you cry over school?
Looking ahead, exams/testing	<b>35:00</b>  P: Yer but, do you know when you're in year eleven or ten, whatever year you do your GCSEs?
Cry – positive emotion	P: You could cry with happiness.

<p>Sense of achievement/higher grades, effort, skills – listening</p> <p>Being proud, effort, trying something new, mastering new skills, achievements at home, support from parents at the right level,</p> <p>Family/parents/home environment/spending time outside, trying/mastering something new/practical skills/some support but just enough, independence. Scaffolding/modelling from adults</p> <p>Overcoming difficulties, Parents being proud, sense of achievement/pride in own abilities. Happiness</p> <p>Levels of happiness, sense achievement</p> <p>Feelings/emotion words</p> <p>Different levels of emotions</p> <p>Levels of emotion/happiness Aiming for more?</p>	<p>P: You could cry if you like got an A plus or an A star and you'd start crying because you'd know you've done really well and you'd be so glad that you'd actually listened in lessons and stuff like that.</p> <p><b>R: Anything at home when you're feeling quite good about yourself? Any words?</b></p> <p>P: I'm proud of myself when I've tried to do something for a new time, I don't know, when like my dad's said, I don't know, like chop down that tree and then I've like chopped down the tree, I get like real excited because I can do it.</p> <p><b>R: Ok, So when you've finished something.</b></p> <p>P: ...because my dad, we live in quite a big house with quite a big garden so there's always like some chores to do, and when my dad says (name) go and run that barrow up the hill or go and... I don't know, like go and muck out the chickens, or go chop that branch down for me, and like I've never done it before, but then like, I can't do it at the first time, but then my dad will show me and then I feel better about myself, because now I don't need my dad's help.</p> <p><b>R: Excellent, so you've managed to do it on your own?</b></p> <p>P: Yer, just to say I don't really chop down trees.</p> <p>P: The other day, it was actually yesterday, I had a riding lesson and my horse took off with me, but he was being really good after that and he's done a really nice canter and my mum was really proud of me. I then sat on my horse, which I'd not sat on for three months, I'd gone riding with her and I was so happy about it.</p> <p><b>R: Brilliant, that sounds really good. Any other ideas or words?</b></p> <p>P: I was really happy, no I was very... ecstatic when I managed to jump 50 metres no cm on my horse.</p> <p>P: Intrigued.</p> <p><b>R: Brilliant, so you've done some jumps as well, that's quite high isn't it. Any other words or phrases you might use.</b></p> <p><b>37:00</b></p> <p>P: Amazing</p> <p>P: Intrigued</p> <p>P: I feel on top of the world.</p> <p>P: You wish!</p> <p>P: (The young people laughed).</p> <p><b>R: You might use that sometimes.</b></p>
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<p>Student support, bouncing back from difficulties, happiness</p> <p>Recognition of life's ups and downs, talking/relationships, friendships, supportive relationships with peers. Bouncing back/resilience?</p> <p>External support systems - new</p>	<p><b>R: Have you heard of anything else the school is doing to help other children or young people? Any good ideas you think they've got?</b></p> <p>P: I've got a friend called (name), I don't know what's going on or anything but she sometimes comes to student support and she always comes back happy.</p> <p>P: Do you know if you have a bad day, like obviously loads of people are going to have bad days at some point, erm but if you have a bad day, I think it's really good that you talk to somebody. I have bad days all the time for like personal stuff and I think it's good when I talk to my friends and stuff, because it just, yer it just helps.</p> <p><b>P: Have you heard about the new wellbeing workers in school?</b></p> <p>P: No and shakes of head from all young people.</p> <p><b>R: Well I think it's nearly three o'clock so we'll finish for today. I want to say a really big thank you for coming today, it's really helped me.</b></p> <p><b>So what I'll do next, I'm going to take all the information, I've got the recordings here, my next job is to type it all up, so that might take me a little while. I'll try and come back, I will either be just before Christmas or it might be just after. If I can come back to you with some themes and I'll make some little diagrams and things. If I can bring that back to you with some of the things you've told me today, would that be ok, would you all like to come back, meet with me and just check, you might say actually you've not understood that right...would that be ok?</b></p> <p>P: (all wanted to come back).</p>
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## Appendix 16 - Collated Codes to Identify Initial Draft Themes

### Subjects/lessons

Subject of lesson/certain subjects (PE, Drama – more practical?)

PE inside/being inside

Trampolining

Music

Dancing

Singing

Computer/internet

Computer/Multi-sensory/Interactive

Enjoy subject/fun subject? (PE, Maths given as examples)

Just Dance

Puzzles

### Enjoyment

Enjoyment (both good enjoyment and lack of)

Awesome/the best

Fun/having a laugh

Good

Distractions, sense of fun/happiness?

Liking school

Chore/school chores

Motivation/Perception of the school day

Feeling good

Pride/feeling good

### Interests – home and school balance?

Interests

Recognising interests/tuning into young people's skills and abilities, differences/individuals needs

Free time at school

Access to phone/technology/internet/own interests.

Play/leisure time (*distractions - latent*), importance of play/escapism, fantasy, (creating flow?).

Distractions, coping with boredom, access to phones/internet, occupying mind?

Activities, hobbies, sports, computer games, music

Interests out of school

Links to home/clubs/animals/interests

Linking home to school

Time at home/home and school balance? Leisure time/time

Outside environment, walking/outside/pets/exercise

Holidays, yoga, exercise, (*role models - latent*)

Spending time with family, downtime?

Routines (every night)/structure/predictability/rules in games/

### (Sense of achievement – at home and school?) (Self and others recognition)

Sense of achievement/promoting own ability/skills/recognising skills/feeling & being proud/pride in own abilities

Achievement, doing well, higher grades, effort, skills – listening, knowledge

Looking ahead, exams/testing

Phones, games, being good at something (on fifth level - game).

Trying something new, mastering new skills, achievements at home/practical/life skills

Challenge/high expectations/aiming for more?

Winning/competition/competitiveness, rank amongst peers, testing

Parental involvement, praise from parents, sharing achievements with home, parents being proud

Responsibility, chores, animals, helping family, helping others, 'have to' (rules?) - Commitment

## Friendships

Forming friendships  
Friendships/support from peers/friends  
Support (and protectiveness) from friends  
Supportive friendships  
Close friends  
Confidentiality with friends  
Availability of peers/friends  
Talking  
Friendships – out of school  
Working in groups  
All girls?

Importance of maintaining friendships  
Absence of bullying

Bullying/teasing  
Friendship difficulties  
Resolving problems/fixing friendships  
Feeling upset/Issues carrying over to next day

## Choice, Control?

Choice, making choices, own preferences, making plans  
Student voice/preference/control?  
Nice food/food preferences (comforting-latent?)  
Chewing gum  
Money/buying things

## (Approach of adults in school)

Adult support/school staff/teachers  
Relationship with teacher, liking teachers/(protection-latent?), jokes/sarcasm/tricks, willingness to help. Confiding, listening to young people? (latent).  
Adult approach – communication, time and effort of staff  
Scaffolding/modelling next steps/supporting next steps  
Motivation from others/gentle encouragement/encouragement, promoting independence/learning/having a go. (or in sense of achievement?)  
Recognition of effort?  
Being able to make mistakes? Having the right equipment  
Different not right/wrong  
Differentiation of needs, individualised support, understanding needs

Flexibility/understanding of teachers/being fair/flexible with rules/negotiation with adults  
Staff engagement in school policy? e.g. rewards.  
Communication within school

## Links to school systems/rules/rewards and punishments

(Part of the school system? - latent)

Roles and responsibility, behaviour in school  
Responsibility/rules, consequences and punishment  
School rules/understanding of rules, allergies/individual needs/reasons for rules/following rules, permission  
Not/never getting in trouble/not breaking the rules/ not getting told off  
Motivating rewards/ receiving material rewards – to take home  
Useful rewards/availability of equipment/support to follow the rules.  
Earning rewards/recognition of effort?  
Following rules/opportunities to overcome problems  
Reward systems/amount of rewards

Own rewards/punishments

Amount of rewards - Comparison to peers/same as peers/fairness

### **Support systems – student support and pastoral**

Key members of staff – Head of Year (pastoral), familiarity of staff, informal times – puzzles, building rapport Building relationships/rapport?

Relationships through activities (indirect talking – latent?).

Safe/supportive place

Help available – student support/pastoral

Discussing problems, bereavement, sadness

Understanding

Talking to peers or adults

Regular contact

External support systems – new

Recognition of life's ups and downs, talking/relationships, friendships, supportive relationships with peers.

Bouncing back from difficulties/overcoming difficulties resilience?

Emotions – worried/scared happiness

### **People at home/family**

Family/parents/home environment/

Parent's support/encouragement

Wider family, Grandparents, Sibling support, support from older siblings, expressing feelings, availability of someone to talk to, sharing keeping feelings.

Support from parents at the right level,

Some support but just enough, independence.

Scaffolding/modelling from adults

### **Communication/contact with family during school day – e.g. via phones**

Links/Communication with home/parents/family contact,

Communication through phones/technology, speed of response, instant nature of texts/links to home.

Staying informed - Reminders/changes via phones/wider family responsibilities, School changes, involvement in the school – e.g. clubs, permission from parents/carers

Friendships out of school

Improvement/sharing excitement/emotions

Feeling safe/protected, Protection (if something happens – good in this instance).

### **Animals**

Animals, pets, wanting/fondness of animals, nearby animals

Hobbies, Interest in animals

Confiding confidentially, chance to reflect?

Distractions (Latent)

(Calming/therapeutic role of pets? – latent – slightly leading question)

### **Emotional literacy – coping with feelings/emotions/difficulties?**

Releasing emotions/tensions/difficulties/expression

Support for/sharing feelings – upset/reassurance, dealing with situations, difficulties with other people, creating an end point? Space/getting away from difficulties/tensions. Holidays, wider family (pros and cons), staying away from home, a break, special time with an adult? (interpretation)

Confidentiality, trust

Distraction, fantasy v reality (escapism?), Power?, Questioning aggression/violence?

Calming activities

### **Systems/structure/environment of school**

Sleep, tiredness, needing rest, waking hours, darkness (I may have led this though, oops).

Managing own needs, responsibility, worry, getting the bus/transport to school, independence – e.g. getting ready for school, getting up in a morning, times to get up, alarms

, /getting up for school

School start and finish times/length of school day/end of week (shorter/different), Fridays – transition to the weekend?

Sense of fun in school - flexibility  
Food preference, sweets, indulgence?

Clothes – non uniform day, rules/choice  
School uniform – School tops different in summer, ties, shirts, fabric, change in fabric/cotton, Casual?  
Sporty tops, lighter/cooler?  
Preferences/more informal tops?  
Ease of getting ready for school

### **School environment**

Walls/paint  
Equipment (wanting better)/resources  
Cleanliness/looking after their school/places, entitlement for cleanliness?  
(Sense of belonging/pride in school? – Latent)  
Choice of school/  
(Differences between young people, pride in environment/cleaning?)  
Knowledge of and following procedures/feeling safe/safety

Outside activities, Spending time outside (at home)  
Exercise, Gymnastics equipment,  
Feeling weightless, Movement (flips)

Education/role of school/  
Not for chores/lack of responsibility for school environment?/?/more freedom, Adults v child's role - growing older?

### **Language around a good day in school – done separately but on work laptop.**

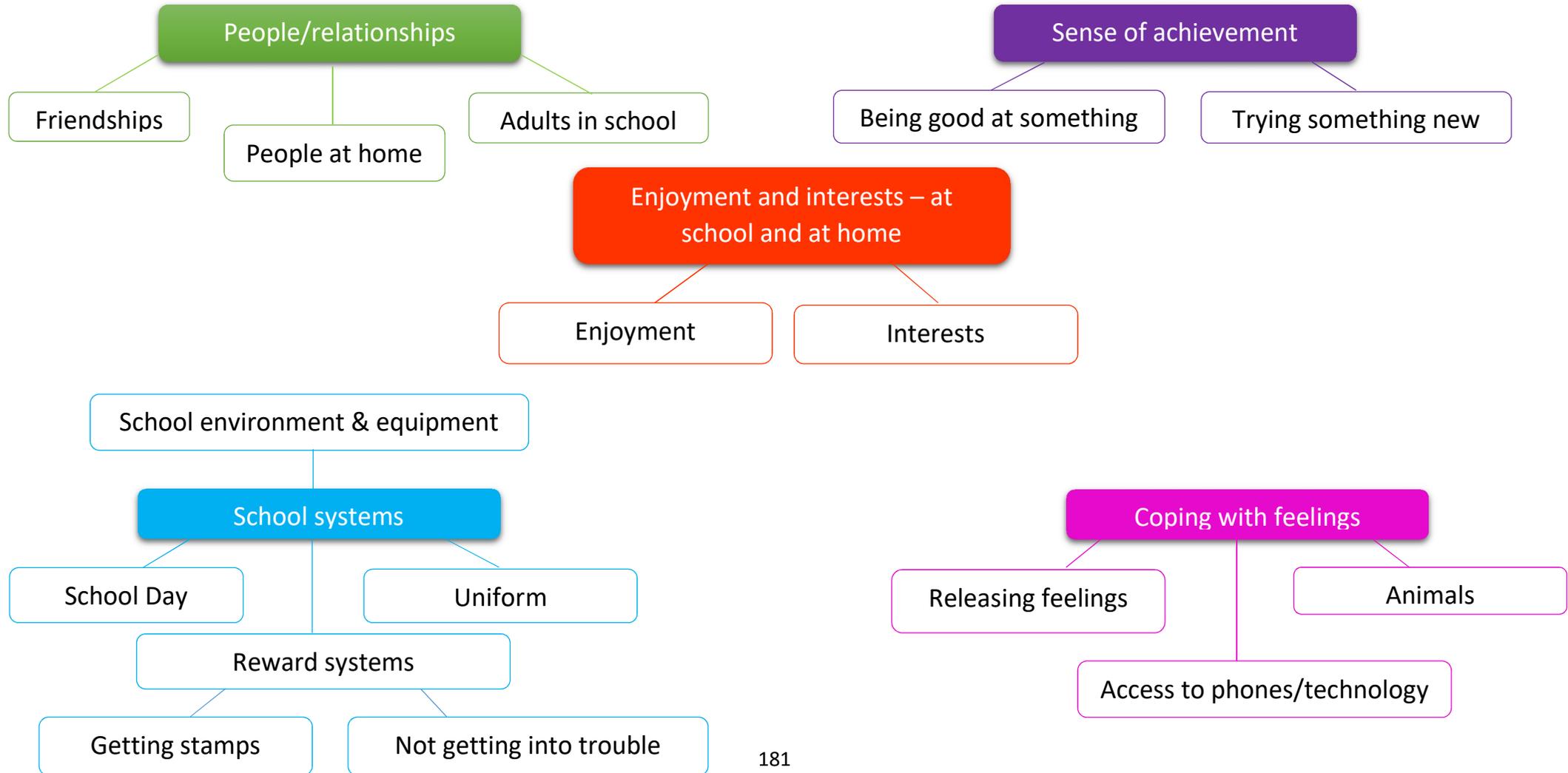
Words – positive  
Being good at something, knowledge of own abilities, enjoyment and interest in subjects  
Positive and negative 'emotional'  
Happiness  
Levels of happiness, sense achievement  
Feelings/emotion words  
Different levels of emotions  
Levels of emotion/happiness  
Cry – negative assumption?  
Cry – positive emotion

### **Focus group reflections**

(Comparison with peers)  
(Group interest)  
(Connection within the group)  
(Interest in peers)

## Appendix 17 - Draft Thematic Maps

### Draft Themes – What Helps to Make a Good Day at school?



## Appendix 18 - Draft Thematic Maps with Illustrative Participant Quotes

### People/relationships

#### Friendships – having friends

- I enjoy it when all my friends are there
- my friends support me
- I turn to my closer friends... I feel like I can tell them anything.
- I think it's good when I talk to my friends and stuff, because it just, yer it just helps.
- I have bad days all the time for like personal stuff and I think it's good when I talk to my friends and stuff, because it just, yer it just helps.

#### Friendships – sorting out difficulties

- So say me and (name) fell and then, like, we never sorted it out, and tomorrow I wouldn't want to come to school because I'd be upset

#### Friendships – no bullies!

- When my bully is not here
- I got teased by some of my teammates

#### People at home/family

- Sometimes you can turn to your people at home as well
- My nan, texting my nan
- I like texting my sister... I think like texting her and telling my feelings and stuff like that and it kind of helps me and supports me.
- My aunty ... I went to stay with her for a few days and that, like, made me feel better.

#### Adults in school - support in lessons

- Our teachers in PE they can be quite supportive sometimes... They motivate us...they say keep doing this, come on. They push us to our limits.
- They're quite supportive if you come in late for some reason.
- he gives us these like puzzles that are called dingbats... he says you've got to say what you see...and he'll sometimes give us clues to them but he'll sometimes think that we should be able to get it on our own, he won't give us clues.
- he'll always try and help you learn how to do it,
- ...and just that they never like go 'come on you can do better than that?'... They know you can try better but they don't speak to you like straight, they just oh like try and do this differently, you just find it a lot easier to do.
- They are quite willing to give stamps out and stuff, they are not like 'oh well

#### Adults in school - emotional support

- ...or coming to like pastoral or student support because you know they'll help you through everything and anything.
- I've got a friend called (name), I don't know what's going on or anything but she sometimes comes to student support and she always comes back happy.

## Sense of achievement

### Sense of achievement - being good at something

- You do something you're really good at...
- Something that makes you feel proud of yourself.
- Something you know a lot about
- Or just like playing a game you're very good at
- Yer, like last year, I did, like, really well on a science test

### Sense of achievement - trying something new

- I'm proud of myself when I've tried to do something for a new time
- I can't do it at the first time, but then my dad will show me and then I feel better about myself, because now I don't need my dad's help.

## Enjoyment and interests – at school and at home

### Enjoyment

- I like it in PE when we do Just Dance....Oh yer, that's awesome
- Sometimes we do trampolining, yer, which is good as well.
- say in PE you do something you like
- I like doing them though, it calms me down, I love doing chores
- I just retain information about science because I like it
- When you have good lessons... So like say PE, Drama

### Lack of enjoyment

- So basically I don't really enjoy it, I don't know, it's not really boring as some lessons I really enjoy but it's a bit like, I don't exactly get up and go 'yey it's a school day'. It's more like 'oh it's a school day'

### Interests/leisure time

- I like playing rugby, or playing my Xbox, I quite like playing shooting games.
- I like watching strictly with my parents.
- I like watching I'm a celebrity.
- I'm quite big on cars and motorsports and stuff
- Sometimes listening to music and stuff.
- Sometimes I listen to music on the bus

## Coping with feelings

### Coping with feelings - releasing emotions

- Sometimes I find it easy, if you, erm, get like a piece of paper, write down what's happened and then tear it up and put it on the fire and watch it go it go up in flames.
- I like doing kickboxing, at home we have this dummy and I like taking my anger out on my dummy.
- I got teased by some of my teammates and I just came home and played on my Xbox after training and killed a load of people, it was good fun.

### Coping with feelings - animals

- It might sound weird but I go to, like, my animals and stuff, so like, my dog or my ferrets.
- We've just got a puppy at my house, so when I'm with him, I always like, I don't know but you just calm down. It's only a baby and he's just full of joy, so you can't help but not be happy with him.
- Riding my horse...it gets me out.
- I like walking my dogs.

### Coping with feelings - access to phones

- I'm like bored at break or something or if I'm bored at home. I'll just go on my phone and I'll look on Formula One Instagram pages.
- it's like really nice having your phone at school because as lunch, say if something happens, because when I found out I got into set three Maths, I was really excited because I was doing really bad in my Maths, erm, so I like instantly text my mum, because she got work, but she can text in-between her clients because of her job, she replies quite fast and it's like easy to communicate with other people.
- That's probably the only reason I have a phone, is so that if anything goes wrong or if I'm upset I can just text my mum or dad and tell them what's gone on.

## School Systems

### School systems - school day

- If school started a bit later, because... Yeh, because I'm like done in.
- on the school days my mum has to get me up and I go like go away, I don't want to get up.
- ...because I was a bit late to bed so I only woke up this morning about 40 minutes before I had leave to go to my bus and I started panicking a bit.
- Like on Fridays, I think, because some schools, there's not that many that does this though, but like on Fridays they start at like 10 and end at like 2pm. I think that should happen.
- I think on Fridays we should have like a fun day and so you get to, like, eat like ice cream in class or something.

### School systems - uniform

- I like the summer because we don't have to wear our school ties.
- Yeh we have a nylon polo shirt.
- It takes me five minutes to get ready.

### School systems – school environment and equipment

- I think we should like renovate the walls because a lot of the walls are just falling apart, like the paints peeling off.
- Maybe clean the toilets up because the toilets are disgusting.
- If you stick your hands under this desk, this one is clean, but normally it is filled with chewing gum. It's disgusting.

### Reward systems - getting stamps

- You get either written warnings, stamps...
- You can trade them in at the end for stuff, so you can buy like pencils, (yeh I got a voucher) or footballs, or speakers.
- It makes you actually want to behave and get stamps.
- Say you come into school late and it's like half way through the year and you forget a pen or something, you can go and buy a pen or pencil or equipment. It's only like ten stamps or something and you get about ten stamps a day.

### Reward systems - not getting into trouble

- I've not got any written warnings this year.
- I aint had any written warnings ever!
- I'd lost my science book in my science class, and I was really worried about it and I was scared I'd get in big trouble. I've never been in trouble before

### Choice – not sure if this would be a theme/subtheme?

- you can choose to be in groups
- Yeh, sometimes if we have a free period, we will go and do trampolining but can do what you like in it.
- me and my friend was like, oh we can make so many plans
- You can trade them in at the end for stuff, so you can buy like pencils, (yeh I got a voucher) or footballs, or speakers.

## Appendix 19 - Young People's Words and Phrases for Feeling Good or Not So Good

### Words and phrases used to talk about good or not so good days

The words below were used to create Word Art images to share with the young people in the second focus group.

Further Questions:

- Are there any more words that you'd like to add to these initial ideas of feeling good or not so good?
- Can you describe any words phrases that you might have heard in the media, on the news, social media, through adults or parents about feeling good or not so good?

<b>Good days</b>	<b>Bad days</b>
Excited, amazing, cry with happiness, satisfying, did well, proud, ecstatic, emotional, intrigued, feeling better about myself, full of joy, did, like, really well, made me feel better, glad, excited because I can do it	Bad day, getting back on your feet, panicking a bit, emotional, makes sure you're alright, you know they'll help you through everything and anything, I'm, like, done in, upset, I literally wanted to start crying, obviously loads of people are going to have bad days at some point, worried, scared,

Appendix 20 – First Word Art for Young People’s Words and Phrases for  
Feeling Good



Appendix 21 – First Word Art for Young People’s Words and Phrases for Feeling Not So Good



## Appendix 22 - Transcription from Second Focus Group

### Discussion about initial draft themes created

Key - R – Researcher, P – Participant

1. R – So, I thought I'd start today by showing you what I've done with what you told me last time. I've been busy, probably like you have been in school. So we started last time by asking what helps makes a good day in school and what makes you feel good in school and then we recorded it on these (pointing to Dictaphones) and this is what I did with it (showing the young people the transcription and coding sheets). So this on here is all of your words. It took me a long time and I had to listen to them over and over again. So anything in bold is my words and anything not in bold is all your words. So I've written it all up on here, so this middle section here is all of what you told me. So that took me a little while.
2. Then, what I had to do next, I had to put a code on it. So everything you told me, I tried to think, well what are they trying to tell me there? What are you saying? So, sometimes you told me about different lessons that you liked, different things you enjoyed, you told me some things about the uniform, that you liked it more in the summer, friendships or when your bullies weren't here, someone told me about puzzles and doing dingbats, so I wrote some of that down as well, so I put codes on everything you told me, and again, I went all the way through. So that was one step.
3. And from that, I put all of the codes in a group, so I was thinking what were they trying to tell me there, what's happening? So from there I put them in a group and that was starting to put themes together. So that was one theme, enjoyment and interests and a lot of you talked about friendships and that seemed to be quite important to you. So I put them altogether in a group and that was starting to put themes together and then, what I'd like to talk about today and I'd really like some more of your ideas, I might have got some things right, I might not have got it right, you might have thought 'oh I did not quite mean that'. If you could tell me that today that would be really helpful.
4. So if we can start, this is all the things you told me. I've colour coded it to help a little bit. So what makes a good day in school or what makes you feel good in school, some of the things that you told me were about the people in school, friendships or the people at home. For different people that was quite important to you. Another thing, I've called it a sense of achievement, I might rename some of these depending on your ideas, lots of you told me, actually being good at something, at school or at home was quite important to you, or having a go at trying something new, so that was quite important. Enjoyment and interests, that was another two themes, I'll go through these in more detail as well. School systems, so you told me some of the school environment and equipment, the school day, some things about uniform, you told me about getting stamps and that was really good, but you didn't like getting into trouble. I've put here, coping with feelings, so if you are getting a bit cross with something or a bit frustrated, having ways to get rid of that. Someone told me about putting it on a bit of paper and burning it in the fire, and I thought that was a really good idea.
5. You told me about some of the animals you have at home and I thought that really helped. Sometimes having your phones and talking to parents at home, or Nans at home, Sisters, different people at home, you felt was really important.
6. So that's what I've come up with so far, and it's just in draft. When I was listening to you, I was thinking this is what I think they were trying to tell me, but I really want you to tell me, is that right, is that not right, what do you think?
7. R: So let me go through the first one, so for friendships on here, a few of you told me having friends and really good friendships was really helpful in school and really supportive, so I've put some of your comments on here. I'll just read through some of them (read through some of their comments – on sheets).
8. R: What do you think about that? Is that about right, have I missed anything, is there anything else you'd like to add to that about having friends?

9. P: I think having moral support is really good, being able to, like, turn to people.
- 10. R: Ok so that's really important to you, to make you feel good in school and maybe at home as well? Anything else people, would like to add to that?**
- 11. (no further comments).**
- 12. R: So we quite like that one do we? Is that ok?**
13. P: Yer.
14. P: Yes.
- 15. R: So next I've got here Friendships, sorting out if it gets difficult, so sometimes, especially at Secondary School, you might fall out with your friends and lots of people do that.**
16. P: I do, a lot.
- 17. R: Yes, its normal, lots of people do. So some of the comments on here are about being able to sort that out and not just being stuck with someone you've fallen out with but being able to move forward either by getting an adult to help you or something else. (Read their comments) Is there anything else that helps with that, sorting out friendships, if it's gone a bit wrong or its getting a bit tricky?**
18. P: The fact that I can literally, just like, walk down to my yard and just forget about everything.
19. P: ...and go to your horses.
20. P: I do that a lot.
21. P: So I had an argument with one of my friends, on Tuesday, and erm, I was like, I got to the yard and I completely forgot about it.
- 22. R: Ok, so going home and switching off? That sounds really good. Anything else?**
23. P: I think, when I fell out with one of my friends, on..., when did I fall out with (name)? About, what...
24. P: Oh last week
25. P: You fall out every week!
26. P: and erm, we were really good friends, me and (name) are really close, just like me and (name), and me and her had fallen out over something, like, really silly, it was just like really silly. (name) helped by sorting out, like taking her to, like, resolve it. So she took her to student support and then we got it sorted out.
27. P: See, I'm best friends with both of them. I'm the coolest.
- 28. R: So you helped both friends?**
29. P: I think it's a bit awkward though, when like, say (name) always tags along with (name), and I tag along, so it's like us three are like that, like we're always with it each other. So it was a bit awkward when I'd fallen out...
30. P: Something else as well, I've got a friend who'd fallen out with a friend and one of my best friends was stuck in the middle of it. She was, like, completely stuck. I was like just ignore it for a bit.
- 31. R: Ok, so you've got other people around, that sounds really useful?**
- 32. R: Another one you'd mentioned (referring to the thematic map) was that there were no bullies in school. So sometimes it goes beyond falling out and you might have a bit of a problem, you might have bullies and things in school, it can happen in lots of schools.**
33. P: I think, with bullies, like because I've been bullied all of my life, for this one reason, but it's a bit personal.
- 34. R: That's fine.**
35. P: Erm and, my mum and dad say to me, that the only reason bullies bully you is because they're going through pain at home, so I just used to cut my bullies a bit of slack sometimes. Like I just to be like, whatever, because you don't know what they are going through at home.
- 36. R: That's really grown up to think like that.**
37. P: My mum and dad just said to be the bigger person, because, like, there's this one girl who I literally can't stand, we don't get on at all, ever since this one accident, and erm, she started being really mean to me, and started being real like really personal, then other people joined in, so it was like a group but then it sort of worked out for a little bit because our parents got involved, but then it just goes back again but I think having your friends around is a lot, lot better.

- 38. R: Its having those good friends, isn't it and being able to ignore the other ones that might be going through themselves.**
39. P: Yer.
40. P: because I know someone is going through something at the moment, and she was just like talking to me about it today.
- 41. R: I think it's really good, it's quite grown up thinking, thinking actually what are they going through?**
42. P: It doesn't make it right...
43. (One participant accidentally snaps a fidget toy and all laugh, altering the conversation).
44. P: ...erm, what was I saying? I've forgotten.
- 45. R: Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about friendships? Do you think that sounds about right for a theme?**
46. P: Yer
- 47. Is that quite important to you all?**
48. P: I think friends mean a lot. I think you can't go through life without friends.
49. P: You can but you'd have a really bad life.
50. P: You'd be a bit sad.
51. P: There was a point when I never had any friends, and then I came to high school and I met, like (name) and (name) and everybody was just really nice.
52. P: Right, I felt really bad as I was sat eating my lunch with (name) and my bestest friend, and one of her friends,
53. P: on the bench?
54. P: Yeh, today, and there was this boy just sat alone, and I felt really bad for him, but then he left before I went to go and say do you want to come and sit with us.
55. P: I don't think he would have yes anyway because it was all girls.
56. P: No me neither.
57. P: No but it would be nice.
58. P: I said that to my mum the other day, there was a man who had an extra, extra large portion of chips, and I was just like, I felt sorry for him as he was sat all on his own.
59. P: I always feel sorry for my dad as well, if everyone else has finished their lunch, and then my dad's just sat there because he's made everybody else's lunch. I'm always like, are you sure you don't want me to sit with you and he was like 'no go upstairs'. He was like oh it's ok. I'm like, oh I feel bad for you.
- 60. R: That might link on, so some of the other things you told me about, people that are important to you. So some adults in school, some adults you might get on really well, some not so much, thinking about the ones that might support you... (Read some quotes from thematic map).**
61. P: I like my R.E. Teacher.
62. R: Ok
63. P: Who's that?
64. P: (name), he's really nice isn't he?
65. P: He shouts a lot.
66. P: No but, yer, I think I'm like, one of his good students.
- 67. R: So what makes some of these good adults in school?**
68. P: I think it's some of the jokes, like (name) the other day he said if you were going to chop a baby which way would you chop it? And we all went like this (gesturing chopping) and he said you're not meant to chop up babies. He's just really funny.
- 69. R: So teachers that are funny. Anything else with teachers?**
70. P: Like good personalities, like you don't just want them to be like just get on with your work.
71. P: Like try and have good relationship with a teacher. You don't want them to be too strict or something.
- 72. R: Ok so they've got to be good fun, not too strict, have a good personality, what would a good personality look like?**
73. P: Err.
74. P: So like...

75. P: I know what a bad personality is. So basically right, I had this teacher, well I have this teacher in...for a lesson, and right and I didn't understand what I was doing, so I'd done it the way I thought I was meant to be doing it and then when he came over he was like, you're meant to be doing it that way and he then gave me a one on like the test thing. It was really bad. I was like, well sorry but I didn't understand.

**76. R: Ok, so what could he have done to make that better?**

77. P: Maybe explained it more.

78. P: Our teacher at the minute, well our teacher that's in Maths, he's always like oh how do you do it and he's just a bit grumpy.

79. P: Who is it?

80. P: (teachers name).

81. P: He gives us, then when we don't get it, then he's like work it out yourself then, the teacher isn't there to tell us what to do.

82. P: Basically, he gives us the questions, then he's like do it, then he gives us like three minutes to do, like six questions, then he just writes all the answers, he doesn't explain it.

83. P: He doesn't give us chance to work them out, like, we're not learning anything. So like me and (name), when we were doing our massive test, we was both like oh what are we meant to do because we didn't get it.

84. P: I got it because I studied at home.

85. P: I never studied at home, we got the same score.

86. P: Yer but only for one of them.

**87. R: So sometimes you might need different amounts of help?**

88. P: I think friends support when you do tests as well, like, I was the lowest in the class because I got like eight out of, how many was it?

89. P: Twenty four.

90. P: Eight out of twenty four.

91. P: I got nineteen.

92. P: and there was like (name) and (name) that got like.

93. P: No she only got thirteen but that was still good.

94. P: ...but then they were like, oh no, that's good, that's good and I knew it wasn't good but it was good like they didn't go haha you got...

95. P: ...but you could also as that person you could take it the wrong way. I had a friend that got her results back and they were lowest than most people in the class, they weren't lower than everybody's but then she got really upset over it and everyone was crowding her and going it's a really good score, don't worry about it and she knew it wasn't and she didn't want to be crowded around, she just wanted to get on with it. So like it didn't bother her until everyone started fussing over it and she took that the wrong way.

**96. R: So I wonder if that's sometimes, you need different things, different people need different things and different people are good at different things, as well aren't they.**

97. P: Yer, ummm.

**98. R: I wonder if, as well, you mentioned the adults and you mentioned emotional support, so if you're finding something a bit tricky or you're feeling a bit down or sad about something, I think someone mentioned if you pet died or anything like that and adults not just being there in lessons but being there, to help with, if you're having a bit of a tricky day which we all have sometimes. So I thought that might be a bit of a theme as well to link in with that? Does that help?**

99. P: Yer.

**100. R: Again understanding adults, you mentioned here (referring to thematic map), coming to Pastoral and Student Support because you know they'll help you through anything and everything (young person's previous words) and I thought that was a lovely way of putting it really, so it doesn't matter what you come with, that they'll try and help you. Have I understood that right? Is there anything else you'd like to add to that?**

101. P: Yer.

102. P: Go on then.

103. P: No I meant, like yer, she's understood that right.

104. P: Oh, ok.
- 105. R: Then you mentioned people at home, you all mentioned somebody at home, it might have been an aunt or uncle, a mum or dad, sometimes your Nan, big sisters and things like that, so I thought that was a really important thing that you all had someone at home to go to as well. Is there anything you'd like to add on there? (read out a few quotes from the thematic map).**
106. P: I've got family in South Africa and we went to visit them in October and it was really hard to leave them. So now we, like, text every night about what goes on in our life and she's, like, thirty and she got married last year, but she's like a sister, because she's my mum's cousin but she's like a sister to me, so we text a lot, because that's when I got her number, and then she got married last year and then she's still thinking about whether to get a dog or a baby first.
107. P: Get both!
108. P: Get both.
109. P: but that's impossible.
110. P: You can have them at the same time.
111. P: Do I want this dog?
- 112. R: So it's quite nice having someone to text quite a lot is it? Just keep in touch with.**
113. P: ...but I text my other, her sister, but she's got two children, and they're both quite young, ones five and ones two, so she's always rushing around. Whereas the one that I normally text (name), she's, like, she's just always there and we do yoga buddies, we do yoga together.
114. P: I love yoga.
- 115. R: Anyone else want to say anything else about anyone at home that helps? Or how they help you or anything?**
116. P: My dad does, he gives me support. If I'm having a bad day, he'll be like, oh just beat them up.
117. P: That's so my dad.
118. P: I'm joking, it's just how my dad is. Me and my brother are both martial arts trained, so my dad's just like, just beat them up. That's just my dad for you.
119. P: Basically, if my dad gets annoyed at work or something, which happens quite a lot, he's got a Volvo, like, a new car, so he goes out driving and has the volume full blast, on country hits and he has it on really loud and he drives around the village, so if I'm having a bad day I just go and sit in the car with him and we just scream out music.
- 120. R: Oh that sounds good, it gets it all out?**
121. P: My dad goes one hundred miles an hour, hahaha.
122. P: No not that.
- 123. R: So do you think that's about right then? So it's to do people, to do with friends, people in school, helping in lessons and helping if you've had a bit of a tricky day and people at home. Is there anything you want to change on there or add to it?**
124. P: This might sound like a really stupid, like, thing but when I'm, like, either, down or, like, upset or angry. I always, like, go and see my horse or ride my horse because I know my horse can't talk back, and like, it can't give me attitude.
125. P: My horse can!
126. P: ...because I know it will just keep it in there because obviously a horse can't talk.
- 127. R: I think that's a good idea.**
128. P: I think that's really funny that a horse can't give attitude, but the other day I was mucking out.
129. P: Mine can. I've got a mare.
130. P: I was mucking her out the other day and she pushed me at my back and I went what have I done now and she started pulling faces at me. My gelding walked in, with er, my sister, because she was riding him for me, and I turned around and I said oh I'm getting on you in a bit, he was like no and stuck his tongue out at me. He can't even hear me properly and he was there like (gestured tongue out).
131. P: What? What a horse stuck its tongue out?
132. P: Yer.

133. P: My dog can, I had a bad day and came home crying, and she's there (gestured putting tongue out).
134. P: That's what my horse does.
135. P: Moral support.
- 136. R: So do you think animals should maybe go on this one then, along with people?**
137. P: yer. (from three young people).
138. P: (name) definitely does, erm, she's new and she's injured, like, so I can't ride her, well I've actually started riding her again. Once I got back on her, I was like, I'd forgotten everything, but, like, she was there the other day and I turned around to put the poo out of her stable into the wheelbarrow and she was doing this into the wheelbarrow, she was sniffing it and then...
139. P: Hoping you didn't notice.
140. P: Exactly.
- 141. R: So if I add animals to go on this one as well (using thematic map), it would be important to go on this one?**
142. P: Yer.
- 143. R: The next one I've put sense of achievement, I've broken that into two different ones, so being good at something and also trying something new. So that was one of the themes, (read some of the young people's quotes). Is there anything else about being good at something, do you think that would be important for you in school, to make you feel good?**
144. P: Being good at, like a sport in a lesson.
145. P: Being good at being nice, because people sometimes think they are nice but, like, little certain things can upset people. Especially when you're at this age when you're hormonal and stuff. Like, whenever I fall out with somebody, I just cut them slack because of hormones and stuff.
146. P: Basically, when I get annoyed with somebody I ignore them, because if I say anything, I know I don't want to offend them. But then like, if I don't say anything then they are going to just ignore me as well. So then I just thought if they annoy me, I'll ignore them.
- 147. R: Ok so basically a bit of space sometimes and being aware of that? So being good to other people as well?**
148. P: and I think not harassing people, like one of my old friends, who I'm not really friends with anymore.
149. P: Who?
150. P: (whispering friends name to other young person).
151. P: Oh right, ok.
152. P: Erm, yer she used to be like, oh what's wrong, what's wrong, what's wrong, like all the time and it got really annoying and that's one of the reasons why we're not friends anymore.
- 153. R: Ok, so being a bit too..**
154. P: A bit too, like, attached.
155. P: Err, yer.
156. P: Like being too fussy.
157. P: If I was with (name), like me and (name) spend a lot of time with each other but we're not like, right we're doing this now, we're going to go and do this, we do it separately, we do it like together but separately. If that makes sense?
- 158. R: Yes, that's makes sense, absolutely. Is there anything else anyone would like to add?**
159. P: Erm, like (name), I'm like that with one of my friends, but then my best friend, whatever I say, like say I'm off to the toilet at lunch.
160. P: Does she say I'll come with you?
161. P: Yer, shes like its ok, I'm like you don't have to come its fine, I can go on my own, and she's like, no I'm coming with you.
162. P: So, I went to pastoral the other day with (name) and she was like, are you sure you don't want me to come? And I was like, no it's fine, I'm going with (name) and (name), I'll be back. She's just like, I need to come with you.
- 163. R: Ok so you've got different friends there really, who need different things?**
164. P: Yer.

- 165. R: Anything else about a sense of achievement and trying something new, a few of you mentioned (read a few quotes out from thematic map). Anything else about trying something new? Do you feel that is something important to you that makes you feel good? In school or at home.**
166. P: Yer, yer.
167. P: I think it's when you're like, not the only one that doesn't know how to do it, because, like, if I'm, say in English and erm, I don't get something, I ask like, not (name) because she isn't in my tutor, but say if I ask (name), then she'll then, like, help me, but I think, so yer.
168. P: ...but I, like, really struggle with trying something new, right, so, like, I have to check with somebody else whether to do it or not.
- 169. R: Ok...**
170. P: So, like, the other day I was doing something, erm, I was like oh do I do it and I really panic about stuff like that, because I've just like got a thing, where I do and I'm really OCD about stuff, so it's really hard to try something new.
- 171. R: Ok so some people like trying something new and some people might find it a bit more difficult, anything else about trying something new? Do you think that's important to you to make you feel good? Sometimes for some people and maybe not for others...**
172. P: Yer.
- 173. R: Anything else?**
174. (No further comments from young people)
- 175. R: Right then, the next one I've gone through it enjoyment, which in school you've all said, (read some previous comments from thematic map). Anything else about enjoyment in school and do you think it's quite important?**
176. P: I think, having the best days of your life.
177. P: I think the clubs that you can do, because you can do clubs for quite a lot of the sports stuff that you do in P.E, even if you're not doing it in P.E. at that time. You can do rugby, trampolining, football, I think in the summer you can do curling, and softball, cricket...
178. P: What is curling?
179. P: It's an Olympic sport, it's weird, I don't know what you're supposed to do in it. You do it on ice but I think they just do it in the hall.
180. P: It's really cool!
181. P: I think it just glides across the hall. You manipulate it as much as possible.
182. P: I enjoy R.E.
- 183. R: Ok so R.E. is on there as well. Is that quite important to you? Would you say that's one of the themes that's quite important, that you come to school and there's actually different lessons that you enjoy?**
184. P: I think, getting things that you know, so like getting things in...Let me rephrase it, so when you want to do something when you're older, so say if you want to be a dancer, you're going to want to do stuff that is related to dance, I think being good at that will help because it will help you when you do your GCSEs and stuff.
185. P: I think teachers influence, like, what I enjoy and stuff. Erm, because like last year I really enjoyed a lesson, and then this year, it's kind of gone, like it was going to be one of my GCSEs and its gone downhill a bit because I'm not enjoying it anymore but erm...
- 186. R: I wonder what changed with that, what's happened?**
187. P: Yer. I think it was like, the influence of the teachers and how I did it. Erm, because what I do is I check my timetable before I go to bed on a night and then...
188. P: I do that as well.
189. P: ...once I get, say I have RE and PE and I have a really easy day, like I only have say Science, not English or French or anything, or like a lesson that I don't like, then I get really excited because I think, like, yes I'm going to enjoy tomorrow and then I get up early.
- 190. R: Ok, so you know that's going to be a better day for you with those things that you enjoy? Anything else you'd like to add to that?**
191. P: I enjoy non-uniform days!
192. P: Oh yes, we've got one this Wednesday.
193. P: Are you wearing your Christmas jumper or actual school uniform?

194. P: I don't know.
195. P: I'm just not wearing uniform.
196. P: I don't want to be a dufus, looking around, like, Christmas jumper.
197. P: Oh I'm wearing my Christmas jumper, I don't care, mine's got ice skates on.
198. P: I don't own a Christmas jumper.
199. P: Mines a reindeer from Lipsy, London.
200. P: You need to wear that?
- 201. R: So you really like non-uniform day then?**
- 202. R: Ok so linked to that, lack of enjoyment, so if you wake up and think oh no I've got this subject today (read some quotes from thematic map).**
203. P: Yer.
204. P: I used to think of it like that.
205. P: but you like yours.
- 206. R: So do you think lack of enjoyment would be part of that theme? So if you wake up and it's all things that you enjoy that would make it a better day. If you wake up and it's those tricky lessons and somethings happened, that would make it a more difficult day?**
207. P: Yer
- 208. R: Does that make sense?**
209. P: Yer
- 210. R: OK, so the next theme I've put is interests and leisure time. (read quotes from thematic map). Does that make it a better day? Is there anything we've missed on there?**
211. P: I like listening to Christmas songs on the bus...
212. P: Yer.
213. P: ...like, in December.
- 214. R: So that was to do with interests and maybe leisure time as well, I wasn't quite sure if it was interests or leisure time or both? What do you think about that one?**
215. P: Both, I think
216. P: Wait, what's leisure time?
- 217. R: Leisure time, like doing things in your own time, having time to do the things that you like.**
218. P: Like horse riding.
219. P: all the things in my spare time, with animals and in my garden, so basically my brothers really into, like gaming and stuff like that but I'm really into animals. Whenever somebody comes, whenever I tell somebody how many animals I've got, they go like, do you live on a farm and then they come to my house and go, like, but your house is tiny. It's actually not that, it's really big but the gardens quite small because it's got like a back and a front garden but most of the space is taken up by all my animals. So I have two woods, so one of them is full of my chickens and the other ones full of more chickens, and then I have nine ferrets.
220. P: Nine?
221. P: I used to have seven dogs, I used to have three rabbits but we only have two now. I have three dogs, nine ferrets, we save birds of prey as well, so it's like a bird sanctuary, but, so sometimes...
222. P: I'm coming.
223. P: Haha, so we had a kestrel in before, called Kevin...
224. P: Aww.
225. P: ...but he's now released back into the wild, we saved a baby bullfinch and a crow, yer so me and my dad, like, do that and then my mum's just like...
226. P: I once saved a hedgehog.
227. P: We've saved loads of hedgehogs. I go to hedgehog rescue every single Sunday.
- 228. R: So anything to do with animals is a big interest of yours? And that helps to make you feel better?**
229. P: Well once, with my dad, there was once this rat, stuck in a trap, because it was like, in the woods but we didn't know it was there, and then, there was like this little thing on it, so it was

- like a tick on the rat, and basically my dad was like oh just leave it there because it will die eventually, but I got it out of the trap, eeee, and I got to hold it and it never bit me.
230. P: I reverse saved a jackdaw once.
- 231. R: Oh wow.**
232. P: Well I say reverse saved, I didn't save it at all. As in I shot it.
233. P: I enjoy going to work with my mum...
234. P: You shot it?! Why?
235. P: Yes, because it's a sport.
236. P: ...she's a physiotherapist for dogs and horses. She's got these really nice clients and she calls them by the dog's name and the dogs are really cute and I just sit there with the dog while she does physio on it.
237. P: Whenever I've been to my mum's work, she works at the vet's surgery in (place), and often me and my sister like to go into the kennel room, and they've got like some dogs in the kennels that they've been operating on or something. So they've got nice dogs in the kennels.
- 238. R: So you get to go and visit them do you?**
239. P: Yes, we get to go and see them.
- 240. R: Do you quite like doing that then?**
241. P: Yer.
242. P: I enjoy rescuing cats, because we rescued them twice from my yard. We've literally just recently rescued one, and there was three of them, the mum and the dad obviously got released again and the girls got...erm... their vaccinations and stuff and the last one we sold on and they got kept at the yard and then we moved yards but I'm really hoping we can get one.
- 243. R: Ok, so anything to do with animals and looking after animals is quite important to you all?**
244. P: Yer
245. P: Me and (name) and, who else, me and (name) are really, really horsey and animally.
246. P: Yer.
- 247. R: Ok, so the next one I thought was coping with feelings. So if you're having a bit of a tricky day, if somethings going on and I've put three different ones for this one. So I've put coping with feelings - releasing your emotions, so this one, like I said earlier, (reading quotes and their ideas) and I thought they were all really good ideas, is there anything else? Is that important to you, if you feel a bit rubbish when you go home, just to get rid of those feelings?**
248. P: Well, I don't know because sometimes I take my anger out on my brother,
- 249. R: Ok...**
250. P: It may seem a bit rude and a bit bad...
251. P: That's a good idea.
252. P: ...but sometimes if my brothers being, like, real gobby to me, I'll just like, shut up or I'll punch you and then he's like go on then, haha, so then, so then I punch him and then I get told off, but then it's like I'm ok after that because, I think I have some, like, anger issues a little bit, because when I'm angry I feel it really hard to calm down.
- 253. R: Ok...**
254. P: and yer, just upset.
- 255. R: Ok, and different ideas to get rid of those, so you come home angry and just need to get rid of those feelings?**
256. P: I don't always hit my brother though, I'm not, like, mental. Yer, I'm not like ooohhoo.
257. P: I have, like, a completely different voice, so when I'm really happy, I have a high voice, then I'm really quiet when I'm annoyed and then my mum can tell when I'm annoyed and stuff and then I either take it out on my mum or I take it out on my dog.
258. P: Oooohh. Why the dog?
259. P: What do you do to your dog?
260. P: Nothing, right, my dogs just sits there and I scream at her and then she just walks off.
261. P: Oh, don't be mean to your dog.
262. P: She doesn't care.
263. P: That's just mean, I can't believe I'm your friend right now.

264. P: Especially your dogs, because you've got a nice dogs.
265. P: Yer, I know they're really cute.
266. P: I can't believe I'm her friend right now.
267. P: Yer so (name),
268. P: (name)?
269. P: Yer, my dogs a Labrador, I've got one called (name) as well, erm, but anyway, they sit there and just look at me. Then I stare back at them, then I, just like, shout at them...
270. P: Yell at them.
271. P:...then if it's my dog, my Labrador, he just licks me. He doesn't care.
272. P: You have two Labradors?
273. P: Yer, but ones a cross.
274. P: If you did that to my dog, he'd probably just start biting you.
275. P: My dog would just stand there and lick you. So, it's like you're not bothered.
276. P: My dog doesn't like me and that makes me sad.
277. P: Why doesn't it like you?
278. P: Well I don't know, he just doesn't like me.
279. P: My dog comes and sits in my room, that's about it.
280. P: It makes me sad, my dog doesn't like me.
- 281. R: Ok, so you've got animals in here as well, so maybe if we put animals in the coping with feelings as well?**
282. P: There's animals in every one.
- 283. R: There's animals in lots of them isn't there. I've put animals in a separate one as well. I'm put animals into coping with feelings, so that links into what you were just saying really. (Read through some previous quotes).**
284. P: That's me.
- 285. R: I've put all your words in, I've just not put who's they were. (Read a few more quotes).**
286. P: Oh that's me, I like walking my dogs. Yer.
- 287. P: I'm hearing today lots of things about animals, so you think they help you a lot? So would that be an important theme do you think?**
288. P: Yer
289. P: Yer.
- 290. R: and another one I've put...and I don't know whether to put in this section or not, I've put coping with feelings, access to phones. So last time when I was here, you've put things like (read a few quotes). So a lot of you were texting people at home if you needed it, someone else was texting a big sister or an aunt if you needed a bit of support**
291. P: That was me.
- 292. R: Was that you as well?**
293. P: Yer.
- 294. R: Do you think that would go in coping with feelings, was that helping your feelings or would that go in one of the other sections do you think?**
295. P: No I think it would go in coping with your feelings but then, like, if you if you have a phone, you could also get, like, bullied through your phone.
- 296. R: Ok...**
297. P: Which could then, like, stress you out.
- 298. R: Ok, so that could link to the other bullying section as well?**
299. P: Yer.
- 300. R: Ok, do you want to tell me anything more about that?**
301. P: It's never happened to me, I was just, it's just.
- 302. R: So it can happen on your phones as well?**
303. P: You've never been bullied?
304. P: I got bullied in primary school.
305. P: I've never been bullied.
- 306. R: Ok, so it's more to do with having a phone as you're getting older?**
307. P: My mum and dad said that I couldn't have a phone until I was twelve.

308. P: Yer, I couldn't get one until I was similar.
309. P: Yer same for me.
310. P: Yer, I'm getting a new one for mine, because I get a new one every two years, so I'm getting the iPhone eight.
- 311. R: Oh gosh.**
312. P: What and then next year, it'll be ten?
313. P: No, I'll get an iPhone, my dad will get one for his Mac, in four years.
314. P: Four years?
315. P: No, two years.
316. P: I'm not really into any of them TikTok, Instagram.
317. P: I'm not into Instagram.
318. P: I love TikTok.
319. P: Have you got an Instagram account?
320. P: Yer.
321. P: I used to have TikTok but I got rid of it because I didn't really like it.
322. P: I've got TikTok etc. but I'm not allowed Instagram, but there's no point in me having it anyway.
323. P: Why?
324. P: ...because I don't need it.
325. P: Oh right, fair enough.
326. P: Do you post on Snapchat?
327. P: No.
328. P: TikToks awesome!
329. P: I don't post anything on TikTok.
330. P: I don't like TikTok.
- 331. R: Tell me a bit more about TikTok, I've not heard of that one?**
332. P: It's where you do like music videos and you post them and whoever's got it follows you, like they can see it.
- 333. R: Ok.**
334. P: I've got a video on my phone.
- 335. R: So some of you like using apps and some of you aren't so keen.**
336. P: I've got TikTok that's saved on my camera or that my friends have seen and then sent to me.
- 337. R: Ok.**
338. P: My friend sent me one today that goes, 'hello guess what time it is, it's disco time', it then cuts to him dancing his head off.
- 339. R: Ok so you send videos to each other do you?**
340. P: Yer, haha.
- 341. R: Are they quite funny videos then?**
342. P: There's a really funny one, basically it's ferret, it's a really funny background, and it's like, I can't explain it. Starts to laugh.
- 343. R: If we just start having a look at this next one, we've got one last section and its thinking about things in school, so you told me lots of things about the school day, so you start quite early here don't you?**
344. P: Yer, we start, well I have to get up at seven.
345. P: 8:40.
346. P: We start at 8:40.
- 347. R: Ok, you told me early you quite like Friday because it's going to be a bit different, as well. (Read some of the young people's previous quotes).**
348. P: I think...
349. P: I'm done in.
350. P: ...only on Friday's, only one Friday's and because, like everyone loves Friday's, we should go to school, still start at 8:40 but like finish at one, because there's no point, like erm, staying at school for an extra couple of hours because you're just going to be bored to blooming death aren't you. So I think we should end at one, because I've got people to talk to.
- 351. R: So you like talking to people at home do you?**

352. P: I love texting people. It's awesome.
- 353. R: So that's important to you to have a good day as well?**
354. P: Yeh!
355. R: Is there anything else about the school day (read further quotes).
356. P: I think every week, on a day, I don't mind what day it is, like, maybe a Friday or a Thursday, we should have a fun day where you bring like your animals into school, like if they'd fit on the bus or in your car or whatever.
357. P: A horse, haha.
358. P: I'd be riding up to school then.
359. P: I think we should do that because it's awesome.
360. P: Yer but I think but what if you're allergic to your animals.
361. P: Well bye.
362. P: I could do show jumping on the field!
- 363. R: Yes, I think you mentioned that last time. This one, I've called it school systems, we mentioned for the school day, you mentioned if it started a bit later, being a bit different on a Friday, having a fun day and things like that.**
364. P: I think we should have a half day every Friday.
365. P: I just said that.
366. P: but then it wouldn't be a novelty on the end of term would it.
367. P: Yer because then you'd just get the full Friday off.
368. P: Yer. Exactly.
369. P: but then you'd end on a Thursday, so what would be speciality in that?
370. P: because then you'd get Thursday off as well, then you'd Wednesday off, then you'd get Tuesday off, basically you'd just get your whole life off. Except from Fridays.
- 371. R: I think you might need to come to school occasionally might you.**
372. P: You'd go once a month.
- 373. R: The next one you mentioned uniform and you said about the summer uniform because you get to wear a different top.**
374. P: It takes me about five minutes to get ready in the summer uniform.
- 375. R: Is that better?**
376. P: Yer.
377. P: Yer, much better, because we don't have to both with...
378. P: I always leave my tie in my bag as well.
379. P: Why?
- 380. R: So thinking about uniform, is that quite important to you as well?**
381. P: I think we should get non-uniform every day.
- 382. R: Ok...**
383. P: Some schools in America and stuff like that and some schools in our country ...
384. P: They do.
385. P: ... they have non-school uniform days every day and they have lockers. We need lockers.
386. P: Yer, we really need lockers.
387. P: When I was younger I said to my mum, I want to go to High School because I want a locker.
388. P: Yer that's what I said.
389. P: The last thing, I got here and it's a flipping rucksack.
390. P: and you have to carry it.
- 391. R: Ok..**
392. P: So if I had a locker, I would come to school with, like, just everything in, like, my hands. I wouldn't even have a bag.
393. P: Yer, you'd come to school with everything in a plastic bag, it wouldn't be in your locker it would be in the plastic bag. Actually I'd have it as a bag for life then it would take up less space wouldn't it, like a bag for life, like a Tesco bag for life or something.
394. P: Still save the turtles guys, and the jellyfish.
395. P: It's a bag for life, its reusable.
396. P: Or you could just buy a turtle bag.
397. P: Yes you could buy a turtle bag.

**398. R: Ok, so you were hoping for lockers at school, did they used to be here do you know?**

399. P: They've got them in Sixth Form.

400. P: This school is a bit poor.

401. P: No it's not.

402. P: Yes it is, my Maths Teacher said. Oh this is school is poor, we need to save the glue sticks.

403. P: Yes, school is poor.

404. P: Yer, it's because loads of the teacher left.

405. P: It's a hard not life, for us.

406. P: My art teacher had heart attack, apparently the other week.

407. P: (name) had a heart attack.

408. P: He had a heart attack?

409. P: Yer, he's fine.

410. P: He's ok but he's now not teaching until January, so we have to have cover teachers until then.

411. P: Yer, he's recovering.

**412. R: Ok, so you've got some teachers who are sadly off at the moment. You mentioned cover teachers?**

413. P: Cover teachers are bad I think. Not bad...

414. P: It depends who you have.

415. P: (Name) is really nice.

416. P: I don't like him.

417. P: (Name) Urgh, I can't stand (Name).

418. P: (Name) is one of the teachers who is good at his job, but bad with children.

419. P: Yer but he has children himself.

**420. R: Do you want to tell me a bit more about that?**

421. P: So basically, he'll go, so the other day we had English, and sir was like, right you're going to be watching the rest of Much A Do About Nothing, or you're going to be doing this task.

422. P: We've never watched it.

423. P: It's really good, you get to see naked bottoms. No that isn't the good thing, that's the bad thing.

424. P: No that's good.

425. P: Oh my god! Just keep going.

426. P: ..but yer, he was a bit like, he just sent us to do the work. By the way it's not really as good thing that you got to see bottoms because I didn't really want to see them. It was just part of the film.

427. P: You didn't have to bring that up.

428. P: Yer you didn't have to.

429. P: I know but I did.

**430. R: Shall we move onto the next one?**

431. P: Yer.

432. P: Yer.

**433. R: So the school systems as well, you mentioned the school environment and equipment, you mentioned the glue sticks a minute ago which might link in. (Read some of their previous quotes). So for the school environment, what would that make it a bit better? Or how would it make you feel better in school?**

434. P: If people could respect it.

435. P: For me, when we were in Maths, in the IT group, like, she put her leg, she banged her leg on the table, into some chewy that was still wet and it stuck to her trousers and she couldn't get it off....

436. P: Ugh!

437. P: ...so we had to, like, kind of like peel it off. Oh it was minging.

438. P: In English last year, it was a reading lesson. I randomly put my foot under the table and pulled my hand away and there was all of this chewy all over it, like stringy gunk.

**439. R: I wonder if that links so what you mentioned, like respecting the environment and respecting school?**

440. P: I think maybe people should respect the seagulls more.

441. P: Yer, people were chucking plastic at them.

442. P: Yer, I've got a friend, she was running around with her hood up, going, because apparently a seagull touched her head, this is one of my best friends, she was going around and telling every teacher that a seagull touched her head and I was like, it's not like it's the end of the world. Then, like, everytime she goes outside she puts her hood and , it's like, it's still going to poo on you anyway, if it poos on you.

443. P: I've got pooped on, it went like this (gestured hand running down).

444. P: I've watched people, literally seagulls were sat there, obviously the seagull will try to get their food because obviously they can't find food otherwise and people just run up to them and chase them. Like, how mean is that, respect the seagulls.

445. P: This boy....

446. P: Also, we should give free food to the seagulls.

447. P: No we should not because they'll poo.

448. P: Right, so yer, this boy, you two might know who he is but I don't know, but anyway this boy. Erm, you'll definitely know who he is.

449. P: Who is it?

450. P: One minute, let me just finish, he went to the toilet and then, he like, turned the taps on...

451. P: Oh, he did it with one of his friends.

452. P: ...and flooded the whole, like, toilet.

453. P: He did it and it went all into the whole corridor.

454. P: It was through a History lesson and then somebody else (name) had gone down, (name), then about ten minutes later...

455. P: I think it was (name).

456. P: Yes it was (name) had said please can I go and wash my hands because he'd deliberately, hadn't he, put ink all over his hands.

457. P: Yer.

458. P: I'm pretty sure...

459. P: What so he could go and see it?

460. P: Yer and help him. And then the teacher said no because (name)'s gone to the toilet and then last lesson we all found out it was (name).

**461. R: Ok, oh gosh.**

462. P: Who found out?

463. P: (Name).

464. P: (Name)?

465. P: Who was it and (name)?

466. P: It will have been on CCTV.

467. P: (Name)?

468. P: Yer (name) and (Name).

**469. R: Ok, I wonder if this links to the next one then, so I'd mentioned so that's the importance of what's going on around you, so the things in the environment and the equipment. A lot of you didn't like to get into trouble and didn't like the thought of that (Read quotes out from thematic map).**

470. P: I've not had any written warnings but I've had two isolations. It's not the first time.

**471. P: You also mentioned you quite liked getting the rewards and the stamps that you get.**

472. P: They're not very good though, the speakers don't last very long.

473. P: I think they should like give us better...

474. P: I got a speaker last year.

475. P: If you get an amazon voucher you get five pound and I think you should get ten at least because I really wanted something and it was more than five pounds and I had no money because I spent it all, on Christmas gifts last year, and I bought myself and amazon voucher thinking, oh yer its ten pounds, and when I got home I put it on and it was only five pounds and I got really upset.

**476. R: Ok so something to do with the rewards you get as part of those systems.**

477. P: It's good for like the amazon thing, because you can get, like, anything, but five pounds, what are you going to get for five pounds, apart from like...

478. P: Not a lot.

479. P: A balloon.

480. P: A balloon.

481. P: Not a lot unless its like...

482. P: It's good they give out, like pens and stuff, with your stamps, that's still good. It's when you get further down, I think, it's not in my planner but, like, you start getting rugby balls and stuff but like, you have to blow them up yourself.

**483. R: Ok.**

484. P: No you don't.

485. P: You can ask a P.E. teacher to do it for you.

486. P: What if you don't have a pump.

487. P: You go to Sports Direct and buy one.

488. P: but what if the P.E. teachers were off, like yer.

**489. R: So I'm hearing you quite like the reward system and getting the stamps but it's something to do with things that you get at the end, perhaps if you had more choice with that?**

490. P: Yer, more choice.

491. P: Although I do like, obviously it's not for us, but like in year eleven you can get stuff off like your prom dress.

**492. R: Ok.**

493. P: Off your ticket, not off your dress?

494. P: Yer, you get like money towards it.

**495. R: The last one I've put on here, and I wasn't sure about this one as you'd said a few little bits, I'd put something on about choice (read comments). Is choice something that would be...with choice I've put a question mark because I didn't know if it would be a theme, is choice something that makes you feel a bit better in school?**

496. P: Yes.

497. P: Yer.

**498. R: or is that something...**

499. P: I like it when you get to choose who you work with.

**500. R: Ok.**

501. P: ...because if you pick the right person it always goes well.

502. P: So me and (name), were into like roughly the same stuff, so do you like football?

503. P: No.

504. P: Me too. I hate football?

505. P: Do you like rugby?

506. P: No.

507. P: Fair enough, but then, well were into roughly the same stuff.

508. P: I like to choose where I sit.

509. P: Yer choosing where you sit is quite good because like you can either say right I'd like to relax a bit this lesson but I'll get on as well but so you can sit with your friends.

**510. R: Ok so you quite like choosing who you sit with and who you work with? Is there anything else about choice in school that might be important to you or is it not that important?**

511. P: Choosing what I have for lunch.

512. P: Yer.

513. P: Yer choosing what you have for lunch.

514. P: Unless you're pack up.

515. P: That's just normal though isn't it, you're not just going to pick up a random thing you don't like though are you?

**516. R: Ok.**

517. P: Well, yer but what if there was something you didn't like, then you'd have to eat grapes because I wouldn't want to do that.

518. P: Yer but they're alright.
- 519. R: Do you think choice might be theme then, who you sit with, who you work with and what you eat for lunch? Is there anything else?**
520. P: I always can't choose about whether to get a breakfast wrap or a pizza and a teacake.
521. P: Oh god, the pizzas so nice, the paninis and wraps.
522. P: If I haven't had any breakfast then I'll have a breakfast wrap but normally I wouldn't have a breakfast wrap, normally I'd have breakfast so then I wouldn't have a breakfast wrap.
- 523. R: Ok the last thing I'd like to do. There's some words and phrases, so when we're talking about what makes us feel good I wondered what words or phrases you might use and these are some of the things you've come up with, so I've put them in two pictures.**
- 524. So on a good day, these are your words that I've put into here. Read out their words. Is there anymore words, if we do that I've missed off there that you might use in school?**
525. P: Positive, vibes of positive energy.
- 526. R: Oh I like that, we'll add that on, is there anything else you'd like to add to there. Or is there anything else you've heard. I wondered if you'd heard of anything in the media or on your phones if you go on anything or on the news, are there any words you can think of around feeling good, or when you're having a better day?**
527. P: Horrible, I mean that's bad...
- 528. R: If we do good first, anything about feeling good that you've maybe heard either in school or out of school?**
529. P: When you are actually good, so like when you're not ill. When you've had a good day, when you have something to look forward to going home.
530. P: Yer, like when I've got something to, like, look forward to I think the day just goes really fast.
- 531. R: Ok, so I'll add that on here too.**
532. P: ...but when like you're really bored and haven't got, like, anything to do when you get back it's like a really long day because you'll just be bored.
- 533. R: Ok, anything else you'd like to add.**
534. P: When I enjoy the bus journey home...
535. P: That you enjoy?
536. P: Yer, the bus journey home because I know I'm on my way home.
- 537. R: Ok so having something to look forward to and enjoy. Anything else you want to add?**
538. P: Ecstatic, oh it's already on there...
- 539. R: Or we can look at, I'll put this one out as well, so this ones when you're having a bit of a bad day, a bit of a tricky day and it's not going as well as you'd like. (Read some of their previous words).**
540. P: Hide away.
541. P: You feel like, I don't know...there was this one person who..
542. P: You feel like the world is turning against you.
543. P: Some people say misfit, meaning like you feel like you don't fit in.
- 544. R: Ok, yer.**
545. P: You know what I think, I think well.
546. P: I think I fit in good actually.
- 547. R: Again with this one is there anything you heard on the news, or if you go on some of the apps on your, about times when you're not having a good day or when things aren't going to plan?**
548. P: About things not going to plan, there's this rapper called Juiceworld, who, erm, recently faked his own death.
549. P: Did he fake it?
550. P: Yer, he faked it.
551. P: Oh, I thought it was real!

552. P: No he faked his own death, he faked having a seizure at an airport, to try and get himself out of thirty one years of jail for having, like loads of sealed, for having load of zip locked bags full of marijuana and guns.

**553. R: Ok...**

554. P: ...but erm, like, when it, when he faked his own death, he was rushed to, erm, yer his faked his own death and was rushed to a hospital and, erm, and when the coroner came in to examine his body...erm...

555. P: I didn't know this.

556. P: ...that he didn't find one because it turned out that he'd already escaped from the hospital and got on his own private jet...

557. P: Wow!

558. P: ...and flew to like the Bahamas, but then when it was discovered that he had faked his death and that he had drugs and guns, erm that he was trying to get on the plane with, erm, I don't know if he was forcibly returned to the USA but he was returned to the USA and tried and he got like almost double the jail time that he would have got if he hadn't faked his death, so talk about not going well.

**559. R: Gosh, so what words around that might you use?**

560. P: So if it does go well, so if you thought you were going to have, like a decent day but then, like it crashes and burns.

**561. R: Ok, so crashes and burns...**

562. P: Everybody on snapchat, when I go through their stories, they're always, like NR which means 'no reply' and a sad face and then it's obviously, sometimes it to get some attention and sometimes it's not, so say like, because I've got a friend, who doesn't go to this school, she's in like, Year Ten, and I text her and she always puts it and I was like are you ok? but yer, she's like, 'oh I don't really want to talk about it'.

**563. R: Ok, so people might not want to talk about things as well, so that might go on there too, just not wanting to talk about it. Is there any other words you'd like to add or tell me today?**

564. P: Like to hide away.

**565. R: Is there anything else I've missed today or that you'd like to add? Any other ideas popping in your head?**

566. P: Are we doing this meeting again?

**567. R: No that's it today. What I'll do next, again I'm going to listen to these and write it all up again, do the codes again and the themes again, just to make them that bit better. So what I'll probably do at the end is to write you a bit of a summary letter just saying what we've found out from your ideas.**

## Appendix 23 - Codes Created from Transcription of Second Focus Group

Code	Transcript
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Transcript – Second Focus Group</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Discussion about initial draft themes created</b></p> <p><b>Key - R – Researcher, P – Participant</b></p> <p><b>R – So, I thought I'd start today by showing you what I've done with what you told me last time. I've been busy, probably like you have been in school. So we started last time by asking what helps makes a good day in school and what makes you feel good in school and then we recorded it on these (pointing to Dictaphones) and this is what I did with it (showing the young people the transcription and coding sheets). So this on here is all of your words. It took me a long time and I had to listen to them over and over again. So anything in bold is my words and anything not in bold is all your words. So I've written it all up on here, so this middle section here is all of what you told me. So that took me a little while.</b></p> <p><b>Then, what I had to do next, I had to put a code on it. So everything you told me, I tried to think, well what are they trying to tell me there? What are you saying? So, sometimes you told me about different lessons that you liked, different things you enjoyed, you told me some things about the uniform, that you liked it more in the summer, friendships or when your bullies weren't here, someone told me about puzzles and doing dingbats, so I wrote some of that down as well, so I put codes on everything you told me, and again, I went all the way through. So that was one step.</b></p> <p><b>And from that, I put all of the codes in a group, so I was thinking what were they trying to tell me there, what's happening? So from there I put them in a group and that was starting to put themes together. So that was one theme, enjoyment and interests and a lot of you talked about friendships and that seemed to be quite important to you. So I put them altogether in a group and that was starting to put themes together and then, what I'd like to talk about today and I'd really like some more of your ideas, I might have got some things right, I might not have got it right, you might have thought 'oh I did not quite mean that'. If you could tell me that today that would be really helpful.</b></p> <p><b>So if we can start, this is all the things you told me. I've colour coded it to help a little bit. So what makes a good day in school or what makes you feel good in school, some of the things that you told me were about the people in school, friendships or the people at home. For different people that was quite important to you. Another thing, I've called it a sense of achievement, I might rename some of these depending on your ideas, lots of you told me, actually being good at something, at school or at home was quite important to you, or having a go at trying something new, so that was quite important. Enjoyment and interests, that was another two themes, I'll go through these in more detail as well. School systems, so you told me some of the school environment and equipment, the school day, some things about uniform, you told me about getting stamps and that was really good, but you didn't like getting into trouble. I've put here, coping with feelings, so if you are getting a bit cross with something or a</b></p>

<p>Support from people</p>	<p>bit frustrated, having ways to get rid of that. Someone told me about putting it on a bit of paper and burning it in the fire, and I thought that was a really good idea.</p> <p>You told me about some of the animals you have at home and I thought that really helped. Sometimes having your phones and talking to parents at home, or Nans at home, Sisters, different people at home, you felt was really important.</p> <p>So that's what I've come up with so far, and it's just in draft. When I was listening to you, I was thinking this is what I think they were trying to tell me, but I really want you to tell me, is that right, is that not right, what do you think?</p> <p>R: So let me go through the first one, so for friendships on here, a few of you told me having friends and really good friendships was really helpful in school and really supportive, so I've put some of your comments on here. I'll just read through some of them (read through some of their comments – on sheets).</p> <p>R: What do you think about that? Is that about right, have a missed anything, is there anything else you'd like to add to that about having friends?</p> <p>P: I think having moral support is really good, being able to, like, turn to people.</p> <p>R: Ok so that's really important to you, to make you feel good in school and maybe at home as well? Anything else people, would like to add to that?</p> <p>(no further comments).</p> <p>R: So we quite like that one do we? Is that ok?</p> <p>P: Yer.</p> <p>P: Yes.</p>
<p>Difficulties with friends</p>	<p>R: So next I've got here Friendships, sorting out if it gets difficult, so sometimes, especially at Secondary School, you might fall out with your friends and lots of people do that.</p> <p>P: I do, a lot.</p> <p>R: Yes, its normal, lots of people do. So some of the comments on here are about being able to sort that out and not just being stuck with someone you've fallen out with but being able to move forward either by getting an adult to help you or something else (read their comments). Is there anything else that helps with that, sorting out friendships, if it's gone a bit wrong or its getting a bit tricky?</p> <p>P: The fact that I can literally, just like, walk down to my yard and just forget about everything.</p>
<p>Switching off/ Change of focus Interests</p>	<p>P: ...and go to your horses.</p> <p>P: I do that a lot.</p>

Difficulties with friends	<p>P: So I had an argument with one of my friends, on Tuesday, and erm, I was like, I got to the yard and I completely forgot about it.</p> <p><b>R: Ok, so going home and switching off? That sounds really good. Anything else?</b></p>
Getting on & falling out with friends/ maintaining Friendships	<p>P: I think, when I fell out with one of my friends, on..., when did I fall out with (name)? About, what...</p> <p>P: Oh last week</p> <p>P: You fall out every week!</p>
Close friendships/ Maintaining friendships Adult support Close friendships/ solving difficulties within friendship groups	<p>P: and erm, we were really good friends, me and (name) are really close, just like me and (name), and me and her had fallen out over something, like, really silly, it was just like really silly. (name) helped by sorting out, like taking her to, like, resolve it. So she took her to student support and then we got it sorted out.</p> <p>P: See, I'm best friends with both of them. I'm the coolest.</p> <p><b>R: So you helped both friends?</b></p>
Conflicting friendships/ Maintaining multiple friendships	<p>P: I think it's a bit awkward though, when like, say (name) always tags along with (name), and I tag along, so it's like us three are like that, like we're always with it each other. So it was a bit awkward when I'd fallen out...</p> <p>P: Something else as well, I've got a friend who'd fallen out with a friend and one of my best friends was stuck in the middle of it. She was, like, completely stuck. I was like just ignore it for a bit.</p> <p><b>R: Ok, so you've got other people around, that sounds really useful?</b></p> <p><b>R: Another one you'd mentioned (referring to the thematic map) was that there were no bullies in school. So sometimes it goes beyond falling out and you might have a bit of a problem, you might have bullies and things in school, it can happen in lots of schools.</b></p>
'Stuck in the middle' friendship groups	<p><b>R: Ok, so you've got other people around, that sounds really useful?</b></p> <p><b>R: Another one you'd mentioned (referring to the thematic map) was that there were no bullies in school. So sometimes it goes beyond falling out and you might have a bit of a problem, you might have bullies and things in school, it can happen in lots of schools.</b></p>
Bullying – ascribing reasons	<p>P: I think, with bullies, like because I've been bullied all of my life, for this one reason, but it's a bit personal.</p> <p><b>R: That's fine.</b></p> <p>P: Erm and, my mum and dad say to me, that the only reason bullies bully you is because they're going through pain at home, so I just used to cut my bullies a bit of slack sometimes. Like I just to be like, whatever, because you don't know what they are going through at home.</p> <p><b>R: That's really grown up to think like that.</b></p>
Understanding of peers/bullies. Parental support Empathy	<p><b>R: That's really grown up to think like that.</b></p> <p>P: My mum and dad just said to be the bigger person, because, like, there's this one girl who I literally can't stand, we don't get on at all, ever since this one accident, and erm, she started being really mean to me, and started being real like really personal, then other people joined in, so it was like a group but then it sort of worked out for a little bit because our parents got involved, but then it just goes back again but I think having your friends around is a lot, lot better.</p> <p><b>R: Its having those good friends, isn't it and being able to ignore the other ones that might be going through themselves.</b></p>
Empathy Bullying Resilience in friendships Parental support Support of friends	<p>P: My mum and dad just said to be the bigger person, because, like, there's this one girl who I literally can't stand, we don't get on at all, ever since this one accident, and erm, she started being really mean to me, and started being real like really personal, then other people joined in, so it was like a group but then it sort of worked out for a little bit because our parents got involved, but then it just goes back again but I think having your friends around is a lot, lot better.</p> <p><b>R: Its having those good friends, isn't it and being able to ignore the other ones that might be going through themselves.</b></p>

<p>Empathy/ Confidentiality</p>	<p>P: Yer.</p> <p>P: because I know someone is going through something at the moment, and she was just like talking to me about it today.</p> <p><b>R: I think it's really good, it's quite grown up thinking, thinking actually what are they going through?</b></p>
<p>Justice – right and wrong with peers?</p>	<p>P: It doesn't make it right...</p> <p>(One participant accidently snaps a fidget toy and all laugh, altering the conversation).</p> <p>P: ...erm, what was I saying? I've forgotten.</p> <p><b>R: Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about friendships? Do you think that sounds about right for a theme?</b></p>
<p>Importance of friendships</p>	<p>P: Yer</p> <p><b>Is that quite important to you all?</b></p> <p>P: I think friends mean a lot. I think you can't go through life without friends.</p>
<p>Emotional support of friends</p>	<p>P: You can but you'd have a really bad life.</p> <p>P: You'd be a bit sad.</p>
<p>New start Positive relationships</p>	<p>P: There was a point when I never had any friends, and then I came to high school and I met, like (name) and (name) and everybody was just really nice.</p>
<p>Break/lunch times with peers</p>	<p>P: Right, I felt really bad as I was sat eating my lunch with (name) and my bestest friend, and one of her friends,</p> <p>P: on the bench?</p>
<p>Empathy of others Supporting peers</p>	<p>P: Yeh, today, and there was this boy just sat alone, and I felt really bad for him, but then he left before I went to go and say, 'do you want to come and sit with us?'</p>
<p>Male/female friendships?</p>	<p>P: I don't think he would have yes anyway because it was all girls.</p> <p>P: No me neither.</p> <p>P: No but it would be nice.</p>
<p>Empathy - strangers</p>	<p>P: I said that to my mum the other day, there was a man who had an extra, extra large portion of chips, and I was just like, I felt sorry for him as he was sat all on his own.</p>
<p>Empathy – family members</p>	<p>P: I always feel sorry for my dad as well, if everyone else has finished their lunch, and then my dad's just sat there because he's made everybody else's lunch. I'm always like, are you sure you don't want me to sit with you and he was like 'no go upstairs'. He was like 'oh it's ok'. I'm like, 'oh I feel bad for you'.</p> <p><b>R: That might link on, so some of the other things you told me about, people that are important to you. So some adults in school, some adults</b></p>

	<p><b>you might get on really well, some not so much, thinking about the ones that might support you... (Read some quotes from thematic map).</b></p>
Teacher/subject preference	<p>P: I like my R.E. Teacher.</p>
	<p>R: Ok</p>
	<p>P: Who's that?</p>
Teacher approach	<p>P: (name), he's really nice isn't he?</p>
Being a good student	<p>P: He shouts a lot.</p> <p>P: No but, yer, I think I'm like, one of his good students.</p> <p><b>R: So what makes some of these good adults in school?</b></p>
Sense of humour – Teacher approach	<p>P: I think it's some of the jokes, like (name) the other day he said if you were going to chop a baby which way would you chop it? And we all went like this (gesturing chopping) and he said you're not meant to chop up babies. He's just really funny.</p> <p><b>R: So teachers that are funny. Anything else with teachers?</b></p>
Personality of teachers/teacher approach	<p>P: Like good personalities, like you don't just want them to be like just get on with your work.</p>
Relationship with teachers	<p>P: Like try and have good relationship with a teacher. You don't want them to be too strict or something.</p> <p><b>R: Ok so they've got to be good fun, not too strict, have a good personality, what would a good personality look like?</b></p> <p>P: Err.</p> <p>P: So like...</p>
Teacher approach – 'modelling/ scaffolding? Differentiation (Latent theme/ Inductive from theory?)	<p>P: I know what a bad personality is. So basically right, I had this teacher, well I have this teacher in...for a lesson, and right and I didn't understand what I was doing, so I'd done it the way I thought I was meant to be doing it and then when he came over he was like, you're meant to be doing it that way and he then gave me a one, on like the test thing. It was really bad. I was like, well sorry but I didn't understand.</p> <p><b>R: Ok, so what could he have done to make that better?</b></p> <p>P: Maybe explained it more.</p>
Teacher mood	<p>P: Our teacher at the minute, well our teacher that's in Maths, he's always like, oh how do you do it and he's just a bit grumpy.</p> <p>P: Who is it?</p> <p>P: (teachers name).</p>
Teacher approach/support/ modelling	<p>P: He gives us, then when we don't get it, then he's like work it out yourself then, the teacher isn't there to tell us what to do.</p>

Teacher approach/speed	P: Basically, he gives us the questions, then he's like do it, then he gives us like three minutes to do, like six questions, then he just writes all the answers, he doesn't explain it.
Appropriate support/differentiated for needs	P: He doesn't give us chance to work them out, like, we're not learning anything. So like me and (name), when we were doing our massive test, we was both like oh what are we meant to do because we didn't get it.
Home work/study	<p>P: I got it because I studied at home.</p> <p>P: I never studied at home, we got the same score.</p> <p>P: Yer but only for one of them.</p> <p><b>R: So sometimes you might need different amounts of help?</b></p>
Friends support	P: I think friends support when you do tests as well, like, I was the lowest in the class because I got like eight out of, how many was it?
Tests	P: Twenty four.
Test pressure?	<p>P: Eight out of twenty four.</p> <p>P: I got nineteen.</p>
Friends support	P: and there was like (name) and (name) that got like.
Empathy?	<p>P: No she only got thirteen but that was still good.</p> <p>P: ...but then they were like, oh no, that's good, that's good and I knew it wasn't good but it was good like they didn't go haha you got...</p>
Friends support	<p>P: ...but you could also as that person you could take it the wrong way. I had a friend that got her results back and they were lowest than most people in the class, they weren't lower than everybody's but then she got really upset over it and everyone was crowding her and going it's a really good score, don't worry about it and she knew it wasn't and she didn't want to be crowded around, she just wanted to get on with it. So like it didn't bother her until everyone started fussing over it and she took that the wrong way.</p>
Recognition of differences Empathy	<p><b>R: So I wonder if that's sometimes, you need different things, different people need different things and different people are good at different things, as well aren't they.</b></p> <p>P: Yer, ummm.</p> <p><b>R: I wonder if, as well, you mentioned the adults and you mentioned emotional support, so if you're finding something a bit tricky or you're feeling a bit down or sad about something, I think someone mentioned if you pet died or anything like that and adults not just being there in lessons but being there, to help with, if you're having a bit of a tricky day which we all have sometimes. So I thought that might be a bit of a theme as well to link in with that? Does that help?</b></p> <p>P: Yer.</p> <p><b>R: Again understanding adults, you mentioned here (referring to thematic map), coming to Pastoral and Student Support because you know they'll</b></p>

<p>Wider family Similar-age, slightly older family members Starting a family Pets/animals</p>	<p><b>help you through anything and everything (young person's previous words) and I thought that was a lovely way of putting it really, so it doesn't matter what you come with, that they'll try and help you. Have I understood that right? Is there anything else you'd like to add to that?</b></p> <p>P: Yer.</p> <p>P: Go on then.</p> <p>P: No I meant, like yer, she's understood that right.</p> <p>P: Oh, ok.</p> <p><b>R: Then you mentioned people at home, you all mentioned somebody at home, it might have been an aunt or uncle, a mum or dad, sometimes your Nan, big sisters and things like that, so I thought that was a really important thing that you all had someone at home to go to as well. Is there anything you'd like to add on there? (read out a few quotes from the thematic map).</b></p> <p>P: I've got family in South Africa and we went to visit them in October and it was really hard to leave them. So now we, like, text every night about what goes on in our life and she's, like, thirty and she got married last year, but she's like a sister, because she's my mum's cousin but she's like a sister to me, so we text a lot, because that's when I got her number, and then she got married last year and then she's still thinking about whether to get a dog or a baby first.</p> <p>P: Get both!</p> <p>P: Get both.</p> <p>P: but that's impossible.</p> <p>P: You can have them at the same time.</p> <p>P: Do I want this dog?</p>
<p>Connection with family members/ similar activities</p>	<p><b>R: So it's quite nice having someone to text quite a lot is it? Just keep in touch with.</b></p> <p>P: ...but I text my other, her sister, but she's got two children, and they're both quite young, ones five and ones two, so she's always rushing around. Whereas the one that I normally text (name), she's, like, she's just always there and we do yoga buddies, we do yoga together.</p>
<p>Yoga/relaxation</p>	<p>P: I love yoga.</p> <p><b>R: Anyone else want to say anything else about anyone at home that helps? Or how they help you or anything?</b></p>
<p>Parental support Sense of humour</p>	<p>P: My dad does, he gives me support. If I'm having a bad day, he'll be like, oh just beat them up.</p> <p>P: That's so my dad.</p> <p>P: I'm joking, it's just how my dad is. Me and my brother are both martial arts trained, so my dad's just like, just beat them up. That's just my dad for you.</p>

<p>Coping strategies (Teaching of?) Parental support</p>	<p>P: Basically, if my dad gets annoyed at work or something, which happens quite a lot, he's got a Volvo, like, a new car, so he goes out driving and has the volume full blast, on country hits and he has it on really loud and he drives around the village, so if I'm having a bad day I just go and sit in the car with him and we just scream out music.</p>
	<p><b>R: Oh that sounds good, it gets it all out?</b></p>
<p>Parental influence</p>	<p>P: My dad goes one hundred miles an hour, hahaha.</p> <p>P: No not that.</p> <p><b>R: So do you think that's about right then? So it's to do people, to do with friends, people in school, helping in lessons and helping if you've had a bit of a tricky day and people at home. Is there anything you want to change on there or add to it?</b></p>
<p>Animals/ Distractions (unconditional? – latent)</p>	<p>P: This might sound like a really stupid, like, thing but when I'm, like, either, down or, like, upset or angry. I always, like, go and see my horse or ride my horse because I know my horse can't talk back, and like, it can't give me attitude.</p>
	<p>P: My horse can!</p>
<p>Confidentiality</p>	<p>P: ...because I know it will just keep it in there because obviously a horse can't talk.</p>
	<p><b>R: I think that's a good idea.</b></p>
<p>Animals</p>	<p>P: I think that's really funny that a horse can't give attitude, but the other day I was mucking out.</p>
	<p>P: Mine can. I've got a mare.</p>
<p>Sense of humour/ rapport with animals</p>	<p>P: I was mucking her out the other day and she pushed me at my back and I went what have I done now and she started pulling faces at me. My gelding walked in, with er, my sister, because she was riding him for me, and I turned around and I said oh I'm getting on you in a bit, he was like no and stuck his tongue out at me. He can't even hear me properly and he was there like (gestured tongue out).</p>
	<p>P: What? What a horse stuck its tongue out?</p>
	<p>P: Yer.</p>
<p>Support from animals</p>	<p>P: My dog can, I had a bad day and came home crying, and she's there (gestured putting tongue out).</p>
	<p>P: That's what my horse does.</p>
	<p>P: Moral support.</p>
	<p><b>R: So do you think animals should maybe go on this one then, along with people?</b></p>
	<p>P: yer. (from three young people).</p>

<p>Distraction through animals</p>	<p>P: (name) definitely does, erm, she's new and she's injured, like, so I can't ride her, well I've actually started riding her again. Once I got back on her, I was like, I'd forgotten everything, but, like, she was there the other day and I turned around to put the poo out of her stable into the wheelbarrow and she was doing this into the wheelbarrow, she was sniffing it and then...</p> <p>P: Hoping you didn't notice.</p> <p>P: Exactly.</p> <p><b>R: So if I add animals to go on this one as well (using thematic map), it would be important to go on this one?</b></p> <p>P: Yer.</p> <p><b>R: The next one I've put sense of achievement, I've broken that into two different ones, so being good at something and also trying something new. So that was one of the themes, (read some of the young people's quotes). Is there anything else about being good at something, do you think that would be important for you in school, to make you feel good?</b></p>
<p>Sense of achievement/ Sports</p>	<p>P: Being good at, like a sport in a lesson.</p>
<p>Empathy for others? Caring towards others? Hormones</p>	<p>P: Being good at being nice, because people sometimes think they are nice but, like, little certain things can upset people. Especially when you're at this age when you're hormonal and stuff. Like, whenever I fall out with somebody, I just cut them slack because of hormones and stuff.</p>
<p>Reflection/ Empathy?</p>	<p>P: Basically, when I get annoyed with somebody I ignore them, because if I say anything, I know I don't want to offend them. But then like, if I don't say anything then they are going to just ignore me as well. So then I just thought if they annoy me, I'll ignore them.</p> <p><b>R: Ok so basically a bit of space sometimes and being aware of that? So being good to other people as well?</b></p>
<p>Recognition of differences/</p>	<p>P: and I think not harassing people, like one of my old friends, who I'm not really friends with anymore.</p> <p>P: Who?</p> <p>P: (whispering friends name to other young person).</p>
<p>Needing space? Asking for help rather than being asked.</p>	<p>P: Oh right, ok.</p> <p>P: Erm, yer she used to be like, oh what's wrong, what's wrong, what's wrong, like all the time and it got really annoying and that's one of the reasons why we're not friends anymore.</p> <p><b>R: Ok, so being a bit too..</b></p>
<p>Healthy friendships and relationships Too clingy?</p>	<p>P: A bit too, like, attached.</p> <p>P: Err, yer.</p> <p>P: Like being too fussy.</p>

Recognition of space/individuals	<p>P: If I was with (name), like me and (name) spend a lot of time with each other but we're not like, right we're doing this now, we're going to go and do this, we do it separately, we do it like together but separately. If that makes sense?</p> <p><b>R: Yes, that's makes sense, absolutely. Is there anything else anyone would like to add?</b></p>
Best friends	<p>P: Erm, like (name), I'm like that with one of my friends, but then my best friend, whatever I say, like say I'm off to the toilet at lunch.</p> <p>P: Does she say I'll come with you?</p>
Clingy friends	<p>P: Yer, shes like its ok, I'm like you don't have to come its fine, I can go on my own, and she's like, no I'm coming with you.</p>
Adult support/pastoral Healthy friendships	<p>P: So, I went to pastoral the other day with (name) and she was like, are you sure you don't want me to come? And I was like, no it's fine, I'm going with (name) and (name), I'll be back. She's just like, I need to come with you.</p> <p><b>R: Ok so you've got different friends there really, who need different things?</b></p> <p>P: Yer.</p> <p><b>R: Anything else about a sense of achievement and trying something new, a few of you mentioned (read a few quotes out from thematic map). Anything else about trying something new? Do you feel that is something important to you that makes you feel good? In school or at home.</b></p> <p>P: Yer, yer.</p>
Peer support/ similarities— academic	<p>P: I think it's when you're like, not the only one that doesn't know how to do it, because, like, if I'm, say in English and erm, I don't get something, I ask like, not (name) because she isn't in my tutor, but say if I ask (name), then she'll then, like, help me, but I think, so yer.</p>
Recognition of own strengths and difficulties/	<p>P: ...but I, like, really struggle with trying something new, right, so, like, I have to check with somebody else whether to do it or not.</p> <p><b>R: Ok...</b></p>
Trying something new/ peer support Recognition of own emotions	<p>P: So, like, the other day I was doing something, erm, I was like oh do I do it and I really panic about stuff like that, because I've just like got a thing, where I do and I'm really OCD about stuff, so it's really hard to try something new.</p> <p><b>R: Ok so some people like trying something new and some people might find it a bit more difficult, anything else about trying something new? Do you think that's important to you to make you feel good? Sometimes for some people and maybe not for others...</b></p> <p>P: Yer.</p> <p><b>R: Anything else?</b></p> <p>(No further comments from young people)</p> <p><b>R: Right then, the next one I've gone through it enjoyment, which in school you've all said, (read some previous comments from thematic map).</b></p>

	<p><b>Anything else about enjoyment in school and do you think it's quite important?</b></p>
Having fun	P: I think, having the best days of your life.
School clubs/ sports	P: I think the clubs that you can do, because you can do clubs for quite a lot of the sports stuff that you do in P.E, even if you're not doing it in P.E. at that time. You can do rugby, trampolining, football, I think in the summer you can do curling, and softball, cricket...
	P: What is curling?
Professional sports	P: It's an Olympic sport, it's weird, I don't know what you're supposed to do in it. You do it on ice but I think they just do it in the hall.
	P: It's really cool!
	P: I think it just glides across the hall. You manipulate it as much as possible.
Preferred lessons	P: I enjoy R.E.
	<b>R: Ok so R.E. is on there as well. Is that quite important to you? Would you say that's one of the themes that's quite important, that you come to school and there's actually different lessons that you enjoy?</b>
Career/job skills/life skills	P: I think, getting things that you know, so like getting things in...Let me rephrase it, so when you want to do something when you're older, so say if you want to be a dancer, you're going to want to do stuff that is related to dance, I think being good at that will help because it will help you when you do your GCSEs and stuff.
Teachers influence/ enjoyment of subjects	P: I think teachers influence, like, what I enjoy and stuff. Erm, because like last year I really enjoyed a lesson, and then this year, it's kind of gone, like it was going to be one of my GCSEs and its gone downhill a bit because I'm not enjoying it anymore but erm...
Teacher influence. Preparation the night before	<b>R: I wonder what changed with that, what's happened?</b> P: Yer. I think it was like, the influence of the teachers and how I did it. Erm, because what I do is I check my timetable before I go to bed on a night and then...
Looking forward to preferred lessons	P: I do that as well. P: ...once I get, say I have RE and PE and I have a really easy day, like I only have say Science, not English or French or anything, or like a lesson that I don't like, then I get really excited because I think, like, yes I'm going to enjoy tomorrow and then I get up early.
	<b>R: Ok, so you know that's going to be a better day for you with those things that you enjoy? Anything else you'd like to add to that?</b>
Non-uniform	P: I enjoy non-uniform days! P: Oh yes, we've got one this Wednesday.
Comparison to peers	P: Are you wearing your Christmas jumper or actual school uniform? P: I don't know.

<p>Wanting to fit in with peers Confidence</p> <p>Clothing comparison</p>	<p>P: I'm just not wearing uniform.</p> <p>P: I don't want to be a dufus, looking around, like, Christmas jumper.</p> <p>P: Oh I'm wearing my Christmas jumper, I don't care, mine's got ice skates on.</p> <p>P: I don't own a Christmas jumper.</p> <p>P: Mines a reindeer from Lipsy, London.</p> <p>P: You need to wear that!</p> <p><b>R: So you really like non-uniform day then?</b></p> <p><b>R: Ok so linked to that, lack of enjoyment, so if you wake up and think oh no I've got this subject today (read some quotes from thematic map).</b></p> <p>P: Yer.</p>
<p>Predicting the day ahead.</p>	<p>P: I used to think of it like that.</p> <p>P: but you like yours.</p> <p><b>R: So do you think lack of enjoyment would be part of that theme? So if you wake up and it's all things that you enjoy that would make it a better day. If you wake up and it's those tricky lessons and somethings happened, that would make it a more difficult day?</b></p> <p>P: Yer</p> <p><b>R: Does that make sense?</b></p> <p>P: Yer</p> <p><b>R: OK, so the next theme I've put is interests and leisure time. (read quotes from thematic map). Does that make it a better day? Is there anything we've missed on there?</b></p>
<p>Music/fun</p>	<p>P: I like listening to Christmas songs on the bus...</p> <p>P: Yer.</p> <p>P: ...like, in December.</p> <p><b>R: So that was to do with interests and maybe leisure time as well, I wasn't quite sure if it was interests or leisure time or both? What do you think about that one?</b></p> <p>P: Both, I think</p>
<p>Free time (wording rather than leisure time?)</p>	<p>P: Wait, what's leisure time?</p> <p><b>R: Leisure time, like doing things in your own time, having time to do the things that you like.</b></p>
<p>Animals/horse riding</p>	<p>P: Like horse riding.</p>

Free time/ interests Sharing interests with others	P: All the things in my spare time, with animals and in my garden, so basically my brothers really into, like gaming and stuff like that but I'm really into animals. Whenever somebody comes, whenever I tell somebody how many animals I've got, they go like, do you live on a farm and then they come to my house and go, like, but your house is tiny. It's actually not that, it's really big but the gardens quite small because it's got, like, a back and a front garden but most of the space is taken up by all my animals. So I have two woods, so one of them is full of my chickens and the other ones full of more chickens, and then I have nine ferrets.
Nature/Outside	
Home environment	P: Nine?
Animals Caring for animals Nature	P: I used to have seven dogs, I used to have three rabbits but we only have two now. I have three dogs, nine ferrets, we save birds of prey as well, so it's like a bird sanctuary, but, so sometimes...
Caring for animals	P: I'm coming.  P: Haha, so we had a kestrel in before, called Kevin...
Caring for animals	P: Aww.
Caring for animals	P: ...but he's now released back into the wild, we saved a baby bullfinch and a crow, yer so me and my dad, like, do that and then my mum's just like...
Caring for animals/routine?	P: I once saved a hedgehog.  P: We've saved loads of hedgehogs. I go to hedgehog rescue every single Sunday.  <b>R: So anything to do with animals is a big interest of yours? And that helps to make you feel better?</b>
Parental influence Caring for animals	P: Well once, with my dad, there was once this rat, stuck in a trap, because it was like, in the woods but we didn't know it was there, and then, there was like this little thing on it, so it was like a tick on the rat, and basically my dad was like oh just leave it there because it will die eventually, but I got it out of the trap, eeee, and I got to hold it and it never bit me.
Killing animals	P: I reverse saved a jackdaw once.  <b>R: Oh wow.</b>
Not caring for animals Parental support/ influence	P: Well I say reverse saved, I didn't save it at all. As in I shot it.  P: I enjoy going to work with my mum...  P: You shot it?! Why?
Sports – shooting	P: Yes, because it's a sport.
Parental influence – jobs/animals	P: ...she's a physiotherapist for dogs and horses. She's got these really nice clients and she calls them by the dog's name and the dogs are really cute and I just sit there with the dog while she does physio on it.
Parental influence – jobs/animals	P: Whenever I've been to my mum's work, she works at the vet's surgery in (place), and often me and my sister like to go into the kennel room, and they've

<p>Visiting parents work</p>	<p>got like some dogs in the kennels that they've been operating on or something. So they've got nice dogs in the kennels.</p> <p><b>R: So you get to go and visit them do you?</b></p> <p>P: Yes, we get to go and see them.</p> <p><b>R: Do you quite like doing that then?</b></p> <p>P: Yer.</p>
<p>Caring for animals Nature</p>	<p>P: I enjoy rescuing cats, because we rescued them twice from my yard. We've literally just recently rescued one, and there was three of them, the mum and the dad obviously got released again and the girls got...erm... their vaccinations and stuff and the last one we sold on and they got kept at the yard and then we moved yards but I'm really hoping we can get one.</p> <p><b>R: Ok, so anything to do with animals and looking after animals is quite important to you all?</b></p> <p>P: Yer</p>
<p>Horses</p>	<p>P: Me and (name) and, who else, me and (name) are really, really horsey and animally.</p> <p>P: Yer.</p> <p><b>R: Ok, so the next one I thought was coping with feelings. So if you're having a bit of a tricky day, if somethings going on and I've put three different ones for this one. So I've put coping with feelings - releasing your emotions, so this one, like I said earlier, (reading quotes and their ideas) and I thought they were all really good ideas, is there anything else? Is that important to you, if you feel a bit rubbish when you go home, just to get rid of those feelings?</b></p>
<p>Releasing feelings/emotions with siblings</p>	<p>P: Well, I don't know because sometimes I take my anger out on my brother,</p> <p><b>R: Ok...</b></p>
<p>Awareness of healthy relationships?</p>	<p>P: It may seem a bit rude and a bit bad...</p> <p>P: That's a good idea.</p>
<p>Sibling rivalry Coping/calming strategies/ releasing emotions</p>	<p>P: ...but sometimes if my brothers being, like, real gobby to me, I'll just like, shut up or I'll punch you and then he's like go on then, haha, so then, so then I punch him and then I get told off, but then it's like I'm ok after that because, I think I have some, like, anger issues a little bit, because when I'm angry I feel it really hard to calm down.</p> <p><b>R: Ok...</b></p>
<p>Emotions</p>	<p>P: and yer, just upset.</p> <p><b>R: Ok, and different ideas to get rid of those, so you come home angry and just need to get rid of those feelings?</b></p>
<p>Coping strategies Normal emotions</p>	<p>P: I don't always hit my brother though, I'm not, like, mental. Yer, I'm not like oooohoo.</p>

Recognition of emotions/signs Parental support/ Containment (Latent?)	P: I have, like, a completely different voice, so when I'm really happy, I have a high voice, then I'm really quiet when I'm annoyed and then my mum can tell when I'm annoyed and stuff and then I either take it out on my mum or I take it out on my dog.
	P: Oooohh. Why the dog?
	P: What do you do to your dog?
Animals/coping strategy	P: Nothing, right, my dogs just sits there and I scream at her and then she just walks off.
Animals	P: Oh, don't be mean to your dog.
Coping strategy	P: She doesn't care.
	P: That's just mean, I can't believe I'm your friend right now.
Animals	P: Especially your dogs, because you've got a nice dogs.
	P: Yer, I know they're really cute.
Animals	P: I can't believe I'm her friend right now.
Similarity to friends	P: Yer so (name), P: (name)?
Animals Bond with pets Coping strategy	P: Yer, my dogs a Labrador, I've got one called (name) as well, erm, but anyway, they sit there and just look at me. Then I stare back at them, then I, just like, shout at them...
Releasing feelings/emotions Unconditional love? Animals/pets	P: Yell at them. P: ...then if it's my dog, my Labrador, he just licks me. He doesn't care.
Pets	P: You have two Labradors?
Pets/bond	P: Yer, but ones a cross.
Bond with pet	P: If you did that to my dog, he'd probably just start biting you.
Bond with pet	P: My dog would just stand there and lick you. So, it's like you're not bothered.
Being liked	P: My dog doesn't like me and that makes me sad.
Being liked	P: Why doesn't it like you?
Bond with pet	P: Well I don't know, he just doesn't like me.
	P: My dog comes and sits in my room, that's about it.
Feelings/being liked	P: It makes me sad, my dog doesn't like me.
	<b>R: Ok, so you've got animals in here as well, so maybe if we put animals in the coping with feelings as well?</b>
Animals/pets	P: There's animals in every one.

	<p><b>R: There's animals in lots of them isn't there. I've put animals in a separate one as well. I've put animals into coping with feelings, so that links into what you were just saying really. (Read through some previous quotes).</b></p> <p>P: That's me.</p> <p><b>R: I've put all your words in, I've just not put who's they were. (Read a few more quotes).</b></p>
Caring for pets	<p>P: Oh that's me, I like walking my dogs. Yer.</p> <p><b>P: I'm hearing today lots of things about animals, so you think they help you a lot? So would that be an important theme do you think?</b></p>
Animals/pets Caring for animals Support from animals	<p>P: Yer</p> <p>P: Yer.</p> <p><b>R: and another one I've put...and I don't know whether to put in this section or not, I've put coping with feelings, access to phones. So last time when I was here, you've put things like (read a few quotes). So a lot of you were texting people at home if you needed it, someone else was texting a big sister or an aunt if you needed a bit of support</b></p>
Family support	<p>P: That was me.</p> <p><b>R: Was that you as well?</b></p> <p>P: Yer.</p> <p><b>R: Do you think that would go in coping with feelings, was that helping your feelings or would that go in one of the other sections do you think?</b></p>
Access to phones Bullying on phones	<p>P: No I think it would go in coping with your feelings but then, like, if you if you have a phone, you could also get, like, bullied through your phone.</p> <p><b>R: Ok...</b></p>
Stress	<p>P: Which could then, like, stress you out.</p> <p><b>R: Ok, so that could link to the other bullying section as well?</b></p> <p>P: Yer.</p> <p><b>R: Ok, do you want to tell me anything more about that?</b></p>
Experience of bullying	<p>P: It's never happened to me, I was just, it's just...</p> <p><b>R: So it can happen on your phones as well?</b></p>
Bullying	<p>P: You've never been bullied?</p>
Previous experience of bullying	<p>P: I got bullied in primary school.</p> <p>P: I've never been bullied.</p> <p><b>R: Ok, so it's more to do with having a phone as you're getting older?</b></p>

Parental guidance	P: My mum and dad said that I couldn't have a phone until I was twelve.
Comparison to peers	P: Yer, I couldn't get one until I was similar. P: Yer same for me.
New phones	P: Yer, I'm getting a new one for mine, because I get a new one every two years, so I'm getting the iPhone eight. <b>R: Oh gosh.</b>
Upgrading phones	P: What and then next year, it'll be ten?
Upgrading phones	P: No, I'll get an iPhone, my dad will get one for his Mac, in four years.
Upgrading phones Phone apps	P: Four years? P: No, two years.
Phone apps – dislike	P: I'm not really into any of them TikTok, Instagram.
Phone apps – likes	P: I'm not into Instagram.
Comparison to peers	P: I love TikTok. P: Have you got an Instagram account?
Phone apps – dislike	P: Yer.
Parental guidance?	P: I used to have TikTok but I got rid of it because I didn't really like it.
Choice?	P: I've got TikTok etc. but I'm not allowed Instagram, but there's no point in me having it anyway.
Personal choice	P: Why?
Phone apps	P: ...because I don't need it.
Posting on apps	P: Oh right, fair enough.
Phone apps – likes	P: Do you post on Snapchat?
Posting on apps	P: No.
Phone apps – dislike	P: TikToks awesome! P: I don't post anything on TikTok. P: I don't like TikTok.
Phone apps, interacting online	<b>R: Tell me a bit more about TikTok, I've not heard of that one?</b> P: It's where you do like music videos and you post them and whoever's got it follows you, like they can see it. <b>R: Ok.</b>
Phone apps/ viewing videos	
Saving videos/	P: I've got a video on my phone.

apps online with friends	<b>R: So some of you like using apps and some of you aren't so keen.</b>
Sharing videos with friends	P: I've got TikTok that's saved on my camera or that my friends have seen and then sent to me.  <b>R: Ok.</b>
Sharing funny videos	P: My friend sent me one today that goes, 'hello guess what time it is, its disco time', it then cuts to him dancing his head off.  <b>R: Ok so you send videos to each other do you?</b>  P: Yer, haha.  <b>R: Are they quite funny videos then?</b>  P: There's a really funny one, basically it's ferret, it's a really funny background, and it's like, I can't explain it (starts to laugh).  <b>R: If we just start having a look at this next one, we've got one last section and its thinking about things in school, so you told me lots of things about the school day, so you start quite early here don't you?</b>
School start time	P: Yer, we start, well I have to get up at seven.  P: 8:40.  P: We start at 8:40.  <b>R: Ok, you told me early you quite like Friday because it's going to be a bit different, as well. (Read some of the young people's previous quotes).</b>
Feeling tired	P: I think...
Liking shorter Fridays Boredom at school Talking to people/friends	P: I'm done in.  P: ...only on Friday's, only one Fridays and because, like everyone loves Fridays, we should go to school, still start at 8:40 but like finish at one, because there's no point, like erm, staying at school for an extra couple of hours because you're just going to be bored to blooming death aren't you. So I think we should end at one, because I've got people to talk to.  <b>R: So you like talking to people at home do you?</b>
Phones/texting/ online interaction	P: I love texting people. It's awesome.  <b>R: So that's important to you to have a good day as well?</b>  P: Yeh!  <b>R: Is there anything else about the school day (read further quotes).</b>
Fun days/animals (Linking to home? – Latent)	P: I think every week, on a day, I don't mind what day it is, like, maybe a Friday or a Thursday, we should have a fun day where you bring like your animals into school, like if they'd fit on the bus or in your car or whatever.
Animals/pets	P: A horse, haha.

Linking to home/ interests/pets	P: I'd be riding up to school then.
Recognition of others needs	P: I think we should do that because it's awesome.
Putting self-first	P: Yer but I think but what if you're allergic to your animals.
Linking to own interests	P: Well bye. P: I could do show jumping on the field!
	<b>R: Yes, I think you mentioned that last time. This one, I've called it school systems, we mentioned for the school day, you mentioned if it started a bit later, being a bit different on a Friday, having a fun day and things like that.</b>
Shorter Fridays	P: I think we should have a half day every Friday.
Treats at the end of term (shorter days)	P: I just said that. P: but then it wouldn't be a novelty on the end of term would it.
Time off school	P: Yer because then you'd just get the full Friday off. P: Yer. Exactly.
Liking novelty at the end of term?	P: but then you'd end on a Thursday, so what would be speciality in that?
Time away from school.	P: because then you'd get Thursday off as well, then you'd Wednesday off, then you'd get Tuesday off, basically you'd just get your whole life off. Except from Fridays. <b>R: I think you might need to come to school occasionally might you.</b>
Less time at school	P: You'd go once a month.
Summer uniform Getting ready for school Quicker getting ready time	<b>R: The next one you mentioned uniform and you said about the summer uniform because you get to wear a different top.</b> P: It takes me about five minutes to get ready in the summer uniform. <b>R: Is that better?</b> P: Yer. P: Yer, much better, because we don't have to bother with...
Preparation for school	P: I always leave my tie in my bag as well. P: Why? <b>R: So thinking about uniform, is that quite important to you as well?</b>
Non-uniform days	P: I think we should get non-uniform every day. <b>R: Ok...</b>
Comparison to other schools/ countries	P: Some schools in America and stuff like that and some schools in our country ...

Uniform Lockers	P: They do.
School resources	P: ... they have non-school uniform days every day and they have lockers. We need lockers.
School resources/ storage of belongings	P: Yer, we really need lockers. P: When I was younger I said to my mum, I want to go to High School because I want a locker.
School bags/ carrying school resources	P: Yer that's what I said. P: The last thing, I got here and it's a flipping rucksack. P: and you have to carry it.
School storage of belongings	<b>R: Ok..</b> P: So if I had a locker, I would come to school with, like, just everything in, like, my hands. I wouldn't even have a bag.
Carrying school resources	P: Yer, you'd come to school with everything in a plastic bag, it wouldn't be in your locker it would be in the plastic bag. Actually I'd have it as a bag for life then it would take up less space wouldn't it, like a bag for life, like a Tesco bag for life or something.
Bag for life/ environmental awareness	P: Still save the turtles guys, and the jellyfish.
Environment	P: It's a bag for life, its reusable. P: Or you could just buy a turtle bag. P: Yes you could buy a turtle bag.
Sixth form (differences to school)	<b>R: Ok, so you were hoping for lockers at school, did they used to be here do you know?</b>
School budgets	P: They've got them in Sixth Form. P: This school is a bit poor.
Awareness of school budgets/ finance	P: No it's not. P: Yes it is, my Maths Teacher said. Oh this school is poor, we need to save the glue sticks.
Awareness of staff changes	P: Yes, school is poor.
Impact on young people	P: Yer, it's because loads of the teachers left. P: It's a hard not life, for us.
Awareness of staff illness	P: My art teacher had heart attack, apparently the other week. P: (name) had a heart attack. P: He had a heart attack?

	P: Yer, he's fine.
Staff illness/cover teachers	P: He's ok but he's now not teaching until January, so we have to have cover teachers until then.
Staff illness	P: Yer, he's recovering.
	<b>R: Ok, so you've got some teachers who are sadly off at the moment. You mentioned cover teachers?</b>
Cover teachers (negative)	P: Cover teachers are bad I think. Not bad...
Cover teachers (positive)	P: It depends who you have.
Teacher preference	P: (Name) is really nice.
Dislike of teachers	P: I don't like him.
Relationship with teachers	P: (Name) Urgh, I can't stand (Name).
Knowledge of teachers	P: (Name) is one of the teachers who is good at his job, but bad with children. P: Yer but he has children himself.
Teacher approach/ lesson content	<b>R: Do you want to tell me a bit more about that?</b> P: So basically, he'll go, so the other day we had English, and sir was like, right you're going to be watching the rest of Much A Do About Nothing, or you're going to be doing this task.
Comparison to peers/lessons Lesson content, novelty?	P: We've never watched it.
Embarrassment	P: It's really good, you get to see naked bottoms. No that isn't the good thing, that's the bad thing.
Teacher approach/ lesson content	P: No that's good. P: Oh my god! Just keep going.
[focus group dynamics – appropriateness of discussion]	P: ..but yer, he was a bit like, he just sent us to do the work. By the way it's not really as good thing that you got to see bottoms because I didn't really want to see them. It was just part of the film. P: You didn't have to bring that up. P: Yer you didn't have to. P: I know but I did.
	<b>R: Shall we move onto the next one?</b>
	P: Yer.
	P: Yer.
	<b>R: So the school systems as well, you mentioned the school environment and equipment, you mentioned the glue sticks a minute ago which might link in. (Read some of their previous quotes). So for the school</b>

	<p><b>environment, what would that make it a bit better? Or how would it make you feel better in school?</b></p>
Respecting the school	P: If people could respect it.
School cleanliness	P: For me, when we were in Maths, in the IT group, like, she put her leg, she banged her leg on the table, into some chewy that was still wet and it stuck to her trousers and she couldn't get it off....
School cleanliness	<p>P: Ugh!</p> <p>P: ...so we had to, like, kind of like peel it off. Oh it was minging.</p> <p>P: In English last year, it was a reading lesson. I randomly put my foot under the table and pulled my hand away and there was all of this chewy all over it, like stringy gunk.</p> <p><b>R: I wonder if that links so what you mentioned, like respecting the environment and respecting school?</b></p>
Respecting wild animals	P: I think maybe people should respect the seagulls more.
Deemed inappropriate behaviour	P: Yer, people were chucking plastic at them.
Over-reacting of peers	P: Yer, I've got a friend, she was running around with her hood up, going, because apparently a seagull touched her head, this is one of my best friends, she was going around and telling every teacher that a seagull touched her head and I was like, it's not like it's the end of the world. Then, like, every time she goes outside she puts her hood and , it's like, it's still going to poo on you anyway, if it poos on you.
Relating to own experience	P: I've got poosed on, it went like this (gestured hand running down).
Respecting wild animals Deemed inappropriate behaviour	P: I've watched people, literally seagulls were sat there, obviously the seagull will try to get their food because obviously they can't find food otherwise and people just run up to them and chase them. Like, how mean is that, respect the seagulls.
Caring for animals	P: This boy....
Own needs first	P: Also, we should give free food to the seagulls.
Awareness of peers Peers behaviour	P: No we should not because they'll poo.
Awareness of peer's actions	<p>P: Right, so yer, this boy, you two might know who he is but I don't know, but anyway this boy. Erm, you'll definitely know who he is.</p> <p>P: Who is it?</p>
Awareness of peer's actions	P: One minute, let me just finish, he went to the toilet and then, he like, turned the taps on...
Individual/two people's actions	P: Oh, he did it with one of his friends.
Sharing of information	P: ...and flooded the whole, like, toilet.
Awareness of peer's actions/	P: He did it and it went all into the whole corridor.

<p>intentions</p> <p>Teachers awareness of pupil actions</p> <p>Sharing of information</p>	<p>P: It was through a History lesson and then somebody else (name) had gone down, (name), then about ten minutes later...</p> <p>P: I think it was (name).</p> <p>P: Yes it was (name) had said please can I go and wash my hands because he'd deliberately, hadn't he, put ink all over his hands.</p> <p>P: Yer.</p> <p>P: I'm pretty sure...</p> <p>P: What so he could go and see it?</p> <p>P: Yer and help him. And then the teacher said no because (name)'s gone to the toilet and then last lesson we all found out it was (name).</p> <p><b>R: Ok, oh gosh.</b></p> <p>P: Who found out?</p> <p>P: (Name).</p> <p>P: (Name)?</p> <p>P: Who was it and (name)?</p>
<p>CCTV</p>	<p>P: It will have been on CCTV.</p> <p>P: (Name)?</p> <p>P: Yer (name) and (Name).</p> <p><b>R: Ok, I wonder if this links to the next one then, so I'd mentioned so that's the importance of what's going on around you, so the things in the environment and the equipment. A lot of you didn't like to get into trouble and didn't like the thought of that (Read quotes out from thematic map).</b></p>
<p>School behaviour system</p>	<p>P: I've not had any written warnings but I've had two isolations. It's not the first time.</p> <p><b>P: You also mentioned you quite liked getting the rewards and the stamps that you get.</b></p>
<p>Quality of reward systems</p> <p>Choice/selection/availability of rewards</p>	<p>P: They're not very good though, the speakers don't last very long.</p> <p>P: I think they should like give us better...</p> <p>P: I got a speaker last year.</p>
<p>Amount/value of rewards</p>	<p>P: If you get an amazon voucher you get five pound and I think you should get ten at least because I really wanted something and it was more than five pounds and I had no money because I spent it all, on Christmas gifts last year, and I bought myself and amazon voucher thinking, oh yer its ten pounds, and when I got home I put it on and it was only five pounds and I got really upset.</p> <p><b>R: Ok so something to do with the rewards you get as part of those systems.</b></p>

Rewards choice Reward value	P: It's good for like the amazon thing, because you can get, like, anything, but five pounds, what are you going to get for five pounds, apart from like...
Rewards, usefulness/ varying value	P: Not a lot.  P: A balloon.  P: A balloon.  P: Not a lot unless its like...
Reward usability School resources Own resources	P: It's good they give out, like pens and stuff, with your stamps, that's still good. It's when you get further down, I think, it's not in my planner but, like, you start getting rugby balls and stuff but like, you have to blow them up yourself.  <b>R: Ok.</b>
Access to resources	P: No you don't.  P: You can ask a P.E. teacher to do it for you.
Availability of teaching staff/resources	P: What if you don't have a pump.  P: You go to Sports Direct and buy one.  P: but what if the P.E. teachers were off, like yer.  <b>R: So I'm hearing you quite like the reward system and getting the stamps but it's something to do with things that you get at the end, perhaps if you had more choice with that?</b>
Reward choice	P: Yer, more choice.
Usefulness of rewards	P: Although I do like, obviously it's not for us, but like in year eleven you can get stuff off like your prom dress.  <b>R: Ok.</b>
Reward choice	P: Off your ticket, not off your dress?
Reward value/choice	P: Yer, you get like money towards it.  <b>R: The last one I've put on here, and I wasn't sure about this one as you'd said a few little bits, I'd put something on about choice (read comments). Is choice something that would be...with choice I've put a question mark because I didn't know if it would be a theme, is choice something that makes you feel a bit better in school?</b>
Choice – peers to work with	P: Yes.  P: Yer.  <b>R: or is that something...</b>
Choice – peer to work with	P: I like it when you get to choose who you work with.  <b>R: Ok.</b>

Comparison to peers	<p>P: ...because if you pick the right person it always goes well.</p> <p>P: So me and (name), were into like roughly the same stuff, so do you like football?</p>
Peer similarity	<p>P: No.</p> <p>P: Me too. I hate football?</p> <p>P: Do you like rugby?</p>
Choice – seating positions	<p>P: No.</p> <p>P: Fair enough, but then, well were into roughly the same stuff.</p>
Choice – seating position and friends Engagement in lesson	<p>P: I like to choose where I sit.</p> <p>P: Yer choosing where you sit is quite good because like you can either say right I'd like to relax a bit this lesson but I'll get on as well but so you can sit with your friends.</p> <p><b>R: Ok so you quite like choosing who you sit with and who you work with? Is there anything else about choice in school that might be important to you or is it not that important?</b></p>
Choice – lunchtimes/food	<p>P: Choosing what I have for lunch.</p> <p>P: Yer.</p>
Choice – preferences	<p>P: Yer choosing what you have for lunch.</p> <p>P: Unless you're pack up.</p>
Choice – likes/preferences	<p>P: That's just normal though isn't it, you're not just going to pick up a random thing you don't like though are you?</p> <p><b>R: Ok.</b></p>
Choice – preferences/likes	<p>P: Well, yer but what if there was something you didn't like, then you'd have to eat grapes because I wouldn't want to do that.</p> <p>P: Yer but they're alright.</p>
Range of food options	<p><b>R: Do you think choice might be theme then, who you sit with, who you work with and what you eat for lunch? Is there anything else?</b></p>
Availability/choice of food	<p>P: I always can't choose about whether to get a breakfast wrap or a pizza and a teacake.</p> <p>P: Oh god, the pizzas so nice, the paninis and wraps.</p> <p>P: If I haven't had any breakfast then I'll have a breakfast wrap but normally I wouldn't have a breakfast wrap, normally I'd have breakfast so then I wouldn't have a breakfast wrap.</p> <p><b>R: Ok the last thing I'd like to do. There's some words and phrases, so when we're talking about what makes us feel good I wondered what words</b></p>

<p><b>Words –to add to Word Art diagrams</b></p> <p>Looking forward to something at home</p> <p>Boredom</p> <p>Bus journey/going home</p> <p>Not fitting in/wanting to hide away</p>	<p>or phrases you might use and these are some of the things you've come up with, so I've put them in two pictures.</p> <p>So on a good day, these are your words that I've put into here. Read out their words. Is there anymore words, if we do that I've missed off there that you might use in school?</p> <p>P: <b>Positive, vibes of positive energy</b></p> <p>R: Oh I like that, we'll add that on, is there anything else you'd like to add to there. Or is there anything else you've heard. I wondered if you'd heard of anything in the media or on your phones if you go on anything or on the news, are there any words you can thing of around feeling good, or when you're having a better day?</p> <p>P: <b>Horrible</b>, I mean that's bad...</p> <p>R: <b>If we do good first, anything about feeling good that you've maybe heard either in school or out of school?</b></p> <p>P: When you are actually good, so like when you're not ill. When you've had a good day, when you have <b>something to look forward to</b> going home.</p> <p>P: Yer, like when I've got something to, like, look forward to I think the day just goes really fast.</p> <p>R: <b>Ok, so I'll add that on here too.</b></p> <p>P: ...but <b>when like you're really bored and haven't got, like, anything to do</b> when you get back <b>it's like a really long day</b> because you'll just be bored.</p> <p>R: <b>Ok, anything else you'd like to add.</b></p> <p>P: When I enjoy the bus journey home...</p> <p>P: That you enjoy?</p> <p>P: Yer, <b>the bus journey home because I know I'm on my way home.</b></p> <p>R: <b>Ok so having something to look forward to and enjoy. Anything else you want to add?</b></p> <p>P: <b>Ecstatic</b>, oh it's already on there...</p> <p>R: <b>Or we can look at, I'll put this one out as well, so this ones when you're having a bit of a bad day, a bit of a tricky day and it's not going as well as you'd like. (Read some of their previous words).</b></p> <p>P: <b>Hide away.</b></p> <p>P: You feel like, I don't know...there was this one person who..</p> <p>P: You feel <b>like the world is turning against you.</b></p> <p>P: Some people say <b>misfit, meaning like you feel like you don't fit in.</b></p> <p>R: <b>Ok, yer.</b></p> <p>P: You know what I think, I think well.</p>
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Fitting in	<p>P: I think I fit in good actually.</p> <p><b>R: Again with this one is there anything you heard on the news, or if you go on some of the apps on your, about times when you're not having a good day or when things aren't going to plan?</b></p>
Celebrity knowledge	<p>P: About things not going to plan, there's this rapper called Juice WRLD, who, erm, recently faked his own death.</p> <p>P: Did he fake it?</p> <p>P: Yer, he faked it.</p> <p>P: Oh, I thought it was real!</p>
Celebrity actions	<p>P: No he faked his own death, he faked having a seizure at an airport, to try and get himself out of thirty one years of jail for having, like loads of sealed, for having load of zip locked bags full of marijuana and guns.</p> <p><b>R: Ok...</b></p> <p>P: ...but erm, like, when it, when he faked his own death, he was rushed to, erm, yer his faked his own death and was rushed to a hospital and, erm, and when the coroner came in to examine his body...erm...</p> <p>P: I didn't know this.</p> <p>P: ...that he didn't find one because it turned out that he'd already escaped from the hospital and got on his own private jet...</p> <p>P: Wow!</p>
Celebrity actions	<p>P: ...and flew to like the Bahamas, but then when it was discovered that he had faked his death and that he had drugs and guns, erm that he was trying to get on the plane with, erm, I don't know if he was forcibly returned to the USA but he was returned to the USA and tried and he got like almost double the jail time that he would have got if he hadn't faked his death, so talk about not going well.</p>
Consequences	<p><b>R: Gosh, so what words around that might you use?</b></p>
'crashes and burns' Bad day	<p>P: So if it does go well, so if you thought you were going to have, like a decent day but then, like it crashes and burns.</p> <p><b>R: Ok, so crashes and burns...</b></p>
Getting attention on apps/texting	<p>P: Everybody on snapchat, when I go through their stories, they're always, like NR which means 'no reply' and a sad face and then it's obviously, sometimes it to get some attention and sometimes it's not, so say like, because I've got a friend, who doesn't go to this school, she's in like, Year Ten, and I text her and she always puts it and I was like are you ok? but yer, she's like, 'oh I don't really want to talk about it'.</p>
Sharing emotions online/through text Online interactions	<p><b>R: Ok, so people might not want to talk about things as well, so that might go on there too, just not wanting to talk about it. Is there any other words you'd like to add or tell me today?</b></p> <p>P: Like to hide away.</p>

**R: Is there anything else I've missed today or that you'd like to add? Any other ideas popping in your head?**

P: Are we doing this meeting again?

**R: No that's it today. What I'll do next, again I'm going to listen to these and write it all up again, do the codes again and the themes again, just to make them that bit better. So what I'll probably do at the end is to write you a bit of a summary letter just saying what we've found out from your ideas.**

## Appendix 24 – Collated Codes from Second Focus Group

Support from people

### Adult support

Parental support/ influence/visiting parents work (such as their work or guidance with animals)  
Sense of humour (parents)

### Wider family support

Connection with family members/completing similar activities/hobbies  
Similar-age, slightly older family members

### Awareness of healthy friendships and relationships

Support of friends  
Importance of friendships  
Close friendships/best friends  
Positive relationships  
Supporting peers/peer support  
Emotional support of friends  
Friends support (including tests/tests results)  
Break/lunch times with peers  
Empathy for others? Caring towards others?  
Similarities– academic

### Getting on & falling out with friends/maintaining friendships

Difficulties with friends  
Solving difficulties within friendship groups  
Conflicting friendships/maintaining multiple friendships/‘stuck in the middle’ friendship groups  
Resilience in friendships  
Male/female friendships?

Recognition of differences  
Recognition of space/individuals  
Needing space? Too clingy? Clingy friends  
Asking for help rather than being asked.

### Bullying – ascribing reasons

Understanding of peers/bullies.  
Bullying on phones  
Previous experience of bullying  
Stress

### Parental guidance

Access to phones  
Interacting online with friends  
Phone apps– likes and dislikes  
Posting on apps  
Comparison to peers  
Sharing videos/funny videos with friends (Making videos to share with peers)  
Phones – texting  
Sharing emotions/getting attention online/apps/through text  
Celebrity knowledge, celebrity actions and consequences

### Comparison to peers

Wanting to fit in with peers/peer similarity  
Being liked  
Relating to own experience  
New/upgrading phones  
Clothing comparison

Not fitting in/wanting to hide away  
Embarrassment - [focus group dynamics – appropriateness of discussion]  
Comparison of lessons

Empathy of others, family members, strangers  
Reflection  
Confidentiality

Teacher preference  
Relationship with teachers  
Personality of teachers  
Teacher mood  
Sense of humour (teachers)  
Knowledge of teachers  
Awareness of staff illness  
Cover teachers (positive and negative)  
Dislike of teachers

Preferred lessons  
Teacher approach – support available/speed of delivery  
Appropriate support/differentiated for needs, 'modelling/scaffolding? Differentiation (Latent theme/Inductive from theory?)  
Lesson content, novelty?  
Linking to own interests  
Career/job skills/life skills  
Teacher's influence/enjoyment of subjects  
Subject preference

Being a good student  
Home work/study

Preparation the night before  
Predicting the day ahead.  
Looking forward to preferred lessons

#### Recognition of own emotions/signs

Putting own needs/self-first  
Recognition of others needs  
Normal emotions  
Hormones  
Test pressure?  
Confidence  
Releasing feelings/  
Sibling conflict/releasing emotions with siblings  
Coping/calming strategies (including teaching of?),  
Parental support/containment (Latent?)

Switching off/change of focus i.e. **interests** (creating flow?)  
Yoga/relaxation  
Animals/pets as a coping strategy/distractions/(unconditional love/positive regard? – latent)  
Sense of humour/ rapport with animals

#### Support from animals

Bond with pets  
Feelings/being liked (with animals...)  
Caring for animals  
Distraction through animals  
Animals/horses/horse riding/dogs/ferrets/chickens  
Confidentiality

Not caring for animals  
Killing animals

[Sense of achievement/recognition of own strengths and difficulties/](#)

Having fun

Music

School clubs/sports/professional sports

Trying something new

[Free time \(wording rather than leisure time?\)](#)

Interests

Sharing interests with others

Routine?

Home environment

Nature/Outside

Sports – shooting

Looking forward to something at home/bus journey/going home

School start time

Feeling tired

Time off/away from school/less time at school

Treats/novelty at the end of term (shorter days), shorter Fridays, fun days

Boredom at school

Linking to home/interests/pets

Talking to people/friends (linking to home? – Latent)

[Uniform](#)

Non-uniform

Summer uniform

Getting ready for school/quicker getting ready time

Preparation for school

[Awareness of school budgets/ finance/resources/staff changes](#)

Comparison to other schools/countries

Impact on young people

Storage of belongings/school bags/carrying school resources/lockers

Sixth form (differences to school)

[Respecting the school](#)

School cleanliness

Respecting wild animals

Bag for life/environmental awareness

Justice – right and wrong with peers?

Deemed inappropriate behaviour

Awareness of peer's actions/intentions/behaviour

Over-reacting of peers

Teacher's awareness of pupil actions

Sharing of information/CCTV

School behaviour system

Availability/choice/selection/quality/usefulness/usability of rewards

Amount/value/varying value of rewards

Access to own resources

Availability of teaching staff/resources to support reward prizes

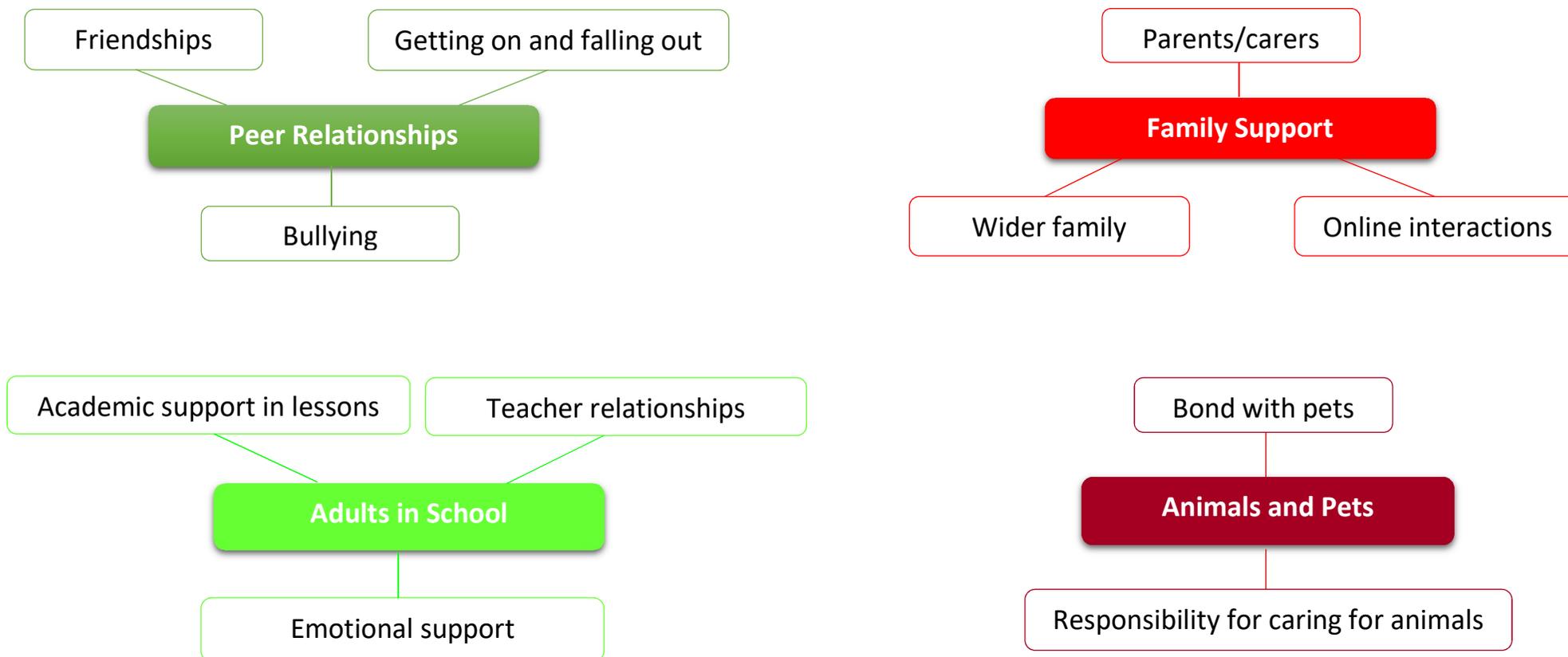
Choice – peer to work with, seating positions, friends, engagement in lesson

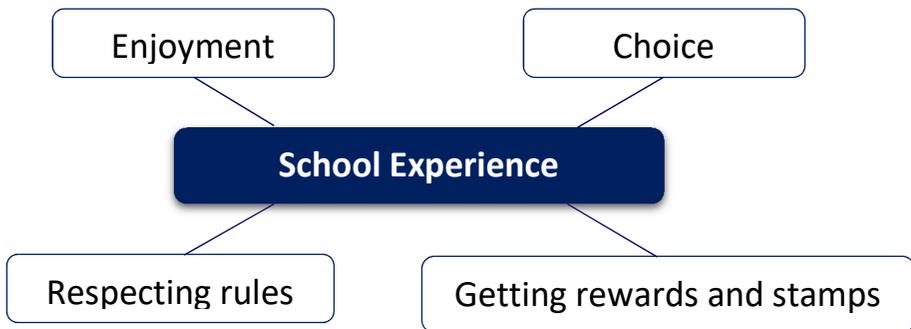
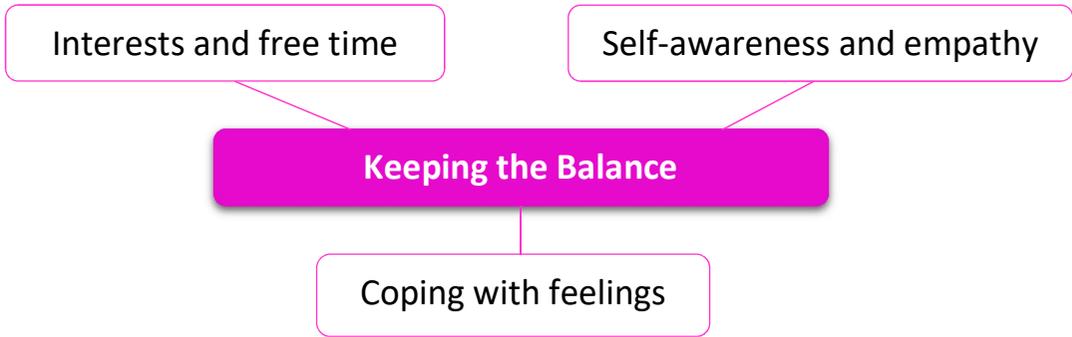
Choice – lunchtimes/food preferences/availability and range of food options

Choice? – phone apps, Personal choice

## Appendix 25 – Final Thematic Maps

### What Helps to Make a Good Day at School?





## Appendix 26 - Final Thematic Maps with Illustrative Participant Quotes

### Peer Relationships

#### Friendships

- I enjoy it when all my friends are there
- my friends support me
- I turn to my closer friends... I feel like I can tell them anything.
- I think it's good when I talk to my friends and stuff, because it just, yer it just helps.
- I have bad days all the time for like personal stuff and I think it's good when I talk to my friends and stuff, because it just, yer it just helps.
- I think friends mean a lot. I think you can't go through life without friends....You can but you'd have a really bad life....You'd be a bit sad.
- I think friends support when you do tests as well... like they didn't go haha you got...

#### Getting on and falling out

- So say me and (name) fell and then, like, we never sorted it out, and tomorrow I wouldn't want to come to school because I'd be upset.
- I've got a friend who'd fallen out with a friend and one of my best friends was stuck in the middle of it. She was, like, completely stuck. I was like just ignore it for a bit.
- Being good at being nice, because people sometimes think they are nice but, like, little certain things can upset people. Especially when you're at this age when you're hormonal and stuff. Like, whenever I fall out with somebody, I just cut them slack because of hormones and stuff.
- when I get annoyed with somebody I ignore them, because if I say anything, I know I don't want to offend them.

#### Bullying

- When my bully is not here
- I got teased by some of my teammates
- you could also get, like, bullied through your phone.

### Family Support

#### Parents and carers

- Yer, like last year, I did, like, really well on a science test and I quite like science and I only dropped, like, three marks out of the entire test, and erm, I asked my teacher if I could take a picture of it and at the end of the lesson I sent it to my parents and was like 'yey look what I've got on this test' and they were like 'yey well done you, you're so clever'.
- my mum was really proud of me
- On the school days my mum has to get me up
- My mum and dad just said to be the bigger person.
- My dad does, he gives me support. If I'm having a bad day.

#### Wider family

- Sometimes you can turn to your people at home as well
- My nan, texting my nan
- I like texting my sister... I think like texting her and telling my feelings and stuff like that and it kind of helps me and supports me.
- My aunty ... I went to stay with her for a few days and that, like, made me feel better.
- She's just always there and we do yoga buddies, we do yoga together.

#### Online interaction

- It's like really nice having your phone at school because as lunch, say if something happens, because when I found out I got into set three Maths, I was really excited because I was doing really bad in my Maths, erm, so I like instantly text my mum, because she got work, but she can text in-between her clients because of her job, she replies quite fast and it's like easy to communicate with other people.
- That's probably the only reason I have a phone, is so that if anything goes wrong or if I'm upset I can just text my mum or dad and tell them what's gone on.
- I love texting people. It's awesome.
- My mum and dad said that I couldn't have a phone until I was twelve.
- I've got TikTok etc. but I'm not allowed Instagram, but there's no point in me having it anyway.

## Animals and Pets

### Bond with pets

- It might sound weird but I go to, like, my animals and stuff, so like, my dog or my ferrets.
- We've just got a puppy at my house, so when I'm with him, I always like, I don't know but you just calm down. It's only a baby and he's just full of joy, so you can't help but not be happy with him.
- This might sound like a really stupid, like, thing but when I'm, like, either, down or, like, upset or angry. I always, like, go and see my horse or ride my horse because I know my horse can't talk back, and like, it can't give me attitude.

### Responsibility for caring for animals

- Riding my horse...it gets me out.
- I like walking my dogs.
- I go to hedgehog rescue every single Sunday.
- I enjoy rescuing cats, because we rescued them twice from my yard.

## Adults in School

### Support in lessons

- Our teachers in PE they can be quite supportive sometimes... They motivate us...they say keep doing this, come on. They push us to our limits.
- he'll always try and help you learn how to do it,
- ...and just that they never like go 'come on you can do better than that?'... They know you can try better but they don't speak to you like straight, they just oh like try and do this differently, you just find it a lot easier to do.
- They are quite willing to give stamps out and stuff, they are not like 'oh well you have to earn it'.
- Basically, he gives us the questions, then he's like do it, then he gives us like three minutes to do, like six questions, then he just writes all the answers, he doesn't explain it.
- He doesn't give us chance to work them out, like, we're not learning anything.

### Teacher relationship

- I think it's some of the jokes.... he's just really funny.
- Like good personalities, like you don't just want them to be like just get on with your work.
- Like try and have good relationship with a teacher. You don't want them to be too strict or something.
- I think teachers influence, like, what I enjoy and stuff.
- They're quite supportive if you come in late for some reason.
- Cover teachers are bad I think. Not bad...It depends who you have.
- he gives us these like puzzles that are called dingbats... he says you've got to say what you see...and he'll sometimes give us clues to them but he'll sometimes think that we should be able to get it on our own, he won't give us clues.

### Emotional support

- ...or coming to like pastoral or student support because you know they'll help you through everything and anything.
- I've got a friend called (name), I don't know what's going on or anything but she sometimes comes to student support and she always comes back happy.

## Sense of Achievement

### Being good at something

- You do something you're really good at...
- Something that makes you feel proud of yourself.
- Something you know a lot about
- Or just like playing a game you're very good at
- Yer, like last year, I did, like, really well on a science test
- I was really proud of myself, although I am good at science, erm, still one of the highest marks only dropped one or two. So I got like second or third highest out of the entire year.

### Trying something new

- I'm proud of myself when I've tried to do something for a new time
- I can't do it at the first time, but then my dad will show me and then I feel better about myself, because now I don't need my dad's help.
- it's really hard to try something new. (Contrasting quote – some YP find it easier than others).

## Keeping the balance

### Interests and free time

- I like playing rugby, or playing my Xbox, I quite like playing shooting games.
- I like watching strictly with my parents.
- I like watching I'm a celebrity.
- I'm quite big on cars and motorsports and stuff
- Sometimes listening to music and stuff.
- Sometimes I listen to music on the bus
- I'm like bored at break or something or if I'm bored at home. I'll just go on my phone and I'll look on Formula One Instagram pages.
- I like doing them though, it calms me down, I love doing chores
- All the things in my spare time, with animals and in my garden, so basically my brothers really into, like gaming and stuff like that but I'm really into animals.

### Self-awareness and empathy

- Especially when you're at this age when you're hormonal and stuff.
- I have, like, a completely different voice, so when I'm really happy, I have a high voice, then I'm really quiet when I'm annoyed.
- I think I have some, like, anger issues a little bit, because when I'm angry I feel it really hard to calm down.
- ...you don't know what they are going through at home.
- ...there was this boy just sat alone, and I felt really bad for him,
- I just used to cut my bullies a bit of slack sometimes. Like I just to be like, whatever, because you don't know what they are going through at home.
- Obviously loads of people are going to have bad days at some point.

### Coping with feelings

- Sometimes I find it easy, if you, erm, get like a piece of paper, write down what's happened and then tear it up and put it on the fire and watch it go up in flames.
- I like doing kickboxing, at home we have this dummy and I like taking my anger out on my dummy.
- I got teased by some of my teammates and I just came home and played on my Xbox after training and killed a load of people, it was good fun.
- The fact that I can literally, just like, walk down to my yard and just forget about everything.
- ...if I'm having a bad day I just go and sit in the car with him (dad) and we just scream out music.
- I don't know because sometimes I take my anger out on my brother...

## School Experience

### Enjoyment

- I like it in PE when we do Just Dance...Oh yer, that's awesome
- Sometimes we do trampolining, yer, which is good as well.
- say in PE you do something you like
- I just retain information about science because I like it
- When you have good lessons... So like say PE, Drama
- So basically I don't really enjoy it, I don't know, it's not really boring as some lessons I really enjoy but it's a bit like, I don't exactly get up and go 'yey it's a school day'. It's more like 'oh it's a school day'

### Respecting rules

- You get either written warnings, stamps...
- I've not got any written warnings this year.
- I aint had any written warnings ever!
- I'd lost my science book in my science class, and I was really worried about it and I was scared I'd get in big trouble. I've never been in trouble before.
- He went to the toilet and then, he like, turned the taps on... Oh, he did it with one of his friends...and flooded the whole, like, toilet...He did it and it went all into the whole corridor.

### Choice

- you can choose to be in groups
- Yer, sometimes if we have a free period, we will go and do trampolining but can do what you like in it.
- I like it when you get to choose who you work with.
- Yer choosing where you sit is quite good because like you can either say right I'd like to relax a bit this lesson but I'll get on as well but so you can sit with your friends.
- Choosing what I have for lunch

### Receiving rewards and stamps

- You can trade them in at the end for stuff, so you can buy like pencils, (yer I got a voucher) or footballs, or speakers.
- It makes you actually want to behave and get stamps.
- Say you come into school late and it's like half way through the year and you forget a pen or something, you can go and buy a pen or pencil or equipment. It's only like ten stamps or something and you get about ten stamps a day.
- It's good for like the amazon thing, because you can get, like, anything, but five pounds, what are you going to get for five pounds...

## Whole School Environment

### School day

- If school started a bit later, because... Yer, because I'm like done in.
- on the school days my mum has to get me up and I go like go away, I don't want to get up.
- ...because I was a bit late to bed so I only woke up this morning about 40 minutes before I had leave to go to my bus and I started panicking a bit.
- Like on Fridays, I think, because some schools, there's not that many that does this though, but like on Fridays they start at like 10 and end at like 2pm. I think that should happen.
- I think on Fridays we should have like a fun day and so you get to, like, eat like ice cream in class or something.

### School funding and resources

- I think we should like renovate the walls because a lot of the walls are just falling apart, like the paints peeling off.
- Maybe clean the toilets up because the toilets are disgusting.
- If you stick your hands under this desk, this one is clean, but normally it is filled with chewing gum. It's disgusting.
- Yer, we really need lockers.
- When I was younger I said to my mum, I want to go to High School because I want a locker.
- this school is poor, we need to save the glue sticks.
- if we've got gym stuff outside but it would be better if we could have some more on there... We have should some gymnastics stuff..
- I think we should have better equipment.

### Uniform

- I like the summer because we don't have to wear our school ties.
- Yer we have a nylon polo shirt.
- It takes me about five minutes to get ready in the summer uniform.
- I think we should get non-uniform every day.

Appendix 27 - Second Word Art for Young People's Words and Phrases for Feeling Good



Appendix 28 - Second Word Art for Young People's Words and Phrases for Feeling Not So Good

