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An art programme for excluded teenage females attending a PRU: An investigation of the experiences of pupils, staff and an Educational Psychologist researcher

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore the experiences of pupils, staff and an Educational Psychologist (EP) researcher, who had engaged in the planning of, and inclusion in, an arts programme in a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) setting. A case-study approach was utilised through the design and implementation of a six session art programme which included three members of staff (teaching assistants S1, S2 and S3)¹, two pupils from Key Stage three (P2 and P1), one pupil from key stage four (P3) and myself. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the head of the key stage three PRU (HP), two of the pupils (P1 and P3) and the three members of staff (S2, S1 and S3). A reflective diary was maintained throughout the programme and interview process. An inductive latent Thematic Analysis (TA) was completed on the interview and reflective diary data.

Overall the findings reveal the importance of ethos/climate of the environment, conversations and art in the experiences presented. Art was interpreted as having a facilitatory role on the social phenomenon under study. Those outcomes and benefits of the programme prevalent in the data are discussed as well as the difficulties encountered throughout the experience. Further interpretation of the Main Overarching Themes (MOTs) demonstrated the potential importance of the development of more positive relationships in the group as well as opportunities for personal learning.

This study has raised questions about the potential for reflection, skill development and the impact on individual and social change. Further information emerged which relates to understanding and meeting the needs of excluded young people and how creative activities such as art may be of benefit in educational provisions. Implications for involving this group of young people in research are discussed. This research highlights one way in which EPs may be able to develop their creative role in the future. It explores one example of how we might increase the accessibility of our service to females and without the need for a perceived within child deficit.

¹ It is important to note that to maintain confidentiality, the names of the participants have been changed and given the labels P1, P2 and P3 (pupils); S1, S2 and S3 (staff); and HP (the head of the PRU).

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List of abbreviations

ACE-Arts Council England

AEP-Association of Educational Psychologists

AR-Action Research

BESDs-Behaviour, emotional and social difficulties

BPS-British Psychological Society

CAMHS-Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

CBT-Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

CGF- Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

CPD- Continuing professional development

DA-Discourse Analysis

DCSF- Department for Children, Schools and Families

DES-Department of Education and Science

DETR- Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation

DFE-Department for Education

DFEE-Department for Education and Employment

DFES-Department for Education and Skills

ECM-Every Child Matters

EFF-Estimée Fairbairn Foundation

EP-Educational Psychologist

GCSE-General Certificate of Secondary Education

GT-Grounded Theory

HMI-Her Majesty's Inspection

HP-The head of the KS3 provision

IPA-Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis

KS3-Key stage three

KS4-Key stage four

LA-Local Authority

LEA-Local Education Authority

LOT-Lower order theme

LSU-Learning Support Unit

MAT- Multiagency team

MHF-Mental Health Foundation

MOT-Main Overarching Theme

NA-Narrative Analysis

NFER- National Foundation for Educational Research

P1 and **P2**-two KS3 teenage females that were involved in the programme and research

P3-One KS4 teenage female that was involved in the programme and research

PRU-Pupil referral unit

S1, S2 and **S3** - Adult members of staff involved in the programme and research (S1 from the KS4 base and S2 and S3 from the KS3 base)

SEF-Self Evaluation Framework

SEU-Social Exclusion Unit

TaMHS-Targeting Mental Health in Schools

TA-Thematic analysis

UEL-University of East London

Glossary of Key terms

A Main over-arching theme (MOT)-encompasses the principal metaphors in the data as a whole and presents an argument, position or assertion about an issue or reality. It can 'house' similar Lower order themes to create a bigger 'idea' or 'message'.

A higher order theme-where lower order themes together make sense. It is often too small to be a standalone theme. When it relates to other similar themes then collectively they can make-up a Main overarching theme.

A Lower order theme (LOT) – a theme within a higher order theme where basic codes together make sense.

A Code-a meaningful segment/element derived from the raw data or text. A backing to a theme

Pen Portraits

Below is a description of the context in which this piece of research was undertaken and the participants involved. Information was obtained through consultation with the head of the KS3 provision.

Context

'The PRU operates from three sites to provide education for young people aged 11 to 16 from across the LA. Most who attend have been permanently excluded from mainstream schools or are at risk of being excluded. Almost all of these are boys. Those aged 11 to 13 attend the KS3 base and those aged 14 to 16, the KS4 base. These centres are a few miles apart. A third provision, the 'vulnerable unit', is based at a rugby stadium in the centre of the town. This centre caters for young people who are mainly girls and have a history of not attending school; for example, due to extreme anxiety. At present, all the young people at PRU are White British. A small number have a statement of special educational need. The nature of the students' difficulties means they are working below national expectations partly because they have missed considerable periods of schooling. The unit has the Sportsmark Award'.

Pupils

P1- 'Y9 pupil, from a supportive family, defiant and disruptive, great 1:1 and able to really talk to about issues in her life. Interested in hair and make-up. Daily targets were to stay on task/ speak respectfully/ take time-out/ talk to an adult 1:1'.

P2- 'Year 8 pupil, lots of issues at home since she was very young and lives with Nan. She works better with females on 1:1 but craves attention of males. Daily targets were to stay on task/ speak respectfully/ take time-out/ talk to an adult 1:1'.

P3- 'Year 10 pupil who lived with and cared for her mother. She enjoys 1:1 work with adults and has a real interest in art. A reflective pupil with a high level of emotional need but an openness and eagerness to talk about her difficulties'.

'At the time of the programme, the pupils were relatively new to the setting. The provision had 2 teachers and 2 TA's supporting up to 10 pupils at a time. The aim of the provision was to work with individual pupils on their targets and return them to mainstream after a set period of time with the tools they needed to manage. All pupils participating in the programme were full time. Their typical day included: a morning of maths/English/science/art and an afternoon of food tech/outdoor education/ASDAN. Outside agencies regularly involved with the pupils and the staff at the PRU included phase, environmental education and rugby (once a week). At the time during which the programme ran, there were no children in care or pupils with English as an additional language. Pupils had a tailored curriculum including time for social skills development, opportunities to reflect and support to work out next steps. In addition, most young people had 1:1 emotional support and self-esteem work from a self-chosen adult'.

Staff:

'All adults were female, had a flexible approach and were open to new ways of working. Their approaches to behaviour management varied. All were passionate about working with excluded pupils and had had significant experience of working within alternative provisions. They appeared open, approachable and sincere in personality'.

S1- 'TA, early 30's, wanted a change of career and has a very calm and approachable approach, made good relationships with the pupils responsible for Year 7/8 along with a teacher. Lead art lessons, food tech and supported in all other lessons'.

S2- 'Early 30's, TA at KS4, very 'arty' and knowledgeable, responsible for a form at KS4 alongside a teacher'.

S3- 'Teacher of Maths/Science/ICT, late 30's, calm and methodical, laid back approach, responsible for Year 9 form'.

HT- 'Late 30's, Teacher of all subjects, high expectations of staff and pupils and responsible for the day-to-day running of the unit'.

EP Researcher:

26 year old female Educational Psychologist in training. I was new to working at the LA PRU setting and had limited experience of working with teenage females who attended a PRU. When the research began I had been working in the local authority with my own 'patch' of schools for about nine months. Art was and continues to be a passion in my life. I practice in a range of art activities in my free time and I have a specific interest in its usefulness in working with young people.

Chapter 1-Introduction

Why undertake the research?

As a result of my past and current experiences in my development in becoming an Educational Psychologist (EP), I have continued to uphold a keen interest in working with those pupils who are unable to access education within the mainstream classroom. My first vocational experience after completing my undergraduate psychology degree was in a primary Pupil Referral Unit (PRU). It was here that my commitment to excluded pupils developed. Working as an Assistant EP, my role included being a part of the Pupil Reintegration Service (PRS), which involved working in a range of different primary and secondary PRU settings. I developed a belief that some of the young people attending these provisions were in need of specialist support. Accessibility to services such as the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Art Therapy, psychotherapy and Educational Psychology for example, is arguably limited. During my experience I have often observed that young people are reliant upon the PRU in obtaining the day-to-day support that is required. This research will investigate one way of how pupils and staff in an educational setting might be supported by an EP in developing a new opportunity in the form of an arts programme. It is hoped that through an investigation of the experiences of participants, future practice and research in similar areas will be further informed.

My second area of interest linking to my research is the use of the artistic process in providing a beneficial effect and positive contribution to the educational experiences of young people. As an undergraduate psychologist, I developed a paper (Murphy, 2009) which investigated the link between artistic creativity and psychopathology which specifically investigated the Surrealist artist Salvador Dalí. It was here that my interest in the use of art as a form of catharsis and the inter-connective nature between creativity, personality and

susceptibility to mental illness began. Art is something which I hope to develop as one of the threads to be woven through my practice and career as an EP. As a scientist and mathematician in my early years of academia, it was art which turned my career in the direction of psychology. Art is a medium which has always fascinated me. In my work with children I have used art flexibly to facilitate their understanding and expression of their thoughts. As a person who has practised in a range of visual arts activities (including dance and drama) I have experienced the positive psychological effects which art can have. I believe that art is a powerful, almost magical and/or spiritual medium unlike any-other which has benefitted my life. It is accessible to all; is inclusive and is free from the many negative associations, which other intervention methods frequently used, (e.g. written/spoken language) carry with them. I believe that art has many benefits, one example being that it allows one to work at a much more organic, primitive and unconscious level.

What is to follow?

The second chapter presents a review of the literature related to exclusion, disaffection and the gender difference in research and practice with young people. It will also consider legislation regarding the long-term effects and ways of supporting disaffected young people. It will cover research which explores the use of art in relation to social inclusion and promoting mental health and wellbeing. Findings relating to the potential importance of special environments in schools will also be discussed. In the final section the changing role of EPs will be explored and the possibilities of engaging in systems and therapeutic work will be considered.

Chapter three describes my epistemological and reflexive position before justifying the selection of a Case Study design. It also includes a description of the methods used and research procedure. The reasoning behind the use of an inductive Thematic Analysis (TA) and a description of the technique used is also covered.

Chapter four presents an account of the thematic analysis, supported by extracts from the transcription of the three sets of data (pupil/ staff interviews and my reflective research diary).

In Chapter five discussions are presented which link the analysis with relevant literature. The chapter considers methodological issues encountered as well as strengths and limitations of the study. As the chapter draws to an end the implications of this research, for EPs and other professionals wishing to invest in similar types of work or research, are explored. Future areas of research and research questions of interest are also noted.

Aims of the research

This research aims to explore the experiences of the excluded female pupils, staff (who are experienced in working with this population of young people) and an outsider to the setting (who is both a trainee EP and a researcher), who have engaged in the planning of and inclusion in an arts programme in a PRU setting. I hoped to uncover how participants felt about the different steps of the programme and how they looked back on their experiences of the sessions. It is possible that throughout this exploratory study, the implications and barriers to the implementation of an art programme will be explored. Using a case-study approach and TA an interpretation will be presented to the reader. It is hoped that this rich description of findings will provide further information that may be beneficial in informing similar practice and research in the future.

Moving on from that research which underpins this study (as will be discussed in the literature review) in its exploratory capacity, it is also arguable that the research has possibilities in the uncovering of further information relating to:

- The potential for influencing change within individuals and a system to be investigated;
- The voice of females and excluded young people being strengthened by adding to these areas of the literature;
- Making a contribution to research which focuses on better understanding and meeting the needs of disaffected pupils;
- Developing knowledge of meeting the needs and working effectively with teenage females with behaviour, social and emotional difficulties (BESDs);
- Contributing to research which provides a more positive and holistic (rather than negative (Gonick, 2004)) view of teenage, excluded females.
- Adding to the growing (yet limited) body of research investigating the use of creative activities such as art in schools;
- The implications for this creative way of practising as an EP to be uncovered;
- How professionals might increase the level of equality between the sexes in relation to their level of access to specialist services;
- The development of insight into working and researching with this group of young people and staff.

A further implication for the research community lies in the methodology used. Braun and Clarke (2006) highlight that TA is a poorly demarcated and claimed analytical method, yet it is widely used by many researchers who label it as 'something else'. It is arguable that there are many similarities between theoretical (i.e. more realist/ essentialist/'little q') and latent (more constructionist/'big Q') TA and other analytical methods with more 'kudos' and a

method or specific 'recipes'. It is arguable that researchers may favour an analytical label which is associated with major analytical traditions such as *grounded theory* 'light' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p81), 'thematic' *discourse analysis*, thematic decomposition analysis (a form of DA) (Stenner, 1993; Ussher and Mooney-Somers, 2000), *narrative analysis* (Murray, 2003; Riessman, 1993), *conversation analysis* (Huchby and Wooffitt, 1998), *interpretative phenomenological analysis* (IPA: Smith and Osborn, 2003) or *content analysis* (Wilkinson, 2000). There is a view that TA is a less sophisticated of well branded form of analysis. Ryan and Bernard (2000) labelled thematic coding as a process performed *within* 'major' analytic traditions rather than a specific approach in its own right. For this reason many researchers may be fearful that their investigations may be held in a lower regard by their peers. In being bold in my use of TA I hope that its credibility as a good analytical tool will have some effect on its level of recognition in qualitative research in it being perceived as a method in its own right in a continuing elitist society.

Chapter 2-Literature Review

This chapter will set the scene for the area of research and aims to act as the rationale behind this study. The first aspect covered in this literature review is associated with research investigating the participant group under study. Previous investigations involving females and excluded or disaffected young people will be explored in order to highlight the need for and benefits of engaging in further research and practice with this group of our young population. Governmental research and publications will be discussed, which relate to meeting the needs of disaffected young people; before I move on to discussions about art. In the middle section of the chapter, research which has investigated factors which are viewed as being effective in supporting the re-engagement of disaffected young people will be discussed in more detail. As the discussion progresses, studies specifically looking at the beneficial use of art in meeting the needs of young people are explored. Studies investigating the importance of adult approach and environment are also covered before moving onto discussion of research which supports the potential for art to have beneficial effects on the mental health, resilience and outcomes of young people. The final section of the review explores prior research and discussion associated with the changing role of EPs and the possibility of their involvement in creative and potentially therapeutic work in the future.

My consultation with the literature occurred before the research and art programme was developed and after the analysis had been completed. This review was therefore written in two stages. In an attempt to facilitate the process of inductive TA, I attempted to step back from the research literature during the time of the programme and throughout the analytical phase, as I hoped that themes would emerge from the data rather than being influenced by theory.

Why girls?

Through my investigation of the available research which has aimed to facilitate the views of excluded pupils I observed that studies have, in the past, focused very much upon hearing the voice of those experiences of males. In the literature there are very few papers where the views of females are explored. This study aims to add to the strength of voice which female excluded pupils have within the research community.

In accordance with these findings, Kitzinger (2002) identified another bias in relation to the access which the two sexes had to specialist services and/or support during their journey through the education system. Kitzinger highlighted that ‘...boys take a much bigger share of the educational budget...’ (p8). Vardill (1996) suggests that, in any one year, around twice as many boys than girls are referred to his Educational Psychology Service. In a later study Vardill and Calvert (2000) suggest that this ratio is even higher, with three times as many boys being referred. My experience of working in PRUs has largely been with males and my skills to work with female pupils are arguably significantly less-well developed. Based on readings of an essay by Slater (undated) this gender difference may be due to many reasons including: a perception in society of a higher level of underachievement in the male population (leading to increased numbers of reported male underachievers); a higher level of diagnosis in males; a teacher bias that males have more serious emotional and behavioural problems (i.e. because they act out and are disruptive whereas females may appear withdrawn and internalise behaviours); or teachers may feel that the pain experienced by girls is too complex to deal with. This study aims to further investigate those methods which could be beneficial in meeting the needs of young people by providing alternative (and potentially beneficial) experiences for vulnerable females.

Gonick (2004) describes how since the turn of the century there has been a shift in how female teenagers are viewed. In the past, this subset of the population have been perceived

as vulnerable but, in more recent years it is seen that they are being portrayed as having a more negative (and potentially detrimental or less sympathetic) 'mean girl' image. Gonick (2004) cites a range of publications which focus on this topic. Gonick highlights that literature presents girls as socially competitive and feeling unable to express this competitive nature in aggression. In such publications, it is viewed that it is this tension which leads them to the employment of social manipulation techniques. Ringrose (2006) analyses the representations of girls in the media, suggesting that there has been a significant change in view from vulnerable to mean. It is arguable that society may be becoming less understanding of the needs of young women and have started to take a more demonising stance. This piece of research hopes to illuminate this subsection of our population in a more holistic and positive light.

When this piece of research was initiated in the Local Authority (LA) where I work, the provisions for excluded girls were new and in the early stages of development². As a result of my experience of working in a range of similar settings I have observed how easy it is for establishments to become authoritarian in their approach especially in mixed-sex settings where there is an expectation that a consistency in approach has to be maintained. I have learnt that staff can become reactive and how the settings start to be fuelled by negativity. It is arguable that the pupils attending PRUs may have experienced a lifetime of educational settings where feelings of negativity have become familiar. As professionals it is evident that in allowing these negative educational experiences to replicate, we are continuing to repel these pupils towards the margins. As stated by Vasagar (2011), supporting pupils in accessing experiences which promote emotional wellbeing may be classed as a priority for EPs. It is arguable that EPs have a role to play to identifying ways of effectively supporting

² Prior to this research being completed, there had been no provision for young, excluded females with BESDs; however, the KS3 and KS4 female pupils were starting to be integrated into the two settings alongside same-aged male peers. The females were in the large minority in these settings and the approach of staff towards the male and female pupils was similar.

those young people who may be at increased risk to those vulnerabilities and negative experiences associated with exclusion and/or disaffection. About eighty per cent of those excluded are male (OFSTED 1996; SEU,1998b; Hayden and Dunne, 2001; DfES 2002) and it is arguable therefore that due to increase in staff experience in working with excluded males, provisions are equipped and/or designed to be more able to meet the needs of males. As a result of the programme developed in this study it is possible that the setting could be supported in developing skills and knowledge in better meeting the needs of females.

Why excluded young people?

'Hard to reach' children, who are frequently in greatest need of good services, have tended to be marginalized in enquiries about those services (Hill, 1997). Curtis *et al.* (2004) highlight that due to a range of methodological and practical reasons, children who communicate well, in English, or who are regular school attendees, are more likely to be given a voice in the research literature. In their exploration of related research, Curtis *et al.* (2004) discovered that despite there being an extensive volume of literature on working with 'difficult' children across a range of settings (for example, Cooper *et al.* 1994; Sanders & Hendry 1997; Sandiford 1997; Daniels 1999; Spalding *et al.* 2001), there is little describing the practicalities of involving these young people in research. I believe that being open about my experiences of the research process could support the development of better research practice with a hard to reach group. It is also arguable that a good experience of being interviewed or involved in research may be a 'step in engaging young people, and helping them feel that it is possible to make a difference' (Curtis *et al.*, 2004, p173). Moreover, the research aims to investigate how useful it may be for young people to inform us about how to deliver a good service that may support their health, educational experiences or welfare.

Disaffection

The majority of our population of excluded young people would be classed as being 'disaffected'. The term 'disaffection' is multi-faceted, referring to a cluster of behaviours, attitudes and experiences. A report by the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR) (2000) identified the following elements of disaffection:

- lacking a sense of identity; having a sense of failure;
- 'disturbed', 'depressed', 'difficult' young people, with social and emotional problems;
- behaviour – crime, misbehaviour, drugs, lack of social skills; harming (or potentially harming) self and/or others;
- not exercising civil/democratic rights (uninterested, uninvolved and unregistered) or social/economic rights (poor knowledge of, and access to, services);
- experience discrimination through age alone or combined with other factors (race, disability, single parenthood, homelessness, and young carers);
- being failed by the system (especially education and employment/training);
- 'Status Zer0' – not in education, employment or training ('NEET').

(DETR, 2000, Paragraph 5.3)

There are many problems which I have with these elements and so I feel it is important to note the following factors which should accompany the above definition of disaffection.

- Disaffection is not just to do with a young person's attitude. This common belief can often result in an unhelpful 'blame' culture developing.
- There are many different causes, and while the roots of disaffection can be broadly located in poverty, failings of support services, difficult home circumstances and behavioural and emotional difficulties. Each young person has their own unique story to tell.
- Every young person is different in the way they express and experience their disaffection.

Terminology that I am more comfortable with for describing young people demonstrating these common difficulties and having experienced negative events include 'disadvantaged', 'vulnerable', and 'socially excluded'. Therefore when I speak of disaffection these factors are encapsulated in my constructs presented herein.

The 'problem' in context-Why does it matter?

Research (Steer, 2000) has shown that the UK lags behind most other Western nations in terms of the proportion of its young people staying in post-compulsory education. Among the twenty nine Organisations for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, the UK is one of only four in which twenty per cent or more of young people drop out of education within a year of the end of compulsory education. Behind the figures for educational underachievement lie considerable costs to individuals and society as a whole. According to figures from the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) (1999), non-participation in education, employment or training between the ages of sixteen and eighteen is a major predictor of subsequent unemployment and teenage parenthood. Research over recent years has also reported higher levels of mental health problems in this subgroup of young

adults. It has been predicted that over forty per cent of those not participating at sixteen will also not be doing so at eighteen; and three quarters of young men aged sixteen to seventeen appearing before Youth Courts are not in any full-time activity (SEU, 1999, Chapter 4). Looking at the above figures, the economic costs of disaffection to the country are vast and it is arguably a responsibility (of society, the central or local governments etc.) which needs to be tackled. As professionals we need to further understand how to meet the needs of these young people.

How might we move forward?

'Pupils with Problems' consisted of two Government reports (DFE, 1994a and DFE, 1994b) which incorporated many themes from the Elton Report blended with advice received from HMI (e.g. DES, 1989). Daniel's *et al.* (2003) provided a summary of these documents, along with other related research, policy and practice. Some of those 'central messages' that were noted as being associated with educational settings effectively supporting excluded pupils or preventing disengagement, included the importance of school ethos; working in collaboration with pupils and closely with other agencies; a supportive social network, relationships and a development of a pro-social peer-group; work to nurture pupils' emotional development, resilience and, the formulation of an internal locus of control (p140-141). Further information can be seen in Table 1 ([Appendix I](#)).

Although these factors will be explored in further detail later in this introductory discussion, it is important to note that this study will make an attempt at exploring how some of these messages may be achieved.

Next I turn to the other topic of research which is highly important in this study: Art.

Art in Education

The National Curriculum provides an indication of the importance attributed to different subjects and so inevitably affects the nature and level of their provision. For a long time arts have not been deemed as 'core' subjects. A relatively recent study of head-teachers' perceptions of arts in the primary school (Downing, Johnson and Kaur, 2003) has shown, that without further research to help shift government priorities, the arts will continue to struggle against national agendas which are felt by some, to prohibit the place and prestige of the arts in the curriculum. It is arguable that this in turn, limits the potentially highly beneficial role that they could play. This study aims to heighten the profile of the use of art within educational establishments, especially in those settings where pupils may have difficulties accessing and/or succeeding in the 'core' subjects.

Disaffection research and the potential for a link with the arts

Throughout the 1990s, there was a large amount of research and evaluation undertaken to investigate the causes of disaffection and the successful practices in addressing this (e.g. Hayden, 1997; Parsons, 1996; Learmonth, 1995; Garner, 1993). Kinder and Wilkin (1998) undertook a two-year study researching the effectiveness of strategies for disengaged pupils. In their paper they summarised their findings with three key 'elements' of repair which they believed could potentially underpin the successful re-engagement of pupils. These elements consisted of: 1) the opportunity to establish positive personal relationships with an adult who can represent and model pro-social values, and offer 'respect' to the young person; 2) the opportunity to achieve academic/vocational success which offers a sense of coherence and progression for the youngster's career and learning pathway; and 3) the opportunity to appreciate a constructive leisure activity, which provides a sense of enjoyment, personal achievement and self-worth.

Harland *et al.* (2002) undertook a large-scale study to investigate the effects of arts education in secondary schools. One of their most interesting findings was that in terms of social inclusion, arts outcomes appeared to be strongly associated with the therapeutic outcomes of enjoyment, psychological wellbeing, and also interpersonal skills/relationship development along with increased awareness of cultural and moral issues. Harland *et al.*'s (1995) study also hints that participation in arts activities can provide opportunities which 'pull' young people away from engaging in anti-social acts by providing them with positive activities with which they can 'fill' their time. It also offers outcomes linked to the second element of repair (Kinder and Wilkin, 1998) relating to achievement and vocational success. The development of creativity, expressive skills and art form knowledge and skills in young people are all skills which are transferrable and/or recyclable in other contexts. 'Tools' and interests are developed which young people could utilise and expand upon throughout their lives. It could therefore be said that arts may have the potential to offer cultural, educational and even economic inclusion. With regard to the first element of repair, Harland *et al.*'s (2000) study can be referred to. Their observation of various arts teachers' practice resulted in a common and distinct style being identified as being used in their lessons. The authors described this as a 'praise culture'. They speak of the ambience in the classrooms as being 'inclusive', 'organic' and mirroring a 'high challenge, high support model' of interaction (p.511). A theme was identified in the different arts classrooms which involved 'joint learning', 'cooperation and commonality', 'unconditional positive regard' and 'respect' (p.511). Kinder and Wilkin (1998) noted that arts teachers were displaying quintessential 'inclusive' behaviours: offering respect, encouragement and esteem. Equally, the authors identify the factors of expertise, enthusiasm and equivalence within these effective arts teachers' pedagogical repertoires. They note that these are all terms which are familiar in the world of counselling (p.54) and are essential for the development of trust; something which one could argue that many disaffected pupils have significant difficulty with. It could be stated that the arts teachers in this study (and possibly in general terms) appear to offer a pedagogical style that mirrors the kinds of interpersonal behaviour, techniques and values which excluded pupils respond positively to. In these environments of trust and respect young people are able to learn invaluable social skills; methods of how to develop good adult- young person relationships; and the teachers are able to successfully model appropriate and pro-social attitudes and actions.

A 'special' environment within educational provisions

Harland *et al.*'s study (2000) discussed observations associated with the environment that was created in art-rooms. This is something that Spalding's (2000 and 2001) studies investigated in even more detail. Spalding looked into the effects which different environments, embedded into five primary schools in Liverpool, had on children with BESD and who were presenting a lack of control and 'pre-criminal tendencies' (Spalding, 2000, p.129). Pupils were described as children who experienced problems learning effectively in the classroom and who were 'at risk' of disaffection through low self esteem, relationship problems and other factors associated with social deprivation. The intervention was concerned with 'fostering of healthy emotional development and of taking into account the child's inner world'(Spalding, 2000,p.129). It had an aim of responding to concerns expressed by the Mental Health Foundation (MHF) (Kurtz, 1996) about the poor levels of support available for an estimated 10% to 12% of children who experience mental health problems. The environment created in the schools consisted of a 'therapeutic room' or a 'special place' where brief approaches to therapy (Oaklander, 1997), Neuro-linguistic Programming (Bandler and Grinder,1982), Sand-play (Bradway, 1997), Storytelling and Metaphor Work (Mills and Crowley, 1986), Body Therapies (Field *et al.*, 1998), Systematic Relaxation and Reflexology (Olness and Cohen, 1996), computer software (such as Biofeedback Techniques as explored in Culbert's (1999)publication), and Circle-Time (such as Mosley, 2001 and Mosley and Doyle, 2001) were made available. There were also similarities to Montessori approaches (Montessori, 1988) where the environment is viewed to 'do half the work' (Spalding, p72). As with the Montessori approach there was a focus on independence and freedom within limits. Students were allowed to choose their activity within a prescribed range of options and uninterrupted blocks of work time. It is arguable that the rooms were based upon a constructivist or discovery model of learning and progression where students are believed to develop skills and engage in psychological self-

construction by means of working with materials and interacting with their environment rather than being instructed. Spalding's paper implies a belief that the pupils have an innate path of psychological development and ability to 'self heal' (Spalding, 2000, p.130).

Spalding's (2000) evaluation was of the first cohort of 22 children to complete the 'Quiet Place' programme. A mixed method approach was utilised. A standardised measure called the Boxhall Developmental Strands and Diagnostic Profile which comprised a rating questionnaire was used to compare teacher rating of experimental and control pupils before and after attending the 'Quiet Place' over a 6 week intensive programme period. The criteria for experimental and control pupils was determined by their emotional need and the degree of concern expressed by teachers and parents. Groups (22 children belonging to each) were matched for age and socio-economic background. For the experimental group (attending the programme) there was a 5.81 point shift in the score in the positive direction for the developmental strands (organisation of experience and internalisation of control). They were also shown to have an average 6.4 negative shift in scores on the diagnostic profile (self limiting features, underdeveloped behaviour, unsupported development) whereby a negative score represents positive development. The control group had a markedly different rate of development in comparison to the experimental group with a 1.95 point positive shift in the developmental strands overall and a -1.52 shift in scores on the diagnostic profile towards the positive end of the spectrum. However these differences between the sample groups did not reach the 0.05 level of significance on a T-test.

In this study, Spalding (2000) also completed an analysis of semi-structured interview data to look for patterns in the responses of teachers' (for 22 children) and parents' (16 out of 22) when asked about their perception of children from the experimental group pre and post intervention. One section of analysis was looking at the interview responses for the 7 children in the group who were seen to have achieved the most (i.e. above a 10 point shift

on any of the Boxhall factors). Analysis of interview transcripts highlighted that children who experienced most gains were those whose emotional needs were mostly linked to low self esteem (5 cases), anger management (3 cases), the need for support in settling into a new school after exclusion from or difficulties at a previous placement (2 cases), a need for adult attention(1 case), anxiety (1 case)and experiencing a traumatic event (1 case). Eleven of the 16 parent interviewees felt that the intervention was very effective and 5 slightly effective. All six teachers being interviewed also gave positive responses relating to effectiveness. Fourteen of the 22 children were seen by staff to have improved noticeably with regards to their classroom behaviour, seven of which were seen to have made considerable improvements.

In summary, the report highlighted that for pupils, the experience was empowering, they felt safe and were seen to do things to completion and to explore things that they otherwise would not explore. Spalding explained that:

The children often seem to change physically; the environment is conducive to allowing them to unwind and to focus on themselves and look inwards in a safe uninterrupted space. In a way they enter a dream world with completely different rules and conditions.

Spalding, 2001, p, 72

Findings suggested that the implementation of quiet or special places in the schools had a positive effect on the emotional development of the children. Their self esteem and confidence was seen to increase, pupils were perceived as having an increased ability to discuss problems and able to manage their anger working through and making sense of their feelings. They displayed marked progress on measures of emotional growth and behavioural disturbance, there were overall positive changes to the school as a whole (calming, reduction in difficult behaviour in the playground and had a facilitatory effect on making

children more reflective). Parents reported a reduction in feelings of personal stress and a change in atmosphere at home. It is possible that the influence of environment on pupil experiences in their educational setting is an area which could be explored further in this study.

Two of the main limitations of Spalding's intervention were identified by both staff and parents during feedback interviews. The programme was short-lived and it was noted that ideally the 'Quiet place' would have been made accessible to more pupils (who could gain the benefits). Moreover, the fact that the school staff perceived a need for outside professional support (therapists with specific training in specialist approaches) and a need for more external resources resulted in a provision which they may not have been able to maintain. It was suggested that the programme or 'Quiet room' was not something which the setting could continue to provide in isolation. It is arguable that an art programme (as explored in this study) is something which PRUs or other establishments may feel more empowered and able to embed into their practice once established.

Positive steps forwards in the exploration of the use of art

As indicated in the studies discussed above, there is an increasing awareness of the capacity of the arts to engage disaffected young people. A growing body of research in this area is required for this awareness to spread and for it to have significant effects on practice.

Currently the limited volume of research on this topic makes it difficult to compare and contrast methods and findings but through the use of this critical technique in the future, with the research that evolves, there is possibility for practice to be more well-informed and enhanced. Before 1997, there was no funding body in the UK investing in arts activities with excluded young people and therefore work in this area was underdeveloped and mainly anecdotal.

When the previous Labour government was elected in 1997, 'social inclusion' became a well established priority and it is apparent that young people disengaged from learning and

educational opportunity (e.g. non-attenders, excluded pupils and under-achievers) had been identified as a group of the population for the government to 'target'. As a result of this, an array of strategies and initiatives such as *Learning to Succeed: A New Framework for Post-16 Learning* (DfEE, 1999) were developed and publications including *Bridging the Gap: New Opportunities for 16–18 Year Olds Not in Education, Employment or Training* (SEU, 1999) were released. Possibly, as a result of this increased interest, in 1997 The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (CGF) first began to support arts activities in PRUs and Learning Support Units (LSUs), focusing in particular on support for residencies by artists. In Wilkin *et al.*'s 2005 study for the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), they indicated that the CGF's focus on this funding priority was based upon the belief that:

the arts had a special contribution to make [as opposed to other curriculum experiences] to the personal, social and educational development of pupils in PRU/LSU settings, thus helping them reintegrate into mainstream education and to undertake the difficult transition into adult life.

Wilkin *et al.*, 2005, p7.

The CGF's initial aims were to encourage the wider adoption of arts projects in alternative educational provisions. They hoped that in time, units would be sufficiently equipped and confident to set up their own projects and funding organisations, in particular public bodies, would recognise the value of this work and so support the arts projects once CGF grants were no-longer available. The CGF published a report *Creating Chances* (Ings, 2004) which was made widely available to policy-makers and practitioners with an aim to making such projects sustainable and more widely practiced. The discussion disseminated the good practice of twelve arts initiatives that were supported in 2001 to 2004 through *First Time Projects*, a scheme funded by the CGF, Arts Council England (ACE) and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation (EFF). *Creating Chances* gives accounts of the day-to-day running of arts

activities in the twelve settings and the subtleties and nuances of their effects. In 2005 *Serious Play* a formal and robust evaluation of seven projects was published (Wilkin *et al.*, 2005). The Researchers undertook sixty nine interviews with pupils, teachers, artists and other significant individuals. The study consisted of three stages of investigation: a retrospective survey of four completed projects; a study of three projects in the process of being implemented; and a follow-up phase, which focused on the long-term impact and sustainability of the three projects. In summary, Wilkin *et al.* (2005) found that the pupils and staff in the PRUs and LSUs developed an increased knowledge and skills in a particular art-form; pupils developed confidence, self esteem and more positive behaviours; and pupils experienced positive feelings such as enjoyment, success and satisfaction which the researchers saw as factors promoting re-engagement in education. Findings also suggested that there was a positive impact on the classroom practice of staff and their approaches to pupil behaviour. The artist participants were shown to develop teaching skills in addition to a greater understanding of the needs of the pupils and enthusiasm to work in similar ways in the future. The importance of the role of an outsider was noted by the researchers as the artists were seen to introduce pupils and staff to a novel approach and attitude to interacting and teaching young people. Other key success factors were linked to time, funding and commitment. Further information relating to their findings is represented in Table 2 ([Appendix II](#)). The authors of the *Serious Play* report (Wilkin *et al.*, 2005), highlight the need of embedding arts projects into the practice of PRUs and LSUs across the country.

Further Research-The positive effects of the arts

Supporting mental health and pupils in meeting the 5 outcomes

There are many papers and books that have been written about the therapeutic effects of art and so I will only touch on this topic briefly here. In relation to working alongside excluded and potentially disaffected young people, in Le Count's (2000) paper, she discusses how many pupils with behavioural difficulties may have experienced a whole variety of personal changes that have resulted in grief and bereavement. She highlights how changes, however big or small, such as movement to a new school and loss of contact with friends can have a significant effect on many aspects of a young person's life. She explained that pupils can sometimes become stuck in the grieving process such as that explained by Kubler-Ross (1982). Kubler-Ross (1982) saw the individual as moving from shock and denial to searching, then anger followed by depression and guilt before reaching a stage of resolution. Le Count (2000) stated that too often children inhibit grief in fear of upsetting the adults close to them and frequently become preoccupied at the shock and later depression stage. This pre-occupation can prevent young people from engaging or fully accessing many areas of school life. She discussed the ways in which the therapeutic use of arts can help us work 'from the inside out' in that working with the arts can feel safe for a young person. Arts can create a safe place for emotions to be discharged. At other times pictures, for example, may enable the expression of the struggle and confusion surrounding a loss, or multiple losses, which the young person may only be able to express non-verbally. It may also be a way of working through feelings of guilt and working through unacceptable feelings. The process may provide them with a chance to explore and 'act out' feelings which have not been emitted before. Engagement in expressing one-self creatively through acting (i.e. play or the interaction and exploration of artistic materials) is what is seen to be the vital process in exploring something which may not be accessible verbally. These ideas are clearly explained

in Le Count's (2000) interpretation of Oaklander's (1988) work (p18). The importance of undertaking such work has been highlighted in a number of different studies. The negative effects which unresolved grief can have on the development of young people are significant. Black's study (1974) provided evidence of a link between depression and school refusal; similarly, Brown *et al.* (1977) and Hill & Price (1967) found connections between adult depressive illness and childhood bereavement. It is apparent that grief could affect all of the five outcomes discussed in the *Every Child Matters* (ECM) Campaign (2003 and 2004): be healthy; stay safe; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution; and achieve economic well-being. Le Count's (2000) study highlights the potential contributions which arts activities could make in relation to helping children to meet these five ECM outcomes.

On reflection, there is also large scope for the use of arts activities to enhance the mental health and emotional wellbeing of vulnerable young people which in turn could be linked to the development of Targeting Mental Health in Schools (TaMHs) initiatives in LAs across Britain. Recent evaluation of this multi-agency mental health approach (DCSF, September 2009) has produced positive results. Statements such as, 'schools which implement psychological wellbeing and mental health measures have higher levels of attainment.' (p15) suggest that programmes which address mental health in schools may have a powerful and effective future for all young people attending a variety of settings. It is easy to see that in large scale programmes, it is possible that highly effective approaches (such as arts) may be held in lower regard than the more 'fashionable' programmes such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). There is a risk that that LAs may look more favourably at approaches with a stronger (i.e. more researched) evidence base and where impact is easily measured and achieved in the short term. Again, it is evident that the need for a growing research base linked to the use of artistic methods is essential. Without increasing investigation, it is

possible that pupils could miss-out on (what I see as) one of the most effective and natural methods of work.

Increasing resilience through the arts

I stated earlier my belief that the arts are almost magical or spiritual in the psychological effects which they can have. In my reading I delved deeper into the effects which spirituality (which spurs on cognitive processes and unique and often deep thinking) can have on the behaviour of young people. It is important to note that spirituality does not necessarily carry religious significance but can refer to a sense of the meaning which individuals attach to their lives, a belief in being connected beyond one's own self to something 'greater' (Watson, 2000). Averill (2002) gave an alternative explanation and indicated that spirituality might be viewed as vitality and a creative attitude. Benson *et al.* (2003) perceive spirituality as an important dimension of human development that is closely linked to an individual's personal and social wellbeing. Research in this area has indicated a positive correlation between children's spirituality and their ability to cope with difficult life experiences such as hospitalisation (Ebmeir *et al.*, 1991), physical illness (Pendleton *et al.*, 2002; Sommer, 1994) and death (Sommer, 1989). In Gersch's (2009) paper the idea of an EP's role in spiritual listening is discussed. As a result of Gersch *et al.*'s (2008) preliminary study which involved spiritual listening with a sample of 26 primary and secondary school children, it was suggested, that most children can communicate simple, clear and intelligent answers to deep metaphysical questions relating to matters of life. Similarly findings suggest that children believe that the answers to questions such as 'what makes for a happy life?' impact on their own and other children's behaviour, progress and learning in (and out of) school. This implies that spirituality and creativity in children could potentially open them up to accessing more positive experiences and lives in the future. It may equip them with a resilience and 'bouncing-back' power which will help them to cope with difficult times. This

is of course something which disaffected and struggling young people would benefit from. It offers potential for the arts to provide young people with a way of thinking, flexibility and a skill which they could carry with them for the rest of their lives.

In the final section of this literature review, I will turn to the third key topic which relates to the study in question: The role of the EP.

The Changing Role of the Educational Psychologist: Increasing opportunities to become engaged in creative work

There are now numerous papers being written about the distinctive contribution of educational psychology and the perceived 'identity crisis' of its practitioners. Since the 1960s to the late 1980s EPs as a whole, have been attempting to shed their stereotype as psychometricians and later as gatekeepers to special education.

In 1989 Lucas proposed a test, '...to assess whether there is a continuing need for Local Authorities to employ EPs in the present form of organised services' (p171). His questions included, 'who needs [Local Education Authority] LEA Psychological Services?', and 'what can you do that no-one else can?' In concordance with this topic, Gersch (2009) stated that 'for educational psychology to be a valued, vibrant, adequately funded profession with an assured future, EPs need most of all to be seen as relevant, with their work deemed to be valuable and useful...' (p10)

Gaskell and Leadbetter's (2009) study based upon the Activity Theory Framework aimed to explore the changes in views about the professional identity of ten EPs who worked part of the week in a multiagency team (MAT) and the other part in an Educational Psychology Service (EPS). They hoped that in a time of change within the EP profession, the study would provide insights into a new form of practice. The results highlighted a value associated with increased 'opportunities to engage in creative ways of working' and to be 'flexible' and as

two of the factors influencing professional identity for EPs. They described being able to engage in preventative work and action research projects which was not possible when having a responsibility to a 'patch' of schools. A number of participants appeared to appreciate the opportunity presented despite an initial lack of clarity, apparent 'blurring of roles' and personal questioning relating to 'what [they had] to offer over and above what was already [there in the MAT]' (p.104). They saw that engaging in new ways of working (in MATs) as a chance to realise, validate and develop skills and knowledge (p.105), in addition to being allowed the space which enabled them to reconsider their contribution. Skills which were taken for granted in single agency working were valued highly in MATs. This was shown to enhance EPs perception that their contribution was valued by other team-members. Moreover, participants valued opportunities to apply and validate psychological skills and to practice as a 'Child Psychologist' as opposed to an 'Educational Psychologist'. Some were seen to value exploring alternative paradigms, whilst for others they felt more able to realise their individual psychological skills and develop these (potentially into a specialism). In summary Gaskell and Leadbetter's study provides refreshing stance to the implications which rapid rates of change can have on EPs. It moves us away from topics such as 'identity issues' and 'threats to identity' (Booker, 2005 and Branscome *et al.*, 1999) which appear to dominate narratives associated with the integration of EPs into MATs and new ways of working.

I believe that these times of change are exciting for EPs in which we can develop our interests and extend our skills. Due to the large breadth of psychological knowledge which underpins the training for our career, systems work and work that has the potential to be therapeutic are two branches of work for which we are well placed. Through continuing professional development (CPD); I feel that it is possible that EPs could use art in creative

ways in many levels of their practice. This study aims to investigate just one way in which EPs may be able to engage systems work using art.³

Gersch (2009) speaks about the 2005 Challenge and Change Series conference at UEL which was attended by representatives from all the British Psychological Society (BPS) divisions. He explained that the key perspectives from all included the belief that the different professions share many more common strands than those that separate them. It was noted that what matters, is not so much the title of any professional, rather, who is equipped, available and trained to do a specific job. This strengthens my belief that work with the potential to have a therapeutic effect could be undertaken as part of our roles as EPs. Moreover, EPs could support those adults who have the privileged position of working closely and on a frequent basis with pupils to support the development of their knowledge and practice in order to better meet the needs of young people. As stated above, the needs of young people largely outweigh the specialist support that is available. It is understandable that due to ethical and legal issues, professionals are wary about practicing therapeutically in their work without evidence of a qualification. Professionals are concerned about crossing professional boundaries however, in my view, it is not acceptable for individuals with many years experience and knowledge to sit back and watch other professionals 'crumble' under the pressure of referrals, when they themselves could be providing a supportive role. Moreover, I feel that, it is not acceptable that vulnerable young people's needs are not met due to high thresholds and long waiting lists. In a related study

³ It is important to note that the arts programme in this study did not aim to act as therapy for the young people and staff involved. The programme was to provide an experience or access to involvement in an activity which could potentially have a therapeutic effect. The art sessions were viewed as an experience similar to that which a person may seek to engage with, in their every-day life. It involved activities which are accessible to all.

(Spalding, 2001), where the focus was on the creation of a 'special place' in five mainstream primary schools (discussed above), interviews with head-teachers demonstrated one of the key perceived benefits -that needs were met immediately and without the need for waiting lists. It is arguable that, schools should not be expected to take the load of supporting pupils alone in meeting their more complex needs. I feel that systemic or joint-group work may be one avenue through which where there may be scope for EPs to engage with schools and pupils in very different and exciting ways. Using methods such as those explored in this study, EPs could be seen to have an effective role to play in supporting school-staff to work therapeutically and in novel ways with pupils. It is possible that staff participation in such programmes could not only enable them in further understanding the needs of their pupils and how these needs can be met; but could also act as an empowering experience in which EPs and staff are able to work collaboratively as equals with different strengths and knowledge to enrich the intervention. Working in such ways could be seen as a chance to enhance the creativeness and effectiveness of EP practice. The engagement of other EPs in similar group work and research could allow our roles to be broadened through a changing perception in schools of how we are able to support their development.

Summary

This study is based upon a positive model of health and wellbeing and upon a holistic approach to personal development and growth. It is interested in the exploration of how the implementation of an arts-programme, in partnership with staff and pupils at a PRU, has potential to support the development of individual participants. It also hopes to identify any potential effects which the programme might have on the PRU as a whole-system. Although there are many aspects of this study which aim to add to the gaps in the literature, my key interest is to explore the experiences of participants in detail

This literature review has shown that:

- There is limited research where the voice of teenage (and excluded) females is heard;
- there is an imbalance in the specialist services provided to male and female pupils;
- in recent years teenage females have been presented in a negative light;
- disaffection is a large cost to the country;
- more research is needed to investigate how the needs of disaffected young people may be better met;
- the profile of arts in education is currently low and arguably, through research could have benefits in being heightened;
- growing research associated with the arts suggests that there may be a role for art to play in supporting social inclusion and re-engagement;
- there are benefits to a nurturing and safe environment and specific adult approaches to pupils within educational settings;
- research suggests that art may have other positive effects on young people relating to mental health, supporting the achievement of the 5 Outcomes and building resilience;
- in this time of change there may be a place for EPs to engage in more creative and systemic work.

This study has potential to address some of these issues through its exploratory nature. It is evident that this study could also be empowering for those participants involved by engaging them in research which has possibility in further enhancing our knowledge of their needs

and how they might be met. The research aims to add to the small growing research base which explores the use of art with excluded young people. It could be classed as providing a unique contribution to the research because the study is specifically working with females. The research is building upon the foundations of other studies such as Wilkin *et al.* (2005) by providing a much more in-depth case-study of the implementation of an art programme in a PRU. There is possibility for increased knowledge and insight in this area by investigating experiences of participants from a holistic view (i.e. exploring both their positive and negative experiences). It is hoped that findings could be used to support professionals hoping to undertake similar practical group-work or research in the future.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The laboratory of a qualitative researcher is everyday life that cannot be contained in a test tube, started, stopped, manipulated or washed down the sink.

Morse, 1994, p.1

Predictive theories and universals cannot be found in the study of human affairs. Concrete, context dependent knowledge is, therefore, more valuable than the vain search for predictive theories and universals.

Flyvbjerg, 2006, p.224

In this chapter the various methodological aspects of this study are outlined. The values and beliefs which underpin my research design have been made transparent. The chapter clarifies how the methodologies chosen map onto the research question. At the start of this journey, this concerned:

An art programme for excluded young females attending a PRU: What are the experiences of pupils, staff and an EP researcher?

My epistemological and ontological positions will be discussed. I will explore my reasoning for choosing the case study methodology and a description of the approach utilised will be noted. The practicalities of the research process (and how this evolved) are explained step-by-step. Other issues including ethical implications and the effect which the completion of a pilot study had on the final research project are included in this part of the thesis. The chapter contains a description that aims to justify my selection and use of Thematic Analysis (TA) and to describe the specific approach used. It concludes by discussing issues such as generalizability and other factors which may contribute to the perceived value of this study.

General Characteristics of this investigation

The aim of this research was to focus on the quality and texture of the experience rather than simply the identification of cause-effect relationships. It was an explorative study in which I had a personal role throughout. As a participant and a researcher it was inevitable that I experienced direct contact with the phenomenon to be researched over a number of successive weeks. The investigation involved an exploration into how staff, pupils and I experienced personal involvement in the design, development and implementation of an arts programme within a PRU setting. The focus of the study was to explore, learn and make sense of individual experiences of a real-life set of events. I agree that Mehra's description of qualitative research fits well with this study with regard to the data collection, analysis and interpretation stages:

Qualitative research paradigm believes that researcher is an important part of the process. The researcher can't separate himself or herself from the topic/people he or she is studying, it is in the interaction between the researcher and researched that the knowledge is created. So the researcher bias enters into the picture even if the researcher tries to stay out of it.

Mehra, 2002, p.5

Due to the nature of the study, any attempt to stay out of the research was impossible. It is important to note that I was not a spectator but a part of the social phenomena being studied. It was an impossible task to avoid affecting or contributing to what was happening. Throughout the art programme, and from commencement of data gathering, considerations were made about what actions were taken, why certain behaviours occurred (and others did not), and how personal behaviours changed over time. Thoughts relating to how my own 'values, experiences, interests, beliefs, political commitments, wider aims in life and social identity may have shaped the research process'; and also how the research may have

'affectively and possibly changed [me], as [a person and a researcher]' (Willig, 2009, p.10) were kept in mind and noted in a research diary throughout. An abstract of this can be seen in [Appendix III](#). Although the aim of the research was to obtain the views relating to the experiences of all participants involved, a subsection of the data collected was compiled in this reflective research diary. In this record, accounts of what was said and happened in each session, interpretations, personal views and the perceptions (of thoughts, feelings and motivations) of those involved in the study were also noted.

It is possible that through the use of an illuminative approach (Timmins and Miller, 2007) parts of the art programme intervention that did and did not work were able to be identified by participants. Although many traditional evaluative studies as consistent with a positivist approach to research, I was resistant to adopt such methods. Many studies (such as Spalding *et al.* (2001) as discussed in the literature review) typically deliver an intervention to an experimental study group that receives the intervention of programme. The members' overall performance as a group is compared with a control group matched in all characteristics other than that they do not receive the intervention. The effectiveness of the programme is judged on the basis of statistical analysis of overall differences in scores on measures of programme effectiveness between the two groups (the statistical significance of difference in the mean scores of the two groups). I agree with Pawson and Tilley (1997) who note that there are difficulties associated with interpreting the findings of such studies, which are linked to the assumptions (methodology) associated with their design. One belief discussed by Timmins and Miller (2007) is, 'the belief that the programme works as a common blunt instrument likely to have equal impact on all participants in the experimental group' (p. 9). In positive approaches it is accepted that if there is a significant programme effect then this will be shown through a comparison of the mean scores of each group. Pawson and Tilley (1997) highlight that participants bring different outlooks, perceptions and

skills to a study that, in Realistic Evaluation (Timmins and Miller, 2007), creates different contexts. It is evident that a programme could result in different effects being experienced by individual participants and may therefore be more positive for some in comparison to others. This different effect and the valuable variability in experiences of participants would be masked by the use of a statistical process which is often used to investigate or evaluate programme outcomes. It is arguable that a lot of rich information is lost through the adoption of a positivist approach. It is evident that traditional experimental research methods could be interpreted as being disempowering of participants and researchers could be seen as having low expectations in relation to the skills of individuals making up the sample group. Statistical analysis removes the value of individual, unique voice and the use of preconceived variables can lead to the imposition of the researcher's meanings and so would not preclude the identification of respondents' own ways of making sense of the phenomenon under investigation. As noted by Preece and Timmins (2004) illuminative studies are useful where researchers are curious about impact and effects and wish to gather information on broad fronts to 'to inform the development of an intervention or initiative' (p.27).

The research was based on the relativist paradigm that resonates with the key idea that meaning is hidden and can be brought to the surface through deep reflection and a hermeneutic approach. It is linked to thinkers such as Foucault (2002) who argue that 'truth' is subjective, Dilthey (1894) who stated that 'every lived experience occurs within a historical social reality' (p.131) and instrumentalists such as Dewey who discussed the view that theories should not be classed as true or false but measured in value on how effectively they explain or predict a phenomenon and that the value of an idea is determined by its function in human experience.

My epistemological position which underpinned the research design was interpretative and as a researcher a subjective stance was taken. The dynamic interaction between the researcher, participants, the phenomena under study as well as the day-to-day life of the PRU was central to capturing and describing the lived experience of the art programme.

My ontological position relates to Social Constructionism and is linked to the idea that the world is not orderly or a law-bound place. This study aimed to question the 'out-there-ness' of the phenomena and to emphasise the diversity that can be applied to interpretations. However, I do not take such an extreme relativist position which indicates that it is not possible to obtain a 'truth' or 'knowledge' but simply believe that there is potential for a range of 'truths' to be 'out there'. The aim was to allow patterns to be sought and relationships to emerge as a result of the investigatory process. The focus was to discover knowledge, to assimilate further personal understandings and reflection, and to optimise both the researcher's and reader's opportunity to learn. It was expected that the final account or understanding would be experimental and very much dependent upon my experience and constructs about the world. It is acknowledged that another researcher's or analyst's interpretation of the data compiled may be very different to that which is presented in the final chapter. Throughout I hoped to capture the 'feel' of a particular experience for individuals involved.

It is arguable that qualitative research tends to be undertaken in the participant's own territory or in a naturally occurring setting. Although I am familiar with educational settings, it is arguable that I was possibly the 'odd-one-out' in the participant sample as the PRU was not my natural setting. Searching the Oxford English Dictionary Online (2nd November 2010) it was apparent that the phrase 'natural setting' is linked to habitat which suggests a context or environment in which an individual would spend a significant time-period and/or live. The dictionary refers to 'home' and although it is arguable that for some young people and

staff, the school is a setting where they spend a substantial part of their waking lives, I feel that as an EP it is not possible to experience the same connection to the environments we flit between.

Methods

In the initial planning stage of the research process it was hoped that a qualitative method could be used which could be classed as being at the extreme end of the qualitative-quantitative spectrum: a method that was as far away from a positivist approach as possible. Having spent three years of my Experimental Psychology undergraduate degree being involved as a researcher in a range of 'predictable, predetermined and fixed' (Atkinson and Cooper, 2000, p2) studies I felt liberated at the thought of exploring the use of methodologies which felt (in the initial stages) alien yet alive and real. It was an aim to use an emancipatory research approach whereby the research would empower the interviewees who would be given the opportunity to become 'active participants rather than passive subjects of research.' (Atkinson and Cooper, 2000, p2). However, on reading Zarb's (1992) work which relates to undertaking research with disabled groups of people, it became apparent that the emancipatory approach was an ideal that due to a number of limitations (e.g. time restrictions as well as the level and severity of the pupils' behavioural needs) and ethical considerations (e.g. the implications of the pupils and staff reading my reflective diary and interpretations) would not be viable in this piece of research. Zarb (1992) highlighted that:

simply increasing participation and involvement will never by itself constitute emancipatory research unless and until it is disabled people themselves who are controlling the research and deciding who should be involved and how.

(Zarb, 1992, p.128).

Mitchell (1999) also speaks of emancipatory research in the sense that participants should be enabled to '...set agendas, contribute experiences and memories, and also to have a role in data analysis and editing' (p.2). I came to realise that although this research did provide methods which are arguably aiming to empower participants and so balance the power dynamic between researcher and researched, a participatory approach is a more realistic and accurate description of the approach that was chosen and used. Other methods which were considered in the early stages of the research design can be seen at the end of this chapter.

Willig (2009) describes 'big Q' and 'little q' qualitative research,

'Little q does not work from the bottom up. That is little q methods of data collection and analysis do not seek to engage with the data to gain new insights into the ways in which participants construct meaning and/or experience their world; instead they start with hypotheses and researcher-defined categories against which qualitative data are then checked.'

(Willig, 2009, p.9)

This research study is consistent with a big Q methodology which is 'bottom up' and where the researcher does not control the data but allows themes to emerge.

Case Study

...sometimes we have to keep our eyes open and look carefully at individual cases-not in the hope of proving anything but rather in the hope of learning something...

(Eysenck, 1976, P. 9)

Willig (2009) describes a case study as an approach which may involve the use of a range or mix of methods of data collection and analysis. It involves an in-depth, intensive and sharply focused exploration of an occurrence that has definable boundaries. The case in this study was the collection of participants involved in the art programme situation. The study had a number of defining features:

- *Attention to context*-where a holistic approach was taken looking at the art programme and experiences of all involved (or case) within its context. The researcher paid attention to the ways in which the different dimensions of the art programme related to or interacted with the environment of the PRU setting. This was done through the use of the reflective diary by acknowledging or hypothesising about factors that may have been contributing to the situation under study. E.g. the impact which (recent or lifetime) experiences of participants may have and the mood/climate of the setting throughout the lifespan of the programme or in individual sessions.
- *Triangulation*-where information from different sources: interviews (i.e. the views of staff and pupils), diary/observations (i.e. the views of the researcher) was integrated to gain a rich picture and allowed the researcher to approach the case from a number of different angles.
- *A temporal element*- the art programme process was observed over time and any changes or developments which may have occurred were assessed.

- *The generation of further insight into or knowledge of social or psychological processes.*

The case study design which was used in this research could be described as an *Instrumental Case Study* whereby, individuals (i.e. staff, pupils and myself) who are experiencing a phenomenon of interest or the object of the study (i.e. involvement in an arts programme at a PRU) constitute suitable cases for analysis. The task of the researcher was to act as a witness or reporter and to remain close to the 'scene' in an attempt to observe events as they unfolded. It is important to remember that case studies are only ever partial accounts of a person or person(s) in a situation; they never capture the individual in his or her entirety.

Methods of data collection for case study research vary. Though, Yin (2009) highlights six types of data sources which are most suited to case study approaches, namely; documentation; archives; interviews; direct observations; participant observations; and physical artefacts. Yin (2009) suggests interviews are the most useful form of data in case study research however those other methods chosen for this study could be classed as an appropriate match to this methodology.

Preparation for the study

Due to the small sample population of potential participants in the LA where this research was undertaken, it was decided that a pilot study would not be undertaken with young people attending the sites from which my participant sample would be taken. In the LA where this research was conducted, there were three largely male-orientated provisions in which excluded young females were placed. A KS3 site, KS4 site and a vulnerable unit. Each setting had a head of provision or teacher in charge. The provision as a whole was managed by a separate head. A number of consultations were performed with a range of professionals to assist with the planning of the research. A meeting was organised with an Art Therapist; the head of the excluded pupils provision as well as the head and staff from the KS3 and KS4 sites; a colleague who had recently set up a project to support the education and development of permanently excluded pupils; the Arts and Sports Engagement team manager; the manager of the Arts Entitlement Group and Integrated Youth Service (who were setting up a music and film project); and also the Pupil Support Manager (responsible for attendance in the LA). The aim of these consultations was to obtain access to exclusion data and to discuss the varying provisions and protocols for managing the short term and fixed term exclusion of pupils. These conversations paved the way for setting the research in a context and allowed me to ensure that the research would be providing something new and different to the LA.

As a result of having conversations with the Art Therapist, I was able to begin to reflect on the ways in which Art Therapists work. The art programme had no aim to provide the participants with Art Therapy (where a particular issue is targeted with the intention to create change) and so it was important to remain sensitive to this throughout the programme. The conversation initiated further reading into the area of Art Therapy which highlighted a need to obtain further advice throughout the duration of the project from a

professional that has knowledge of this field. For example, I learnt that working with a vulnerable group of young women and staff using art could result in situations which require careful management. Furthermore, I came to realise that art is a medium (whether the aim is to provide therapy or not) which has the potential to result in a therapeutic effect.

My visits to the KS3 and KS4 PRU settings allowed me to meet with those staff interested in involvement and to explore their perceptions of how the programme might develop. I was able to view the art-rooms and to discuss the work which was already being undertaken with the young people on-site with the arts-co-ordinator. Conversations at the KS3 site were had with staff and the head of provision about the possibility of bringing girls from the two (KS3 and KS4) provisions together onto the KS3 site and of involving staff from the two settings in the project. This was an empowering exercise which may have acted as an opportunity to set the expectation that ownership and leadership of the programme was a shared responsibility of all people involved. It was a key meeting where the organisation of practicalities of the research began.

At the third provision for vulnerable teenage girls in the LA, pupils were encouraged to be involved in various therapeutic interventions on-site. The unit was also well-known in the LA for its high level of attainment in GCSE art. A visit to this setting was organised. As a result of the participation in therapeutic sessions and academic art activities, it was decided that it would not be appropriate to involve these pupils in my research. Similarly, there was already a cohesive group feel in the unit. Due to the pupils' needs, an expectation for the pupils to visit and work at a new setting may have been unreasonable. The pupils in the unit appeared to be settled and familiar with each other but travelling to the KS3 site and meeting new pupils may have been unsettling for the girls. Many of the females attending the vulnerable pupils unit did not demonstrate behavioural difficulties associated with disaffection, but were susceptible to school refusal or non-attendance associated with anxiety for example.

Although there may have been an overlap in the general needs of these pupils with the pupil participants P1, P2 and P3 they could be seen as being a very different group of participants to those which I aimed to work with. It is arguable that their involvement in the programme may have also had potential to influence the therapeutic support which they were already accessing (i.e. through CAMHS).

It is possible that Conversations with this set of pupils and the adults on-site would not limit my participant sample. The information that was gathered from the girls and staff in this provision was highly fruitful in developing my initial thoughts about the design of the arts programme and research. Although the conversations with this group were not pre-planned but simply exploratory, I was able to start thinking about the questioning techniques that might be used in interviews. It was apparent that open ended questions were particularly problematic for some of the pupils. Some pupils appeared to be more confident and able to provide lengthy responses when structured questioning was introduced. Similarly, specific questions about negative experiences appeared to promote an increased openness in the pupils' responses. This allowed me to begin drafting interview schedules which were shared with my research supervisor. In this subsection of the pilot study it was also possible for me to observe the girls participating in arts and textiles activities and to experience (and reflect on) the environment which had been created in the setting.

*Research procedure*Table 3- showing the summary of the research design and process followed

<p>1. Preparation: Exploration of relevant research and creation of a draft critical literature review; development of potential research questions; pilot study; presentation of research to university tutors and colleagues; submission of research proposal and ethics application, and meeting with the head of provision for excluded young people to introduce research and begin planning.⁴</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>
<p>2. Preparation for the study, information gathering, meetings with key people in the LA and PRUs and focusing stage carried out with PRU staff</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>
<p>3. Creation of art-programme and research materials including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information leaflets and consent forms(Appendix IV); • Comment/consent box and slips(Appendix V); • Plan for the initial planning session(Appendix VI); • A programme timetable, preliminary group pact, flexible outline/format for each art session, ‘who is doing what?’ and attendance sheets(Appendix VII); • signup sheet for interviews(Appendix VIII) <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>
<p>4. Meeting with those KS3 and KS4 pupils who were interested in participating. The research (see prompt sheet Appendix VI) information leaflets and consent forms were discussed. It was agreed that participants from the KS4 site would be transported to the KS3 provision for the sessions.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>
<p>5. Consent of participants and parents/ carers obtained: Written consent was completed by staff and pupils. Parental information leaflets and consent forms were also sent out for completion (Appendix IV). Copies were returned with a letter (Appendix IX).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>
<p>6. Planning Session: including teambuilding and programme design. Brainstorming (re. expectations of the programme) was audio recorded (see Appendix X for participant views) and a group pact was created and agreed. Participants were introduced to the use of attendance, ‘who is doing what’ and comment/consent box⁵. The art resources were explored.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>

⁴ The head of provision met with the staff and heads from the KS3 and KS4 site to discuss the feasibility of the research and introduced the research to potential female pupil participants. It was agreed by staff that the research would work most effectively at the KS3 site.

⁵This box was another method through which participants could withdraw consent and pass comment on their experience at any point

<p>7. Art programme: (15th June-6th July 2010) 7x 1 ½ hour flexible sessions⁶ (6 took place) in the KS3 art room on most Mondays and Tuesdays across four successive weeks⁷. The first and final art sessions were video recorded and a reflective research diary was kept by myself throughout. The art programme was delivered through joint work with pupils and staff⁸. The record of attendance for session can be seen in Appendix XI.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>
<p>8. With permission photographs of the artwork were taken and these can be seen in Appendix XII.</p>
<p>9. 1:1 Interviews with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two of the three female pupils (one from KS3 and one from KS4). One of the pupils (P2) withdrew consent for participation in the interview verbally. • Three of the members of staff involved in the programme • The head of the KS3 provision <p>Interview sessions were selected by all participants and interviews were also completed in a location of the participant's choice. One interview was performed at the KS4 site (P3), one at the vulnerable girl's unit (S1), another at P1's mainstream school (to which she was being re-integrated) and two at the KS3 site (S2 and S3). All interviews were completed in a quiet room and were audio-recorded, with permission. After the interview reflections were entered into my research diary. Notes were not taken throughout in fear of affecting concentration, non-verbal communication and the development of rapport. (7th July-15th July 2010)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>
<p>10. Separation and Reflection time: A period of separation from the research was programmed into my research timetable. The process of completing my work as a trainee EP alongside the research process was exhausting and intense. The distancing period was to allow myself to return to the data refreshed.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>
<p>11. Transcription: The research diary was also transcribed and secondary reflections added. The audio recordings of 1:1 interviews with staff and pupils were also transcribed.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>
<p>12. Key observations were noted from watching the video recordings by a colleague and me. Initially I hoped to transcribe this data (i.e. audio/body-language etc.) however, after an initial attempt it was evident that the information obtained would prove to be overwhelming. It was hoped that the use of the video data would enhance my data analysis but this did not prove feasible.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p>
<p>13. Analysis-A Thematic Analysis (TA) of the data was completed. The process used will be discussed later in this chapter.</p>

⁶ In the art sessions, participants were expected to engage in an art activity of their choice. They had free access to all equipment available in the art room throughout the programme. Some of the pupils had been with S2 to purchase a range of new materials in advance.

⁷ Initially I had hoped that sessions would take place on a weekly basis however, due to time restraints, timetable arrangements for staff and pupils, my university commitments and a limited time-frame, this was not possible.

⁸ From the start it was made clear to the participants that the aim of the sessions was for the programme to be flexible and that they all had an equal say in how sessions would look. My longing to be as much of a participant in the research as the staff and young people was emphasised.

Diary and observation

As described previously, a commitment was made to keep an unstructured record (of personal experiences, activities and feelings) over the period of time when the arts programme and research data collection phase was undertaken. This began after the initial meeting with the Head of the PRU provision and ended after the final interview. It was inevitable that this diary keeping had an effect upon my daily routines and also on my experiences of the research. It was an initial aim for entries to be completed (as soon as possible) after each art session. Reflections were also added intermittently after the sessions and the data collection phase, when thoughts relating to the process came to mind. Similarly as noted above, secondary reflections were added as the diary was transcribed. It was possible that those initial thoughts about an event immediately after it had happened and those noted after some reflection time may appear quite different.

The diary also contained detailed notes of observations which had been made during my participation in the sessions. These notes included both participant and self observation. They included verbatim, or near verbatim, quotes or summaries of what people said, concrete descriptions of the setting, people and events involved. Attempts were made to ensure that observations that initially appeared trivial at the time (but had the potential to later be seen to have crucial meaning/significance) were not excluded. These may be referred to as *substantive notes*. Willig (2008) states that to undertake this effectively, the 'researcher needs to obtain a balance between participation and observation' (p27). However, it was an aim in the programme for me to be classed as an equal member of the participant group and I found this ideal of Willig's difficult to balance. On occasions, a tug of war was felt between the role of researcher (or observer) and participant. In my role as a researcher there was a tendency at times to slip into a slightly detached stance to facilitate the reflection process of the phenomenon. At other times (when fully immersed and

emotionally attached to the experience) there was some difficulty in my attempts to distance myself. Although it was an aim throughout the research to remain transparent in my explanations about the use of my diary with the pupils and staff involved, at times I was aware of potential perceptions of myself as a 'spy', 'outsider' or as being insincere in my approach or personality. The notes were also used to allow reflexivity relating to my role in the research, my relationship with the other participants, and the problems being encountered throughout the journey of the art-programme and within the context where the research was being undertaken. These may be labelled *methodological notes*. I also began to record emerging themes, connections and patterns (*analytical notes*) which are arguably the beginnings of data-analysis. These analytical notes were recorded as they emerged in my thoughts often as a result of completing my substantive notes. They were to be used to further explore patterns in future observations. Throughout this process however, I aimed to maintain an open mind to allow alternative explanations to be considered.

Interviews

The pupils' and staff's views relating to their experiences of the programme were facilitated using semi-structured interviews. These were outlined in the form of an interview agenda. The interview sessions were described to individuals taking part as being opportunities for the participants to voice their experiences and views. It was explained that questions were simply there to provide some structure. All participants were encouraged to 'go off on a tangent' when describing their thoughts. After my pilot study, a decision was made to insert some 'negative' questions which may have allowed the participants to feel safe or as if they had permission to be negative about the programme. The interview agenda can be seen in [Appendix XIII](#). The three main types of questions used could be linked to those types described by Spradley 1979, quoted in Willig 2008, p.24; 'descriptive' (prompting the

interviewee to provide a general account of what happened), 'contrast' (allowing the interviewee to make comparisons between their experiences) and 'evaluative' (about the interviewee's feelings towards something). As a result of my reflections relating to my pilot study, the interview schedule was also shortened. It was learnt that the pupil participants' ability to focus in 1:1 situations may be limited and all participants may have been deterred from exploring their own thoughts in the discussion if they were aware that there was a long list of questions to complete. Images were used on question prompt sheets which were handed to the participant as each question was asked. The aim of the pictures was to support their understanding and interpretation of each question. It was possible (given the sample population) that some of those individuals involved in the research may have had specific needs relating to language and so the range of pictures were used to reduce any difficulties they may have had. Pupils were also given the opportunity to look at the questions before the interview session to allow them time to think about their responses. It was an aim of the researcher to ensure that any anxiety relating to the interview process was reduced to a minimum.

Semi-structured interviews provide a flexible data collection method allowing the researcher and participant to engage in conversation and dialogue. I found the approach particularly attractive because questions could be modified in reply to the participant's responses. The interview process felt more natural as I was also able to probe further as any interesting and important issues arose. I was also able to follow the participant's interests and concerns (Smith and Osborn 2003). It is argued that taking a naïve stance or expressing ignorance assisted me in obtaining a more detailed and comprehensive account from the participant, as well as asking for illustrations of events or experiences to promote the enrichment of the description (Willig, 2001). Although I had been a participant in the art programme, I wanted to make it clear to the participants that their experiences may have

been very different to what they may have presumed me to have observed. Riessman (2008) highlights the importance of an interviewer's emotional attentiveness, engagement and the reciprocity established in the exchange, allowing the listener to understand the participant's perspective. Atkinson (1998) stated that listening well should increase the participant's feeling of safety by expressing trust and acceptance without judgment. All of these factors were taken into account as interviews were completed. Participants' phrases were mirrored back to them using their language to reflect my understanding of what they had said. Suitable pauses were left before silences were broken in the interview to ensure enough time was given to allow the participant to undertake further reflection. The aim of this was to promote deeper thoughts and reflection (Atkinson, 1998).

In the early stages of research design it was hoped that focus groups would be used with the mixed group of participants (or alternatively with separate groups of pupils and staff) to elicit their views. However, after working with the group over the six week art programme period, it became apparent that focus groups could prove to be a problematic and ineffective method. Moreover, Curtis *et al.* (2004) highlight some of the difficulties they encountered in group discussions with pupils with BESDs (p170-171) and advised researchers to obtain advice from staff and pupils in advance. Staff informed me that the pupils would respond better to one-to-one sessions. I was aware of the potential benefits of undertaking a focus group. Through reading I learnt that they could facilitate the thoughts of individuals and further discussion in the group, through shared access to the thoughts of others. They could also be seen as 'feeling' more natural and less artificial which could result in a higher ecological validity in comparison to semi-structured interviews (Willig, 2001). Involvement in focus groups could also increase confidence, be less anxiety provoking and empowering for individuals through the perception of a shared voice. However, the complex nature of the pupils' behavioural needs meant that a focus group could have had

adverse effects on the research. Similarly it is arguable that the number of pupils and staff available for separate focus groups (staff n=3 and pupils n=3) was below the minimum required to make focus groups plausible. In Breakwell *et al.*'s (2006) *Research Methods in Psychology*, Millward states that, 'a systematic review of focus group research in psychology yields an average of nine participants...as conventional, with a range of six to twelve' (p285). She explains that this conclusion is 'consistent with figures quoted in focus group literature, although some (researchers) would advocate between six and eight participants as ideal' (Albrecht *et al.*, 1993; see also Wilkinson, 2003).

Undertaking one-to-one interviews, after a failed focus group, could have affected the quality of the results obtained as relationships between participants and/ or the researcher and participants may have been damaged. Moreover, due to the nature of the pupils within the setting, a failed focus group (i.e. a negative experience) could have impacted on the pupils' willingness to continue their engagement in the research process. I felt that this was a highly probable reality as I had witnessed in the initial planning session (three adults and three pupils) how the girls were shown to really struggle with a structured group discussion.

It is arguable that the use of one-to-one interviews can increase courtesy bias (i.e. the tendency for respondents to give answers that they think the interviewer wants to hear) and perceived increased researcher control (preventing participants from being confident in following their own agendas/ developing 'themes most important to them' (Cooper *et al.*, 1993); in comparison to focus groups, their use can also prevent interference to or repression of independent thought channels. In focus group research, 'consciousness raising' (linked to feminist research)i.e. bringing another individual's or group of individuals' thought(s) that had not previously been processed into the consciousness (of the researcher/participant) is described as being a positive. However, it is possible that this could prevent more personal thoughts from evolving into sensible or communicable

perceptions. A further preference for individual interviews over focus groups is that through the absence of peer pressure the likelihood of participants providing their objective opinion could be increased. Similarly the influence of dominant voices in the data could be minimised.

One of the focuses underpinning the programme and research was for all participants in the group to be given equal opportunities to contribute and therefore the research process for the pupils and staff was identical. Although a focus group with staff may have had benefits without any complications (relating to behaviour), I was resistant to implement any feature into the research process that may have provided the pupils with an opportunity to perceive a difference between how they and the adults were viewed or treated. Therefore, it was decided that the whole participant group would be invited to sign themselves up for individual interview slots noting a convenient time and place. The same interview questions were asked of both staff and pupils.

Participants

The identity of the staff and pupils involved are represented in fictitious letter-number combinations to maintain anonymity. All of the staff and pupils were known to me on a first name basis. All participants were white British. Dates of birth and background information e.g. length of time working with excluded pupils and personal history information for example was not obtained. However, I was aware that those pupils involved had spent time at a mainstream high school and in the near future were to be re-integrated back into a mainstream school.

The participant sample included:

- Myself (as a participant in the arts project and Trainee EP researcher),
- Three members of female staff (S1, S2 and S3 working as teaching assistants with excluded young people (two were based at the KS3 and one from the KS4 base). S1, S2 and S3 were participants in the arts project and research interviews.
- Two female pupils from the KS3 base (P1 and P2) and one female pupil from the KS4 base (P3) for excluded pupils⁹. The three young women were participants in the arts project and research interviews.
- The head of the KS3 provision (HP). She was involved in the planning/co-ordination/organisation and interview stage).

Ideally an independent method of random sampling would have been used to select a group of excluded female pupils and staff whereby each of the members of the population would have an equal chance of being selected. Similarly quota sampling involving matching the population on certain characteristics (e.g. a threshold interest in art) would have allowed the research to be more representative. However, the researcher was restricted to using opportunity sampling which involves selecting those people who are easily available (Mitchell and Jolley, 2001). The sample of young excluded female pupils and staff working with excluded pupils in the LA where my research was undertaken was very limited.

Equipment

Audio recording was carried out using a digital Dictaphone. Video recording was collected through the use of two video recorders (one tape and one digital) with microphones.

Photographs of artwork were taken using a digital camera. Audio and visual data was transferred electronically onto a secure (password protected) computer. Taped visual data

⁹ It is important to note that the term 'excluded pupils' describes those young people in the LA that are not accessing full-time mainstream education. Some of the participants had been provided with a fixed term or part-time placement arrangement within the PRU. Each pupil had been attending the setting for varying lengths of time.

was transferred onto a television. Information was transcribed into a Microsoft WORD document to allow effective analysis of the quantitative data.

Ethics and informed consent

The completed ethics application form can be found in [Appendix XIV](#). Applications were made to both the University and LA in which the research was undertaken. The parent/carer/legal guardian, staff and pupil participant information sheet and consent forms were produced and copies of these can be found in [Appendix IV](#). Codes of ethical conduct for EPs were considered throughout the research, such as the Code of Professional Practice by the Health Professions Council (2008, 2010) and the BPS (2002,2009). Although consent was gained in advance for the pupils' involvement in the programme, I was aware that the participants may have changed their minds about certain aspects of the programme and research, as time progressed. Therefore through the use of the consent/comments box ([Appendix V](#)), pupils were given the opportunity to withdraw consent to involvement in the interviews (or any other part of the process) at any time. Similarly, the sign-up sheet for interviews was another method of opting in to the research once the programme was complete. Participants were also reminded prior to the art and interview sessions that video or audio recording would be taking place.

A significant amount of reflection time was spent considering how issues of power could be tackled in my relationships with the participants throughout the research. Hollway and Jefferson's discussions (2009, p30-31 & 84-85) assisted me in this. Although it was not possible to find a solution to power imbalances, my reflective process allowed me to recognise the importance of my relationships with the staff and young people involved and to be sensitive to how these were evolving throughout the programme. It was possible that through the development of safe, positive relationships using Rogerian characteristics of

warmth, genuineness and empathy (Rogers, 1951) in my interactions in the art sessions, the research interviews felt more natural to participants. However, I was aware that having spent some time with individuals throughout the programme could have affected their experiences of the research process in negative as well as positive ways. It was possible that the participants' experience of working together in a group over a number of weeks, may have made it difficult for them to be honest in their responses for fear of damaging a relationship that had been formed.

Analysis

Thematic Analysis (TA) was used to analyse the varying forms of data collected.

Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail. However, frequently it can go further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic.

Boyatzis, 1998

Braun and Clarke (2006) highlight that TA (unlike Conversation Analysis, Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), Grounded Theory (GT), Discourse Analysis (DA) and Narrative Analysis (NA)) is essentially independent of theory and epistemology and can be applied across a range of approaches. They describe it as being a flexible method that 'should be seen as a foundational method for qualitative analysis' (p78). It is a research tool that can potentially provide a rich and detailed yet complex account of data. TA is also viewed as a good approach which can act as a useful starting point from which researchers can develop further methods. It was described by Braun and Clarke (2006) as 'an accessible form of analysis, particularly for those early in their qualitative research career' (p.81). Moreover, in the early stages of the research process, I was keen to prevent myself from falling victim to committing to a method rather than a topic, the content or research

questions (Holloway and Todres, 2003). From the start, I had a clear idea of what I wanted to do for my research and was keen for my research to evolve and develop naturally over time. An analysis method was required that would fit to the research that was undertaken. I did not want to be restricted. The flexibility of TA was highly attractive.

TA is widely used, but there is no clear agreement about what exactly TA is and how you go about doing it. It can be seen as a very poorly 'branded' method, in that it does not appear to exist as a 'named' analysis in the same way that other methods do (e.g., NA or GT). Braun and Clarke (2006) argue that there is a lot of research out there where it is often not explicitly claimed as the method of analysis, when, in actuality, it is arguable that what has essentially been used is thematic- but is either claimed as something else (such as DA and Content Analysis) or is not identified as any particular method at all. It is possible that the reason for this is that there is a significant amount of overlap in the process of TA with phases of other qualitative analytical methods. The stages are not necessarily unique to TA.

Further examples of advantages of (and my reasons for choosing) TA are as follows:

- ✓ Results are generally accessible to the educated general public
- ✓ It is a useful method for working with the participatory research paradigm, with participants as collaborators
- ✓ Can usefully summarise key features of a large body of data and/or offer a thick description of the data set
- ✓ Can generate unanticipated insights
- ✓ Allows for social as well as psychological interpretations of data
- ✓ Can be useful for producing qualitative analysis suited to informing policy development.

Selected from Braun and Clarke (2006) Table 3, p97

A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set. It is important to note here that themes do not emerge out of the data but they reside in the heads of researchers as a result of thinking about the data and creating links as the

researcher understands them (Ely *et al.*, 1997, p. 205- 6). Braun and Clarke (p82) state that TA is flexible in that it allows the researcher to determine themes and 'prevalence' in a number of ways or at a range of different levels:

1. Did the themes appear in each individual data set?
2. What number of different participants articulated the theme across the entire data set?
3. What is the occurrence of the theme across each of the data sets and the dataset as a whole?

In this piece of research the analysis was consistent with the first and third levels described. It was hoped that by looking at each data set separately, a number of Main Overarching Themes (MOTs) would be interpreted. By comparing the occurrence of the themes across each of the data-sets it was hoped that through the analysis of recorded experiences, further insight relating to the processes occurring in the art program would allow key messages to be learnt. I felt that focusing on the second level of measurement for thematic prevalence could be problematic in this piece of research due to the small number of participants contributing to each dataset. Therefore prevalence was measured with regards to the participant group/each dataset (i.e. pupil/staff/my) rather than individual participant. It is possible that a participant or participant group repeating an 'idea' in an interview could be representative of the importance of that 'idea' to them. If as researchers we are hoping to learn from the constructs of our participants, it is important that we listen to these potential cues.

TA was used to provide a detailed and nuanced account of a group of themes within the data which relate to a particular latent theme across the whole or majority of the data set. In this study, I took an inductive approach. This means that themes identified were strongly linked to the data themselves (Patton, 1990) (similar to GT). Themes identified may bear little relation to the specific questions that were asked of participants in interviews and were also not driven by the researcher's interest in the area or topic. Although (as discussed earlier), it was impossible to free myself completely from the research in relation to my

theoretical and epistemological commitments. It was the aim of this form of analysis to be data driven. Themes were coded diversely, without paying attention to themes that previous research on a similar topic had identified. Braun and Clarke (2006) state that an inductive approach can be enhanced by not engaging with the literature in the early stages of analysis. However, Tucket (2005) argues that engagement with the literature can enhance your analysis by sensitising you to more subtle features of the data. I was comforted by this re-assurance as prior to my analytical technique being chosen I had completed my draft critical literature review.

Themes were identified at a latent level which means that the analysis went beyond the semantic content of the data (i.e. the explicit or surface meanings of the data/what has been said or written) and started to identify or examine the underlying ideas, assumptions and conceptualisations and ideologies that are theorised as shaping or informing the semantic content of (or what is actually articulated in) the data. This involved interpretative work and the analysis that was produced was not just description. Burr (1995) links latent TA to the constructionist paradigm and notes that it overlaps with some forms of DA. As mentioned earlier in this chapter I located my epistemological position within the constructionist paradigm and so the analysis phase was conducted in line with this. Therefore TA cannot and does not seek to focus on motivation or individual psychologies, but in this study sought to theorise the socio-cultural contexts, and structural conditions that enabled the individual accounts that were provided.

The data were separated into three data sets: pupil interviews, staff interviews and my reflective research diary. TA was undertaken on the three separate sets. [Table 4](#) shows the phases of TA that were used rigorously with the data and examples are given (*italics*) of how I put these into practice.

Table 4- An adapted version of Braun and Clarke’s (2006) ‘thematic analysis’ based on Table 1 and 2, p87 & 96

PHASE	DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS
1)Jotting down thoughts	<p>The analyst (in this case me) begins to notice and look for patterns of meaning and issues of potential interest in the data. (This may begin during data collection). Ideas should be jotted down.</p> <p><i>These thoughts were embedded into my reflective research diary as I attempted to hypothesise and formulate meaning from my experiences. See Appendix III where a sample my diary transcript is provided.</i></p>
2)Familiarisation with the data	<p>Data should be transcribed, read and re-read. Ideas should be jotted down. Transcription should involve a ‘verbatim’ account of all verbal (and sometimes non-verbal e.g. coughs/laughs) utterances. The transcript should retain the information needed in a way which is ‘true’ to the original data (punctuation to represent the true meaning). It may be useful to check the transcripts back against the original audio recordings for ‘accuracy’. Data should be read through at least once before coding is begun.</p> <p><i>After the transcription phase, as noted above, I spent some time away from the data before reintegrating myself by listening to the transcripts again. As I listened, I made notes of key ideas which stood out in my mind relating to salient issues that arose in the commentary (Appendix XV)</i></p>
3)Generation of initial codes	<p>The analyst begins coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the data-set, collating data relevant to each code. Codes identify a feature of the data that appears interesting to the analyst, and refer to ‘<i>the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon</i>’ (Boyatzis, 1998, p63). Tuckett (2005) describes this part of the analysis where you are ‘<i>organising the data into meaningful groups</i>’. Each data item should be given equal attention in the coding process which should be thorough, comprehensive and inclusive.</p> <p><i>Notes were made at the side of each paragraph of the transcript identifying potential codes (see Appendix XVI). For each of the data sets, a list of codes was collated (Appendix XVII). As the transcripts were read again, those paragraphs/extracts (numbered) which linked to each code were noted next to the code-name in the list. However, it is important to highlight that some of the paragraphs/extracts were classified under more than one code. The list of codes for each dataset was checked with the ‘key ideas’ formulated in the previous phase to check for concordance and that no codes had been missed. Using a symbol system, each code-list was used to ‘link up’ similar codes. This was done by going back to the suitable paragraphs in the transcripts, collating extracts together and re-viewing the code-name given to the group. The result would often be a re-naming of the code and re-location of some extracts to other, more suitable code. Finally, a list of codes (and their relating extracts) were collated together and printed for each data-set.</i></p>

4) Searching for themes	The analyst then starts collating codes into potential themes (by looking out for patterns to create units of analysis), gathering all data relevant to each potential theme. Themes are often broader than codes and this phase is when the interpretive analysis of data occurs. Arguments about the phenomenon being examined are made (Boyatzis, 1998). Themes should be generated from a good number/collection of strong examples or extracts from the data.
5) Reviewing themes	<p>Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts, each other (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic map of the analysis. Themes should be internally coherent, consistent and distinctive.</p> <p><i>For each data-set, the list of codes (and their extracts) were printed and cut up into lots of slips of paper. For each data-set these were read and organised to create a mind-map (see Appendix XVIII). This mind-map allowed codes and their extracts to be grouped into themes and for relationships between themes (creating higher order themes), codes and extracts to be formulated. Those codes and themes that did not appear to 'belong' in any of the themes were labelled 'miscellaneous' within the network. They were kept in the mind-map so that they could be included in the further analytical phases. The mind-map for each dataset was typed up with higher order themes and their networks being represented including lower order themes (LOTs), codes and extracts grouped appropriately as represented in the visual diagram. As this was completed some themes were 'crushed' into one, deleted (due to repetition) and again extracts and codes were checked in relation to their relevance to the lower order and higher order themes.</i></p>
6) Defining and naming themes	<p>On-going analysis to refine the specifics of each theme and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme. Data should not be paraphrased or described; data should be analysed, interpreted and made sense of and the extracts should illustrate the analytic claims.</p> <p><i>I returned to the mind-map write-up for each data-set. As I read through the lower and higher-order themes, codes and extracts I began to create a simplified visual representation of the networks. I was attempting to identify main-overarching themes in each data set by clustering, condensing and clarifying the themes further into even higher order themes¹⁰. A new mind-map for each dataset resulted which appeared to tell a story about the data (see Appendix XIX). A new name was also given to the MOTs. extracts for codes and LOTs encapsulated by this MOT were collated into a MOT mind-map write up.</i></p> <p><i>I used this information to assess:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) whether each MOT/LOT appeared in each of the data sets and 2) the number of occurrences (extracts) of the MOT/LOT across each of the datasets and the dataset as a whole. <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(from Braun and Clarke, 2006, p82)</i></p> <p><i>This allowed me to measure the prevalence/strength of each MOT and LOTs in the data which in turn supported the development of the story which I interpreted the data as telling. Results from this process can be seen in Table 5 Appendix XX</i></p>
7) producing the report	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of a vivid, compelling set of extracts and final analysis of these selected extracts (i.e. meanings) should be completed which relates back to the research question and literature. The convincing and well organised story should demonstrate a good balance between analytic narrative and illustrative extracts.

¹⁰ *Note: Continual moving backwards and forwards between the data set, the coded extracts of data and the phases of the analysis of data that is being produced is important. The analyst should continue to jot down ideas and potential coding schemes throughout.

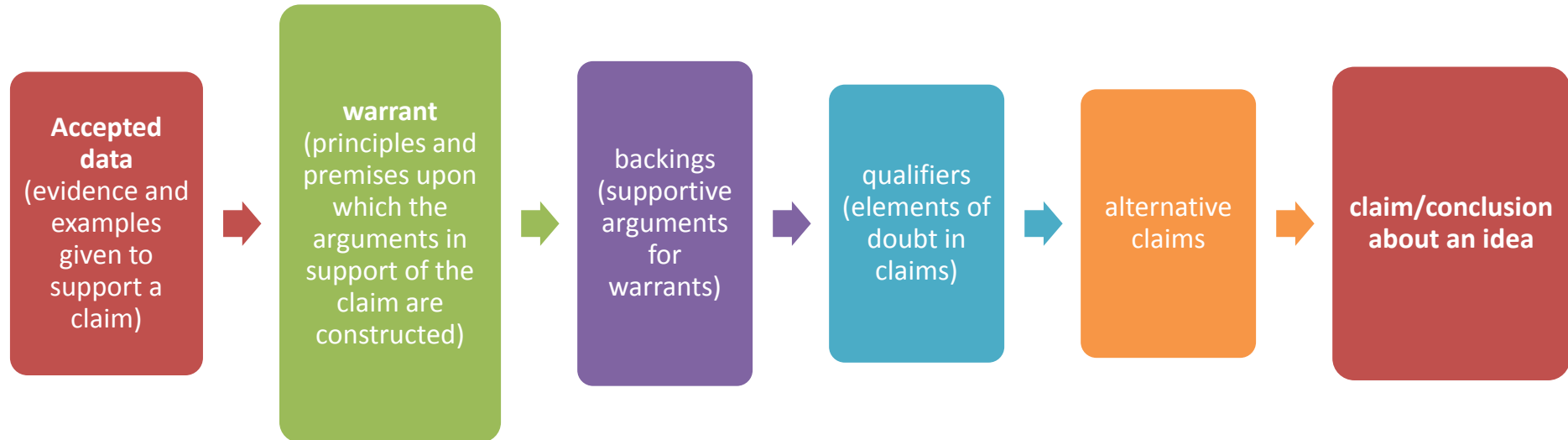
As stated in Table 4 Thematic networks/maps were used. It is important to note that:

The procedure of thematic networks does not aim or pretend to discover the beginning of arguments or the end of rationalizations; it simply provides a technique for breaking up text, and finding within it explicit rationalizations and their implicit signification.

Attride-Stirling, 2001, p388

The ideas underpinning the use of thematic networks as an analytical tool are presented in Diagram I which represents Toulmin's Argumentation Theory (1958) which was originally developed as a structured method for analysing negotiation processes and presenting intelligibly presented arguments or ideas.

Diagram I- Visual representation of Toulmin's Argumentation Theory (1958)



Based upon information presented by Attride-Sterling (2001) p387

As noted in [Table 4](#), visual examples of the thematic maps/networks for each dataset can be seen in [Appendix XIX](#). . It was an aim that these networks would serve as an organising principle and an illustrative tool in the interpretation of the text, facilitating disclosure for the researcher and understanding for the reader. Diagram II below represents the key principals that were used in developing these networks/maps.

Highest order theme in network

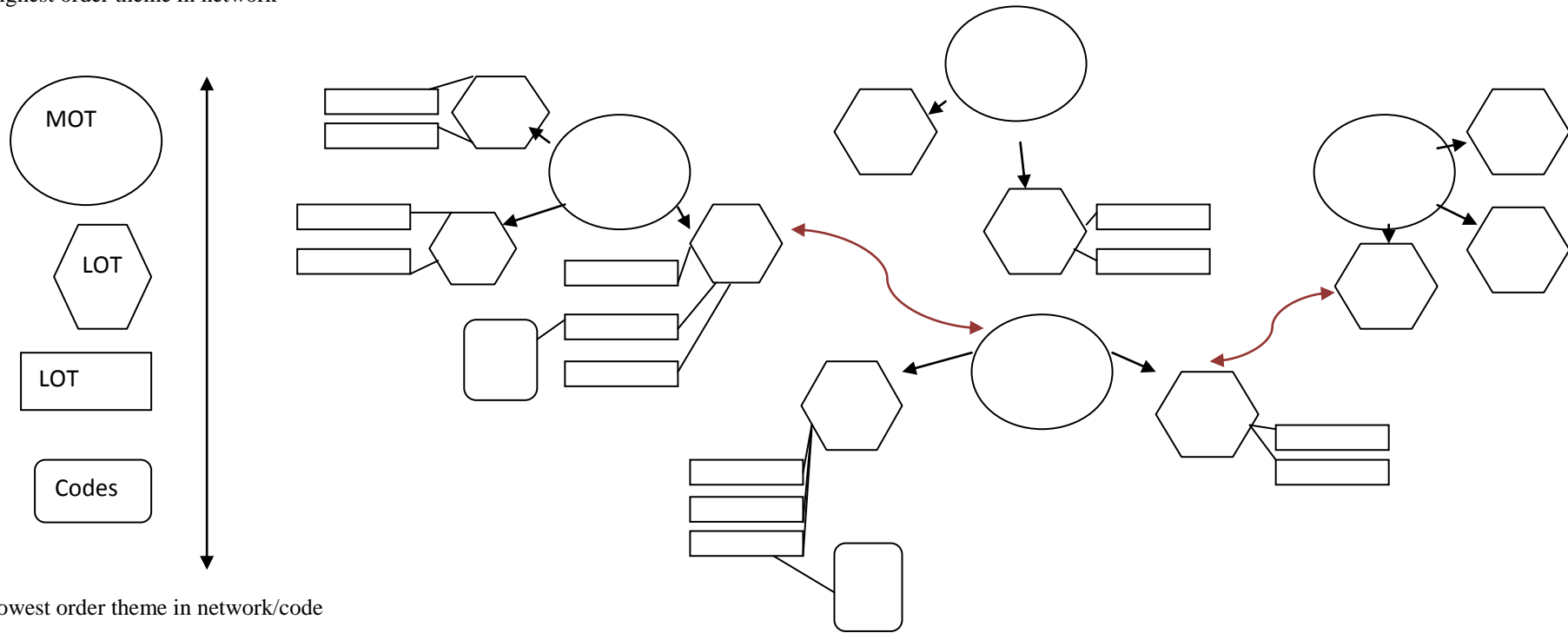


Diagram II- A skeletal example of how thematic networks/maps were organised

It is important to note that the map/network in its visual representation highlights that there is no real notion of hierarchy. There is a fluid nature to the themes and there are many interconnections between codes, extracts and themes in the network (red arrows). A higher order theme is simply used to explain a group of LOTs and so the order describes simply represents a different level of description. Attride-Stirling (2001) highlighted that a network of more than 15 themes was too many and four too few. It is possible that a number of networks can emerge out of a data-set.

As stated above, TA is a poorly demarcated and claimed yet widely used analytic method; however, it does have its drawbacks. Although it is highly flexible as an analytic approach this means that there is the potential for a broad range of things to be said about the data. This makes the developing of specific guidelines for higher-phase analysis difficult which can be very confusing for the researcher who will get to the point where he/she will have to decide what aspects of the data to focus on. Unlike Narrative or other biographical approaches, the researcher is also unable to retain a sense of continuity and contradiction through any one individual account which themselves can be revealing for research. Unlike methods such as DA for example, TA does not allow the researcher to make claims about language use, or the functionality of talk. Finally, TA currently lacks a strong label as an analytic method and so may be seen as a poor brand (putting a black mark on one's research) in comparison to its qualitative analytical peers. However, I am not fearful of using this method for this reason only. As stated above, I strongly believe that this is the most compatible analytical method for my research design and I believe that unless researchers are bolder in their clarity of its use, its credibility as a good analytical tool will continue to be suppressed.

Generalizability/reliability, validity and credibility of the findings

It is arguable that the findings of this study will only apply to the sample being studied and that the reliability (i.e. the chances of the same study performed on different occasions and yielding the same results) and representativeness (i.e. the ability to generalize the findings to the general population or a wider population than the sample group) of the data is low. The scope of the case could be classed as 'microscopic' (Hamel et al., 1993). It is possible that if the research were to be carried out again by a different researcher, the findings may be comparable but may raise very different issues and/or themes. However, I strongly agree with Reason and Rowan's (1981) claim that rigorously controlled quantitative methods may leave us with little more than 'dead knowledge'. They state that 'in human inquiry it is much better to be deeply interesting than accurately boring' (p.36). Scaife (2004) defines validity as 'the degrees to which a method, a test or a research tool actually measures what it is supposed to measure' (p68) when the intentions of the researcher, methodology applied and the results achieved are all taken into account. Osborn and Smith (1998, p69) describe it as 'the singular true account'. Based on this it is arguable that research studies such as this, have a high validity. Yin (1989) speaks of the differences between qualitative research and 'analytic generalization' (with a goal to expand and generalize theories) and quantitative research and 'statistical generalization' (aiming to enumerate frequencies) (p21). Giddens (1984) states that small-scale case studies can develop into generalizing studies if carried out in some numbers. Moreover, Bourdieu (1992, p.57) noted that, 'there was no need for Galileo to constantly repeat the slope experiment to construct the falling body model. A well-constructed single case is no longer singular'. Hamel *et al.* (1993) highlight the importance of the methodological virtues or qualities of a selected case and based on Thom's (1975, 1983) discussions, describe the case study as acting as an experimental prototype which allows the singularity of the object of study to be perceived. They explain

that in doing so it is possible to move from local to global which is necessary for its explanation. Singularity is described as 'a concentration of the global in the local'(p.38) Granger (1988) notes that to discover singularities and make the movement from local to global 'describing, understanding and explaining' is required(p116-117), all of which the case study method is in harmony with. Granger (1988) also speaks of description as being understood through 'the placement of fragments of the puzzle and re-construction of the whole through its parts' (p.117-118) This suggests that case studies have an important part to play in generating comprehensive descriptions and explanations contributing to the larger system under study.

In Scaife's discussions (2004), he highlights the possibility that in research similar to this study, the notion of 'credibility' may be more helpful than the more traditional reliability/validity arguments that have long dominated research (p.71-72). Sturman (1999) developed a number of considerations when investigating the 'credibility' of qualitative research:

1. Data-gathering procedures are explained;
2. Data is presented transparently and in ways that enable ready reanalysis;
3. 'Negative instances' are reported. Data are included whether or not they fit the benefits or intentions of the researcher;
4. Biases are acknowledged and positionality of the researcher is made explicit;
5. Fieldwork analyses are explained;
6. The relationship between claims and supporting evidence are clearly expressed;
7. Primary data is distinguished from secondary data;
8. Interpretation is distinguished from description;
9. A diary or log is used to track what took place during the study;
10. Procedures are used to check the quality of the data e.g. triangulation.

Based on Sturman (1999, p.110) in Keeves & Lakomski, 1999

These were addressed to monitor 'credibility' throughout the research process.

It is also arguable that this study may have a strength in its trustworthiness (see Lincoln, 1995) as there is a reliance on the internal ethical system of the study. By working in a constructionist and naturalistic way, it is possible that there is a fairness to the study which also has a high level of ontological authenticity (provides and increases understanding of the issues under inquiry), educative authenticity (increases the awareness of the positions of others), catalytic authenticity (the extent to which the inquiry opens up possibilities for action) and tactical authenticity (the extent to which the inquiry empowers participants with ways to act)(p277).

Alternative Methodologies

GT was a method which arguably fits well with my positionality and aims of the research. However, I had investigated too much of the literature prior to the study to approach this methodology correctly. Another alternative which was considered when exploring appropriate methodologies was Narrative. Willig (2008) describes Narrative Psychology as being interested in how people organise their lived experiences (White & Epston, 1990). This form of analysis allows participants to tell a story about their experiences and allows researchers to explore how people construct meaning in their lives. Data can be gathered through narrative interviews (Willig, 2008) however, in contrast to TA the interviews are not analysed for themes but instead the researcher asks various questions of the data set; such as: what type of story is being told? Who is the protagonist? What are the thematic priorities of the narrative? And what types of identities are constructed in the narrative? (Willig 2008, p134). Whilst this may provide a viable alternative I felt that the Narrative approach would not get to the essence of what it felt like to be a participant engaged with the art programme process. Similarly DA was discounted as it has been largely criticised for not taking into account the role of the person in the research (Langdridge, 2004). This is a highly

important factor in my research. Interpretive Phenological Analysis (IPA) (which often poses one research question and is also interested in participants' lived experience of a phenomena) could be classed as another suitable methodology however, my decision against this was largely influenced by the fact that I accessed different data sets involving different types of data (pupil and staff interviews in addition to my reflective diary). This lends itself to TA, whereas in IPA the researcher tends to focus on one small participant group and one type of data where the phenomenological interpretation is paramount. Another methodology that was seriously considered in the development of this piece of research was Action Research (AR). Originally labelled by Lewin (1946) it is classed as being very liberal and participatory in its nature (Koshy, 2010). It is at one and the same time an investigation of action, the implementation of investigation through action and the transformation of research into action. Armstrong and Moore (2004) describe AR as a method which encourages practitioners to bring about change in their own work contexts, developing credible approaches and resources for inspiring and initiating change. It is a general term used to describe the process of planning, transformation and evaluation that draws on practitioner enquiry and reflection. However, time was a key factor in this study and therefore, this study did not lend itself to an AR process. Moreover, as a researcher I was resistant to present my piece of research as something with which I hoped to investigate change. I had no prior experience of working in the setting and I was fearful that such an investigation could suggest that there was a problem in the setting which needed fixing. Also there was no aim or expectation in the design of the program that social change would occur.

Chapter 4: Analysis

In the following section I will present an interpretative account of the latent inductive TA that was undertaken in order to answer the research question,

An art programme for excluded young females attending a PRU: What are the experiences of pupils, staff and an EP researcher?

Main overarching themes (MOTs) and the networks that they encapsulate will be discussed based upon those principles presented in Braun and Clarke's (2006) and Attride-Stirling's (2001) papers. The aim was to use a constructionist approach in an attempt to understand the socio-cultural contexts that may have impacted on the accounts being produced. In the discussion of those themes identified I will try to examine the underlying ideas or assumptions that may shape what was said by participants.

More details about the analysis can be found in the Appendix. Visual representations are presented in an order ([Appendix XV-XXIII](#)) which illustrates those stages of analysis described in *Table 4* in chapter 3. Simplifications of the initial mind maps/networks for the three different datasets can be seen in [Appendix XX](#). Simplified diagrams of the MOTs identified in each dataset are presented in [Appendix XXI](#). The finalised mind map/network for those MOTs prevalent in all three datasets is contained in [Appendix XXII](#). The calculated measurement of prevalence of the MOTs and the lower order themes (LOTs) in each dataset and the dataset as a whole is shown in tabular form in [Appendix XX](#).

Through the analytical process, five MOTs were interpreted from the data which relate to experiences:

1. Ethos/climate of the environment
2. Conversation
3. Art
4. Outcomes/benefits of the process
5. Difficulties identified

All five of these MOTs were shown to appear in the three datasets (staff interview, pupil interview and my reflective research diary). Prevalence was measured by firstly noting whether the theme was present in the dataset and secondly by counting the number of occurrences (extracts) which were interpreted as being associated with the theme in question (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p82). With regard to the MOTs this was calculated for each of the data sets individually and across the data as a whole. For the LOTs, the prevalence was measured for the dataset(s) in which the theme appeared. Table 5 in Appendix XX shows the 'breakdown' of prevalence of each LOT with regards to the datasets in which they were evident. Table 6 below summarises the number of occurrences for the MOTs across each of the datasets and the dataset as a whole:

Table 6- Prevalence of the MOTs

MOT/Dataset	PUPILS	STAFF	MY REFLECTIVE RESEARCH DIARY	TOTAL DATASET
1)Ethos/climate of the environment	10	24	66	100
2)Conversation	6	15	81	102
3)Art	14	38	63	115
4)Outcomes/benefits of the process	50	98	289	437
5)Difficulties identified	36	76	118	300

With regard to the three datasets as a whole, the MOTs; *ethos/climate of the environment*, *conversation* and *art* were shown to be very similar in their level of prevalence. However, when the prevalence of these MOTs was looked at in relation to the three datasets viewed separately it was apparent that for both pupils and staff *art* was shown to be slightly more prevalent than *ethos/climate of the environment* followed by *conversation*. For my reflective diary, analysis suggested that *conversation* was the most prevalent MOT followed by *ethos/climate of the environment* and *art* respectively. However, the variation in prevalence across the three MOTs again was not huge. *Outcomes/benefits of the process* was a very highly prevalent MOT with the largest number of extracts in the dataset as a whole (in comparison to the other four MOTs) linking to it. However, it is important to note that there was a high level of overlap of this MOT network with LOTs belonging to the networks of the MOTs *art* and *ethos/climate of the environment*. The MOT *difficulties identified* was also interpreted as a highly prevalent theme without any overlap with the LOT networks underpinning the other four MOTs.

Each MOT and those most prevalent themes in their networks will be presented in turn along with an analytical and interpretative narrative. It is important to note that I would have liked to have discussed all of those LOTs which together could be used to explain the MOT which encompasses them however, due to limitations on the word-count of this thesis, this was not a reality. I therefore invite the reader to turn to [Appendix XXII](#) where a simplified version of the final MOT mind map/set of networks is displayed. In this diagram the less prevalent themes (not discussed in this section) are highlighted in red. The level of prevalence needed for a LOT to be discussed was as follows:

- Appearance in two or all three of the datasets and/or
- 10 or more occurrences of the theme across the dataset(s)

This meant that if in the data transcripts one participant or participant type (i.e. pupil/staff or myself) was shown to demonstrate an ‘idea’ linked to a theme frequently, or if the data transcripts suggested that different participants or participant types were ‘saying’ similar things in line with a particular theme, then through this process, the strength of this ‘idea’ would be measured and made notable. For the MOT *difficulties identified*, because of the high level of prevalence for a large number of the LOTs, the threshold was adjusted by:

- Appearance in three of the datasets and/or
- 20 or more occurrences of the theme across the dataset(s)

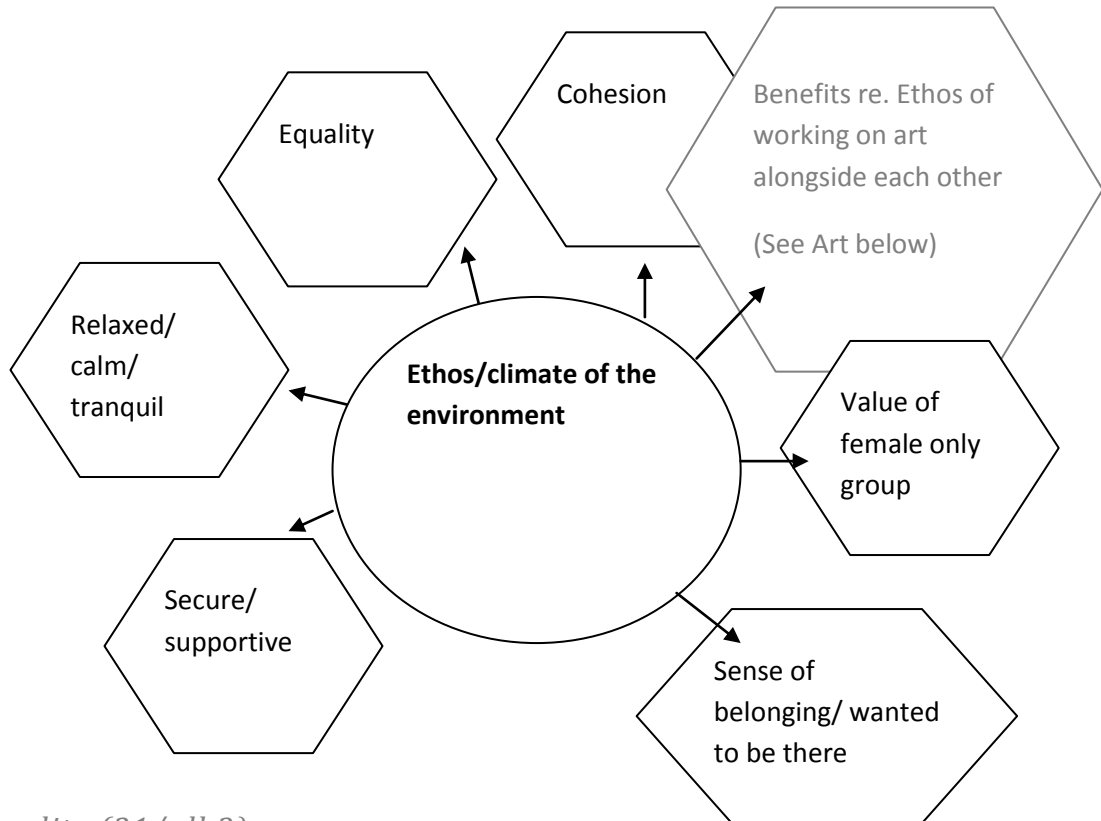
This meant that for each MOT the top fraction of highly prevalent LOTs were discussed.

In the following section, each MOT and LOT is presented and discussed. The brackets after the LOT title indicate their level of prevalence in the data i.e. the number of occurrences or datasets (*staff or pupil interview/ my reflective diary*) in which it was interpreted as appearing. A key for the extracts can be seen in box 1 below..

<u>Box 1</u>	<u>Extracts KEY for quotations taken from data transcripts</u>	
<i>Interviews</i>		
Red-i-interviewer/researcher	Black-interviewee	
P1 & P3-Pupil interviewees		
S1, S2, S3, HP-Staff interviewees (3 TAs involved in the program and the head of the KS3 provision)		
(S1, 19) = (the interviewee, the paragraph from which the extract was taken)		
<i>Diary</i>		
P.P-Pre programme	PL.S-Planning session	POSTP-Post programme
AS-Art session (1-7)		
Black-record of what happened		
Purple-primary reflections		
Blue-secondary reflections		

Ethos/Climate of the environment

Diagram III-The most highly prevalent LOTs in the three datasets for the MOT *Ethos/climate* of the environment



Equality (21/all 3)

This LOT was the most prevalent in the MOT network. This suggests that the feeling of equality identified by participants may have been highly valued in their experiences of the art programme.

P3, 44- ...and what kind of things did you like talking about? About all the stuff that I've done, because they don't judge me... whereas like other people do. I hate being judged, I absolutely hate it.

S2, 32-...and the adults and the kids were all equal and we can all really talk about anything ...so that was nice.

S2, 33- Like you don't normally really get a chance to do that ...because I become the teacher or the TA again when- when we leave the room.

AS2 - Again S3 was very quiet. She seemed to lack confidence in her abilities and asked for help from the girls, S2 and myself. I felt that this may have been really useful for the girls to hear. I originally believed that if they could see an adult struggling then they could even take the role of helping them which in turn could have an effect on power dynamics.

It is evident that other MOT and LOTs which will be discussed later may have bi-directional relationships with this LOT. It is evident that pupils valued an absence in judgement in the approach of adults and an ability to be open minded and understanding. This lack of judgement may have facilitated the openness in and enjoyment of conversations for pupils. Staff valued a reduction in the presence of staff and pupil roles inside the art-room. It was possible that the participants' involvement in an art activity supported this equality through the experience of feelings of novelty (associated with a lack of confidence) for all adult and pupil participants involved. No-one was seen as an expert in the sessions which may have also felt novel, especially to the pupils. It is possible that their construct of school is that it is a place where adults impart or push knowledge and skills onto them. This theme may imply that within the educational setting equality between staff and pupils may be valuable and needed. It is possible that collaborative working may make these hard to reach pupils more accessible and willing to engage with adults. It is arguable that the pupils and staff in the provision where this research was undertaken may have limited opportunity or experience of working in this way. In some settings it may be difficult to break away from the deeply embedded disciplinarian ethos. Pupils may have become normalised to the perception that adults are there to control and teach and it is evident that this approach of equality was refreshing for participants involved. It is arguable that such an approach could facilitate trust, relationship development, feelings of security and relaxation as there was limited need for pupils to resist against an authoritarian figure. Moreover, equality of role between staff and pupils may have enhanced the pupils' positive experiences of school.

Value of female only group (11/all 3)

In a male dominated environment it was evident that the pupils and staff valued the novel experience of working together as females.

P3, 32- ...and the fact that it was all girls as well- I love all girls. (Laugh)

P1, 40- ...Cos we was all girls... So it was better ...

P1, 40-.. ...instead of like it being awkward and like boys interrupting and that.

S2, 32- I think it's nice to have a girly group...we don't very often get the chance to just be a girly group and sit and chat as girls..

AS1- I asked myself how often they sat together as females and shared this sort of information. I felt that some of the topics e.g. miscarriage/sex may not have been discussed if a male pupil/staff member would have been present.

This may have been an experience in which pupils had access to new opportunities whereby they were able to talk about difficult topics of conversation which may have resulted in embarrassment or torment if discussed alongside their male peers. It is possible that the female only group facilitated conversations which pupils rarely had the opportunity, privacy or security to discuss. It is arguable that as P1 (paragraph 40) suggests, the continual presence of boys may prevent them from accessing peer and adult support which could be seen as beneficial and needed. It is possible that the staff's value of the female-only group demonstrates a recognition that the pupils were benefitting from 'getting the chance to chat'. Their value of personal involvement in these novel 'chats' could suggest that they enjoyed the opportunity of meeting the girls' needs in this way. It is possible that through these discussions adults were able to demonstrate and recognise their skills at being able to meet some of the girls' emotional and social needs in a relatively simple way. This experience may have had an empowering effect and could have acted as a facilitator of change in the approach of the staff towards the female pupils.

Relaxed/calm/tranquil (21/staff & my)

In the staff's and my accounts of our experiences, this LOT was shown to be highly prevalent.

It seemed that the atmosphere which was created in the art room throughout the program was different to other lessons or at different times in the setting.

S3, 19- It's like It's nice to relax because while you are in class you are like you need to stop that conversation but this is more of a relaxed atmosphere so people can just chat on at the same time as just doing something nice.

AS3- P2 laughed. She seemed aware of her attempts to push the boundary as her laugh was sheepish (implying that she was aware that she was being cheeky and that she had been caught out). The session felt very light-hearted and pleasurable. It felt nurturing and relaxed.

AS5- The room felt very calm. P2 was calm and appeared to be happy to be there. She returned from the toilet immediately.

It is possible that the flexibility of the art sessions and involvement in an art activity supported a reduced expectation on the pupils and staff. Less pressure may have been felt by staff to make the pupils work as a result of the freedom associated with the programme. It is arguable that the staff were able to observe that this relaxed approach still resulted in work of value being produced without the stress which may be associated with and behavioural challenged resulting from adult led activities. The staff valued this relaxed ethos and it is evident that talking in the sessions did not stop work and so was permitted. It is arguable that the light hearted and calm feel to the environment may have emotional benefits for participants. Similarly, the atmosphere (with reduced adult direction/expectation/reduced stress on the production of work) may have made engagement in the sessions more attractive to pupils. This feel of the environment may have contributed to the pupils' confidence to take risks in interactions (e.g. cheekiness/openness) which may have facilitated relationship development in the group.

Cohesion (3/all 3)

The number of occurrences of this LOT was low but it was an idea which was suggested by all three participant groups in their explanation of their experiences.

P1, 40- What was what was the best thing about working like that? ...and like everyone got on instead of arguing...how did that make you feel...? Happy because everyone got along. Sniff

S3, 75- Everybody was thinking of what to do and everybody was taking part...

AS3- There was a constant buzz of chattering which filled the air. It felt quite electric

It was apparent that the pupils placed a value on working in a group without any difficulties and had a potential desire to get on with peers and staff. It is possible that 'arguing' (with peers and/or staff) may be something which is a regular occurrence in their day-to-day school lives. The staff appeared to value their experience of seeing all members taking part and working independently. It may be a frequent reality that pupils' refusal to co-operate can prevent cohesion from occurring in other learning sessions in the PRU. It is possible that the participants' involvement in a similar journey of exploration with the art materials allowed a reduction of anxiety due to the feeling that all members were in a similar position. As noted in the final MOT mind map ([Appendix XXII](#)) one of the less prevalent LOTs within the *difficulties identified* network highlights (as with the pupils) a level of staff anxiety (i.e. lack of confidence and insecurity) associated with their engagement in artwork. Moreover the large number of conversations occurring in sessions between different participants and as a whole group may have facilitated this cohesive feel.

Sense of belonging/wanted to be there (17/my)

This LOT was one which on reflection causes me some interest. It was a theme which was relatively prevalent in my reflective research diary.

AS2 P1 sat back down at her place and looked at the mask. I felt that her re-entrance to the room was a sign that she did actually want to be there. Part of me felt that she did not want to miss out on what was happening in the room.

AS1- P2 (after a very difficult morning in isolation) P2 stated that she wanted to join the art session but that (against the wishes of the staff) she would be taking some of her lunch up with her.

AS3- I wondered whether the room felt 'nice', 'homely' and a bit like a 'family' to the others present and whether this made the participants want to remain in the room.

My observations suggested that the pupils were seen to be able to re-enter the art room independently and after difficult times prior to sessions would engage in the programme effectively. The art programme appeared to be accessible even after pupils had experienced high levels of emotion (e.g. kicking doors in the isolation room). It is possible that the sessions were attractive and pupils were drawn towards the group environment. Feelings of cohesion and the potential for relationships to begin forming in the group (through positive interaction) may have contributed to this desirability of the ethos. It is possible that their engagement in the programme environment felt positive, safe, calming, therapeutic, like an escape and/ or provided a fresh start. Similarly, as will be discussed below, their involvement in the art activities may have been something through which they could feel success and so more positive about themselves.

Secure/supportive (11/my)

Another LOT which was prevalent in my data sample only was that which linked to the idea that the staff, pupils and myself experienced a feeling of security and support in the group.

AS4- (after S2 shared her news with the group that she had broken up with her boyfriend) P2 stated that S2 looked nice in her new dress. I felt that P2 may have been attempting to make S2 feel better with these complements.

AS2 - adults were helping pupils and visa versa in a range of different tasks

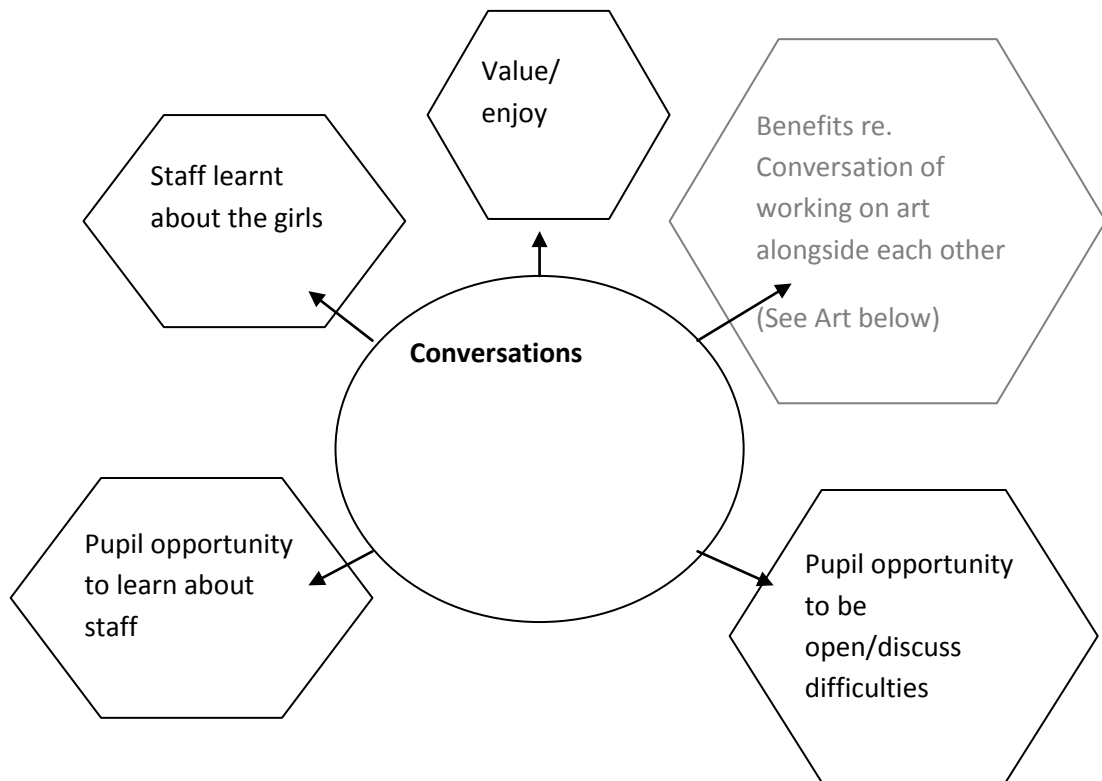
AS6-(P1 telling a story) S2, S3 and I asked her questions (adults showed interested)...Staff showed concern.

AS6 (after hearing difficult news about leaving the setting) P1 returned upstairs and re-entered the room ...Again I wondered if the art-room was a safe-haven for the pupils when they were feeling distressed. P1 stated that, "she was going to play up so that she could stay at the PRU."

Through observation of participants' engagement with the art material and in conversation, pupils and staff were seen to support each other. Pupils openly gave adults advice and support relating to their artwork and difficulties in their personal lives. This willingness may have been facilitated by the feelings of equality explored above. It is possible that this supportive nature which developed resulted in or emerged from the formation of more positive and/or secure adult-pupil and peer relationships. Moreover P1 was shown to return to the room after having a difficult conversation with HP downstairs. She came to the room to talk through what had happened. This suggested a trust in the group and an ability or willingness in P1 to access them for emotional support.

Conversations

Diagram IV-The most highly prevalent LOTs in the three datasets for the MOT *Conversation*



Valued/enjoyed (22/all 3)

The value/enjoyed subtheme was the most highly prevalent contributor to this MOT network. This theme was evident in all three datasets.

P3, 42- You can just freely talk with them two I love freely talking with them two.

P3, 48- (after speaking about talking with staff and how this made her feel) ...I don't know. Like, better than I probably was when I walked into the room, it chilled me out.

S2, 28- Just being able to sit and have a chat as well ...and just chill out and chat about different things while everyone is just getting on with their own little project. I think that was good just to sit and chat about different things.

S3, 19-... but it's nice that you can talk as well while you're doing stuff. It's like it's nice to relax

Access to conversation was shown to be a valuable part of the experience for staff and pupils and P3 went so far as expanding on the benefits which the conversations had on calming her. It is also possible that conversations may have contributed to perceived

enjoyment of the programme as a whole. Staff noted the ease at which they experienced being able to work and talk at the same time. It is possible that this is something which is more difficult in other subject areas in which pupils may be less independent and more in need of adult direction/support.

Staff learnt about the girls (10/staff & my)

S3,73- Yes like I said the conversations and everything ... it was like – oh that was interesting cos you know well we picked up stuff about them that we didn't know, stuff they wouldn't necessarily talk to us about but they've been chatting to people in here and you you find stuff out... It's interesting.

AS1-... They (S1 & S2) were also shown to listen in to conversations and asked the girls questions. It seemed that they were learning more about the personal lives of the girls. I wondered what this interest felt like for the girls. I asked myself how often they sat together ...and shared this sort of information.

Interpretation suggests that through conversation staff were able to discover new things about the pupils and became more familiar with them. The staff demonstrated a longing to know more about the pupils throughout their experience and may have felt more confident and able to ask questions because of the environment created. It is possible that even in a close knit setting such as the PRU, there was limited opportunity for staff to get to know the girls. The prevalence of this theme in the data suggests a value in staff experiencing such conversation. This implies that there is an importance associated with understanding pupils at a deeper level. It is possible that for the excluded young people in this study, conversations such as this may have had a key role to play in relationship formulation. It is possible that excluded pupils may have a limited experience of having positive relationships with key adults in school. They may be guarded to sharing information about themselves or may have had little opportunity to engage in such conversations with teaching staff in their past experiences of education. However, it was evident that during the phenomenon under study, these conversations which enhanced familiarity between group members were facilitated.

Pupil opportunity to be open/discuss difficulties (14/my)

This LOT was present in my dataset only.

AS6- I felt that it was interesting that P1 had been so open. This was the second time that she had spoken about potential risk which she had been in. It seemed that the stories she told implied that in her relationships with males, she was often put at risk. The relationships demonstrated a controlling and potentially abusive trait. I felt that it was important that P1 was able to make the staff in school aware of this. Staff showed concern.

PL.S- P2 (directed to interviewer), "Sorry about today...I have had a horrid time" "I just can't get down" "I have had a really bad day" "what is the point in me trying at this school if I am going to be moved anyway? Why should I try?" P2 was very open in her discussion. I was surprised.

AS2 - P2 spoke about the difficulties which she had been having with her Nan at home. She spoke about leaving the house that morning shouting and swearing at her. She also spoke about her Nan telling her not to come back.

I was surprised how open the pupils were in their conversations especially in relation to their susceptibility to explore topics such as drugs, sex and being in trouble with the police. They did not hold back and it is possible that this opportunity to vent and explore may have had a positive effect on the pupils' emotional wellbeing. It is arguable that the formation of more trusting relationships in the group may have promoted the initiation of these discussions. Through the pupils' exploration and sharing of difficulties, relationships may also have been strengthened. It is possible that the girls had a need or desire to discuss difficulties and show their vulnerability which as noted previously may have been problematic at other times in the setting in the presence of males. It is arguable that the pupils' apparent urgency to talk about quite 'raw' topics of conversation implies a need for safe and supportive environments to be made available with adults they are familiar with. However, it also magnifies the need for staff working in such a way with young people, to have a thorough knowledge of protocols for disclosures and in supporting pupils with access to further specialist support.

Pupil opportunity to learn about staff (10/my)

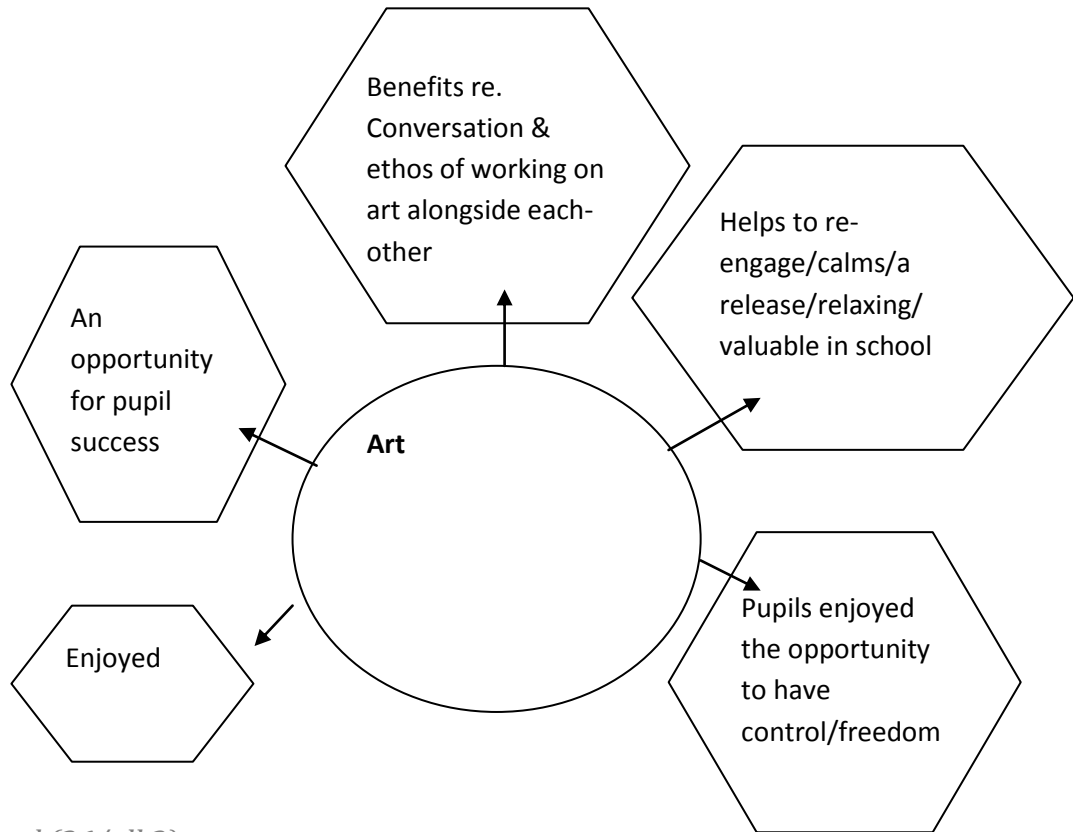
AS6- P1 asked S2 about her boyfriend. Again S2 explained that he “had ended it.”

AS5- S2, S3 and I all spoke about how our parent(s)/carer(s) had been about boys. I felt that again P2 may have enjoyed or benefitted from hearing about the adult’s personal experiences from when they were younger.

AS3- pupils seemed to have a real interest in finding out more about the staff. They wanted to know about them as people, about their relationships and families i.e. the sides of them that they might not see in school.

Staff were shown to be open in their conversations in the group. The pupils appeared to be excited and eager to learn more about the staff at a more personal level. It is possible that in school, pupils rarely get the opportunity to know the adults as individuals due to the belief that staff are required to play a ‘teacher/TA’ role. It is possible that the pupils felt privileged in their experiences during the session where they heard of the staff’s difficulties and of events in their private life. It is possible that this openness may have supported the pupils’ ability to discuss their own difficulties and could have enhanced feelings of trust in the developing relationships. This LOT could be associated with many aspects of the MOT *ethos/climate of the environment* in its ability to enhance (or be affected by) feelings of relaxation, security, cohesion, equality and a sense of belonging. The prevalence and interpretation of this LOT highlights the need for adults working in this way to take care (in monitoring) their level of openness with pupils.

Art

Diagram V-The most highly prevalent LOTs in the three datasets for the MOT Art

Enjoyed (36/all 3)

This LOT had the highest prevalence in this MAT. It was evident that the participants' engagement with the art materials had a significant effect on their enjoyment of the experience.

P1, 8-... like when we did some of the art stuff it was good

S2, 3- With having the clay and all the other arts and craft things involved I think that has been nice, being able to do the hands on bit things...

S3, 5- I just enjoyed playing with the clay and everything.

PL.S- Everyone seemed to get quite excited towards the end of the session and were positive about the practical session to follow.

AS3- It was interesting that P2 had been discussing her work with her Nan at home. I wondered whether she had been thinking about the programme and the work that she had been doing outside of the art-room.

AS2 - P2 quietly got on with her clay... she appeared to be relatively content with her exploration...Everyone worked quietly.

The opportunity to create and explore was shown to be exciting for participants. It is possible that adults and pupils were able to feel like children again 'playing' with the materials. It is possible that the session was relatively novel and in the day-to-day life in the setting where there was limited opportunity to be free in creative tasks. It is possible that this is an aspect of school life in which pupils that find academic work difficult, are more able to celebrate and share with others. It is arguable that the reduced pressure to produce a specific product in sessions may have contributed to the creativity felt. The view that work would be measured for success may have been lessened by a reduced opportunity for comparisons to be made. Participants engaged with different materials and worked independently on varying pieces of their choice. Both of these factors may have enhanced feelings of enjoyment and relaxation.

An opportunity for pupil success (8/all 3)

This LOT was prevalent in all three datasets.

P1, 22- Happy that I could do it.

HP, 51-... especially people in short stay schools, I think it is massive the importacet to the pupils because they don't have to be academically brilliant to do art and achieve something

AS5- She looked at them all (objects created by the others) and stated, "that she was going to take her pot home." She didn't seem to mind that pieces had broken off but appeared to be quite proud. She was keen to let her Nan see her pot. I felt that again it may have been beneficial for P2's interactions and relationship with her Nan at home to be so enthusiastic about showing her Nan her gift which she had created at school. I wondered how often P2's Nan herself felt positive about her granddaughter's experiences of school.

P.P- P3's longing to make something for the calm room implied that she wanted to see her art-work on view at her school. I questioned whether during their experiences of mainstream school, P1, P3 and P2 had seen their work on display.

P1's comment suggests some surprise that she could 'do' the art. It is possible that for some excluded young people their sense of self as a learner in school may be low and feeling success in their education is a rare experience. HP was seen to identify with this and

highlighted the importance of success for such pupils and how success may be more accessible in creative subjects such as art. The need to experience public success was clear in my observations and this publicity may relate to the wider school community and home. It is possible that the pupils recognised that art is one way that they can, are willing or are confident enough to access this through. Many excluded pupils may have missed significant time-periods of schooling. It is evident that with some academic subjects this absence can make access to and success in age appropriate work difficult as a foundation of knowledge has been missed. Creative activities are one subsection of the curriculum in which this barrier to success does not apply. The potential for art to re-engage pupils through an adaptation in their concept of self as a learner is evident here.

It is arguable that without the pupils' enjoyment and experiences of success in creative activities, the other aspects of the experience may not have been accessible. This magnifies the belief that the activity that underpins the 'essence' of such a programme could largely determine experiences and feelings of success or effectiveness in group members.

Pupils enjoyed the opportunity to have control/freedom (10/pupil & staff)

P1, 24- I was like pleased with myself that I could do something ...like right... without no one saying nothing about it.

P1, 18- Because you could do it however you want and...I don't know... it was just good

HP.11-...what do you think potentially or what were the best bits of the art programme? Yeah...I think the fact that they have got to choose that they have had so much input in it. Because then you are going to get something that they want to do, something they are proud of and you are still getting a piece of art work and you are getting something that they have worked on.

S1, 4-... it was nice to see that they got that choice because of course it's limited at other times. So...

The pupils were seen to value the experiences of being independent and controlling their own learning and this may have influenced feelings of equality in the group. Interpretation suggests that they may celebrate freedom and independence as this is restricted in other

lessons and parts of school life. Through their experience in the programme, staff were shown to develop a belief that pupil access to choice may enhance their investment and engagement in learning. Excluded pupils could be classed as being better practiced at receiving orders from adults in their lives. It is arguable that they are experts at hearing the words, 'that's wrong' and 'do this' for example. Their lives may be dominated with directions which squash their creativity. Pupils may use their behaviour as creative methods of obtaining freedom. If this freedom could be accessed using other methods (such as art) then it is possible that there would be less of a necessity to meet these needs in destructive ways. It is evident that art is a flexible area of the curriculum in which pupils are more able to be independent and through which control could be offered to them.

Helps to re-engage/calms/a release/relaxing/valuable in school (24/staff & my)

Although it was not an aim of the programme to provide the participants with a therapeutic environment, this LOT suggests that (as possible with creative activities) a potentially emotional benefit of engaging with art was observed by staff and myself.

HP, 7-. I think that for these kids it really calms them down,

S1, 19- art is q ...a release

S2.15- Ermmmm...I think it felt...was quite relaxing to do the clay and the hands on that kind of things, it was relaxing...quite chilled out and I felt quite chilled out doing all that bit, definitely.

S3, 18- Like I said it just relaxes me a lot. I just chill out when it comes to art, (laugh) Yeah... leave all your problems behind

AS1- However, P2 and P1 had been able to join the session after quite a disruptive start; and were able to focus/engage in calm conversation ...for an entire hour!!!

AS1-(P2 after a very unsettled morning) P2 spent a long time bashing and thumping the clay with her hands and a wooden rolling pin. She was very focused and quiet. She seemed to really enjoy the violence and noise of it and was very serious in her facial expression. Although all others looked and watched her (slightly shocked) they allowed her to just get on... she began to laugh and a smile appeared on her face and she banged and re-moulded her clay. ...this bashing may have allowed P2 to get out her frustrations and... allowed her to be ready to work constructively with the clay for the rest of the session.

The high prevalence of this LOT and further investigation of the data suggests that it was not only the pupils but also the adults who experienced the psychological benefits of exploring the art materials. A calming and relaxing experience was clearly stated. Staff highlighted that whilst engaged in making there was potential for problems to be 'left behind'. This idea was also present in my observations where after a difficult event, pupils were seen to enter the room and almost 'switch off' from the problem and transform into a calm and focused state. It is possible that this calming influence was a facilitator in enabling pupils to engage in the sessions and access conversations, positive interactions and success in creative activities as well as behaviour.

Benefits re. Conversation and ethos of working on art alongside each other

(12/staff & my)

The presence of this LOT in the data suggests a facilitatory effect which art was shown to have on the two other MOTs (*conversation & ethos*) interpreted as being key experiences in the social process being investigated.

S3,76-(talking about art)...It was everybody was doing it together so you know...I think they felt more relaxed to say stuff so. So yes I really liked that...

AS3- I felt that the conversations emerged easier when everyone was busy working. As they worked with their hands and focused on the materials ...it was easy to switch off...

AS3- I asked P1 to pass me the different paints ...and asked S1 to pass me some also. Simple interactions such as this may have facilitated familiarity with each other, respect (through polite please/thank-you) and confidence.

AS5 215-P2 changed the topic of conversation quickly.... I wondered whether she was concerned that she would be asked if she had a boyfriend... She spoke about her art-piece. I wondered if the art was a safe topic of conversation for her to explore....

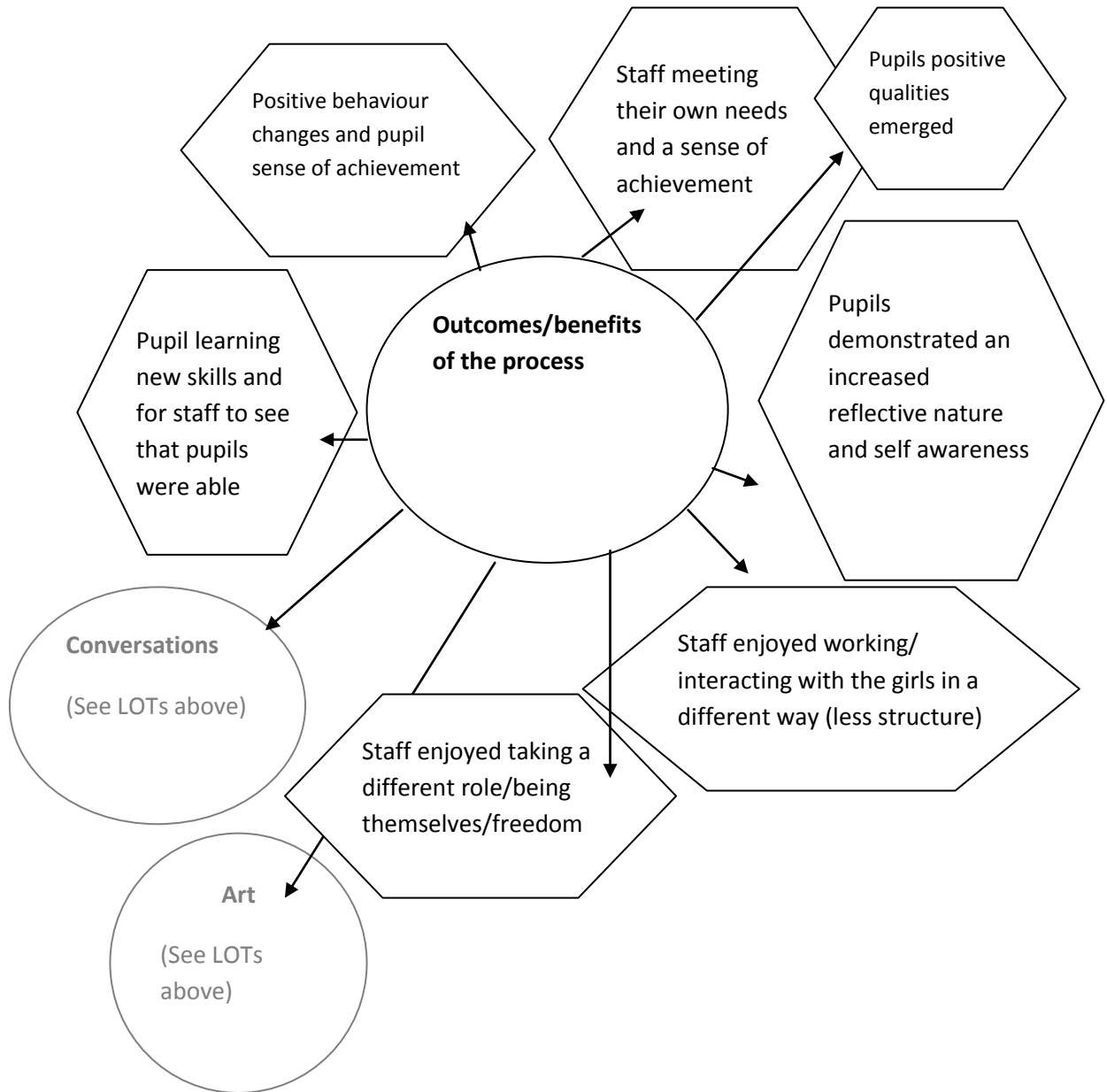
AS3 156 -I felt that there was an acceptance when busy with your hands that if you were not being sociable you were simply focusing on your pot/mask etc. There was a silent permission to not engage in conversation.... I felt that quite a unique social context was created.

It was evident that it is a rare experience in school for staff to be seen learning with pupils and sharing similar feelings of insecurity, inability etc. It is possible that participants independently exploring alongside each other in creative activities enhanced feelings of relaxation in the group and also contributed to the ethos of equality. It was these feelings of ease which may have made conversations feel much easier. Moreover, the fact that the adults were not expected to direct pupils in their learning offered time and a context in which they were able to engage in discussions with the girls.

It is possible that when individuals are busy with their hands, their social inhibitions, sensitivity and tendency to self monitor may be reduced. Moreover, when engaged in creating, social situations may feel less intense and relaxed leading to less pressure felt to talk. Conversations about art may have also acted as initiators for positive conversations with unknown people in the group and also may have acted as easy/safe topics of conversations for when individuals feel less confident.

Outcomes/benefits of the process

Diagram VI-The most highly prevalent LOTs in the three datasets for the MOT *Outcomes/benefits*



Pupils learning new skills and for staff to see that the pupils were able (118/all 3)

This was a very highly prevalent theme in the datasets. It was represented in all three dataset samples.

A) Learning new skills

P3, 36- I can't stand girls...I like... I get along with girls that are older than me but girls my age or like from like year 7 ... no coz I'm close with year 7s....like from year 9 to like 18/19... I hate them, I proper hate them.

P3, 36- But...all my mates are lads

P3, 36- I'm different around lads

P3, 32- and the fact that it was all girls as well- I love all girls. (Laugh)

P3 was seen to benefit from the female only group. During the discussion she was noted to have gone through a learning process as a result of her engagement in the programme. It was evident that initially she noted that she didn't like girls who were a similar age to herself and 'all of [her] mates were lads'. However, in the same conversation she demonstrated (and recognised) her own contradiction in that she noted, '...I love all girls'. It was possible that female-only company was a new experience for these teenagers whose daily educational experiences were mainly shared with males. It is arguable that pupils were developing skills to and an enjoyment in interacting with same-sex peers. It is possible that through their placement in such provisions, their need to experience a sense of belonging and commonality with their male peer group may result in the girls' identities being masculinised. If LAs decide to place females in these male orientated settings it is arguable that it may be a responsibility to provide them with social situations with female peers as this LOT indicates a need (and potential longing) for pupils to identify with a same sex peer group which may be a necessity for them to develop skills and to support their social integration and natural development of identity.

AS3- Through S2's attempts to have a go despite her view that 'she wasn't very good' she was modelling how P1 might be able to cope with similar feelings.

AS2 - When P2 or P3 did not respond to her behaviour P1 was shown to sit down at her place. I felt that P3 had a calming effect on P2. She helped her to calm down and acted as a positive role model, showing her how to bring herself back-down.

PL.S- P3 was attempting to support P2's behaviour and to give her advice.

Staff and pupils were shown to model appropriate behaviours and gave advice to pupils during conversations. It is possible that pupil observation of the behaviours of others may have acted as a more effective method of learning as opposed to being instructed on how they should respond. Moreover it is possible that the girls may have been more willing to accept the advice of peers rather than staff. However, it is arguable that the ethos during the group sessions and the potential development in positive relationships may have contributed to the pupils' openness to listen and learn from the adults in the room.

B) For staff to see that the pupils were able

S1, 26 -the first week I went and when I realised they were just allowed to pick I thought "oh crikey" (laugh) what will happen... I just thinking are we going to manage that?... because you don't want them to experience failure as a result of that...They weren't weren't saying "I want to build the Eiffel Tower" in lollipop sticks, were they...like some would... But erm they didn't ...they all went along with very normal achievable things which you know...which...

AS2 - Although P3 was 'having a bad day' it seemed that she was able to control her behaviour in the room

AS5- ...She asked, "Please can I go to the toilet?" before leaving the room. She also asked politely for art materials...

AS1- The young people openly asked the adults for help with rolling and getting the clay from the table.

AS2 ...P1 simply wandered around the room. Neither P2 nor P3 responded... When P2 or P3 did not respond to her behaviour P1 was shown to sit down at her place.

S1 suggested that her experience of the art program allowed her to observe that her expectations relating to the skills of the pupils' were inaccurate. The sessions highlighted that the pupils did have a range of well developed skills evidence of which emerged during the sessions. These related to behaviour, attitudes, self control, interactional skills, independence etc. It is possible that resulting from the staff's experience and increased

knowledge of these abilities, there was potential for their expectations and approach towards the girls to be modified in the future. Moreover, this experience of pupils (demonstrating their abilities to an audience) may have felt empowering and liberating.

Positive behaviour changes and pupil sense of achievement (13/all 3)

The prevalence of this LOT was evident in the analysis of all three datasets.

S1, 6- And ...It's a level of challenge that they like to take up but they didn't do that at all which...so I was a little bit surprised by that but it was really positive I thought.

AS5- She asked S2 "if she would get extra points for being at art". I felt that P2 believed that she deserved to be rewarded for having come to art without her peers and for her good behaviour throughout. S2 highlighted that, "she was pleased that P2 had had such a calm afternoon after this morning."

The staff's exploration of their experiences implies that they were surprised by the reduction in challenging behaviour displayed by the girls in the sessions. This LOT could also suggest that the pupils may themselves have been impressed by their ability to engage calmly for the duration of some art sessions. For example, in my observation during art session five, P2 was seen to view that she deserved a reward for her behaviour. It is possible that the calming effect of art and the attractive ethos created in the art room may have facilitated pupils' abilities to work effectively in the group. The reduced threat and discomfort presented in the activity and limited presence of adult direction may have also contributed to this effect. This may have been a revealing and empowering experience for the pupils, who in other lessons may present difficulties.

Staff meeting their own needs and experiencing a sense of achievement (10/staff & my)

The interpretation of this LOT in the data suggests that staff in the PRU may starve their own needs in order to meet the needs of pupils.

S1, 19-(Re. making and need for achievement)... We know it for the young people but we forget it for us and you know we sat and I sat and made a dragonfly (laugh) ...to do that for me was un... because we its different....we don't do it on a regular basis, you know it was really nice.

AS3- S2 and S1 spoke amongst themselves for some time. I wondered how often the staff had time to speak together and whether the sessions provided an opportunity for that. I felt that the adults were more relaxed and were able to meet some of their own needs (de-stress) during the session.

AS6- S3 was much less responsive to the girls' behaviour. She continued with her artwork when the girls' behaviour was seen to escalate and/or they left the room. ... It was apparent that her artwork was set as a priority.... I felt that S3 saw the time as an agreed piece of time where she was permitted to switch off.

S1 spoke of the benefits of the art programme including an opportunity to experience a sense of achievement and a rare and valued time when staff were able to do something for themselves. It is possible that due to the level of pupil need in the setting, staff experience a high demand on their energy and may need access to opportunities to relax. The integration of activities such as this into the timetable may have potential to affect the health, happiness and energy of staff. It is possible that the calming effect of art, the reduction in pupil behaviour during these sessions and the ethos of the environment may have contributed to the effectiveness of the intervention in meeting the needs of staff. Interpretation indicates that experiences where staff can replenish their emotional resources are highly valued and could add to the effective work of adults in meeting the needs of pupils in PRU provisions.

Staff enjoyed taking on a different role/being themselves/freedom (15/staff & my)

S2, 35- Yes it is. It is interesting- It's different to being on a different level with the kids yes... So I quite enjoyed that bit.

S3,39- Like this morning, just having a chat about the weekend and not having to, you know, be...it's kind of teacher – pupil type of thing normally...

AS1- Although I recognised that the staff could be negative and disciplinarian in their approach to the girls (because of the nature of the setting and the ethos), during the session, their gentle nature and true personalities had at times shone through.

AS3-.... There was no high expectation on them in the session (no greater than those expectations of the pupils) and they were given permission and seemed happy to step down from their roles.

The interpretation of this LOT in the data implies that staff were happy to be flexible in their approach to pupils during the programme and may have felt liberated in their ability to withdraw from their TA role of power. It is possible that some staff may feel more comfortable adopting a more natural approach to pupils and in revealing a more nurturing side. However, this change in the role adopted by the staff was something that emerged out of the process and was not encouraged or prompted. It is arguable that with other participants this experience may not been evident. It is possible that particular personalities and approaches may be needed (i.e. open-minded/relaxed) to facilitate the events that occurred. Staff enjoyment of taking a different role with the pupils may have largely contributed to the emergence of the environment (equality, relaxed etc.) and conversations. The reduced expectation for staff to teach and the focus on exploration during creative activities may have facilitated this adaptation. It is possible that the ability of staff to be themselves may have acted as a key factor in contributing to the developments in relationships between group members. Preece and Timmins' (2004) investigation of the impact of a support/inclusion centre highlighted the importance of staff personalities, skills and approaches to pupils on the effectiveness of work undertaken with young people with BEDs(p29). Staff who were 'fair, listened, didn't shout, had time to listen, had a positive attitude, were not just a teacher, made personal sacrifices and showed that they cared for

pupils' were highly valued by pupils (p28-29). It is possible that similar qualities in the adult participants in this study, may have contributed to the benefits for pupils as well as the ethos, relationships and openness in conversations which were interpreted as having developed. Pawson and Tilly (1997) state that people are a critical factor in the effectiveness of an intervention and argue that it is the people that cause the programme to work not the programme itself. Further information on the staff involved in the art programme can be found in the Foreword (p.11).

Staff enjoyed working/interacting with the girls in a different way (18/staff/my)

This LOT could have similar implications to that described directly above.

S3, 43- It was just it just made you a bit happier because whereas normally having to follow the pupils and you're doing this and you're doing that you know.... It just makes it a bit nicer part of the day, you know.

S1, 14- Well, we don't just sit with them and do stuff with them... Because we are normally leading or delivering...it's quite...you are having to control time and what they are doing and what they are... keeping them on task and it is a specific task...

AS3-During the session, there was little need for confrontation or for behaviours to be picked-up-on. I wondered what short-term and long term effects being in a 'bubble' for an hour to an hour and a half might have.

What is essentially different about this LOT is that there is a clear association with a reduction in the behavioural problems demonstrated by pupils and feelings of liberation in staff. It is possible that because pupils were seen to be much calmer and more able to engage in the group sessions, staff were permitted to use more positive approaches with the girls. It is possible that when pupil behaviour is consistently challenging, staff may become stuck in a cycle of reactive responses. It is arguable that the pupils' engagement in conversation, art and the benefits of the positive ethos in the room may have supported the pupils' more positive behaviour. The pupils' increased abilities to participate effectively may have provided staff with time, energy and motivation (through a changing attitude towards

the pupils) to respond in more creative and positive ways when a low level challenge *did* occur.

It is possible that the staff's recognition of their enjoyment of taking a different role and interacting with the girls in a different way during their experiences of the program could have acted as a facilitator for change in the future.

Pupils demonstrated an increased reflective nature and self awareness (28/ pupil & my)

This LOT was the second most highly prevalent LOT contributing to the MOT network. It is evident that the pupils' experience of the art program may have enhanced their self awareness and promoted some self reflection with regard to their experiences with the group (staff and pupils) as well as the artistic process.

P3, 52- P2 erm... I've been close with P2 since she started B(mainstream high school), ...but she used to hang around with us and she used to be alright when she was with us but because she has learned from like when I was... messed up in B(school) and she has learned from that and now she does it. She like mirrors us, eer...so I feel guilty for that because we have made her like that.

PL.S-P3 explained that, "I taught her how to be like this" "...I learnt and got out of it!" I asked P3 "how or why?" and P3 explained "because I lost my sister" (Looking sad). P3 (to P2) "come on P2-Sort yourself out...you want to be more like me" "...God she is how I used to be...I used to get so angry and mad!" I felt that this was particularly insightful of P3. P3 was attempting to support P2's behaviour and to give her advice...it is possible that she was learning more about herself and her past and how her behaviour had impacted on others through her observation of the KS3 girls in the session.

In the interview with P3 and resulting from my reflective diary, there was evidence which suggested that P3's reflective nature was promoted through her observations of the other females in the group. It is possible that it was a novel opportunity for P3 and through having pupils who she could relate to, her self-reflection process was initiated. Her verbalisations suggest that she was able to see that in the past, her behaviour had had a negative influence on P2. She displayed feelings of guilt but also a perception that her own behaviour had

improved and was able to identify the cause. It is possible that P3's ability to compare her behaviour to the behaviour of other pupils in the group may have felt empowering. These feelings of success may have contributed to P2's engagement and positive behaviour throughout. Her feelings of guilt may have facilitated some personal change in attitude and approach.

P3, 28- Well, like, when I'm stressed out I don't... I'll sit there but it's just like I'm a computer... I'm just sat there. I don't take anything in, I'm just sat there.

P3, 18- Right, when I'm angry my art is better than when I'm calm.

P3, 18- I can take it out on my art work. (Anger)

P3's recollections of her experiences implies that she had undertaken further reflection about her behaviour, emotions and how they interacted as a result of her experience of engaging with art. P3 was seen to conceptualise her negative emotions (e.g. stress) as a personal weakness which acts as a barrier to learning. However, in her discussion it was clear that her involvement with art may have supported a re-construction of her beliefs relating to her emotional difficulties in that she identified that her 'anger' resulted in 'better' art. This positive re-framing and realisation about her difficulties may have felt empowering especially in a world where difficult behaviour and negative emotions are problematized (i.e. P1, P2 and P3 may have been excluded from mainstream education *because* of them). Furthermore, P3 identified that art allowed her to control her emotions. It is evident that P3's experiences of the artistic process may have supported a more positive view of her difficulties and abilities to manage her emotions.

AS2 – (P2 explaining her behaviour to me in another apology at the end of the session) She explained that she had had a 'really difficult morning and that she had been given a detention after school.' As she had been 'caught smoking'.

As noted by P3 above, P2 was observed to be able to reflect on her behaviour after participation in the art session. She expressed regret that she had been unable to engage

fully and noted the causation. Again high emotions were shown to act as a trigger for behaviour for P2.

Pupils positive qualities emerged (23/ my)

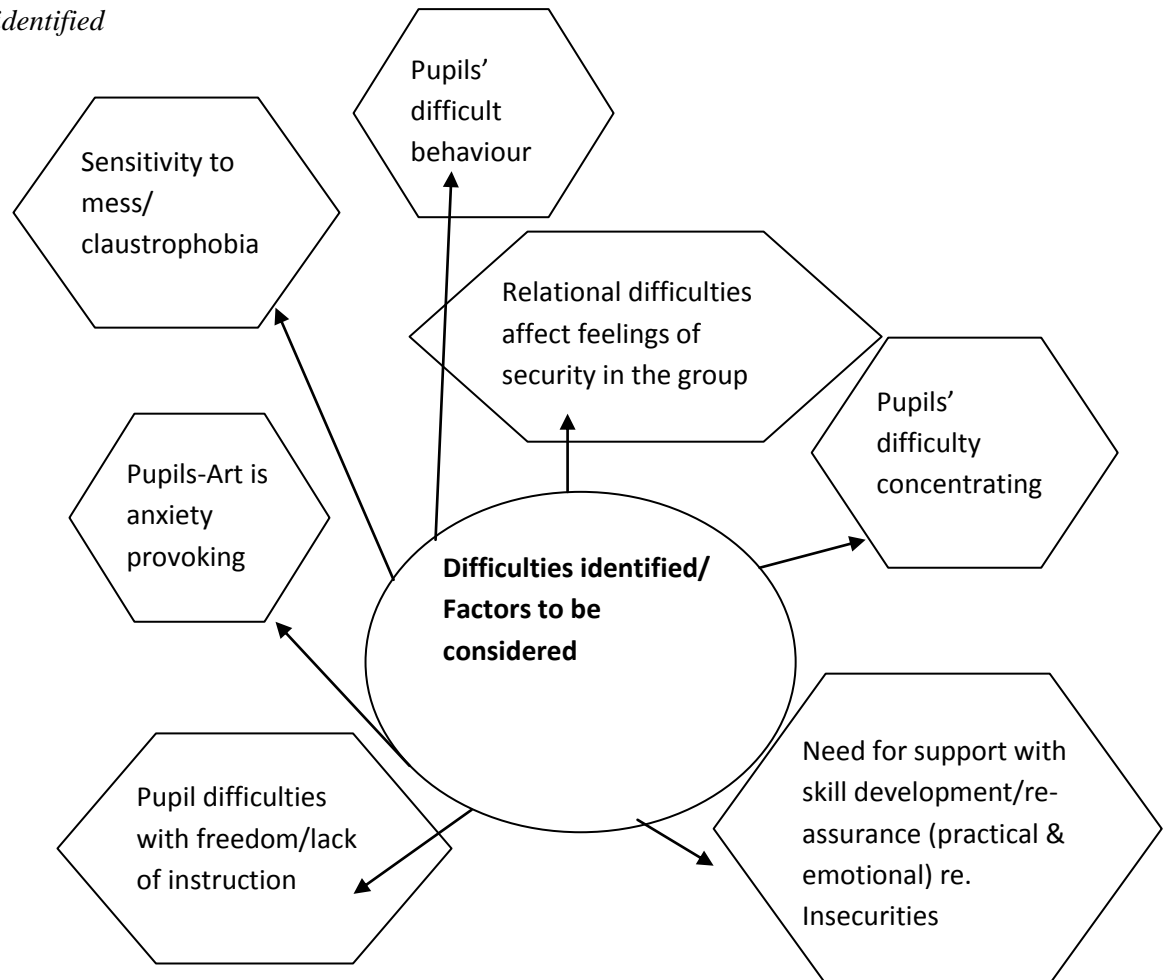
AS6-(Re. S2 informing the group that her boyfriend had broken up with her) P1 asked (S2), "If she was sad?" P1 showed empathy and concern.

AS6- I felt that during these sessions there may have been more opportunity for the 'nice side' of the pupils to have been seen by staff. I felt that this comment(from P1) may have raised S3's self esteem and may have been a chance for her to see that the P1 did care about her and took notice of what she was doing.

In my experience of the art programme, my perception that as time progressed, the girls were shown to reveal their more positive qualities was interpreted as being prevalent in the data. The emergence of these qualities may have been affected by many factors or experiences already identified. It is possible that the enjoyment of conversation as well as pupils feeling listened to and supported by members of the group may have enhanced their willingness to mirror positive acts. Moreover, their enjoyment of art and the calm, relaxed and cohesive atmosphere could have enhanced their ability to interact positively. The success felt (through their engagement in art and more positive behaviour) and reduction in challenge or direction from staff could have developed the pupils' positive feelings. These may have impacted on their actions. The emergence of these positive qualities may have contributed to the adults learning about the girls and also enhanced their own positive approach towards the girls. This in turn could have fed to the positive atmosphere and supported relationship development further.

Difficulties identified

Diagram VII-The most highly prevalent LOTs in the three datasets for the MOT *Difficulties identified*



Although the interpretation of the three datasets clearly presents numerous positive experiences communicated by the pupils, staff and in my reflective diary, the prevalence of this MOT indicates that the phenomenon under study may have also resulted in negative feelings at times. The exploration of the most prevalent LOTs belonging to this network as displayed in the diagram above could, be classed as highly valuable in informing further research and practice. Group work such as that explored in this study may often be represented and perceived in a positive light. This MOT highlights that it is not acceptable to simply presume that pupil engagement with art or with groups of people will be of benefit. It is important that the potential tensions and discomfort which such programmes may cause should be accessible to researchers, programme developers and practitioners, to

allow these experiences of participants to be minimised. Additional (less highly prevalent) factors contributing to the potential negative effects and/or barriers to the programme can be seen in the simplification of the final mind map (Appendix XXII, *difficulties identified*).

Sensitivity to mess/claustrophobia (12/all 3)

P1, 48- What did you not like about working in the group? Like the art room table was too small for everyone to fit their stuff on and that's why it always got a mess because you had to pile stuff up. Sniff...

P1, 54- (Mess) It makes you get angry because ...I don't know (quieter)...it just makes me get angry.

S1, 36-(cramped room) I would probably...I would... the environment I think was the thing. Because it does, the room felt like that to me and it must feel like that to the young people sometimes.

Interpretation implies that during involvement in creative activities agitation and discomfort was felt because of the effects which the environment had on participants. Individuals may have a heightened sensitivity to their physical environment and the prevalence of this LOT highlights that it is a factor which should be taken into consideration when undertaking group work which involves practical activities. It is arguable that the interactions between participant and environment may act as a barrier (due to a heightened emotional state) to accessing feelings of calm and other valued experiences such as conversations.

Environmental factors could significantly impact on a participants' experience of the programme as a whole.

Pupils' difficult behaviour (63/all 3)

P3, 8- When I'm stressed out ...I tend to, like, not care about anything not anything I do, I just don't care.

S1, 22- (talking about P3) ...And then other times she would go off with a gob on, saying things that she wouldn't normally say but she's got an audience and they're buying into it because they are more immature...

HP, 30- I think the way the girls interact together sometimes isn't brilliant. I know that P2 and P3 here can be very disruptive together ... They sort of bounce off each other...

*AS2 - ...As I returned to the room, P2 was running out. I encouraged her to re-enter and carry on with her clay. She was very giddy and it was apparent that P3 had been threatening to throw a wet paper towel at her. *I wondered whether the loud music had fed their giddy mood.**

The presence of this LOT resulting from the analysis indicates that although challenging behaviour in a PRU setting was to be expected, it was indicated that the participants may have believed that pupil behaviour could sometimes feel like a barrier to positive experiences and perceived success of sessions. In the pupils' discussions about their experiences of the programme, they communicated an awareness that their emotions impacted upon their behaviour and that despite a longing to engage in activities, they perceived an inability because of these difficulties. It is possible that the pupils in the programme may have felt discomfort with the novelty of freedom and change in role from staff. Pupil behaviour may have been attempts of pupils to force adults to put the boundaries in place. It is arguable that staff felt that the girls were exploiting the freedom and their behaviour may have impacted on the staff's experiences of the sessions, causing them frustration, stress and disappointment. These ideas are indicated in the less prevalent LOT *The effects of pupil behaviour on staff* present in the initial mind map re. staff interview data ([Appendix XIX](#)). This could have a detrimental effect on development of a positive ethos and relationships in the group.

Pupils' difficulties concentrating (13/all 3)

P1, 4- it got boring at sometimes when we were, like, doing the same work for ages and...

P1,34- I was like a bit bored ...and then like cos I was bored that was like when I thought I would walk out and I'd go and do something else.

S1, 43- there was no rush as well... but I think that is sometimes that poses a problem for the young people because their attention span-it is limited.

S1, 8... because they flit from one thing to another quite often it is quite difficult for them to stay focussed errr...

This LOT implies that the pupils in the study were themselves aware and staff observed them to struggle with their ability to focus on tasks for long periods. It is evident that these difficulties may have been seen as a trigger for behaviour in the sessions. The experiences of staff and pupils highlight a potential need for pupils to have variation in task and short bursts of activity in which they may receive a more immediate sense of reward. It is possible that this LOT may link with that which will be discussed in depth below. If pupils lack confidence in their abilities, investing large amounts of time in something that may result in perceived failure could be seen as a high risk experience requiring resilience.

Art is anxiety provoking (pupils) (32/all 3)

P1, 12- Yes. I don't want to do it in case I get it wrong.

P1, 8- when we did some of the art stuff it was good but like...it was like some of it was hard as well and it like made you not want to do it because you couldn't do it properly because it was too hard.(sniff)...

S1, 38- (Re. Using new materials) ...And there are certainly cases at KS4 we encourage it as much as possible it's not something they are comfortable with.

ASI-P1 explained that "she was rubbish at art, couldn't make things and didn't want to end up at the end of the session with something awful in comparison to everyone else."

Although art may be perceived as an activity which is less anxiety provoking the prevalence of this theme in the interpretation of the data suggests that anxiety was far from absent in the pupils' experiences. The pupils (especially P1) were at times seen to be preoccupied with fear of public assessment and perceived failure. It is arguable that pupils' experiences

of the educational system may hinder confidence with freedom, exploration and creativity. So often the focus in educational provisions is on the value of work in comparison to others. It seems that interest and confidence in creative activity which appears so natural when young, may diminish with age and integration into the educational process. It is possible that excluded young people who may have a vulnerable sense of self as learners could have a heightened sensitivity to failure in general. The development of resilience could be encouraged in such programmes. In a positive, nurturing environment they may be more able to recognise (as discussed above) their ability and success. Such programmes could offer something more than an art lesson where it is less easy to step away from curriculum structure and outcomes. Similarly, it could be seen as an opportunity through which pupils could re-build their connection with creativity and exploration that once may have been a more natural skill.

Difficulties with freedom/lack of instruction (31/all 3)

P1, 62-..What would be different? Like plan it better. And like but you'd you'd have ...different days...like different days. So for every different days you would do different ...Sniff.

P1, 28- The first bit ...how we had to write down about what we was doing in the lessons and that. I didn't like that.

S1, 4... They're not very good at choice... Open choice... it is almost like there is too much choice for them but it was nice to see that they got that choice...

S2, 55- ...yes they do ...if you give them too much freedom they really do find it difficult of how to or to decide what do I do or what do they need to do. I think they get frustrated then and then maybe get a little bit bored and don't know what they should be doing. So as we've experienced they've walked out ...maybe because they haven't maybe got that structure of telling them what to do

PL.S- Again P2 stated, "Why can't you just tell us what we will do" (in the sessions).

This LOT explores pupil experiences which suggest that at times throughout the programme pupils desired specific direction and instruction from adults. It suggests that self-organised learning is something which the pupils reported as a factor which they found frustrating and uncomfortable. This pupil difficulty was also noted through the observations of the staff and

me. The explanations given by staff which explored their experiences suggests a belief that the pupils' difficulties with open choice resulted in frustrations and poor behaviour. This LOT implies that there may have been an overdependence of the KS3 and KS4 pupils on adult instruction which highlights that again the educational system has failed to teach them how to be independent learners. It is questionable whether it is acceptable for educational provisions not to promote these skills in young people simply because their encouragement causes discomfort. It would be interesting, therefore, to further explore how art or such programmes may contribute to the development of these skills.

Need for support with skill development/re-assurance (practical and emotional) re.

Insecurities with artwork (26/staff & my)

S1, 43 She doesn't see past the fact that actually she created something that was really good, and yeah it didn't go well...you still did it and they don't see that. And I think...erm I don't know whether, on the Monday sessions, you did any talking about that sort of thing but because we didn't do any in the sessions we were in I think that....that may-maybe they didn't get the full benefit . As adults we can manage that can't we? We would just say "oh well there it goes". Cough...So maybe a reflection thing in there in it somewhere, whether it was every week or every... maybe at the start of the next session?

AS2 -. Often this frustrated outburst was seen to result in a refusal to continue but, once an adult was seen to help her create some order in her work, she was shown to re-engage.

AS1- P1 showed some determination but suggested (noises and complaints) that she was struggling. S2 and I provided her with reminders that it didn't have to be perfect.

This LOT is very closely linked with those above. It implies that through her experiences of the programme S1 came to believe that there was a need or opportunity in the sessions for staff and pupils together to work through anxieties and difficulties encountered. It is possible that it was seen as an opportunity to embed teaching of resiliency skills into the practical experiences of the programme. It is possible that the effectiveness of such work would be heightened as the skills would be learnt naturally as difficulties arose. The experiences discussed also magnified a need for a high level of adult presence in such

groups. It was evident that the pupils thrived in 1:1 and 1:2 pupil-adult ratios. It was during these interactions when re-engagement was successful and pupils were seen to work through problems they were experiencing with their work.

Relationship difficulties affect feelings of security in the group (21/my)

AS2 - P1 seemed to be unable to engage in the conversation. She was very quiet and slightly withdrawn. I felt that P1 may have felt left out again in that unlike P2, she did not know P3 and did not seem to know the people that P3 was talking about.

AS2 - After the session S2 stated her belief that, "P1 feels a bit pushed out." S3 continued with, "I think she finds it hard competing for P2's attention".

AS1- P3 appeared to be annoyed by P1's negativity and comments as she looked at her scornfully and sighed. I sensed some friction between the two.

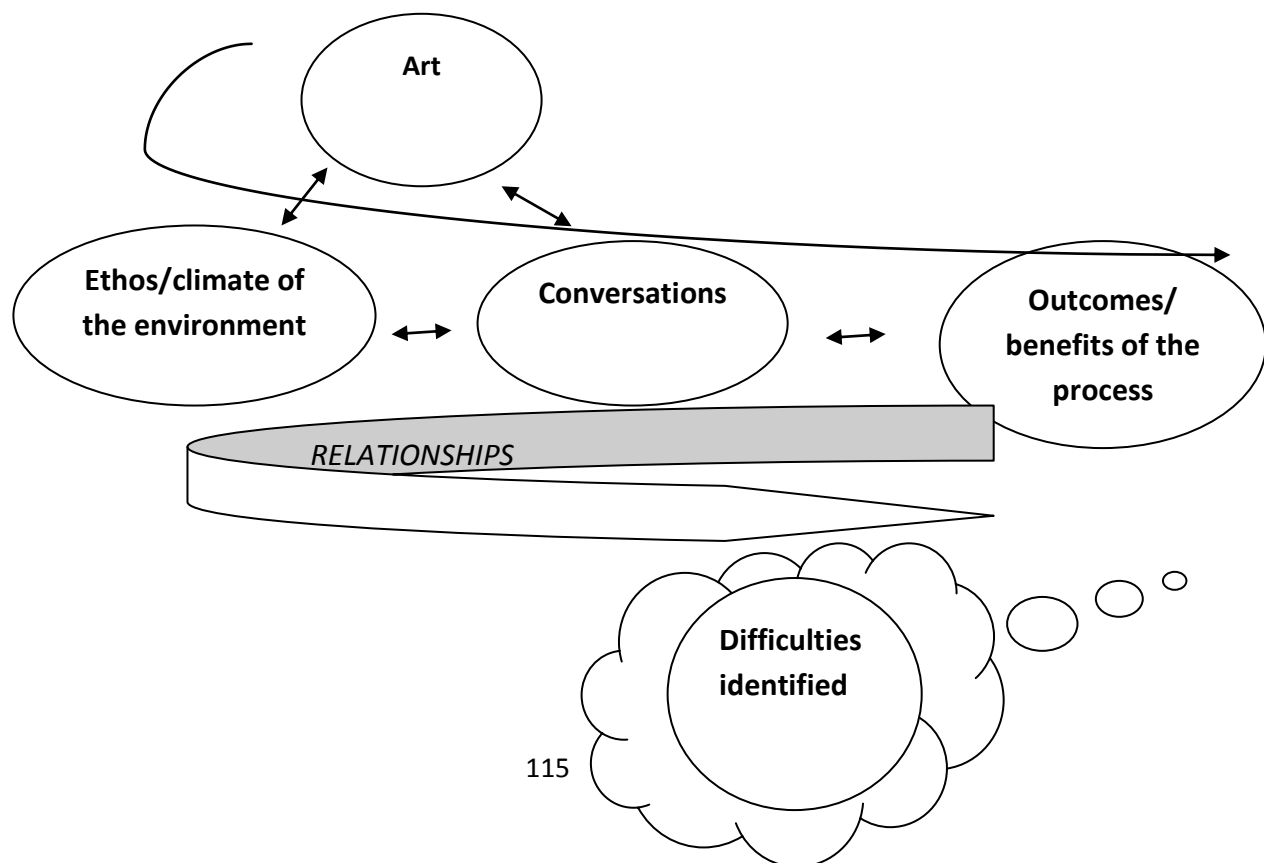
AS2 - P3 (loudly) stated, "God I can't stand her!" (P1) I was very aware that P1 may have picked up on this and may have increased her feelings of being threatened/uncomfortable in the room.

The interpretation of this LOT suggests that as with any group it is inevitable that tensions will arise in relationships between participants. It is important to note that these may have significant effects on the experiences of participants involved and group cohesion. Specific support or solution focused activities may need to be integrated into such programmes as it would be unethical for tensions to escalate without being addressed. It is possible that this indicates a clear need for negotiation of a group pact at the start of such programmes where a protocol for dealing with potential difficulties such as this could be agreed by all participants.

Summary and further reflections

Looking at the MOTs and the prevalence of these themes in the three datasets allowed me to reflect on a process which may have been occurring in the phenomenon under study. It was evident that with regard to the analysis of the whole dataset *art, the ethos/climate of the environment* and *conversations* were interpreted to have a relatively equal part to play in the participants' experiences of the art programme. *Outcomes/benefits* was a MOT that appeared to be interpreted as having a strong prevalence in the data. However, the three MOTs above were interwoven into this MOT, with each having an independent beneficial role to play. Below is a diagram which represents my interpretation of the phenomenon under study which I co-experienced. The MOT *difficulties identified* is seen as being highly prevalent in the data and potentially having a valuable contribution to make in attempts to understanding the experiences of those involved in the programme. In the diagram below, it is presented 'out of the process loop' (in a thought bubble) because it is viewed as forming a separate bracket of learning for myself and possibly the reader.

Diagram VIII- Representing the MOTs and one potential interpretation of the process occurring in the art programme phenomenon



Art was seen as a key facilitator in the process which allowed the other experiences interpreted as being important to participants (including MOTs *ethos/climate of the environment ,conversations and benefits* and factors associated with LOTs) to be made accessible. However, it is arguable that there may be other creative methods which could be equally effective in facilitating such a phenomenon. The MOTs and LOTs as discussed in more specific detail in the descriptions above were interpreted to not affect each-other in a linear process but in a complex web of multi-directional interactions some of which have been discussed. With regard to *Difficulties identified*, interpretation suggests that some aspects of the experience which were problematic for participants could support further reflection and thought for researchers and professionals working in similar ways in the future.

A salient theme which emerged out of my reflections during interpretation was *relationships*. Although this theme was not highly prevalent in the transcripts of physical data (see MOT *outcomes/benefits* Table 5 Appendix XX.), it was apparent that during my interpretation of the MOTs and LOTs a large number were associated with the potential facilitation, development and strengthening of more positive relationships between pupils and staff in the group work. The determination of the relevance of this theme in the process explored would require further research and investigation. However, I feel that it is a salient theme which may be largely influenced by those experiences presented by participants relating to the MOTs *ethos/climate of the environment and conversation*. Other salient themes emerging from the interpretation of my analysis relate to hypotheses that the art programme or group experience provided participants with *learning and development* opportunities such as:

- opportunity to develop new skills,
- opportunity to learn about self,
- experience to identify and understand needs (self and others),
- potential to facilitate change through reflection and empowerment and
- (pupil) access to opportunity to re-engage in learning

It is important to note that the process or links between the MOTs identified is just one interpretation of the underlying process or mechanism which encapsulates what was potentially happening in the phenomenon. It is recognised that the process is contextual and it is arguable that further research would be needed to explore this interpretation further. This suggestion is not aiming to be a definitive explanation and this is concordant with my epistemological belief that every lived experience is constructed within a historical and social reality and for every experience multiple realities (rather than one true reality) can exist.

Chapter 5: General discussion and reflections

Review of findings

At the start of this research process, it was an aim to answer the research question:

An art programme for excluded young females attending a PRU: What are the experiences of pupils, staff and an EP researcher?

It was seen that in the investigation of this question additional information could emerge that would provide further insight into: understanding and meeting the needs of excluded teenage females; the use of creative activities such as art in school; the potential for influencing change in individuals or a system; the implications for EPs working in a creative way; how professionals might increase the accessibility of their services to young females; and including disaffected young people more directly in research.

Prior to exploring some of the implications of this piece of research, further discussion of the findings is important. This section of the thesis will look into each Main Overarching Theme (MOT) that emerged when the experiences of the participants involved in the art programme process were explored.

Three MOTs were interpreted as being relatively equal in their prevalence across the entire dataset.

1. Ethos/climate of the environment
2. Conversation
3. Art

It was apparent that in the three datasets (pupil interview/staff interview/my reflective research diary) these were the three key aspects contributing to their experiences of the art programme process. The phenomena resulting as part of the social process was interpreted to result from a complex set of interactions occurring in bi-directional relationships between these three MOTs. In the interpretation of the *Art* MOT and the network of its Lower Order Themes (LOTs) it was apparent that the art activity may have been acting as a facilitator in the process. It was seen to contribute to but also support other factors which allowed the benefits to emerge.

Ethos/climate of the environment

The environment created in the art-room was a theme which was highly prevalent in all datasets as being an important part of the pupils, staff and my own experiences. In concordance with Kinder *et al.*'s (1998) investigation of in-class and withdrawal work with 'at risk' pupils it was interpreted that a relaxed, calm and tranquil environment was noted as an important part of the participants' experiences in this study. It was apparent that the room may have felt special to the staff and pupils. This study highlights similar findings to Spalding's (2002) investigation with primary pupils with BESDs. The secondary aged pupils participating in this study (in concordance with those in Spalding's investigation) were shown to demonstrate a reduction in negative behaviour (associated with an increase in the pupils' sense of achievement and potential for relationship development). Wise and Upton (1998) identified that this reduction in behaviour may have been facilitated through an increase in value and respect which may evolve through communication and relationship building between pupils and staff. Similarly, Fletcher-Cambell's (2001) study investigating triggers for negative behaviour in young people also identified the importance of these factors. 'Teachers who didn't listen to pupils' and 'adults who were not interested' were two triggers identified by the pupil participants as affecting their behaviour.

It is also possible that there was an increased potential for emotional growth of pupils in the nurturing ethos of the art room. It is arguable that the artistic activity as well as the 'buzz' of conversations amongst the group may have contributed to this environmental effect.

The calm nature of the room was valued by staff and pupils and it is possible that this may have impacted on the relaxation of staff with regards to their role and approach towards pupils. The prevalence of feelings of equality demonstrated in the data implies that the pupils and staff enjoyed an absence in pupil/ staff roles which are normally upheld in the provision. In the conversations there was a clear longing and excitement demonstrated by the pupils to feel equal. It is possible that these two factors alone may have contributed to a more positive ethos in the PRU. This importance of ethos in educational settings was a key factor identified in the two 'Pupils with problems' documents (DFE, 1994a and DFE 1994b) which discussed methods to promote re-engagement of excluded pupils. Holland and Homerton's (1994) investigation of the on-site units for pupils with BESDs in mainstream schools also noted a calm environment as one of the important factors contributing to success. Feelings of cohesion, a sense of belonging and observations of pupil enthusiasm to be present in the art room may be indicative of the attractive nature of the environment created and the enhancing effect which the programme may have had on the relationships developing amongst group members. In concordance with this interpretation, Clarke *at al.*'s (2000) findings were suggestive of the benefits which having a pro-social peer group can have on excluded young people. Studies such as Evans (1995), Garmarnikow & Green (1999) and Hayton (1999) demonstrate the importance which access to a supportive social network can have on re-engagement. Pupils feelings of connection to others within school has been shown to relate to their motivation and achievement (Furrer & Skinner, 2003), with those who feel that they do not belong being at a greater risk of disengagement (Osborne, 1997). The pupils were seen to seek appraisal and recognition from staff and peers in the group.

They demonstrated an enthusiasm to please the adults present but also interacted in ways which were indicative of role reversal. It is possible that in this environment pupils experienced an opportunity to establish positive personal relationships with an adult. This was one of the three elements of repair described by Kinder and Wilkin (1998) for supporting disengaged pupils. They suggested that through the development of relationship adults are more able to represent and model pro-social values and are able to offer respect to the young person.

This study implies that the pupils and staff involved valued the availability of a female only group in a male dominated environment. As discussed above it is possible that this may have supported group cohesion and feelings of a secure/supportive environment in addition to the openness of conversation experienced in the group. Clarke & Clarke (2000) and a report produced by the Mental Health Foundation (1999) imply that resilience can be nurtured by the presence of a network of affectionate relationships. It is possible that through the development of a more positive environment in the PRU the pupils were starting to be more open to investing and engaging in interactions which allowed these relationships to emerge.

Conversation

Conversations were one of the key experiences which were discussed by participants in the group. The prevalence of their value and enjoyment of conversations highlights the potential lack of opportunity in the setting for pupils and staff to sit and chat. In the whole dataset three further LOTs were seen to emerge from the analysis. In the participants' experiences of the programme, conversations were seen as an opportunity for the staff to learn about the girls and for the girls to learn about the staff. The pupils were also shown to be open and experienced an opportunity to discuss their difficulties with individuals and the group. This finding is consistent with My Laughlin's (1999) finding that for pupils at risk of exclusion

in school, teachers who listened to pupils on a regular basis was a factor which was highly valued by pupils and was perceived as a contributor to their ability to remain in school.

Pupil willingness to discuss difficulties during the program could be linked again to the government documents 'Pupils with problems' (DFE 1994a and 1994b) which indicates that the effective re-engagement of excluded young people could be enhanced through supporting their personal and social development. As identified by Wise and Upton (1998) the act of talking and the development of relationships with adults (through these conversations) may have been a form of therapeutic support for the young female (as well as the adult) participants. It is possible that the experiences of staff and pupils learning about each other had a key effect on relationship formation and feelings of equality within the environment. Similarly, without feelings of equality, and the open approach of staff, it is possible that the pupils may have refrained from demonstrating such openness themselves. The openness from staff and the opportunity for pupils to hear about their lives outside the setting appeared to be a valued experience. It is possible that in the setting pupils were developing an ability to share their difficulties with other pupils and staff. They may have gained skills to express themselves through communication. It is possible that as the programme progressed pupils felt more secure in their relationships with group members. It is arguable that this MOT highlighted a need for pupils to have access to conversations where they could offload and air problems. The staff's identification of the novelty and benefits of the conversations was indicative of their recognition that, in the programme, they had developed an increased awareness of the needs of the girls. It is possible that the staff came to realise that through conversations in the sessions, they were able to meet those emotional needs, which as noted in Slater's (undated) essay, in the past they may have viewed as too complex for them to deal with. This idea is consistent with Mc Loughlin's (1999) finding that teachers often fail to appreciate the value which such conversations are

to pupils. Moreover, the interest and value associated with the staff's recognition of being able to learn about the girls through conversations, may have supported an increased awareness. It is possible that, through their experiences, staff had developed a realisation that there was significant benefit to be gained, in their practice and relationship development with pupils, by accessing knowledge about the girls' personalities from a more holistic stance. As noted in Wise and Upton's (1998) study with school pupils with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties (ESBDs), the development of teacher-pupil relationships through communication/opportunity to talk may increase adult insight or understanding of pupil behaviour.

Although this study involved the use of art, it is possible that it was not the art activity alone which promoted the development of interpersonal skills (such as listening and communication) and relationship development (Hartland *et al.*, 2002 and Wilkin *et al.*, 2005). It is arguable that the conversations emerging from (and the environment created as a result of) group-work, could have equal (and potentially greater) parts to play. This is something which could be investigated in more detail. It is possible that the pupils in this study had well-developed social, communication and relationship development skills prior to the program but within the setting had limited experiences to demonstrate these abilities to staff and other pupils. This research could therefore highlight a need for pupils to be offered opportunities in which these skills can be demonstrated, practiced and/or learnt.

Art

Art was described as an activity which all participants in the programme enjoyed. It is evident that this theme may be associated with Hartland *et al.*'s (2002) findings that arts outcomes were linked to therapeutic outcomes of enjoyment. Wilkin *et al.*'s (2005) finding that one of the short term effects of arts activities in PRUs and LSUs was a sense of enjoyment is also concordant with this interpretation. In line with Wilkin *et al.* (2005) a sense of achievement associated with art was prevalent in the data. The opportunity to achieve academic or vocational success and to appreciate a constructive leisure activity (providing a sense of achievement, enjoyment and self worth) were contained in two of Kinder and Wilkin's (1998) three key elements of repair for supporting the re-engagement of disengaged young people. It is possible that the positive feelings of enjoyment and success may have contributed to the pupils' abilities to engage in and access the sessions. In addition, it is possible that these factors may have also contributed to their enjoyment and engagement in other activities at the PRU.

Another idea emerging out of the data was consistent with the DEF (1994a) and DFE (1994b) 'pupils with problems' document which highlighted that a collaborative style of working with pupils can foster feelings of self worth. The opportunity for pupils to have control/freedom in their work was highlighted as having a level of value in the data. As well as the data analysis suggesting that art helped to re-engage pupils, it was seen to have a calming, relaxing and releasing (of emotions) effect on all participant groups. Again this finding is consistent with Hartland *et al.*'s (2002) study which implies that psychological wellbeing is associated with outcomes relating to art. Although it was not an aim of the programme, it is arguable that the pupils in this study may have experienced those effects which were discussed by Kubler-Ross (1982) who suggested that art can have a therapeutic effect in supporting individuals to express their emotions through non-verbal methods. The calmness

experienced by participants and observed in the pupils (throughout and after sessions) could demonstrate that, during the programme through engagement in creative activities, the emotional and mental health of participants may have been enhanced. This was a factor which was noted as being important in re-engaging and preventing disengagement in excluded young pupils (DFE, 1994, P10).

The final LOT belonging to this network was the beneficial effects of pupils and staff engaging in art alongside each-other. It was apparent that the participants' involvement in the creative process may have resulted in them experiencing similar feelings to those identified in Hartland *et al.*'s (2000) study investigating the ambience identified in art classrooms. As with this study, they noted the potential positive effects of joint learning, co-operation and commonality as well as unconditional positive regard and respect. All of these terms are linked with those factors required for the development of trust and are familiar in the world of counselling. As noted in the previous section, this equality in working alongside each other could be seen as having an important contribution to play in enriching the ethos and conversations which emerged. It is important to note that art may not be the only activity which could result in the potential beneficial effects described above. However, the achievement and enjoyment associated with art may be two factors which make this method accessible and effective for these young people. It is possible that the practical nature of the creative task (as noted by Wilkin *et al.*, 2005) may have enhanced the probability of the pupils maintaining efforts which allowed them to experience such feelings.

Outcomes/benefits was a MOT strong in its prevalence in the dataset. Benefits relating to the *ethos/climate, conversations* and *art* noted above provided a significant contribution to the prevalence of this theme.

Outcomes/benefits

A range of LOTs were interpreted as belonging to this MOT network. Pupils were shown to be developing new skills. In the art programme the teenage female participants displayed an increased ability in their interactions with female peers. As mentioned previously, access to opportunity (i.e. a female only group and permission to chat) may have contributed to this perception. However, P1 was shown to be pleased and surprised during the interview that she observed that 'everyone got on'. Similarly pupils were perceived to have access to experiences whereby they were shown to obtain advice and had access to opportunities where they could observe the positive behaviours or skills of others (e.g. dealing with frustration or talking about a relationship break down). On some occasions it was noted that the pupils were seen to have a calming effect on each other and L3 was witnessed encouraging and supporting a peer to self-calm. Again the potential for pupil learning was evident in that pupils were able to help and get help from others.

Staff interviews implied that they learnt through observation of the pupils that their expectations of the girls were inaccurate. As with Wilkin *et al.*'s (2005) study it is possible that as a result of their involvement, the staff may have developed higher expectations of the pupils as they observed independence, an ability to ask for help, positive interactions, and pupils planning work in addition to ignoring the behaviours of others for example.

Wilkin *et al.*'s (2005) research mirrors one of the findings from this study. They found that an increase in the confidence and self esteem of pupils led to positive changes in behaviour.

These changes of behaviour were highly prevalent in this investigation and P3 was shown to be surprised and proud of her behaviour in some sessions. It is possible that it may not only have been those feelings of achievement with the art form which contributed to these changes. The calming effect of art, the attractive environment and the relaxed (and less directive) adult approach are just a few other contributory factors to note.

Another prevalent theme identified that pupils were shown to demonstrate more positive qualities of their characters throughout the duration of the art programme. It is possible that this may have been enhanced as a result of the calming and enjoyable environment; due to pupils' engagement in more positive experiences associated with enjoyment/interest in conversations and increased feelings of practical success; the influence of the more positive approach of staff and/or the positive feelings resulting from the cohesion felt and relationships formed. It is arguable that the staff's exposure to these pupil qualities may have enhanced their knowledge and positive constructs about the pupils. The development of a more holistic view of the pupils may have allowed their approach towards them to become more natural in its positivity.

Analysis of the data also suggests that the pupils may have developed a more reflective nature and self awareness. Interpretation implies that P3 especially was seen to uphold an increased understanding of her behaviour and how this impacted on others; an understanding of the interactional relationship between her behaviour and emotions; how art supported her self control; and also how her anger made her art 'better'. In concordance with P2, P3 also identified that her behaviour could act as a significant barrier to learning. Interpretation of interview transcripts implies that this self-discovery may have been enhanced through observation (available via the novelty of a female only group) as well as through engagement in the artistic process. This idea links with Hartland *et al.*'s finding (2002) that arts outcomes were seen to be associated with an increased access to cultural and moral issues. In Hartland *et al.*'s (2000) study it is noted that in art activities there is opportunity for pupils to develop skills that are transferrable or recyclable in other contexts. As noted by Gersch *et al.* (2008) this creative and deeper level of thought is one skill which could be classed into this bracket. This finding could also be tied in with Hayden's (2002) discussions which note the importance of the development of an internal locus of control on

the re-engagement of disaffected young people. It is arguable that reflections such as that noted by P3, that art helped her to control her anger, may be empowering and influential in her life. Watson (2000), Anverill (2005) and Gersch (2009) spoke of spirituality and spiritual listening. It is possible that their findings linking this creative form of thinking to personal and social wellbeing, behaviour, progress and learning could also apply to the increased reflective nature identified in the experiences of pupils in this study. Further research would be required to explore this idea in greater depth however, findings are consistent with Preece and Timmin's (2004) investigation. In their study the impact of a support/inclusion centre in a secondary school in the West-midlands was explored. They found that in the setting many of the pupils were developing an awareness of the impact of their behaviours on others as well as skills and strategies to support their re-integration e.g. confidence, seeing that they were able to control their behaviour and learning calming techniques/social skills/how to develop rapport with adults. Preece and Timmin's (2004) hypothesised that the development of these skills was largely influenced by the pupils' reflective abilities being enhanced through increased access to a safe and attractive environment where staff had a very nurturing approach.

Again findings imply that the programme may have resulted in a therapeutic experience for the participants involved whereby 'therapeutic' is classed as an opportunity to promote emotional wellbeing. The sessions may have provided a safe and contained space where difficulties could be externalised (White and Epsom, 1990). It has been shown that this can lead to a reflection on one's current state which stabilises the person (Beisser, 1970) to move towards exploring solutions (De Shazer & Dolan, 2007, Selekman, 1997). Boal (2003) explained how such experiences can prepare people for individual and/or social change. Staff in this study were shown to have been able to identify (and meet) their own needs through their involvement in the art programme. As discussed in more detail above, this

may be one important finding which highlights the importance of staff working in the PRU having opportunity to recuperate and re-build their energy especially when the pupils' demands on them are high.

There was also a highly prevalent LOT within this MOT network which implied that staff enjoyed taking a different role and interacting in a new way with pupils. The more positive interactions observed by myself and noted by the staff mirrored those findings from Hartland *et al.*'s (2000) study which identified arts teachers as using a 'praise culture' and a 'high level of support' resulting in an 'organic' ambience (p511). As discussed previously it is arguable that very particular personalities of staff may be paramount in this change in interaction occurring. The staff in this study suggested feelings of liberation and happiness at shedding their teaching assistant role for the sessions. It is possible that these experiences would not be the same for all. The prevalence of this theme could suggest an opportunity for the staff to learn, through practice, the positive effects of approaching their role in school in a different way. Further investigation would be required to identify whether (and to what extent) this could have an effect in creating further change.

The MOT *Difficulties identified* was also highly prevalent in the staff, pupil and my own dataset. This MOT had an important role to play in adding something new to the literature. It highlighted some challenges which arose during the creative group-work which were experienced by the excluded young people (and also observed by staff participants as well as, in some cases by myself).

Difficulties identified

The interpretation of this highly prevalent theme suggests that the implementation of group work in which creative activities are used may not be a completely positive experience for staff and young people. Those difficulties identified could be interpreted as potential barriers impacting on the abilities of pupils to engage in such methods of working. The pupils (P1 in particular) were interpreted as having a heightened sensitivity to the mess and busyness in the art room. This highlights the potential need for the environment to be carefully considered when planning such work. Similarly, as could be predicted from any group work, tensions between group members were interpreted as having the potential to affect group cohesion and comfort of individuals in the sessions. The prevalence of this LOT magnified the importance in staff or pupils having access to skills to identify and support a resolution to such difficulties. Moreover, the need for a 'group pact' in group work is evident here, whereby a shared agreement on ethos and how to deal with relational (and other) problems could be negotiated before the sessions commence.

Pupil difficulties with behaviour and concentration were identified. These may have been triggered by those factors presented in the findings that art was both anxiety provoking and that the freedom associated with the art session (and lack of instruction) caused some discomfort. This suggests that, although for some pupils the opportunity to control and plan their work may be perceived as a positive, at other times or for other pupils this opportunity may be unsettling. It is evident that pupil behaviour may have been one method of expressing these feelings of anxiety.

The prevalence of another LOT within this network implied that staff experienced an opportunity and need during the sessions to support pupils in working through their anxieties as they arose. This allowed me to hypothesise that the difficulties identified may not necessarily need to be interpreted as barriers for the pupils but could be viewed as

experiences from which valuable learning could emerge. It is possible that the creative, nurturing and safe environment could have supported the pupils in dealing with self directed learning, independence, freedom, success/praise, a new sense of belonging, feelings of challenge/ tension, trusting in a novel situation, re-engagement in artwork (despite difficulties) and taking risks in their work. Resulting from their experiences in the programme, pupils may have developed an increased ability (and reduced fear) to engage in creativity and flexibility in learning. Staff's recognition of the need for support again could suggest further reflection and learning experienced by the adults with regards to their understanding of the needs of pupils.

Two themes which were identified as salient themes surrounding the analysis included the evolution of more positive *relationships* between members of the group and *potential for learning and development* of individuals. There was not sufficient physical evidence of these ideas in the data for prevalence to be measured. However, it is evident in this discussion that many of the interpretations of the MOTs and LOTs could be associated with these key salient themes having significant value to add. It is arguable that both of these salient themes could contribute to the facilitation of change both in individuals and the PRU as a whole. It is possible that change does not happen by chance but through increased understanding and awareness resulting from experiences. Furthermore, opportunity for change could also be enhanced through access to experiences that have potential to promote an adaptation in attitudes and to generate emotion. However, the ability for the programme to impact on a process of change is something which, due to time constraints, this study has not been able to explore. A visual representation of this hypothesis can be seen in diagram IX in [Appendix XXIII](#).

It is arguable that this interpretation has implications for further research and practice which may need to be taken into serious consideration. It is evident that if such work has potential

to facilitate change, promote emotion and self reflection there is a risk that issues may arise which individuals may need to work through. Direct work from an EP, school staff or other professionals may need to be implemented and during such programmes participants should be aware of and sensitive to these potential effects.

Strengths and limitations of this study

Personal reflections on the research, qualitative process and methodology used

It is arguable that my involvement in this research has taught me an influential research tool and has also acted as a method of invaluable professional development. Although (due to my background in experimental psychology) the use of qualitative methods felt unnerving and uncomfortable at times, I feel that throughout this study, I have developed my reflective nature in my practice and have learnt an immense amount about myself as a research practitioner. I also developed skills in working with groups of excluded teenage females whom previously, I have had limited experience of working with. Through the use of Thematic Analysis (TA), I feel that I have been equipped with a flexible data analysis tool which is free from theoretical underpinnings. It is an analytical tool which can be used within other analytic traditions (such as grounded theory) (Braune and Clarke, 2006, p78) and it can be utilised across a range of theoretical and epistemological approaches. It is compatible with both essentialist and constructionist paradigms within psychology. Moreover, I feel that by being bold in my use of this method I can contribute to the support and recognition which it deserves.

The use of a reflective research diary was invaluable. It allowed me to witness that my behaviour began to change throughout the programme and the research. It illuminated the way that I make sense of my experiences, the world, and the way I live and act as a professional. I was able to look at my behaviour and the behaviour of others in detail and could see that my behaviour may be influenced by drives of which I was not always aware (e.g. a struggle with control, feelings of fear and stress). My exposure to such knowledge may have supported my progression as an effective practitioner. As Shepherd (2006) states, 'being surprised at the mismatch between my espoused values and how I actually practised was often a precursor to the change in my own behaviour' (p343). I realised that the

completion of a written diary felt therapeutic. It closed the gap where psychological practice can feel lonely. It supported the understanding of my frustrations and helped me to develop and formulate my hypothesis relating to my observations and experiences. It is arguable that my reflective diary allowed the TA process to be initiated from the early stages of the study. I came to realise that this form of self observation could also be a technique through which my research and EP practice could be enriched in the future.

General Strengths

This piece of research could be viewed as making a small contribution to the literature which could counteract those negative effects which the demonising portrayal of female teenagers in the media and publications over recent years (Gonick, 2004 and Ringrose, 2006) could be having on society. This research values, respects and perceives a benefit in the in-depth interpretation and understanding of the experiences of young people. It highlights the important role which excluded young people can play to inform future practice and research attempting to understand and meet their needs. This is something which Curtis *et al.* (2004) noted as an area for development in exclusion research.

This research could be viewed as contributing to the literature which explores the value of creative processes and art in schools and the curriculum. It could also be seen as adding to the growing body of research relating to meeting the needs of disaffected young people. Moreover, this research also contributes to the very small research base which explores the relationship between creative activity, group-work, special places/ethos and working with excluded young people. It is arguable that it may offer the opportunity to amend or question 'theory' that has risen up out of the literature.

It is possible that the completion of this research has supported learning at two different levels. It was a piece of practical work from which participants in the program may have had

the direct opportunity to benefit and progress (through the development of transferable learning and thinking). Through engagement in the 'journey' explored in this thesis, the reader may also be offered insight into work with excluded young people and the effects and difficulties in working in such creative ways.

It also offers an in-depth description of one example of how an EP was able to work in a more creative way.

Methodological Issues

Diary and observation

Initially I had planned to complete the reflective diary entry immediately after each art session. However, this was not always plausible as it was not always possible to schedule an hour's slot after sessions for reflection. On some occasions initial reflections were completed a day or two after the art session. Often, when I was completing my initial diary entry and I was lacking time or energy, a description of events would result. This could often be used to enhance my memory at the secondary reflective stage where I could review my experiences from a distance. I became aware that it is possible that by working in this way, memories may have been forgotten or adapted. However, my secondary reflections allowed me to think further about how I had felt at the time and how this related to the context of the research process as a whole. Re-reading the diary highlighted how difficult the period had been for me. Initially, my primary diary entries read as being guarded and mechanical in their factual nature. While I was working in the setting, I found it difficult to distance myself. There was a continual reminder that I was attempting to work in partnership. In my secondary reflections, I was more able to distance myself and to be honest. The use of the diary was illuminating from a personal and professional view.

It may have been useful to have completed an audio-diary on the day of the session. This may have acted as a more convenient and less timely method to record initial thoughts when they were clear in my mind and to capture emotions when they were high. Listening to these spoken entries may have made my secondary reflections much richer and accounts more accurate.

Interviews

In the planning stage of the research I had hoped that through the use of an interview timetable, pupils would sign up for set slots at the PRU to maintain a consistency in experience. It was not possible to perform all interviews at the PRU as timeslots during which participants were available, were not all times at which participants were present at this site. Over a two-week period all interviews were completed. S2, S3 and HP completed their interviews at the KS3 site; P1 at the mainstream setting which she was being re-integrated into; P3 at the key stage four setting; and S1 at the vulnerable girls unit. Although she had decided to undertake the interview in her mainstream school, I was particularly sensitive about P1 completing the interview on a site where (based upon information shared during the programme) she may have felt unsettled. I was aware throughout the interview that although the venue may have been more convenient for P1 (i.e. she did not require transport) potentially her willingness to be open may have been affected.

One of the limitations of my research is that I had been involved with the participants in the art programme and was also interviewing them about their experiences. Although honesty was encouraged, participants were re-assured that I would not be upset by negative comments, and questions were embedded into the semi-structured interview schedule to promote criticism; the fact that I was not removed from the process may have largely influenced the responses provided.

There had been no success with the use of the comments box. I felt that obtaining comments through a written medium may have been off-putting for the population of pupils. During one session, P1 had stated that 'she was no good at writing'. The interviews were therefore an insightful opportunity to access the pupils' and staff's views relating to their experiences. However, one major limitation of this research was that I was not able to discuss the entire interview data produced. This resulted in internal conflict as I had hoped to give voice to participants in this study. I wondered how, on reading my study back participants may have felt about whole themes from their stories being held back from further interpretation.

The semi-structured interviews were a strength of the process as they provided the right amount of flexibility for pupils and staff. This structure was flexible as it allowed me to guide the interview but also enabled me to take the participant's lead which in turn, gave me the space to dig deeper into aspects of the process which emerged as being important for them.

Participants

Based upon my reading of Curtis et al (2004) I assumed that the young people would be empowered by their involvement in the research process. Similarly it was expected that there would be a use in the teenage females informing research wanting to further understand their experiences and perceptions of services accessible to them. However, this assumes that pupils have the knowledge, insight and communication abilities to do so and it is evident that such research may be more problematic with other groups of participants.

When undertaking my interviews with the pupils, I realised that the research may have been limited by the method of data collection being used. The pupil interviews were short and as I transcribed the audio recordings, I became aware that the expressive and receptive language needs of the pupils could have impacted on their abilities to communicate their thoughts about their experiences through language. Although pictures were used to support

the pupils' understanding of the semi-structured interview questions, I felt that depending on expressive language alone, for the girls to communicate their experiences, may have been limiting. Their attention skills could have been an additional factor affecting their length of response and willingness to engage in the discussion.

A comparison of transcripts highlighted a stark difference in the volume of information provided by the three participant groups. This meant that in comparison to the staff and me, contributions of pupil views to the analytical process were less. During this process I found myself working hard to do justice to the pupil participants. A method of facilitating views as pupils engaged in drawing (individually or as a group) may have been beneficial to the process. It is possible that the abstract and/or intense nature of the 1:1 interview may have been off-putting. It is arguable that the staff and my own views that a focus group with the pupils would be problematic, may have been proven wrong, especially if the session to facilitate views was undertaken much like the art programme sessions where the atmosphere was often buzzing with conversation.

It is arguable that participant views relating to their experiences may have been largely affected by their attendance in the sessions. It is possible that those pupils (and staff) who had missed a number of the art sessions may have developed quite a different perception of the environment for example. This limitation due to attendance was a less prevalent LOT interpreted in the *difficulties identified* MOT network. It was evident that this was a factor perceived by participants to effect confidence of individuals and group cohesion (Appendix XXIII). However, due to the nature of the pupils and the provisions as a whole, the identification of a solution to this limitation was proven to be problematic.

These findings shed some light on the potential barriers to including pupils with BESDs in research. In line with Curtis *et al.* (2004) and Hill (1997), it highlights some of the creative methods which may need to be used to enhance the strength of voice of those groups of

young people at the margins. The study exemplifies the richness of information that can be obtained through the use of a research process which involves 'spending time' (Morris 1998) or 'joining in with the activities' (Bearison, 1991, cited in Beresford, 1997, p. 29) of pupils. The investigation highlighted a need to use more creative methods in situations where listening and speaking was proven to be problematic or 'boring' for pupils. It is arguable that these findings are similar to those presented in Curtis *et al.*'s (2004) study who highlighted the need to build on visual, non-verbal and game or even computer-based approaches with hard to reach pupils as described for example, in Boyden & Ennew (1997), O'Kane (2000) and Shephard & Treseder (2002).

As noted in the mind map which represents the MOTs interpreted from the TA of my reflective research diary ([Appendix XIX.](#)), there were a range of negative experiences in my attempts to engage in research with the excluded teenage females. These were mainly associated with feelings of uncertainty, lack of control and fear that completing the research would not be an achievable task. I was aware throughout that if one pupil stated that she did not wish to continue their involvement in the programme or participate in the interviews for example, then the rest of the pupil group would (and had the permission and right to) conform with their peer in withdrawing consent. This experience supported my flexibility and a heightened awareness (and monitoring) of ethical practice as the research journey progressed.

Instruments

I found the use of video equipment extremely stressful and frustrating. Obtaining and using the equipment was a large hurdle for me. Although I worked with a colleague in compiling a set of individual reflections on the first and final art sessions, these were omitted from the analysis as I found it very difficult to make strong, conclusive comparisons. Throughout my experience of the programme I had come to realise that every session varied greatly with

regard to the pupils' behaviour and adult interactions for example. It is possible that a longer programme would have resulted in film-clips of the first and final session in which the comparisons made, could be more clear and informative. Filming was seen as a useful method through which results of research could be fed back to staff and for adults involved in the programme to identify significant observations independently. There is scope for an EP to support staff in the interpretation of observations which could be used to enhance the development of practice in settings but also to enrich research such as this.

The use of video equipment may have affected the group sessions due to discomfort of participants with being filmed. In the sessions in which video equipment was used, the pupils helped me to set up. In interviews some participants chose to hold the audio-recorder to their mouth. Such attention to the recording devices could detract from the real life situation.

Ethics and informed consent

P3's parent was not able to complete the permission slip in time for the start of the programme. P3 had completed her consent form and so it was agreed that verbal consent from her parent would suffice. Gillick- Fraser Competence (1986) states that children under sixteen can be legally competent to give their consent if they have, 'sufficient understanding and intelligence to enable him or her to understand fully what is proposed'.

After meeting P3, working through the information leaflet and observing her involvement in the planning session, P3 was seen (under this definition), to be eligible to give consent. I would have liked to have made an attempt to telephone all parent(s) and carer(s) to explain the research before the consent forms were complete. Although I had provided a contact number and an explanation that support in accessing the information leaflet could be sought, I was aware that verbal contact may have been helpful for some.

Although I have attempted to conceal the identity of pupils, schools and staff by changing their names and locations, I am aware that it may be possible for participants to identify themselves. Therefore, I have made efforts to write in a way that is respectful to all.

In relation to ethical implications for myself as a researcher, I felt that it may have been useful to have ensured that after a programme session a time-slot in the day was protected to reflect and adjust. I found the programme difficult and it was evident that at times coming to the PRU straight from a visit and going on to another visit after the programme session could be classed as poor practice. It is important to recognise that work such as this can be lonely and risky. It is essential that professionals engaging with pupils at this level should be able to step out of their professional shoes and tell their story as a human being. Regular supervision slots specifically related to the art programme could be classed as a necessity.

Methodologies and Analysis

There are many weaknesses with the methodology for example, the level of subjectivity. One of my reservations about qualitative research was how do you avoid confirming everything you initially thought, especially when engaging in an inductive, latent, constructionist TA approach which relies heavily on interpretive work. I also questioned at times whether I was making it up as I went along. This experience felt unnerving for me in comparison to the feelings of security which statistical analysis provides and which I have become accustomed to in the past.

Although TA was observed as being a highly flexible analytic approach this meant that there was potential for a broad range of things to be said about the data. This made the higher-phase analysis a very difficult and overwhelming task, in which I experienced a significant amount of personal turmoil over what themes to miss out of further discussion. As I was completing the key initial stages of my analysis which involved organising and formulating all

of the extracts, codes, subthemes and MOTs I was continually conscious of my reasoning behind placing the codes and their extracts in certain positions (see Appendix XIII). A colleague completing the task may have created a very different web of themes and identified links between extracts, codes and themes that was not apparent to me. I was sensitive to the fact that I had been immersed in the processes of the arts programme and data collection and prior to the analytical stage had completed a critical review of the literature. This theoretical sensitivity and my inability to totally 'bracket' all previous knowledge made inductive TA (in its purest sense) a problematic task. Similarly, I was aware that distancing myself completely from my preconceptions and constructs was an attempted yet potentially impossible task. I was also conscious that the effectiveness of the TA undertaken in this study may be highly dependent upon the reflective and interpretive skills of the researcher. At times (when overwhelmed by the data) I realised that my capacity may have been reduced.

I have included many extracts of the participants' data to show how my interpretations were made. This will hopefully allow for my subjectivity to be understood and evaluated by those reading this thesis. I now feel that it may have been useful to have asked a colleague to complete the thematic-map exercise, as the credibility of my results could have been assessed through triangulation of MOTs. In this study, time constraints did not allow for this lengthy process to be repeated. However, I was able to experience the use of peer support and supervision and how this allowed my interpretations and decisions to be rationalised. I believe that this supported the process in becoming more rigorous and thorough. This is a method of use which was noted by Yardley (2008).

It is impossible to forget that this is in effect a subjective study with the subjectivity arising through the accounts of six people's experiences of engaging in the arts programme through my interpretation of those accounts. This raises questions about the extent to which the

results can be generalized. This was something which was discussed in greater depth in the methodology section (p64-66). On further reflection I came to realise that it is arguable that it is the reader who can infer whether they have learnt from reading the account (Scaife & Wellington, no date). It is hoped that by being transparent in relation to my positionality, by describing the process of analysis and my interpretations in depth, and including significant numbers of extracts in the analytical account, then the reader's ability to engage with, comprehend and potentially learn from the experiences which have emerged out of the research process will be facilitated.

It is also important to remember that case studies such as this are only ever partial accounts of a person or person(s) in a situation; they never capture the individual or the situation in his/her or its entirety. The study could be classed therefore as a snapshot of reality and perceptions which were very specific to the situation and those individuals involved.

However, this study has been able to capture the views and experiences of a small group of people and the ideographic nature of the study could be seen as strength as it has provided an in-depth account of the unique experiences. This could support a richer global understanding of a situation and may allow deep reflection in the reader. This study in turn could lead to results which could spark off further experimental investigation.

The art programme was short lived and so one of the limitations of my study is very-much in line with those findings in Wilkin *et al.*'s (2005) investigation. It is arguable that short-term interventions in this field, though often of immediate value, are potentially unlikely to have lasting effects upon the lives and life chances of young people. In Wilkin *et al.*'s report, it was stated that young people in PRUs often experience difficulties that 'cannot be fixed in the short term'. It could be argued that often the lives of these young people have been filled by 'short-termism' where they have moved from one institution to another time-after-

time. Time was one of the less prevalent LOTs that emerged from the data which related to the MOT *difficulties identified* (see [Appendix XXII](#)). Therefore, in concordance with Wilkin *et al.* (2005), I express the need for sustained support if the benefits of group activities such as this are to endure. If provided with consistency, it is possible that the involvement of young people in similar activities, could serve as a 'counterweight' to their prior hap-hazard experiences. Such young people as those involved in this study, may have lived through interrupted relationships with staff, the loss of friendships and various other grievances that were also noted in Le Count's (2000) research investigating the negative effects which exclusion and disaffection are associated with. This study of the experiences of participants in the art programme highlighted some short term effects but also allowed the potential which such work could have in the longer term to be uncovered. In particular the findings show that the effectiveness of similar short term projects may be limited by the anxieties felt by young people resulting from change and uncertainty in the novel nature of such programmes. Longer periods may be essential to allow this anxiety to be reduced (and for benefits to outweigh these feelings) over time.

Recommendations for further research

Following on from this piece of research a number of avenues were identified which may be beneficial to explore further:

- I felt that it would have been useful to return to participants to further investigate those salient themes which emerged out of the data, to assess their relevance and to see how the MOTs *ethos/climate of the environment, conversation and art* may have contributed to:
 1. Relationship formulation
 2. The development of new skills
 3. Learning about themselves
 4. Identifying and understanding needs (of self and others)
 5. The potential for change to be facilitated
 6. Pupil re-engagement

Having the capacity to work with the young people as co-researchers to construct the analysis and interpretation phase is something that would have been highly attractive to me if more time had been available.

- An investigation of the interaction between the MOTs and the facilitatory role which art was interpreted as playing. I would have like to have developed a deeper understanding of the specific role which art had to play in the social process occurring. An investigation into the consistency of this role across different groups may support generalizability.
- I also would have found it useful to return to the participants to investigate to what extent *ethos/climate, conversations and art* were of value in their experience of the programme. Although the analysis allowed prevalence to be measured in the data it

may have been useful to use a measurement that was less dependent on language.

A scoring method of value/importance could be followed by an option to explain why. It is possible that because the programme was entitled an 'art programme' pupils and staff were more susceptible to talk about art in the interview.

- The art programme in this study could only act as the initial part of the process of social change. It would have been beneficial to investigate the direct impact which the programme has on individual and social change in the long term.
- An investigation of the impact of the programme on the emotional and mental health of all participants over time may have been insightful.
- Further analysis and interpretation of the mismatches in perceptions between pupils, staff and my reflective diary would have been interesting. Those experiences of individuals and the perceptions of others relating to their experiences (i.e. the staff's perceptions of how the girls experienced sessions in comparison to how the pupils actually presented their experiences) may have been significantly different.
- I would have liked to have explored what other activities embedded into a similar group work structure may be successful and whether the flexibility and creative element of the activity had an important part to play. This could have been done through brainstorming sessions with the pupils P1, P2 and P3 (or with other populations of pupils) and putting their ideas into group work practice. Pupils could have been involved as joint-researchers in evaluating the experiences of each programme type.
- I would have liked to have observed and analysed the difficult behaviour in each programme session to see how it might have changed (e.g. decreased in frequency and severity) as the environment and relationships developed. I also would have found it useful to identify potential triggers for positive and negative behaviours observed.

- Further study into staff and pupil perceptions of each other pre-and post-programme may have been insightful. Information relating to level of familiarity and knowledge about individuals, strength of relationship and sense of belonging in the group/setting as a whole, may have further informed an understanding of the impact of the programme on relationships. Similarly, pre-and post- measures of staff's perceptions of pupil personal qualities, level of skill and behaviour may have provided a rich picture of how perceptions and expectations might have changed through experience.
- I feel that it would have been useful to look in more detail at what happened in each session and over the duration of a programme such as this. I would have liked to have had the capacity to measure (in more depth and with increased accuracy) to what extent: participants are listened to by others, are engaged in positive/negative interactions, the type of conversation occurring, the frequency at which different sorts of skills are being taught/learnt through interaction, staff employed a positive (as opposed to a reactive nor disciplinarian) behaviour management approach to challenging pupil behaviour etc. This could have been done through direct observation (naturalistic/frequency counts) or filming of all sessions.
- An investigation with the staff and pupils from the programme into the barriers which prevent pupil/ staff equality in other areas of school life. It may have been beneficial to further investigate what effects inequality might have on the relationships which staff and pupils experience.
- A study with an aim to uncover to what extent art is anxiety provoking in comparison to other areas of learning or activities available in school, may have allowed the interaction between participants and the artistic process to be understood further. It may have been interesting to investigate whether the level of anxiety in group members changed throughout the programme. Similarly, it would

be useful to have a more developed understanding of whether there are other activities in which anxiety is reduced at a more rapid rate through experience over time.

- Further investigation into self directed learning and independence may allow practitioners to understand how to better support pupils in developing independence skills. A study investigating pupil ability to self direct in art in comparison to other subjects would be of interest. An understanding of how confidence in independence may increase over time in different subject areas could be useful and may highlight the positive role which art may play.
- I would have liked to have used a pre- and post measure of staff confidence in their ability to meet the needs of female pupils (e.g. their emotional health and wellbeing).
- An assessment of pupil attitude to school over the duration of the art programme may have allowed understanding to be gained relating to how their involvement may have affected their engagement in education. The use of a similar study in a setting where an art programme had been embedded over a longer period could provide more conclusive results however.
- It would be interesting to see if similar experiences are presented with different groups of participants. This would allow it to be possible to research whether certain personalities are required for such group-work to be effective and for certain experiences and outcomes to emerge. Undertaking similar programmes in different PRU provisions would allow a greater understanding into the type of school setting which may be better suited to a programme being established. Moreover, it may have been useful to have checked the accounts (presented for each MOT) with another group of participants who had experienced the process. This may have added to the credibility of the interpretations

- Further research investigating difficulties which are presented during creative group-work with other similar populations of young people. This may allow opportunities or programmes to be developed which are more accessible to these young people. Barriers identified during different forms of group work (i.e. nurture groups/ social skills groups/ circles of friends etc.) could be compared and contrasted.
- An investigation into the interpretation that 'success' in art was more fluid in comparison to other curriculum subjects. A large scale study with a range of pupils attending mainstream and alternative provisions may be insightful in informing the value associated with creative activities which has been highlighted in this study.
- Further study into the need for a facilitator or 'outsider' in such programmes may be useful especially if the potential role of an EP in such creative work is to be fully understood. It may be useful to investigate whether equality and cohesion can be achieved in the absence of a facilitator and what specific qualities of an EP (as opposed to a visiting artist or teacher) are valued by participants in such work.

Conclusions and Implications

This case study aimed to explore the experiences of pupils, staff and an EP researcher involved in the development and implementation of an arts programme in a PRU. The latent TA completed under a constructionist paradigm indicates that three key inter-related factors (*ethos or climate/conversations/art*) were interpreted as contributing to the experiences of participants. Two other highly prevalent themes were interpreted which were associated with experiences; one which was perceived as outcomes/benefits and another related to difficulties.

The *ethos/climate of the environment* was highlighted in the analysis as something which was important to participants. Pupils and staff were seen to value the relaxed, calm, secure and supportive environment experienced. It was suggested that the setting felt special and attractive to pupils. Feelings of equality between adults and young people were also interpreted as being highly beneficial as well as feelings of cohesion and a sense of belonging. The pupils and staff valued the female only group in a male dominated environment. Interpretation of the data suggests that the environment may have impacted upon the development of more positive behaviour of pupils during the sessions. Similarly, links with relationship formation were also explored.

Conversations were another aspect of the programme which was perceived as being novel and valuable by group members. Opportunities for pupils to learn about staff and visa versa were described as being possible contributory factors to the facilitation of relationships between pupils and staff. There was a pupil and staff interest in learning more about each other. A pupil openness and potential need to offload was identified. This ability was interpreted as being facilitated by the openness and relaxed nature adopted by staff throughout the sessions. Experiences of conversations were suggestive of a perceived opportunity for pupils to demonstrate, practice and learn interpersonal skills. Moreover, one

further interpretation of data linked to this area was an opportunity for staff to learn. Their accounts implied that through conversations staff may have developed an awareness of the pupils' emotional needs and how these might be met through conversation. There was potential for staff to come to the realisation that, through the process of accessing more information about the pupils, relationships and practice could be enhanced.

The importance of *art* was also noted. It was interpreted as having a facilitatory effect in the phenomena under study. Pupils and staff were shown to enjoy engaging in creative activities. Pupils were also interpreted as accessing feelings of achievement and success. Interpretation was suggestive of these two factors having a large part to play in enabling pupils to engage in and access the other benefits of the sessions. The involvement of staff and pupils in similar creative activities alongside each other was viewed as contributing to the equality and trust felt in the environment. Pupils were seen to enjoy the control and freedom embedded into practical tasks which may have reduced the need for resistance against staff. The experiences of group members were also suggestive of art being seen as an activity which had a calming, relaxing and potentially therapeutic effect.

Pupils and staff were seen to experience a range of *outcomes/benefits*. Pupils were interpreted through their experience to potentially develop skills to interact with female peers and obtain or provide support from/to other group members. Interpretation implied that pupils also developed a reflective nature and self awareness which may have promoted their emotional wellbeing. Experiences explored by participants implied that in the art sessions there was a marked improvement in pupil behaviour. This was classed as a further area in which pupils were perceived as experiencing feelings of success. The positive qualities of pupils were also shown to emerge and were interpreted as another factor with potential to contribute to the development of more positive relationships in the group as well as more positive self perceptions of individual participants. Interpretation of

information relating to staff was suggestive of them learning that their perception of pupil abilities (and their expectations) were inaccurate. Staff were also shown to enjoy taking a different role and interacting with the girls in a new way. Both of these findings are indicative of the possibility of change being promoted.

The final theme interpreted from the data *difficulties identified* was suggestive of those negative experiences of participants in the group. Pupil sensitivity to mess and feelings of claustrophobia, tension between group members and pupil difficulties with behaviour and concentration are three negative experiences that emerged. It is arguable that such difficulties could be classed as barriers hindering engagement. However, this study highlights how some of the other difficulties noted, such as the anxiety provoking nature of art, discomfort caused by freedom and need for adult support in working through anxieties, could be classed as opportunities for pupils to develop skills which could be transferrable in other learning situations. The importance of ethos, relationships and activity could be key in supporting the promotion of such skills.

Two salient themes were seen to emerge out of the analysis and interpretation of the data which have been noted in the descriptions above; an increase in positive *relationships* between participants and potential for *learning/development*. Both of these themes could be associated with the facilitation of change in individuals or systems, these ideas are areas in which further research would be needed.

Implications for practice

In the previous section some recommendations for future practice were provided. However I will now discuss some further implications of the findings. Although this study was based upon the views of a small number of pupils, it has uncovered several areas of learning which may have implications for other researchers, educational practitioners and EPs wanting to work with excluded young people or in a similar way. As the findings cannot be generalized, the suggestions which follow are made tentatively and are not aiming to be applicable for all professionals, young people nor all creative forms of group work.

General reflections

- Pupils may benefit from environments in schools that are relaxed and nurturing. The development of 'special places' in school could have an impact upon pupil perceptions of their educational experiences.
- Opportunities in which young people are able to feel equal to the adults within school may be valuable. Feelings of equality between pupils and staff could be enhanced through experiences in which they are able to learn alongside each other.
- The presence of female only group work in male orientated provisions could be of high importance to excluded young people in the promotion of interactional skills required for social inclusion. Moreover, it may be of benefit to provide pupils with a peer group with whom they are able to relate. Limited access to a same sex peer group could affect the development of the sense of self of pupils. This has implications for LAs with regards to their placement of pupils in such provisions.
- The opportunity for pupils to simply sit and chat with a group of adults and peers may have an important role to play for these young people. These could act as an opportunity for pupils to demonstrate, practise and learn interpersonal skills. Pupils may also require opportunities to discuss their problems, express themselves and to

access advice or to offer help to others. This has implications for a school or schools hoping to support the psychological wellbeing and mental health of its pupils. A study by the DCSF (2009) highlighted the effects which the promotion of these factors in pupils can have on attainment.

- An importance may be associated with pupil and staff opportunities to learn about each other more holistically. Such experiences could contribute to relationship formation and a sense of belonging for pupils in schools. This in turn could affect pupil engagement and attitudes to education.
- The integration of activities throughout the school day in which pupils can have freedom and responsibility in the self-directed nature of learning may support the development of skills that could be utilised in other areas of their educational experiences. Embedding less structure and a reduced focus on outcome in some learning activities may have an empowering effect on pupils. It could also adapt their approach to learning which may contribute to their level of anxiety in school.
- Art and creative activities may provide disengaged young people with feelings of enjoyment and success. These experiences could have a key role to play in supporting a more positive view of school and/or learning. Art activities may be more accessible to young people and could be a method through which independence skills and resilience in learning could be developed.
- Creative activities may be used with pupils with emotional and behavioural needs when they are experiencing a high level of emotion. It is possible that the calming and potentially therapeutic effect which engagement in creativity may have could support the development of a more secure internal locus of control.
- Involvement in group work and/or activities in which pupils are encouraged to take the lead may result in a reduction of pupils' feelings of being dominated and/or challenged by adults in learning situations. The pressure/threatening nature of the

educational experience could be reduced. Pupils may encounter a reduction in their anxiety and need to resist staff expectations which in turn could result in pupils demonstrating fewer behaviours associated with avoidance, conflict and tensions with staff. This could allow pupils to experience success in relation to their classroom behaviour. The opportunity for pupils to demonstrate more of their positive qualities may have an important role to play in feelings of cohesion and relationship development with staff and peers within the educational setting they attend.

- Through a supportive and trusting group environment it is possible that anxieties associated with creativity and freedom in learning could be approached and supported. Through the use of potentially less anxiety provoking activities such as art, it is possible that pupils could develop skills which could support other areas of learning. It is important that staff do not protect pupils from experiencing anxiety. In this study, the low level anxiety associated with art that was presented, was observed as an opportunity for the pupils to develop resilience.
- Due to the therapeutic effect which engagement in artwork and conversation can have, there was a need identified in this study for staff to be sensitive to disclosures and other issues that might arise in such work. The potential for further specialist support over the longer term was noted as one area to consider when working with vulnerable pupils in this way.
- It is important that staff working in PRUs are provided with opportunities throughout the day to meet their own needs. Holland and Hommerton (1994) noted the importance of 'breathing space for class teachers' (Preece and Timmins, 2004, p25). They may benefit from opportunities in which they are able to 'step down' from their role and are able to interact more naturally with pupils. It may be important for PRUs as systems to assess how the ethos of their setting could allow for lower pressure experiences (possibly through the use of new

activities/programmes/joint learning approaches) to be implemented into their setting to provide valuable support.

- Through the implementation of novel group activities offering a new 'space' and 'climate' within PRU settings, it is possible that personal reflection, learning and changes may be facilitated.
- The effectiveness of group work with this group of young people may be enhanced through a high adult: pupil ratio in sessions. Holland and Hommerton (1994) also highlighted the benefits for pupils with behavioural difficulties of 'opportunities for respite and support in small groups' (Preece and Timmins, 2004,p.25). Pupils in this study were shown to enjoy the level of attention but were also seen to benefit from 1:1 adult support in working through difficulties (and demonstrating/developing resilience skills) with their artwork. The implications and arrangements required for this higher level intervention may need to be considered by schools.
- Pupils may benefit from short bursts of activity where a level of variation is presented throughout a session. Pupils may also initially require activities from which the sense of reward/success is more immediate. Skills could be developed over the duration of a programme as pupil confidence in creativity and art materials increases. This could be done by gradually extending the time (and investment) which activities require to complete.

Reflections on my own practice

- An EP's involvement in the art program highlighted the potential for future work in this area. I feel that I have developed a unique and occasional tool that may support me in working with groups of individuals to create a space which is potentially empowering and beneficial. This role felt more comfortable for me as it moves away from the traditional EP SEN role and further towards one which allows access for all children and young people without the need for a perceived within child deficit. Moreover, it is possible through working in this way I experienced that it was possible to immerse myself and obtain a wave of understanding associated with the workings of a PRU as a system. I felt that the richness of information obtained about the group of pupils and staff was immense and its collection felt more natural in comparison to the time-consuming and abstract 1:1 work usually performed. This study exemplifies the effectiveness of EPs undertaking group work and working at a more front line level with the young people and staff we engage with.
- It is possible that resulting from my experiences I may now be in a good position to provide training to staff in schools or could act as a facilitator in supporting their development of group work in their settings. This is something which I have begun in one of my high schools. Although the focus of the group is very different (aiming to support the development of social skills) in my facilitatory role I have been able to ask questions in a consultation approach to bring the thinking of staff forwards.
- By using this approach in my future practice, I could support settings in the evolution of their perceptions of the role of EPs. In my experience as an Assistant and Trainee EP I have observed a reactive approach whereby the EP is frequently called into school with a view that they can 'fix' a problem pupil. I have learnt that school may often obtain the advice of a professional when they have reached a point of

desperation. By working in this way I have witnessed how EPs could adopt a more preventative approach with schools and pupils.

- The research highlighted a potential need for non-verbal and more creative methods to be used in facilitating the views of these young people. Pupils were seen to find conversation and the requirement for sustained attention problematic. This could be applicable both in my regular casework as well as any future research in which I might hope to engage in with similar groups of teenagers.

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Appendices

Appendix I

Table 1-Some of the Central Messages from ‘Pupils with Problems’ (DFE, 1994a and DFE, 1994b) and Daniels *et al.*’s (2003) review of policy, practice and research exploring methods of supporting excluded pupils and/or preventing disengagement.

Improving school ‘ethos’ and whole-school approaches help to lessen disaffection and hence the need for alternative provision and exclusions.
Personal and social education/ emotional development 'must continue to be a central concern for mainstream education' (DFE, 1994b, p.10).
Expert teaching and skilled behaviour management also lessen disaffection and disruption.
A collaborative style of working with pupils, allowing them to contribute to their programmes of work or behaviour management can help to foster feelings of self-worth.
Establishing closer ties and working practices with other agencies is necessary.
Access to supportive social networks (Evans, 1995; Garmarnikow and Green, 1999; Hayton, 1999).
‘Resilience’ nurtured by a network of affectionate relationships (Clarke and Clarke, 2000, Mental Health Foundation, 1999).
Having a pro-social peer group (Clarke <i>et al.</i> , 2000).
Developing an internal locus of control (Hayden, 2002; Jackson and Martin, 1998; Ratcliffe, 1999).

From Daniels et al. (2003) p140-141

Appendix II:**Table 2-** Summary of Wilkin *et al.*'s (2005) findings of the (short term) effects and effectiveness of arts activities in PRUs and LSUs

Pupils
Increased Knowledge and skills in the particular art-form
Improved listening and communication skills and ability to interact within a group setting
Increased confidence and self-esteem, leading to positive changes in behaviour
The 'buzz' of participating; pupils gained a sense of achievement, satisfaction and, above all, enjoyment from the projects. Enjoyment of education was recognised as a priority by the previous Government and has been described as 'the birthright of every child' (Clarke, 2003).
Teachers
Improved knowledge and skills in the particular art form
An impact on general classroom practice, e.g. using demonstration rather than instruction; new approaches to managing challenging behaviour; including the arts in their own lessons
Higher expectations of their pupils
Artists
The development of specific teaching skills, particularly a dual artist/teacher role
More understanding of the issues and needs of the client group
An enthusiasm for future work in this area.
Potential positive contribution for pupils
Significance for pupils' re-engagement with learning
The projects can provide a distinctive contribution in that activities are practical rather than academic; contemporary and relevant to the pupils' own interests; allow pupils to achieve, when they have previously mainly had experience of failure, and provide an opportunity for the young people to express themselves more positively. They provide a space where there is a focus on the development of the whole child, particularly in relation to his/her sense of self.
Provide examples of how education can be made enjoyable.
Other Findings highlighted
The importance of the presence and role of an outsider (in the study's case-the artist) in the success of the projects. They were seen as experts coming in from the outside world and people who were 'on their (the pupils) wavelength'.
The pupils responded positively to the artists' more relaxed and informal approach to teaching, their positive attitudes towards the young people and their willingness to listen to the pupils' ideas.
The presence of an artist with fresh skills, ideas and attitudes can inform general teaching practice both beyond the life of the projects and in other curriculum areas.
There was a legacy left in the PRUs/LSUs of real enthusiasm for further participation in similar projects and all involved were unanimous in their belief in the cost effectiveness of the provision.
Key factors in successful projects include: time; funding; and a commitment (staff and artists) to collaboration, partnership-working and openness to change.

from Wilkin *et al.*(2005) p.92-94

Appendix III- example of my reflective research diary transcript

Session 3

22nd.06.2010

11am

Present: Me, P1, P2, P3, S1, S2, S3

I felt less nervous about this session in comparison to the previous sessions. I felt more able to enjoy it. I felt that part of this was that the program had run without me while I had been attending a 4 week block at university. I felt that there was less of an ownership placed on myself, I felt more able to sit back and I felt that there was the potential for me to be able to act more like an equal participant in the project.

I wore my jeans and T-Shirt. I felt more comfortable and more like myself in these clothes in comparison to the week before.

When I arrived at the school P1 was alone. P2 had gone with a member of staff to pick up P3 and S1 from the other setting. Again this may have contributed to her feeling excluded from the P2 P3 friendship. P1 met me in the entrance hall. We had a general chat about the weekend as we went up to the art room. It was interesting that on this occasion there was no fuss or show from P1 and no negativity about having to attend. I felt that maybe P1 had learnt to become used to the sessions and possibly myself (a stranger) and was less unsettled by the change in routine or more confident or at ease about her abilities in the art session. P1 helped me to put out everyone's work and uncover the block of clay from the plastic. I asked P1 if it would be okay if we didn't have the music on today (as I had a headache). I also felt that the music had caused disruption in the previous session. Because of the songs which P2 and P3 had chosen, the room was made to feel chaotic. It had stopped conversations from occurring and it may have caused P1 to walk out. Therefore I wondered whether she was sensitive to noise and had found that it had made it difficult to engage in the session. I wanted to ensure that people involved in the program felt calm and settled. I wanted to prevent any external factors from risking this. I did have a headache but I also felt that by informing the pupils of this (rather than just stating that I didn't want it on) may have given them some insight into how I might be feeling and how the music might have an effect on my enjoyment of the session. Rather than demanding, I was asking them to be empathetic.

A fan had been placed in the room which made the room much cooler. P1 opened a window in preparation. I felt that she may have been aware of the uncomfortable environment which the heat had caused at the previous session and possibly how this had affected her own behaviour.

P1 stated that, "my work is rubbish" I wondered whether uncovering the work of other people was difficult for her. It seemed that P1 may be constantly comparing herself to others and may have found it difficult to perceive others doing well. She complained that she couldn't find her clay and that she wanted to start something new this week. I found it interesting that P1 was often the first one to change her mind about activities and would flit from using one media type to another. In a way although I saw that P1 would abandon pieces which she thought were not going well, I again I wondered whether she had a strength in her willingness to try new things. This interested me as it is possible that P1 was often the one to start exploration with new media first, may have highlighted a part of her character. It is possible that P1 is a person that likes to be in control and to show others that she isn't scared to take the lead. Both myself, S2 and P2 were shown to follow her in the

creation of a mask. Although I hadn't thought of this at the time at which this decision was made, I was aware that P1 will have influenced this decision. This suggests a role reversal whereby 2 adults were shown to take a pupil's lead in exploration. I wondered if P1's potential needs to control were met through this. I asked her if she wanted to do anymore to her mask. She stated that it was 'rubbish', picked it up and asked '...if she could put it in the bin'. I was surprised that she had asked my permission as this was something which I had not seen in P1 before. She was seen previously to simply go ahead with what she wanted to do. I also wondered whether P1 found it difficult (privacy/lack of confidence and self belief) when others looked at her artwork. By throwing it away, she may have been attempting to stop others from seeing her work or to draw a line under the exploration she had had with the material. I wondered whether her attempt at throwing the mask away was not a representation of her mask being worthless but that the perceived benefits were in the process of making. It is possible that once the process is over, P1 wants to leave the evidence of her experience in the art room. But again I wondered whether she wanted me to fight and prove the value of her art work. Her threats to throw her mask away were relatively public which implies that she may have been seeking recognition. I informed her that it was her choice what she did with the pieces she made. She threw it in the bin and stated that she ...'wanted to look in the art cupboard'. She went and got the keys and S2 to help her. P1 brought the fabric box to the table. Again it seemed that she was not scared of trying out different materials. She was not easily led and did not copy the ideas of others. She sat alone and began to make a bow. This suggested some creativity and independence. She seemed to know what she wanted to make very quickly. She asked S2 about the practicalities of what she was hoping to make, "how will I stick this bow together S2?" S2 and myself helped her to find some needles and threads but she seemed to have her own idea. She asked S2 if '(she) would get her a safety pin from downstairs?' P1 appeared to enjoy the 2:1 adult attention. She had the adults running around her so that she was able to do her bow. She was much more focused without the other pupils present. She explained that she was making her bow to go on her mask. This initially suggested that she did value her mask and was not going to leave it in the bin. Again I felt that this display may have been a cry for attention and adult praise of her work. However, she later informed me that she was going to make a new mask. I thought about this process, it informed me that through the artwork, the pupils (or P1) may be building up some resilience. Although her first attempt at a mask (in her view) had been unsuccessful, she was setting about trying to make a better one. Perceived failure is a part of life but, I wondered whether if in this environment and through art-work (where the focus was not on the outcome) failure was easier to learn to deal with. P1 appeared to be very engaged and keen to get going without the other pupils present. I wondered whether her difficulties engaging in other sessions was a result of concentration difficulties or was part of a role that she felt a pressure to maintain in front of her peers. She looked at all the different glitter. When P1 appeared to be struggling and asked S2 for help she quickly protested when S2 did it a way she did not agree with she stated, "not like that S2!" and continued alone. S2 explained, "I am no good at things like that P1" I felt that this may have been useful for P1 to hear. That even the adults feel unsure at times and lack confidence. (Possibly highlighting that the adults are learning too). Similarly P1 may have felt that the expectations of others around her may not have been high as they lacked confidence in their own abilities. Similarly, it highlighted that it was ok for adults to lack confidence too. Through S2's attempts to have a go despite her view that 'she wasn't very good' she was modelling how P1 might be able to cope with similar feelings.

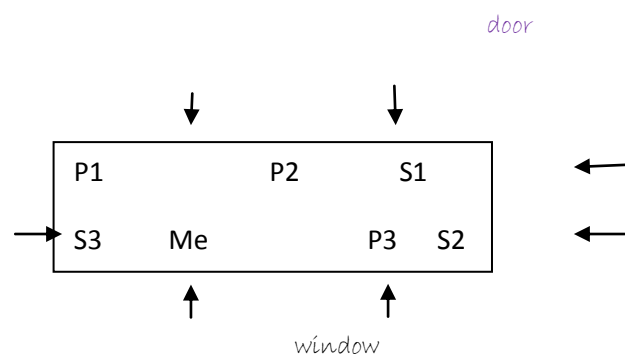
J joined us. She asked for help from S2. J highlighted that, "(she) is so slow". Again this may have been beneficial for P1 to hear that an adult needed help and didn't feel competent. P1 highlighted, "you are a bit slow S3." P1 had completed a number of different activities by this point in the program and may have been conscious that she was much faster at working than an adult. This may have affected (boosted) her confidence and self belief. It was clear that she was aware that J was a

beginner with that material also. S3's comment also implied that the focus was not on what you make or how much you make but simply enjoying making what you are working on.

I decided to join P1 with using some of the beads from the fabric box to decorate my mask. Again, without thinking I was following P1's lead. Some of my jewels had dropped off as the paint had dried. Again this was another opportunity for P1 to see something going wrong for someone else. By continuing to work on the mask it is possible that I was providing an example of how to continue even when things go wrong. In a way all the adults present had modelled perseverance for P1 to observe. P1 was very calm and focused.

I informed S2 about not having any music (because of my headache). This was an opportunity for P1 to see that I was not just asking the pupils but making my request known to everyone. This prevented the blame being placed on the young people in the group.

L2, P2 and S1 arrived and joined the table. P2 sat next to P1 and P3 sat in her usual place next to me. It was interesting that although there were no set places on each of the sessions so far, the people involved appeared to have favoured places. They sat in similar positions each week.



N got her pot and stated that she wanted to paint it this week. She complained that the clay was still wet. She seemed to want permission from an adult as to whether it was safe to paint. I wondered if P2 may have found it difficult to simply ask for help directly or in a constructive way. She stated that her Nan had asked for her pot to be painted brown and red. I was quite surprised that P2 had been speaking with her Nan after her description which she had given of the difficulties they had been having the previous day. It was interesting that P2 had been discussing her work with her Nan at home. I wondered whether she had been thinking about the program and the work that she had been doing outside of the art-room. Did this mean she was enjoying this part of her school experience? I also questioned how often pupils such as P2 tended to talk with their parent(s)/carer(s) about the work they had done during their days at school. For many of these pupils, their parent(s)/carer(s) may have felt that school had often been a place where their child had experienced difficulties and felt negative about. It is possible that it was a rare event for parent(s)/carer(s) of these pupils to experience positive conversations with their children about school. Although P2 had spoken about the troubles which she had been having with her Nan at home, it seemed that the pot which she was creating showed that she cared. P2 was observed to have put a significant amount of time and care into the creation of her pot. I wondered if P2 felt proud of her pot and whether she had used her discussions with her Nan to show that despite their difficulties she did care (and had been working on something to give to her for some time as a token to show this). This made me question how often in secondary school pupils have the opportunity to take home work to show their parent(s)/carer(s). There was a part of me that believed that this was something which stopped after primary school. I

also wondered whether this group of individuals (who have difficulties accessing the curriculum and completing work) have the chance to feel proud of work which they have produced. I wondered whether their parent(s)/carer(s) had frequently been in a position to praise their child's work or to witness their success. P2 began to paint her pot.

Again I informed the girls that I had a bit of a headache and asked the whole group if we could keep the music off. Again I did not want to direct my instruction/request at any particular member of the group as I wanted to decision to be seen as a shared responsibility. As a result, throughout the session, none of the girls asked for music. This session seemed to involve a lot more conversations than the last. I wondered whether the girls were relaxing with each other and whether the group was starting to gel. Also, the whole group were present (all 4 adults and 3 pupils) and as we began our activities, no-one was late. At last! I could not help but feel that in all members of the project being present that security was added. The session felt more balanced, as if we were not waiting for anyone or no-one was missing out. I felt that punctuality and the attendance of all people may have been a contributing factor to the calmness and group cohesion in the session.

N spoke again about the difficulties which she had had with her Nan. She stated that she had left her lunch at home to annoy her and again had left the house shouting and swearing at her. It was as if P2 wanted to update the members of the group on the progress/developments on her difficulties since the last time it was spoken about.

S2 and S1 spoke amongst themselves for some time. I wondered how often the staff had time to speak together and whether the sessions provided an opportunity for that. I felt that the adults were more relaxed and were able to meet some of their own needs (de-stress) during the session. There was no high expectation on them in the session (no greater than those expectations of the pupils) and they were given permission to step down from their roles. P3 and P2 were shown to be quiet, listening in to the adult's conversations. They asked questions. S2 spoke about having been shopping for a dress which she was *'hoping to wear at the races that weekend'*. She showed the group a picture of the dress on her phone. P2 and P3 asked her where it was from. S2 spoke about her sister and also about having been woken up early by people on the street. S2 stated that *'people had been driving around the streets doing hand break turns'* etc. She joked about the area where she lived and what it was like. The girls (L2 and N) seemed to be familiar with the area and were attempting to guess who the people *'making trouble'* were. Although P2 had suggested the previous week that she had been involved in similar late night antisocial behaviour, P2 and P3 showed concern for S2 and demonstrated some empathy. S2 also spoke more generally about the heat in the room and having *'sweaty knees'*. This made the girls laugh-they all laughed together. Everyone seemed to enjoy the light-hearted atmosphere.

N and P3 asked S1 about her husband and son. S1 spoke about some difficulties which she had had in the past with ex-students egging her family home. P2 and P3 again attempted to work out who the young people were. S1 informed the girls about the effects which the behaviour had had on her family and how her son had been put in danger due to his allergies to dairy products. She spoke about the lengths that she had to go to ensure that all of the egg was cleaned up and spoke about the consequences which contact with the eggs may have had for her son. Again P2 and P3 showed concern in their responses. P2 really wanted to know who had done it. She seemed protective of S1 and implied that she wanted to get the people responsible back. The pupils seemed to have a real interest in finding out more about the staff. They wanted to know about them as people, about their relationships and families i.e. the sides of them that they might not see in school. The staff seemed very open and did not hold back in their responses to the questions the pupils asked. It is possible that by hearing how the behaviour of others had negative effects on S2 and S1 it is possible that they

would be more able to reflect on their own behaviour. It is possible that during these quite simple interactions, the young people were gaining greater insight and knowledge about the staff but potentially about themselves. Skills may also have been being developed e.g. empathy and reflexivity. The staff were also able to see that the pupils did care and were interested in knowing more about them. The pupils were able to see that the adults were not just simply made up of the personas which they saw in school. They were aware that this is a role that they played and they knew that there was more to them. It is possible that the pupils saw this as an opportunity to find out more about the adults and to see them as a 'whole' person. P3 and P2 showed an interest in where the different staff at school lived. It is possible that they were quite excited by S1 and S2's openness and wanted to know more. Part of me wondered if P3 and P2 were trying to push the boundary of privacy to see how much they could find out. However, S2 and S1 had a line which they were unwilling to cross. This made me think about how ethical it was for power imbalances to be reduced to a minimal level. The roles of staff could not be completely deleted as part of the process because, the staff had to continue working with the girls once the program had ended. P2 laughed. She seemed aware of her attempts to push the boundary as her laugh was sheepish (implying that she was aware that she was being cheeky and that she had been caught out). The session felt very light-hearted and pleasurable. It felt nurturing and relaxed. Everyone was engaged and there were few distracters.

Throughout the conversations P1 was quiet but was shown to be listening. She looked up at S2, S1, P2 and P3 on occasions. P1 was shown to ask S2 unrelated questions. I felt that these were attempts at involving herself in the conversations-by attempting to initiate conversations that were linked to situations which she had been involved in. She asked S2 if she had been 'walking her dog over the weekend (?)'. When I asked her how come? She informed me that S2 often walked her dog at the park near her house and would say hello to her. Again I felt that P1 lacked confidence in the group. She really wanted to belong and was starting to try harder to include herself. I saw that in this session that she was not running from the room and was actually trying to remain in the room and involve herself with the others. I wondered whether the room felt 'nice', 'homely' and a bit like a 'family' to the others present and whether this made the participants want to remain in the room. I asked P1 if she had a dog and this resulted in a relatively in-depth conversation. She looked at me and gave detailed explanations in her responses. This was a surprise as P1 had previously only been seen on most occasions to give very brief answers. She seemed to be keen to be engaged in a 1:1 adult conversation and was able to maintain it without too much support from myself. It is possible that because a number of in-depth conversations were going on around the room (mainly between S2, S1, P3 and P2), P1 may have felt less like our conversation would be overheard by the others. She spoke about the troubles which she and her family had had with her dog from him being a puppy. She spoke of the times she had taken him to the park and he had run off, attacked other dogs, bitten her etc. She explained that she was hoping to sell it and to get a new one. I was surprised how willing P1 was to speak about this topic for such a long time. She did not attempt to change the conversations and expanded her responses. It was much like a conversation you would have with a younger child e.g. when you are getting to know them. She was very willing to answer my questions and she developed the conversations without further encouragement. I wondered whether it was a novelty for her to speak with an adult about an every-day non-stressful topic. About something that was not to do with her and was an easy/non-judgemental/non-threatening conversation.

I felt that the conversations emerged easier when everyone was busy working. As they worked with their hands and focused on the materials it felt that it was easy to switch off from what was going on around you. At times I felt that I was less aware of the busy morning that I had had or the fact that this program was part of my doctoral research I found that in this session I was experiencing the most pleasant part of my day-I could switch off from the past or the future and happily explored my materials in the present. At times I looked forwards to being involved in a creative activity and going

to the PRU to be a part of the art session. When I was focused on making, it felt okay not to talk. I also observed that others did not always feel the need to talk. In some sessions individuals were very chatty and yet in others they were seen to be much quieter. I felt no expectation to talk and engage in conversations. I felt that there was an acceptance when busy with your hands that if you were not being sociable you were simply focusing on your pot/mask etc. There was a silent permission to not engage in conversation if you didn't feel the need to or to simply listen and not participate. I felt that quite a unique social context was created in the program sessions. As an 'outsider', I also felt that I was able to benefit from simply investing my energy in listening to the conversations of others; it allowed me to learn more about them as individuals. I thought about P1 who may have also felt a slight outsider in P2 and P3 friendship. I was able to see that through P1 being able to listen to their conversations it was possible time to be spent and knowledge gained from her simply being present. This shared experience alone, may have provided P1 with foundations and an increased confidence upon which some relationship with P3 and P2 together could be formed. There may have been points of reference which P1 could refer to in conversations with P3 in the future for example which P3 would have known that P1 had heard.

P1 spoke with S2 about her mum being '*forgetful*'. I wondered whether P1's conversation with me had given her the confidence to initiate conversations with other adults. I wondered if the adults felt safer for P1 to talk to as she was rarely seen to initiate a conversation directly with P2 or P3. She may have used these conversations to build her confidence in the group. She explained (smiling) that her '*...mum often forgot when she had grounded her and would go out*'. She gave an example from a day earlier in the week. She described a '*...big argument that she had had with her mum*' and indicated that she had been selfish ('*had refused to run her a bath*'). She also described '*...storming out of the house screaming at her mum*' and stated that '*...they would be shouting at each other one minute and loving the next*'. She spoke about times when her mum had asked her to run her baths, had been hammering the door down screaming at her to get off the computer, had gone out when she was meant to be grounded (leaving P1 alone to go out) and had chased her across the park shouting to make her come in. I felt that this may have been an attempt to link herself to P2 in some way and to try and develop a similarity (maybe she wanted to be seen to be like her). It was evident that she had listened carefully to P2's descriptions of the difficulties she had been having with her Nan and was linking her experiences of family difficulties (a strained relationship with an authoritative and key parental/carer figure) to this. I also felt that P2's story may have introduced P1 to be more open in her discussions about herself. She appeared to be more confident in this session-she seemed less threatened having P3 in her audience and seemed more relaxed (or less defensive through the use of her behaviour). P1 listened to P2 and P3 as they had a conversation and was seen to look up at them as she worked. Very subtly she seemed to be attempting to formulate a link with P3. She asked P3 a question but STILL appeared to be a little timid. P3 did respond however. I felt that something may have been happening in this session the dynamics seemed to be changing. P1 seemed to be happier being in the room and as if she wanted to be there (didn't want to miss out). P1 appeared to be making more of an effort with the group members and was shown to invest in conversations. P3 was also potentially less threatening and there were fewer conversations from P3 that could be classed as authoritative and patronising for the girls. She appeared to take less of a 'mother hen' role and seemed more relaxed in just being her. I felt that P3 may have also felt slightly threatened initially coming into a new setting with less familiar staff and P1 (who she didn't know). It is possible that because S1 was present (who worked at the setting where P1 was based) allowed P3 to feel more confident in being herself or restricted her from playing a 'mother hen' role. Moreover, it is possible that as time passed she was more relaxed with the other members.

P1 had finished her mask and bow but just sat quietly listening to the conversations. She was seen to pour out the glitter from the pots and mixed them with her fingers on the table. She then tried to get

the glitter back into the pots. P1 appeared to be more of an explorer. She was again seen to be messy and almost child-like with the materials. There was no response from adults (she was permitted to make mess) and it is possible that this was a novel experience. I was surprised by P1's actions sometimes. In previous sessions, she had been overly sensitive (and quite childish in her response) to getting her hands dirty however, at other times she had been seen to poke clay with her fingers for some time and to get glitter all over them. I wondered whether P3 was developing her ability to cope with mess. It is possible that in her early development she may not have had access to these messy experiences which may have caused her sensitivity to develop. I felt that having access to early-learning experiences such as this may have acted as opportunities to develop these skills later in life.

S1, S2, P1, P3, P2 and I all chipped into each other's conversations. The group felt like it was gelling and everyone seemed more relaxed. It felt that the absence of outbursts and/or people moving out of the room from the group meant that the environment could be settled and calm. There was a constant buzz of chattering which filled the air. It felt quite electric. Again S3 spoke very little and there were few interactions initiated by the rest of the group with her. Part of me felt that J was a good role model in that she highlighted that it was okay not to feel that you had to engage in conversations. She seemed to clearly enjoy putting all of her energy into making. I asked her how she was getting on. P1 commented on 'how slow S3 was'. P1 was listening in to conversations even when I was not aware. She seemed to be very in-tune with the setting, immersed in what was going on almost like she had all her 'feelers' out picking up information on what was said/done by others. P1 was open to being critical of S3. S3 replied to P1, "I am just enjoying taking my time over it." I felt that this comment was useful for P1 and the other girls to hear, as it emphasised that there was no rush, pressure or expectation on anyone in the room to produce lots of little masterpieces. I felt that S3's personality was an asset to the group. Although she was quiet (and it was sometimes easy to forget that J was even present), she modelled a lot of useful behaviours and attitudes for the girls to see. She did not respond when she was provoked or teased, she did not appear to be angry when the pupils were disrespectful and so it is possible that she was teaching them that individuals do not always have to respond in predictable and reactive/defensive ways. It is possible that through their interactions with J they could learn new patterns of behaviour and were able to see that people may not always respond in predictable (negative) ways to their negative behaviours. It is possible that these responses may have acted to break some of the girls' cycles of behaviour that they were stuck in. The girls were sometimes seen to laugh at S3's lack of a response to them. However, I felt that this may be an uneasiness or shock response in them. J was very different to S2 and S1 who seemed to be quite in-tune to the girls (and quite similar e.g. how they spoke etc). J was quite shy/timid, calm and gentle and had a real quirky-ness about her. She was a refreshing member of the group and I felt that sometimes her lack of response to their behaviour prevented an escalation. She did not bite on the bait which the pupil put out for her. In her work with the clay, J was using a very similar technique to S2 but her pot was still unique. She had asked S2 for advice on a number of occasions throughout. She demonstrated a lack of confidence and need to follow others however she demonstrated creativity and originality. It is possible that she also showed the girls that it was ok to get help and learn from your peers but also showed them how it is possible to use this help to reach a desired outcome in her work.

S1 had a way of interacting with the pupils which was very similar to the way that the males and females in the setting were seen to interact with each other. She was not so-much an authority figure but more of a 'mate'. However, she gave behavioural reminders regularly in an informal manner. S2 was slightly more formal in her discipline approach and could sometimes seem a little authoritarian/confrontational. At times I felt that S2 would make efforts to control her natural response to the girls' behaviour because of my presence and may have stopped herself from giving

reminders that may be seen as negative. I found this interesting. I wondered if my present made the adults involved more reflective about their practice. I felt that this was more probable for S2 with whom I probably had the most contact and greater number of general (and personal) conversations. Although there had been no conversations about the behavioural methods used by staff in the setting and I was resistant to be seen as someone observing or judging on the skills of staff, I was very aware that this may have been an elephant in the room which I had no control in dispelling.

Half way through the session P3 got annoyed with her clay. Prior to this she had been relatively focused but appeared to be enjoying being involved in conversations. She stated that, "*the painting was not neat*" "*...the brushes were rubbish*" and at one point, her clay cracked. She became restless and stressed. She got up out of her chair and she announced that, "*she was going to go for a fag!*" She got a cigarette out and S1 highlighted that, "*smoking was not allowed at this base.*" I was concerned that P3's behaviour could set the other two girls off. P3 appeared to have difficulties dealing with errors that she had made and when unpredictability occurred. It is possible that she had found it hard to focus on her clay as she spoke and this had resulted in her not working as neat as she had hoped or expected. She asked P2, "*... if she was going to come with her.*" Again I felt that this comment would have made P1 feel left out. Similarly this was an attempt for P3 to encourage P2 to follow her behaviour (as P2 had previously been seen to be easily led by P1). S2 warned P2 and P2 was seen to remain quiet. I was surprised that P2 responded in this way and wondered whether the prior calmness had helped her in this instance to restrain her impulses to be led. P2 continued to remain focused on her creative task. I wondered whether P2 was quite immersed in what she was doing and so was happy to stay. P3 sat back down and began a conversation about different makes of cigarettes. It was evident that when P2 showed some control, P3 was able to conform. It is possible that if P3 was the changed person she had previously described herself as being then she could not risk being out-done by P2 in her ability to control her anger or emotions linked to her disappointment. It is possible that P2's response acted as a trigger to her making a good decision. Similarly, it is possible that P3 did not want to miss out on time in the program if all members were present in the room (i.e. being in the session was more desirable than sitting outside alone). She asked S2 whether she smoked and what make of cigarettes she smoked. S2 engaged in this conversation. P3 calmed. It is possible that P3 is able to use conversations (initiating her own distraction technique) to calm herself down and to support her ability to re-engage. This is something from which the other pupils may have learnt-i.e. they observed another pupil managing her emotions effectively.

P2 asked the group for advice about what colour the base of her pot should be.

I asked P1 to pass me the different paints that she had used on her mask and asked S1 to pass me some also. Simple interactions such as this may have facilitated familiarity with each other, respect (through polite please/thank you) and confidence. S1 asked where the metallic paints were and P1 and I showed her. It is possible S1 (an adult) asking pupil's (L1) where things were, pupils were able to feel helpful and valued by the adults. It suggests that the adult perceives the pupil as more knowledgeable to themselves. Even small experiences of this for the pupils may have resulted in a heightened self esteem.

I presented the problem about my university commitments the following week to the group (i.e. I was not going to be available for the Monday and Tuesday sessions). I asked how they would feel about doing the sessions without me. The girls and staff felt that they would and should go ahead with the program. I felt relieved with the group's decision. I was glad that they wanted (chose) to undertake the sessions without me a) because it meant that they did not want to miss out on a session (which may have suggested some enjoyment and value attached to the program) but b) it also meant that the group saw the program as being able to proceed without me (which may have implied that I was

not seen as a leader or someone who needed to be there-it provided me with hope that the program could continue after my research was complete).

When S2 reminded the group that it was almost lunch, it came as a surprise to everyone. People began to calmly and independently start tidying away. The conversations had made the session go much quicker and everyone had been immersed in their conversations and making. P2 laughed and highlighted that she had no lunch again and stated that, “*she didn’t need to eat anyway.*” She spoke about a *big binge of unhealthy food which her and her friend had had the previous night while watching a film.* I wondered whether P2 being blasé in her potential attempts to suggest that she had unhealthy eating habits/an eating disorder. P1 complained that, “*she was at her mainstream school tomorrow.*” I wondered whether the fact that P1 had had a positive session which she appeared to enjoy had made the thought of her visit to mainstream school more daunting. Her comment suggested that she may have found it easier or preferred it at the PRU provision. P3 stated that her “*...clay was shit!*” as it cracked as she attempted to put it away. I spent some time explaining how it could be stuck back together. P2 remained calm and appeared to be accepting. Again this provided an opportunity to see how another pupil dealt with disappointment. P3 appeared to be less focused on the resulting piece of art and showed no resistance to come the following week. I wondered if P3 simply enjoyed being present for these sessions.

All members of the group then chose what they hoped to do the following session (next week). All of the girls left once they had finished clearing away but had forgotten to wipe down the table. S2 called them back up. P2 returned and kicked a chair over. S2 gave her a subtle warning that, “*there was no need for such behaviour.*” P2 wiped the table before returning downstairs. It seemed that P2 was creating a show as she had been asked to do something. It was almost as if P2 had reverted to another role on exiting the art classroom. However, the calm atmosphere had come to an end and all of the members on the program were not present. The context had changed. I was very aware that on her brief visit downstairs, she may have come into contact with other members of the PRU who may have caused her mood and attitude to change. Similarly, I felt that once the ‘bubble’ had been broken, S2 had also reverted back to an authoritarian role. During the session, there was little need for confrontation or for behaviours to be picked-up-on. I wondered what short-term and long term effects being in a ‘bubble’ for an hour to an hour and a half might have. I was able to unpick my own experiences of being a part of that ‘bubble’ but I hoped that the interviews might access the experiences of the others’. I was very aware that the memories of those experiences might be lost in a few weeks time (i.e. when the interviews were completed) and I hoped that the pupils and staff would have posted reflections in the comments box beside the sink. However, the busyness of the environment and the apparent longing of the female pupils in the group to quickly tidy their workstations before joining the others for lunch or home-time may have been the cause of no comments being posted.

I wondered whether it would have been successful to have drinks and a biscuit at the end of each session. This may have encouraged the group to come back together and to obtain closure at the end of the session. It felt uncomfortable when the girls simply finished tidying and left without saying goodbye. I believed that the sessions needed more of a full stop to their end-where staff and pupils thanked each-other and showed some respect. Although it had been a hope in the planning stage to do this it had not been followed through. Often we all lost track of time and it was a rush to pack away in time. Although I believed that the pupils may struggle with longer sessions, I felt that they may have been resistant to have their creative time cut into. Similarly, after all tidying independently I felt that sitting back down as a group may have been problematic. Sitting back down for this discussion may have felt fake/ staged. I envisaged that P1 (especially) may have also found it difficult (particularly at the start whereby she was extremely sensitive to what others in the group may think

of her work) to accept praise publically, especially if she did not see her work as good enough. This in turn could have caused her distress or upset.

I felt that although there were many benefits to having independent activities, I wondered whether the many transitions between activities caused some disruption. With everyone starting and finishing and thinking of things to do at different times, I felt that the times when everyone was fully engaged in creative tasks at the table was limited. I wondered whether starting new tasks acted as transition points during which the pupils may have felt a confusion/uncertainty. Independent brainstorming may have been difficult. I wondered whether involvement in joint work would have been useful in the program. Although I had suggested this as an option in the planning session no member of the group had initiated joint work. I wondered whether this was because they preferred independent work or because of lack of opportunity i.e. no-one else was free at the same time as them. I wondered whether group work may have also resulted in P1 feeling more/less included. I felt that it wasn't my role to suggest group-work as I wanted to process to natural and for ideas to emerge from the group. I was concerned that a suggestion would shift my position of power in the group (which I perceived to be gradually decreasing over time) back up.

Seeing P3 in this session made me realise that all of the pupils present had responded dramatically and negatively to perceived failure. They had a heightened sensitivity when they saw that something they had done had gone wrong especially when it was unpredictable. Failure in creativity is something that is perceived individually and tends to happen without warning (e.g. a pot exploding in the kiln, adding colours to mix a new colour etc.). I saw that they found it hard to not have a focus on outcomes being perfect. They were also seen to become resistant to try again or to re-engage with something that had gone wrong. However, I saw that these were essential skills for these young people. All of the pupils had at least one thing in common (their education in mainstream school had proven to be unsuccessful) and it is possible that in their view, many things in their life had gone wrong. However, I felt that in the sessions the young people (and adult) had the chance to develop skills to manage small (and more manageable) errors.

I felt that out of the group of young people, P2's behaviour was probably the most volatile and disruptive. However, I saw that when she was engaged, she was possibly the most focused. I wondered whether P2 had an enthusiasm for art that was greater than the others. I felt that she got a lot out of the things which she made and enjoyed the process. She was slightly more flexible in her approach.

After the session I joined P2 and P1 in the kitchen. I asked them if they could remind someone to do the register and choice of activity sheet in the following week's sessions when I wasn't there. I also asked if they would remind people about the comments box and the signing up sheets for interviews. I asked if they wanted me to email S2 but P2 stated that she would do it. She smiled. I felt happy that the girls appeared to want to take responsibility. I hoped that they would see that they were just as important as the adults in organising the sessions. P1 simply looked and listened. I wondered if she was sensitive to adults having favourites. I felt that she was desperate to feel that she was liked but could also be destructive in her relationships towards adults. I wondered if these outbursts were attempts at testing them for their sincerity (i.e. if they still liked her despite her behaviour/held a grudge).

I spoke to S2 about my research and to obtain her views about the possibility of doing focus groups/1:1 interviews. She felt that quality information might come from 1:1 sessions with the girls. She explained that her experience suggested that when they are alone in a group, they find it hard to focus and can get silly. Although I agreed with this and to do 1:1 interviews, I was concerned that without a focus group, the girls would not be able to spur the thinking of others on. In a group there

is opportunity for motivation, reflectivity and deeper levels of thinking to emerge in individuals (as they listen to the thoughts of others').

This was probably the most successful out of all of the sessions. I felt very hopeful for my research-I was at a high point in the roller-coaster ride that was my research program. I had thoroughly enjoyed myself during the session and I too felt a bit wild (like P2 had demonstrated) at the thought of leaving the calm room and returning to my role at work-probably to write reports. Work felt very boring and stressful in comparison to what I had experienced. I had felt like a sponge soaking up knowledge about the pupils, adults and the context with which I was working. I had felt myself (not a stereotypical psychologist-but a real person) and alive. The art allowed me to step out of the shoes of a professional and I could just act as a human being. I was more open. I was excited by all the psychological knowledge that was whizzing around my head as I was engaged in the interactions and formulating hypotheses about what I was seeing. Therefore rather than being the psychologist called Caroline, I was Caroline who knew about psychology, didn't know about other things (like what it was like to get chased by the police, take drugs or what it was like working with P2 every day) but wanted to learn from the people she worked with. Again I felt that I was privileged to be engaged in such work. I felt very alive working in this way. I hoped that they could have all been the same as that. I was on a real high! I waited in anticipation of what next week's sessions would look like.

Appendix IV-Participant information leaflets and consent forms



Participant Information Leaflet Pupil

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please contact me if you have any questions or if anything is not clear. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for taking the time to read this

If you would like any help with filling in the consent form or with this information then please contact me on the number/at the address below. I would be very happy to organise a time that is good for us both to speak on the telephone or in person about the project.

What is the purpose of the research?

This research aims to find out about your experiences of being involved in an arts project.

Whilst there may not be any immediate benefits for you if you decide to take part, it is hoped that this work will be fun and a different way of working during your time at school.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen because I have an interest in getting the views of young people who have been out of mainstream school. I want to find out more about what might make school better for you and what you think creative activities are like for you.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. You can withdraw from the project at any time. You do not have to give a reason if you decide you don't want to take part.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you decide you would like to take part then we will get together in a group with other pupils that want to take part too and also with some of the adults from your school. Together we will think about and plan some activities that we can all do together in school. The arts programme will last between 6-8 weeks and will happen about once a week. I am also hoping to video record the first and the last arts session that we do together. The video will not be focusing on particular girls or staff in the group but will be on the room of people as a whole group.

Before and after the programme I will want to meet with groups of people involved to ask about some of their views at the start and end of the project. This will sometimes be done with adults from school present and sometimes just with the pupils. I will also be asking some people to talk with me on their own once the programme has finished but if you are not happy with that you just have to say. You have the right to say 'no thanks' at any time during the project. Some of the discussions will be recorded on an audio recorder.

Will I be recorded, and how will the recorded media be used?

The sound files will help me gain an accurate picture of your views I will record our conversation. The videos will help me to see what people in the group are doing in the first and last art sessions. They will let me see how people are acting. The audio recordings of our conversation and video recordings of the group will only be used for analysis. The only person that will hear your voice and see the videos is me when I transcribe them.

It is IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT film and audio clips will be kept by me on security protected disks after the research is complete. I will let you know if I want to use these clips again. I may use them to re-analyse what was said or done OR I might use them to help with training of people that want to know more about the work we did. If I want to use the clips again I will contact you

again for permission. I will also ask for permission from your parent(s)/carer(s). If I do ask you if I can use the clips again I will let you know how/why the clips are being re-analysed and/or who would have access to the recordings. You would have the right to say NO this request. It is up to you!

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?

All the information that we collect about you during the course of the research will be anonymised. That means that I will change your name and will not print any specific details about you. This will reduce the chance of your 'story' being recognised.

This study is interested in what people say and act this means that sections of your interview or what you say in the focus groups with the others or how you act may be quoted in my final report. I will check that you are ok with the information you have given me immediately after the focus group, interview or filming.

If you change your mind about participating at any point you can contact me and tell me you want to withdraw from the study.

Who will see the transcript?

The anonymised transcript will be seen by my research supervisors, and a small team of researchers who will support me in analysing the data.

What will happen to the results of the research project?

- This research is part of a required element of my training as an Educational Psychologist. The research will therefore be written up for examination.
- It is also hoped that the research will be written up for submission to an academic journal.
- The findings will also be shared with interested person's working in Children's Services at Warrington Borough Council.

- I will send you a leaflet which will outline the research findings when the research has been completed (August 2011).

What if something goes wrong?

If you are at all unhappy about any aspect of the study or would like to lodge a complaint then you can contact my university tutor in the first instance. If you would like to escalate your complaint further then you can contact Dr Fletcher the University Registrar and Secretary.

Ruth Slater

Dr David Fletcher

University Supervisor

Registrar & Secretary

University of Sheffield

University of Sheffield

School of Education

Glossop Road

Glossop Road

Sheffield

Sheffield

AS10 2JA

AS10 2JA

Tel: 01142228165

e-mail: Ruth.Slater@Derbyshire.gov.uk

Who has ethically reviewed the project?

This project has been ethically approved via the School of Education ethics review procedure.

Further information that you may wish to provide.

It may be useful for you to inform me of any allergies or physical or mental health problems which you may currently have or may have had in the past. This could be helpful for me to make sure that wherever possible you are not put under any risk while you are involved in the project. This information will remain confidential unless I feel that during the programme or after the programme you may be at risk. However, if information has to be shared then I will discuss

this with you before doing so. All personal information will be kept in a secure (locked) cabinet and will be destroyed once the research is complete. Your parent(s)/ carer(s) have also been given the chance to share any similar information they might know about your health. They will have the chance to note down any information on the consent form that they have been asked to sign to say that they are happy for you to join the project. If at any time I feel that it is important that information about your health is shared then the person that signed your consent form will be told about it too.

Contact for further information

Caroline Murphy

Trainee Educational Psychologist

Address of Local Authority

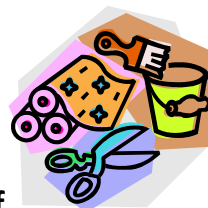
Tel:

e-mail:

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this



Participant Information Leaflet Member of Staff



You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please contact me if you have any questions or if anything is not clear. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for taking the time to read this

If you would like any help with filling in the consent form or with this information then please contact me on the number/at the address below. I would be very happy to organise a time that is good for us both to speak on the telephone or in person about the project.

What is the purpose of the research?

This research aims to find out about your experiences of being involved in an arts project with some of the girls at your school.

Whilst there may not be any immediate benefits for you if you decide to take part, it is hoped that this work will be fun and a different way of working with the young people in the setting where you work.

Why have I been chosen?

You work with young people within a specialist provision. You know these young people well and so are in a good position to work in this way with them. It is possible that it may even be a positive experience for you?! I am interested in how staff feel about working in a different and creative way with the pupils in their setting.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. You can withdraw from the project at any time. You do not have to give a reason if you decide you don't want to take part.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you decide you would like to take part then we will get together in a group with those pupils who are interested in taking part and together we will think about and plan some activities that we can all do together in school. The arts programme will last between 6-8 weeks and will happen about once a week. I will want to meet with groups of people involved to ask about some of their views. This will sometimes be done with the pupils but on some occasions discussions will take place only between the staff and myself (once at the start and again at the end of the programme). I will also be asking some staff and pupils to talk with me in a 1:1 situation when the project is over if they are happy with that. You have the right to decline or withdraw from participation any at any time during the project. Some of the discussions will be recorded on an audio recorder. The first and final arts session will be video recorded. The recording will not be focusing on individual girls or members of staff but will be done to look at the activities and actions of the group as a whole.

Will I be recorded, and how will the recorded media be used?

The sound files will help me gain an accurate picture of your views I will record our conversation. The videos will help me to see what people in the group are doing in the first and last art sessions. They will let me see how people are acting. The audio and video recordings of our conversation will only be used for analysis. The only person that will hear your voice and see the actions is me when I transcribe the conversation and videos.

It is IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT film and audio clips will be kept by me on security protected disks after the research is complete. I will let you know if I want to use these clips again. I may use them to re-analyse what was said or done OR I might use them to help with training of people that want to know more about the work we did. If I want to use the clips again I will contact you

again for permission. If I do ask you if I can use the clips again I will let you know how/why the clips are being re-analysed and/or who would have access to the recordings. You would have the right to say NO this request. It is up to you!

Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?

All the information that we collect about you during the course of the research will be anonymised. I will change your name and will not print any specific details about you. This will reduce the chance of your story being recognised.

This study is interested in what people say and how they act this means that sections of your interview and some of the actions from the first and final arts session may be quoted in my final report. I will check that you are ok with the information you have given me immediately after the interview, focus groups and video recording sessions.

If you change your mind about participating at any point you can contact me and tell me you want to withdraw from the study.

Who will see the transcript?

The anonymised transcript will be seen by my research supervisors, and a small team of researchers who will support me in analysing the data. The transcript will only be shown to others when you have agreed the content.

What will happen to the results of the research project?

- This research is part of a required element of my training as an Educational Psychologist. The research will therefore be written up for examination.
- It is also hoped that the research will be written up for submission to an academic journal.
- The findings will also be shared with interested person's working in Children's Services at Warrington Borough Council.

- I will send you a leaflet which will outline the research findings when the research has been completed (August 2011).

What if something goes wrong?

If you are at all unhappy about any aspect of the study or would like to lodge a complaint then you can contact my university tutor in the first instance. If you would like to escalate your complaint further then you can contact Dr Fletcher the University Registrar and Secretary.

Ruth Slater

Dr David Fletcher

University Supervisor

Registrar & Secretary

University of Sheffield

University of Sheffield

School of Education

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This project has been ethically approved via the School of Education ethics review procedure.

Further information that you may wish to provide.

It may be useful for you to inform me of any allergies or physical or mental health problems which you may currently have or may have had in the past. This could be helpful for me to make sure that wherever possible you are not put under any risk while you are involved in the project. This information will remain confidential unless I feel that during the programme or after the programme you may be at risk. However, if information has to be shared then I will discuss

this with you before doing so. All personal information will be kept in a secure (locked) cabinet and will be destroyed once the research is complete.

Contact for further information

Caroline Murphy

Trainee Educational Psychologist

Address of Local Authority

Tel:

e-mail:



Participant Information Leaflet Parent(s)/carer(s)/legal guardian(s)

Your child has been invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide if you are happy for her to take part it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please contact me if you have any questions or if anything is not clear. Take time to decide whether or not you wish for her to take part.

Thank you for taking the time to read this

If you would like any help with filling in the consent form or with this information then please contact me on the number/at the address below. I would be very happy to organise a time that is good for us both to speak on the telephone or in person about the project.

What is the purpose of the research?

This research aims to find out about pupils' experiences of being involved in an arts project that will take place at school. There will be three/four young people who will be participating in the study and two members of staff who will also be taking part in activities. It is my aim to find out how arts activities may benefit young people's experiences of education.

Why has your child been chosen?

Your child's school was selected for this piece of research and your child was identified by staff as someone who may enjoy and benefit from being involved in the development of a creative programme. Your child was invited to an information giving session where she was able to ask questions about the project. As a result of this she has shown an interest in participating in the project in the near future.

Does she have to take part?

It is up to her and yourself to decide whether or not she should take part. If she does decide to take part she will be given an information sheet to keep and will be asked to sign a consent form. She can withdraw from the project at any time. She does not have to give a reason if she decides she doesn't want to take part.

What will happen to her if she takes part?

If she decides she would like to take part then she will get together in a group with other pupils and staff from the school that also want to take part. Together with myself they will think about and plan some activities that we can all do together in school. The arts programme will last between 6-8 weeks and will happen about once a week. The sessions will be carefully planned with staff, the girls and the head-teacher to ensure that there are no clashes with lessons or work placements and to help the programme run as smoothly as possible. Before and after the programme I will want to meet with groups of people involved to ask about some of their views about being involved. This will sometimes be done with adults from school present and sometimes just with the pupils. I will also be asking some people to talk with me on their own but if your daughter is not happy with having a 1:1 discussion then she can decline. She has a right to withdraw at any time during the project. Some of the discussions that take place will be recorded on an audio recorder. The first and final art sessions will be recorded using video equipment. The recording will not be focusing on individual girls or members of staff but will be done to look at the activities and actions of the group as a whole.

Will she be recorded, and how will the recorded media be used?

The sound files will help me gain an accurate picture of your daughter's views I will record our conversation using a Dictaphone. The videos will help me to see what people in the group are doing in the first and last art sessions. They will let me see how people are acting. The audio and video recordings of our conversation will only be used for analysis. The only person that will hear her voice and see the actions is me when I transcribe the conversation and videos.

It is IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT film and audio clips will be kept by me on security protected disks after the research is complete. I will let you know if I want to use these clips again. I may use them to re-analyse what was said or done OR I might use them to help with training of people that want to know more about the work that was done. If I want to use the clips again I will contact you again for permission. If I do ask you if I can use the clips again I will let you know how/why the clips are being re-analysed and/or who would have access to the recordings. You would have the right to say NO this request. It is up to you!

Will her taking part in this project be kept confidential?

All the information that I collect about your child during the course of the research will be anonymised. I will change her name and will not print any specific details about her. This will reduce the chance of your story being recognised.

This study is interested in what people say and how people act and this means that sections of interviews and actions observed may be quoted in my final report. I will check that your daughter is ok with the information she has given me on immediately after the 1:1 interviews, focus groups and after the video recording sessions have taken place.

If you child changes her mind about participating at any point she can contact me and tell me that she wants to withdraw from the study.

Who will see the transcript?

The anonymised transcript will be seen by my research supervisors, and a small team of researchers who will support me in analysing the data.

What will happen to the results of the research project?

- This research is part of a required element of my training as an Educational Psychologist. The research will therefore be written up for examination.
- It is also hoped that the research will be written up for submission to an academic journal.

- The findings will also be shared with interested person's working in Children's Services at Warrington Borough Council.
- I will send your child a leaflet which will outline the research findings when the research has been completed (August 2011).

What if something goes wrong?

If you are at all unhappy about any aspect of the study or would like to lodge a complaint then you can contact my university tutor in the first instance. If you would like to escalate your complaint further then you can contact Dr Fletcher the University Registrar and Secretary.

Ruth Slater

Dr David Fletcher

University Supervisor

Registrar & Secretary

University of Sheffield

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School of Education

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This project has been ethically approved via the School of Education ethics review procedure.

Further information that you may wish to provide.

It may be useful for you to inform me of any allergies or physical or mental health problems which your daughter may currently have or may have had in the past. This could be helpful for me to make sure that wherever possible she is

not put under any risk while she is involved in the project. This information will remain confidential unless I feel that during the programme or after the programme she may be at risk. However, if I feel that information needs to be shared then I will discuss this with you before doing so. All personal information will be kept in a secure (locked) cabinet and will be destroyed once the research is complete. This request for information will be shared with your daughter and she will also be given the chance to provide the information in the consent form that she will be asked to sign.

Contact for further information

Caroline Murphy

Trainee Educational Psychologist

Address of Local Authority

Tel:

e-mail:

Thank you so much for taking the time to read this

Consent Form (Parent/legal guardian/legal representative)



Name of Young Person taking
Part _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____

1. I confirm that I understand the purpose and the process of this
research
2. I agree thatcan take part in this research
3. I agree to the conversation being tape recorded
4. I agree to the first and final group art session being video recorded
5. I agree that the audio and video recordings can be kept by the
researcher once the research is complete for further analysis or training
purposes.

Note: written permission will be sought from you prior to this and information will be provided about how/why the data is being re-analysed and/or who will have access to it. You have the right to decline this request.

Name of Parent/legal guardian/legal representative

_____ (Print name)

_____ (Sign)

_____ (Date)

Further information that you may wish to provide.

It may be useful for you to inform me of any allergies or physical or mental health problems which your daughter may currently have or may have had in the past. This information will remain confidential unless your child is at risk and will be destroyed on completion of the research.

A signed copy of this consent form will be sent to you for your own records.

Thank you

Remember your child has the right to withdraw from the project at any time 😊

Caroline Murphy

Trainee Educational Psychologist

Address of Local Authority

Tel:

e-mail:

Consent Form (Young Person)



Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____

1. I confirm that I understand the purpose and the process of this research
2. I agree thatcan take part in this research
3. I agree to the conversation being tape recorded
4. I agree to the first and final group art session being video recorded
5. I agree that the audio and video recordings can be kept by the researcher once the research is complete for further analysis or training purposes.

Note: written permission will be sought from you prior to this and information will be provided about how/why the data is being re-analysed and/or who will have access to it. You have the right to decline this request.

_____ (Print name)

_____ (Sign)

_____ (Date)

Person taking consent

_____ (Print name)

_____ (Sign)

_____ (Date)

Further information that you may wish to provide.

It may be useful for you to inform me of any allergies or physical or mental health problems which you may currently have or may have had in the past. This information will remain confidential unless you are at risk and will be destroyed on completion of the research.

A signed copy of this consent form will be sent to you for your own records.

Thank you for taking part

Remember you have the right to withdraw from the project at any time 😊

Caroline Murphy

Trainee Educational Psychologist

Address of Local Authority

Tel:

e-mail:

Consent Form (Member of Staff)



Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____

1. I confirm that I understand the purpose and the process of this research
2. I agree thatcan take part in this research
3. I agree to the conversation being tape recorded
4. I agree to the first and final group art session being video recorded
5. I agree that the audio and video recordings can be kept by the researcher once the research is complete for further analysis or training purposes.

Note: written permission will be sought from you prior to this and information will be provided about how/why the data is being re-analysed and/or who will have access to it. You have the right to decline this request.

_____ (Print name)

_____ (Sign)

_____ (Date)

Person taking consent

_____ (Print name)

_____ (Sign)

_____ (Date)

Further information that you may wish to provide.

It may be useful for you to inform me of any allergies or physical or mental health problems which you may currently have or may have had in the past. This information will remain confidential unless you are at risk and will be destroyed on completion of the research.

A signed copy of this consent form will be sent to you for your own records.

Thank you for taking part

Remember you have the right to withdraw from the project at any time ☺

Caroline Murphy

Trainee Educational Psychologist

Address of Local Authority

Tel:

e-mail:

Appendix V-Comments/consent leaflets for the comments box

<p>NAME:.....</p> <p>I would be happy to be part of a focus group</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I would prefer discussions to happen all together (adults from school AND pupils)</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I would prefer group discussions to happen separately (just with the pupils/just with the adults)</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>I would like to be involved in the 1:1 discussions with Caroline</p>	<p>MY COMMENTS for the comments box</p>
--	---

Appendix VI- Prompt sheet for initial introductory session

Introduction to Research and Flexible plan for initial Session

Introduction

My name is Caroline Murphy (you can call me Caroline) and I am an Educational Psychologist in Training (NB: Explain). I am particularly interested in art and how it is used in schools but I am also very interested in the views of adolescent girls...especially those girls who are not in full-time mainstream school. As part of my training I have to do a piece of research. Out there in the research the views of young girls like yourselves is really under represented. Therefore I wanted to do some research where the stories of teenage girls were told. I am going to be working in school (the PRU) over the next few weeks. This is an introductory group session. If you decide that you are interested in working with this group some more then we will work for 6 weeks together (you, me and some staff) on an arts programme and then at the end will have a group where we discuss the programme. At the end I will also do some sessions where I speak 1:1 with some people that were involved.

The programme is something which I want you and the adults to work with me on in developing. I am not in charge. My aim in this research is for us to all learn from each-other and to enjoy doing our own arts activities each week. I have some ideas but I will ask you in the initial group session how you might plan the sessions and how you may want this programme to look.

Some of the discussions (focus groups and 1:1 interviews) will be recorded on an audio recorder.

I am also hoping to video record the first and the last arts session that we do together. The video will not be focusing on particular girls or staff in the group but will be on the room of people as a whole group.

You have the right to say 'no thanks' at any time during the project. You can just tell me but the comments box with consent opt in and out forms can also help you do that too.

The sound files will help me gain an accurate picture of your views I will record our conversation. The videos will help me to see what people in the group are doing in the first and last art sessions. The audio recordings of our conversation and video recordings of the group will only be used for analysis (NB: Explain). The only person that will hear your voice and see the videos is me when I transcribe (NB: Explain) them.

It is IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT film and audio clips will be kept by me on security protected disks after the research is complete. I will let you know if I want to use these clips again and will ask you again for permission. I will also ask for permission from your parent(s)/carer(s).

All the information that we collect about you during the course of the research will be anonymised (NB: Explain).

This study is interested in what people say and how they act. This means that sections of your interview or what you say in the focus groups with the others or how you act may be quoted in my final report. I will check that you are ok with the information you have given me immediately after the focus group, interview or filming.

- This research is part of a required element of my training as an Educational Psychologist. The research will therefore be written up for examination.
- It is also hoped that the research will be written up for submission to an academic journal.
- The findings will also be shared with interested person's working in Children's Services at the Local Authority.
- I will send you a leaflet which will outline the research findings when the research has been completed (August 2011).

It may be useful for you to inform me of any allergies or physical or mental health problems which you may currently have or may have had in the past. This could be helpful for me to make sure that wherever possible you are not put under any risk while you are involved in the project. This information will remain confidential unless I feel that during the programme or after the programme you may be at risk.

I will give you a sheet with information about this which you can read. I will also give you a sheet to sign which will be an agreement that you want to be involved. If you want any help with understanding this sheet or what I have said today then just let me know. I would be happy to help or find someone else who would

help if you would prefer. Similar information and a sheet for signing will be given to your parents/carers.

Initial Session

Warm up activity

Some people may be less familiar with each other here-some people may be more familiar. I don't really know many people! So what I would like us to do next is to talk with a partner for a couple of minutes. As a group I then want you to introduce that person by telling the group something about the partner that they don't know. For example: 'This is Ruby, and she has always wanted to milk a cow!'

Group Rules/Pact (focus group and general)

Outline the purpose of this session and discuss the rules of the Focus group and art-project sessions. Discuss the guidelines from Peterson's 1995 'Talk with Teens about Feelings, Family, Relationships and the future'. Also discuss the aims of the sessions and encourage the girls to initiate some more.

Outline of weekly sessions

Look through the outline of sessions that I have created and present as a flexible plan. Explain to the girls how long each art session will last and ask what they would add/change.

Look at timetable

Discuss the dates and times. These will be less flexible because of the varying responsibilities of staff and pupils.

Brainstorm of the types of materials/sorts of activities

Ask the girls what they would ideally want to be using-i.e. materials-and doing in the sessions. Ideally work would be independent-what kinds of things would they like to make. Stress that the emphasis is not on the product (i.e. creating great pieces of art-work) but exploring the different materials and going-with-the flow in each session-and enjoying the experience.

Expectations

Remind that will be audio recorded

Next: I want you to brainstorm on a piece of paper individually what you want to get out of this arts project. What will be its outcomes? What are your expectations and what do you hope it will be like? If you are happy to these could then be shared with the group so that we can start thinking. Alternatively you can just leave the piece of paper with me.

Research-side

I would like you to start thinking whether you would be happy to be involved in A) A focus group discussion about your experiences during the project and B) Whether you would be happy having similar conversations 1:1 with myself after the programme is complete. Do you think it would be easier to have the focus groups all together (with pupils and staff together OR separately?-It is totally up to you).I will have a comments box which will be kept in the art-room for you to provide any comments about the programme/about whether you would like to be involved in these discussions or not.

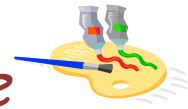
Thinking about next session (the first arts session) what would you like to make?

Note on the board

Appendix VII-Materials for the art session



Art Programme Timetable



Focus Group START:

Session	1	2	3	4	5	6
Date:						
Who is here?						

Focus group/interviews END:

Group Pact

- Anything that is said in the group, stays in the group (Confidentiality)
- We respect what other group members say. We agree not to use put-downs of any kind, verbal or nonverbal.
- We respect everyone's needs need to be heard. We agree that no-one will dominate the group, and understand that just because someone is quiet does not mean that they have nothing to say.
- We listen to each other. When someone is talking we look at her and pay attention.
- We realise that feelings are not 'bad' or 'good'. They just are!
- We don't force people to share when they don't want to
- If someone feels hurt, we want her to try and discuss these feelings in the group.
- We agree to try to be honest
- We don't talk about group members who are not here. We especially don't criticise members who aren't here to defend themselves.
- When we need to talk about other people such as teachers and peers, we don't refer to them by name.

(Adapted from Peterson, 1995, p.19)

Peterson, J.S. (1995) Talk with Teens about Feelings, Family, Relationships and the future. USA. Free Spirit Publishing Inc.

Flexible outline for each session

- Meet in a circle-welcome- Review ground-rules-review what decided to make previous week-reminded to think about what they would like to use/make next week ready for the end of the session-choose workstation
- ACTIVITY
- 5 Minute warning that close to clear away time and the end of the session
- 5clear away time, objects into boxes and meet back in the circle.
- 10 minutes -End in a circle with boxes-share what made/how found the session

-decision of what media would like to work with the following week/what they are planning on doing-posted onto the board

-Review timetable-next session and cross off board

-thanks to everyone and staff

-reminder about the comments box

Date:

WHO IS DOING WHAT?

NAME	ACTIVITY CHOSEN FOR NEXT SESSION

Appendix VIII- Interview sign up sheet

1:1 chats with Caroline



WHO	WHEN

Appendix IX-Letters sent with copies of completed consent forms

(parent(s)/carer(s)/legal guardian(s))

Dear

Here is a copy of your consent forms for you to keep. I have got a copy too kept in a file in a locked cabinet-to keep it safe. I would like to thank you again for allowing your child to be involved in the Arts Programme and the research last term. I will be keeping your child updated on how the research is going and when it is all written up, I will send them some information on what I found out. If you would also like a copy of my findings then please write, phone or email me to let me know.

I hope you have had a good summer.

Kind Regards,

Caroline

Caroline Murphy,

Educational Psychologist in Training

Address of Local Authority

Tel No

Email address

(participant)

Dear

Here is a copy of your consent forms for you to keep. I have got a copy too kept in a file in a locked cabinet-to keep it safe. I would like to thank you again for your involvement in the Arts Programme and the research last term. I will keep you updated on how the research is going and when it is all written up, I will send you some information on what I found out.

I hope you have had a good summer.

Kind Regards,

Caroline

Caroline Murphy,
Educational Psychologist in Training

Address of Local Authority

Tel No

Email address

Appendix X- Findings from the brainstorming activity (Pre-programme planning session with participants)

Expectations of the Art Sessions

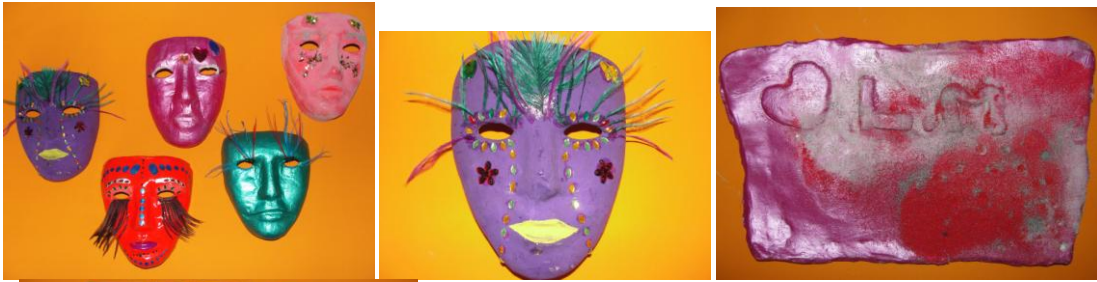
(From audio-recordings and notes taken by individual participants during a brainstorming activity in the Planning Session (2nd group meeting))



Appendix XI-Record of attendance for the art program

<u>SESSION</u>	<u>ATTENDEES</u>	<u>ABSENTEE(S)</u>
Initial introduction session	Me, S2, S3, P1, P2	S1, P3
Planning session	Me,S2, S3, P1, P2 , P3	S1
AS1	Me, S1, S2, P1, P2 , P3	S3
AS2	Me, S2, S3, P1, P2 , P3	S1
AS3	Me, S1, S2, S3, P1, P2 , P3	
AS4	CANCELLED	
AS5	S1, S2, P1, P2 , P3	Me, S3
AS6	Me, S2, S3, P1	P1, P2 , S1
AS7	Me, S2, S3, P1, P2	S1, P3

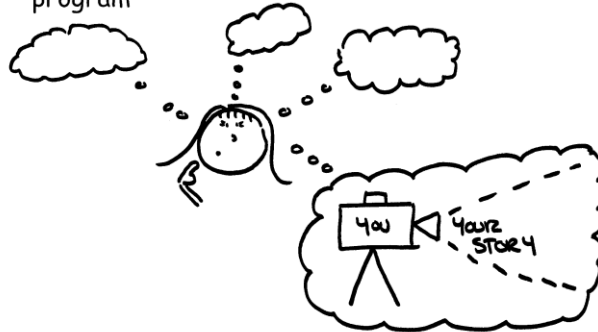
Appendix XII-Images of a selection of the artwork produced by adults and teenage girls during the art programme



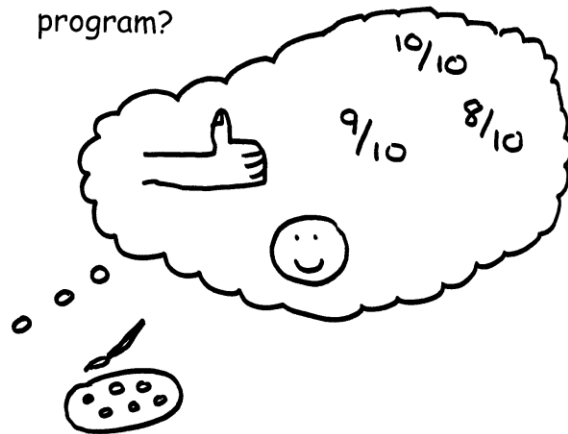
Appendix XIII-Interview materials for staff and pupils

Interview Questions: Semi structured interview-question cards with visual prompts.

1. Tell me about your experiences of the program



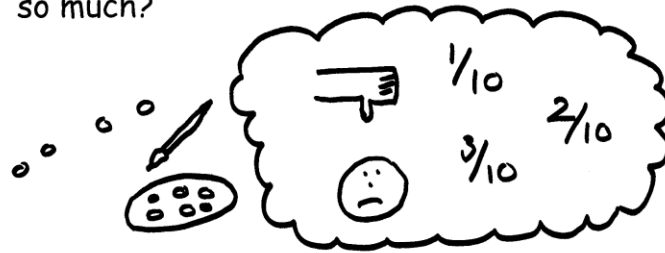
2. What was the best bit about the arts program?



How did it make you feel?



3. What was the worst bit of the art program? Or the things you didn't like so much?



How did it make you feel?



4. What was good about working in the group? What did you like about the group?



How did that make you feel?



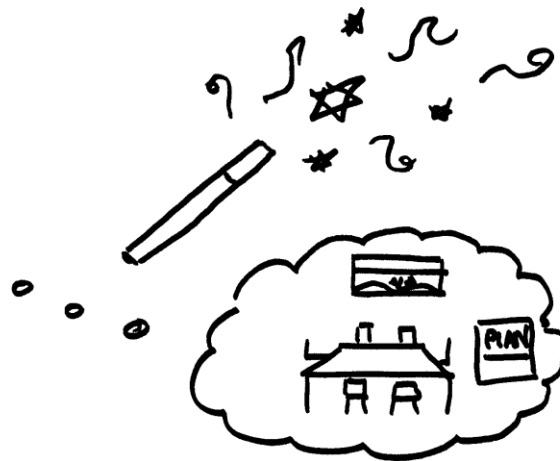
5. What did you not like about working in the group? What was not so good about the group?



How did that make you feel?



6. If you did it again what would you change? What would you do differently?



7. Is there anything else that you would like to say or tell me? because it is possible that you may have some ideas that I may have not even thought about when making these questions up!



Appendix XIV-Ethics Application form

University of Sheffield School of Education

RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM

COVER SHEET

<p>I confirm that in my judgment, due to the project's nature, the use of a method to inform prospective participants about the project (eg 'Information Sheet'/'Covering Letter'/'Pre-Written Script'?:</p>	
<p>Is relevant</p>	<p>Is <u>not</u> relevant</p>
<p>YES (if relevant then this should be enclosed)</p>	
<p>I confirm that in my judgment, due to the project's nature, the use of a 'Consent Form':</p>	
<p>Is relevant</p>	<p>Is <u>not</u> relevant</p>
<p>YES (if relevant then this should be enclosed)</p>	
<p>Is this a 'generic "en bloc" application (ie does it cover more than one project that is sufficiently similar)</p>	
<p>Yes</p>	<p>No</p>
	<p>No</p>

I am a member of staff

I am a PhD/EdD student

I am a Master's student

I am an Undergraduate student

I am a PGCE student

The submission of this ethics application has been agreed
by my supervisor

I have enclosed a signed copy of Part B

University of Sheffield School of Education
RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM

PART A**A1. Title of Research Project**

How do adolescent females and staff at a provision for excluded pupils perceive the use of an arts programme within the setting?

A2. Applicant (normally the Principal Investigator, in the case of staff-led research projects, or the student in the case of supervised research projects):

Title: Miss First Name/Initials: Caroline Jayne

Last Name: Murphy

Post: Trainee Educational Psychologist-Doctorate in Educational & Child
Psychology Department: Education

Email: edp08cjm@sheffield.ac.uk Telephone:07870698011

A.2.1. Is this a student project?

If yes, please provide the Supervisor's contact details:

YES

Ruth Slater

University of Sheffield

School of Education

Glossop Road

Sheffield

AS10 2JA

Ruth.Slater@Derbyshire.gov.uk

A2.2. Other key investigators/co-applicants (within/outside University), where applicable:

Please list all (add more rows if necessary)

Title	Full Name	Post	Responsibility in project	Organisation	Department

A3. Proposed Project Duration:

Start date: March 2010

End date: April 2011

A4. Mark 'X' in one or more of the following boxes if your research:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Involves children or young people aged under 18 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	Involves only identifiable personal data with no direct contact with participants
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Involves only anonymised or aggregated data
<input type="checkbox"/>	Involves prisoners or others in custodial care (eg young offenders)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Involves adults with mental incapacity or mental illness
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Has the primary aim of being educational (eg student research, a project necessary for a postgraduate degree or diploma, MA, PhD or EdD)

University of Sheffield School of Education
RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM

A5. Briefly summarise the project's aims, objectives and methodology?

(this must be in language comprehensible to a lay person)

NOTE: A more full description of the research project's aims, objectives and methodology can be seen in Appendix (I) in my research proposal that has now been seen and approved by my research supervisor on the DEdCpsy.

This study aims to investigate the potential impact which an artistic project may have and the experiences which the participants report. This piece of research will involve the development of an arts project with three /four adolescent girls who have been excluded from mainstream schools and two/three members of staff from the alternative provision which they attend. The project will run for 6-8 sessions and each session will last 1-2 hours. The young women, myself and staff will be working together to plan the project and I will be using pre- and post-programme measures in the form of focus groups, 1:1 interviews, a research/observational diary and video recordings to facilitate the views of participants. Qualitative data will be collected and thematic analysis will be used. It is hoped that this investigation will not simply result in a documented piece of work, but it is my central aim that it will act at a more practical level in effecting lasting change in the real-life setting in which the research is to be undertaken. Aims at a more personal level can relate to the potential benefits for the staff, the educational setting, the Local Authority, the profession of EPs, the young people and myself. It is hoped that staff will become empowered and will be left with skills to run similar programmes with excluded pupils in the future; the Local Authority will have a provision which has a positive ethos and nurturing approach to working with its excluded young people; the research will provide information on the benefits of a EPs taking on a creative role; it is hoped that the young people will be provided with an experience that is beneficial in some way (e.g. through their involvement in the research process itself, having their voice heard or documented in a piece of research and the development of skills/knowledge/interest etc.); and I will increase my skills and abilities in working with this subset of the population.

A6. What is the potential for physical and/or psychological harm / distress to participants?

There are a number of potential risks which this study could raise.

- Participants may be inconvenienced by taking part in this research which although may be beneficial in the longer term may not directly help them.
- If a therapeutic process does occur for some pupils then a block of 6-8 sessions may not be long enough. They may feel that the issues which they were addressing through the use of art may be left un-resolved.
- The participants may become confused by any therapeutic effect that occurs as understanding of emotions released may be at a pre-verbal stage.
- School staff may feel pressured to continue the programme in order to meet the young girls' needs.

- School staff may feel threatened or confused by a changing relationship/role with the pupils. Difficulties/frictions may arise when they return to their classroom setting.
- The participant group may have a number of complex needs and could be classified as a vulnerable group.
- Some of the group may be affected by a potentially therapeutic process occurring as a result of the art activities during the programme. Therefore there may be implications for undertaking work in a school setting and not a clinical setting. Anxieties relating to the school setting could be transferred into the art room. Although I am clear in my aims that the art project is not a piece of therapeutic work, it is not possible to predict the experiences which each individual participant may have as a result of their involvement in the programme.
- Tensions between pupils may result in distress if they are working in a close group with individuals with whom they have particular difficulties.
- The process of gaining rapport with participants may mean that they divulge more information than they would otherwise be willing to share.
- The research may involve the discussion of sensitive issues.
- Disclosures may occur within the group.
- Staff from the setting may not feel qualified or comfortable in dealing with any disclosures that emerge.
- The presence of staff may be threatening to some of the young women (for example power/gender issues may surface)
- There is very low risk of physical harm to participants involved in the research.

A7. Does your research raise any issues of personal safety for you or other researchers involved in the project and, if yes, explain how these issues will be managed? (Especially if taking place outside working hours or off University premises.)

This piece of research does potentially raise some issues of personal safety for myself. These risks are:

- The research will take place off University premises
- The research will be undertaken in the secondary provision for pupils with emotional and behavioural problems and physical and verbal emotional outbursts may occur. There is therefore a risk of assault occurring.
- I may be faced with disclosures

If an emotional or physical outburst does occur then I will have two members of staff present who are trained and permitted to deal with the situation effectively. However, it is important that those members of staff who are involved in the programme are not involved in physical restraints or other behavioural control methods that may damage or risk the relationships that may be evolving as part of the arts project. A member of staff will leave the room to ask for assistance from a suitable number of additional staff who will be able to manage the situation as they see fit

I should have regular supervision with a university research supervisor and placement supervisor.

A8. How will the potential participants in the project be (i) identified, (ii) approached and (iii) recruited?

Adult participants (staff) will be selected from an initial meeting with members of staff from the provision. I will consult with the staff about the research that will be occurring in their provision. At this meeting all staff will be given an outline of the research and will be asked if they would like to participate in the study. Consent will be obtained in written form. Pupil Participants will be identified by the manager of the two units in the Local Authority. I will speak with the group selected about my research plans and will also provide them with an information leaflet to take away and read. The leaflet will provide a written outline of the research, this will detail what the research would involve and what it aims to explore. Those pupils that are interested in becoming involved in the project will be asked to complete a consent form. It will be made clear to pupils in the initial meeting that they have a right to make a choice and to refuse to participate if they so wish. Information and consent forms will also be sent home to their parent(s), carer(s) and/or legal guardian(s).

If any parent(s), carer(s), staff or young people have reading or writing difficulties they will be given the opportunity to meet or speak 1:1 with myself to work through information about the project. Similarly translation of verbal explanations/documentation will be undertaken and/or made available if needed.

A9. Will informed consent be obtained from the participants?

Yes

X

No

If informed consent is not to be obtained please explain why. Further guidance is at http://www.shef.ac.uk/content/1/c6/07/21/15/Ethics_Consent.doc

Only under exceptional circumstances are studies without informed consent permitted. Students should consult their tutors.

A.9.1 How do you plan to obtain informed consent? (i.e. the proposed process?):

Informed consent in the case of Adults who are involved in the study (staff)

Prior to completing the focus group, programme and/or 1:1 interview a consent form will be given to the participants. This will contain another copy of the information sheet. At each stage of the research the research will be discussed to ensure that they understand fully what they are agreeing to and what the process will involve. Participants will be asked to sign a consent form if they agree to take part in the research.

The process for obtaining the informed consent of adults will therefore be:

- Discuss the research with the potential participants
- Provide them with a covering letter which outlines the aims and objectives of the research
- If participants agree to participate they will sign a consent form to indicate their agreement to participate.
- Once consent has been given, all participants will receive a photocopy of their consent forms for them to keep as part of their records.

Informed consent in the case of young people

If the young person expresses an interest in becoming involved in the programme then the following steps will be taken to obtain informed consent.

- Information sent to the parents/carer (s), or Local Authority Social Care department in the case of Looked After Children.
- Gain a signed consent form from the child or young persons' parent or legal guardian.
- Discuss the research with the child or young person
- Gain signed consent from the child or young person to take part in the research.
- Once consent has been given, all participants and parent(s)/carer(s) will receive a photocopy of their consent forms for them to keep as part of their records.

It is important to note that when working with both children and adults it is necessary to consider the verbal and non-verbal cues of the participants when obtaining consent. If they begin to appear like they don't want to continue and they appear to be disengaged with the process, I should interpret this as passive non-consent and the process (focus group/interview etc. should be stopped).

Note: It is important that participants are made aware from the start (i.e. prior to consenting) that the methodology used in this study is different from other forms of research (such as quantitative research). They should be informed that my thesis will focus on the participants' accounts of the programme and will mirror themes relating to their stories that emerge throughout. Consequently, they should be aware that their data will not be hidden like in quantitative (statistical) studies. Participants should be told that a small number of other people (supervisors) will have access to the anonymised transcriptions. My thesis may consist of blocks of the participants' quotes therefore they must be informed about this. I will ensure that all names within documentation will be coded and potentially identifiable details about the participants will be removed or changed. It is possible that some of these pieces of information about participants may be difficult to identify.

Participants will be encouraged to ask questions about the research throughout the process. Information will be explained at a level of competency that the young women can relate to. All participants will be given the right to withdraw from the study at any point prior to the analysis phase. Requests for consent will be ongoing and pupils will be reminded at the start of each art session that they have the right to withdraw. All participants will be given the

opportunity to withdraw during the interview/focus group process also. They will also be given the opportunity to withdraw any quotes immediately after the focus group/1:1 interviews.

A.10 How will you ensure appropriate protection and well-being of participants?

This research is aimed to be empathic and empowering for all of the participants therefore, it is important to ensure that the wellbeing of all participants is considered at all times.

Group sessions

- A calendar will be present in the art room so that the participants are aware of breaks in the programme or when the sessions will finish. This will be shared with the group at each session. This will provide security and structure for the young people involved.
- In the initial session the group will be encouraged to create a pact/list of rules which will allow a safe and secure environment to be developed during the programme. Examples of important factors such as trust, the possibilities of open discussions, confidentiality, the expression of emotions without negative behaviour, power imbalances, respect etc. will also be explored. This pact will be drawn up creatively and will have a central position in where it is placed in the art-room.
- Similarly, those taking part in the semi-structured focus groups will also begin with a ground rules activity for the same reasons.
- Participants will be informed that they will be free to leave the group at any time and similarly that if the rules are not kept then they may be asked to leave the room sensitively.
- Boundaries will have to be made clear at the start and end of each session. Although it is an aim within the session for all participants (including myself) to have an equal power status, it is important that individuals do not feel threatened in their role outside the art-room. Discussions with the group at the start and end of sessions will aim to act as an introduction and de-brief. This structure aims to contain the sessions within the art-room setting.
- Power imbalances or anxieties between staff, myself and the young women will be monitored and addressed. Work will be done to reduce any imbalances/anxieties that are evident throughout. Team building exercises and shared activities will be incorporated into the sessions to enhance the theme of group learning.
- If it is apparent that conflict or tension has developed between any of the participants, this will be addressed by myself and a member of staff from the group using solution focused methods. Ideally relationship difficulties will be resolved within the group but if individual participants suggest that they are unable to move forwards, a discussion will be arranged to help them to make a decision about whether it is beneficial for them to continue to be involvement in the programme.
- At the end of each session, the group will come together and the activities or themes for the following session will be decided by the group (Prokofiev, 1998). This structure will contain any anxiety (Bion, 1961) and will enable a more fluid, group orientated way of working. It will also act as a de-brief at the end of each session.
- Similarly at the start, the group will meet in an inward facing circle to enhance group dynamics (Reddick, 2008) and to prevent the possibility of chaos and confusion descending.
- Work from each session will be collected and kept safe. Girls will be permitted to take all of their work home from the programme on the final session. This could act as a celebration of the young girls' achievements and to enhance their self-esteem.
- Participants will be encouraged to choose to work either in collaboration or independently and are allowed to select their workstation at the start of each session. This will increase the likelihood of the young people feeling comfortable.

- Information will be gathered/participants will be asked if they have and pre-existing mental health or medical conditions that may create risk to them if they participate and they should be advised of any special action they should take to avoid risk. If such instances arise then this will be brought up in supervision. If it is agreed by myself and my supervisor(s) that it is suitable further professional advice will be sought then conversations will be had with the young person's parent(s)/carer(s), the young person and relevant adults in the school. It is important to be consider the possibility that ongoing support may be necessary after the programme is complete.
- If safeguarding issues arise then safeguarding protocols will be followed.
- During research, if I obtain or am witness to any evidence of psychological problems of which the participant is apparently unaware, I will inform the participant if I believe that by not doing so the participant's future wellbeing may be endangered. If it is seen to be appropriate, then a suitable source of professional advice would be recommended to the participant by myself.
- At the end of the programme all participants will be debriefed. All participants will be debriefed once the final semi-structured focus groups have been conducted. All participants will also be provided with contact details of myself and relevant supervisors.
- All participants will be reassured from the onset that their personal data will remain confidential, that data will remain anonymised throughout and information in the form of audio/video-recordings will be kept on a secure computer.
- There is very low risk of physical harm to participants involved in the research however, during practical activities warnings will be given relating to potential allergies to the art materials selected.

Arranging Appointments with participants at appropriate places & times

Appointments will be scheduled with participants at a time and a place that is suitable for them. This should minimise the inconvenience and discomfort for participants.

1:1 interviews will be undertaken in a familiar, quiet and private setting within the school.

Focus groups in which staff/adolescents may feel uncomfortable expressing their views in front of the adolescents/staff will be done in separate groups. Groups will be asked about this prior to the sessions taking place.

Discussion of sensitive issues

Given the nature of the research it is possible that sensitive issues may be raised. Participants will be encouraged to only talk about things that they are comfortable sharing. The participants will be reminded at the start of a focus group that that they have the option to leave the discussion group (through the use of an exit card) or can refrain from speaking at any point. If however, the research raises issues for the participants and psychological distress is caused then support will be gained from a member of staff with whom the young person has a good relationship. The interests of the participants will always prevail over the interests of the research and during the construction of interviews, questionnaires and group activities, I will be sensitive to questioning that is itself highly sensitive, may raises confidentiality issues and/or is intrusive.

Checking the transcript

The process relies on building rapport with the participant to enable an open and frank discussion about the experiences which the participants have had. However, it is possible that during this process a participant may say something that they would not like to be included in the write up of the study. Similarly in the videoed sessions the participants may be relaxed, may forget that they are being filmed and may act in ways which they would not want to be included in the transcription.

The following steps will be taken to prevent this:

- After the interview, focus group or video sessions are completed I will ensure that the participants are happy with how the session went and if there are any changes to their account which they would like to make or if they would like any actions to be kept out of the transcription process.

I will be the first point of contact for participants in the research. It will be made clear to participants in the information leaflet that my tutor Ruth Slater (my university research tutor) can be contacted if someone wants to raise a complaint about my work. If that is not satisfactory then the University of Sheffield Registrar and/or Secretary can be contacted.

The research will be fed back to participants in a format which is accessible and meaningful for them. I will create a leaflet which outlines the findings of the study and will, if they want, arrange to chat with them about the findings.

A.11 What measures will be put in place to ensure confidentiality of personal data, where appropriate?

Confidentiality and Anonymity

All data will be anonymised by coding the names and removing all identifiable information. The data and sound/video-files will be stored on a password protected computer until the research and assessment of the thesis is complete. All consent forms and other paperwork containing personal information will be kept in a locked cabinet in line with data protection laws.

As stated above data which participants do not want included in the transcript will be removed from analysis data-sets and will be deleted.

No real names, places, or other identifying information will be used in the write up of the research project. However, the research is taking place in a small educational setting (unique to the Local Authority) which only a small number of pupils attend and in which only a small number of Local Authority employees work. This inevitably increases the risk of participants being identifiable. This is something which is difficult for me to avoid. All participants involved in the programme and semi-structured focus groups will be reminded to respect the confidentiality of others'. However, again I will have limited control over this variable.

Transcription of the Data

The transcripts will be completed by me and consequently I will be the only person who hears the voice and sees the videos of the participants.

Access to data

Sections of the anonymised transcripts will be shared with my Supervisors and this information will be available in the information leaflet provided before consent is given.

A.12 Will financial / in kind payments (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants? (Indicate how much and on what basis this has been decided.)

Yes

No

X

A.13 Will the research involve the production of recorded or photographic media such as audio and/or video recordings or photographs?

Yes

X

No

Participants will be filmed during the art programme sessions, in the initial and final session. This will be for data collection purposes only. Audio recordings will also be made of the semi-structured focus groups and 1:1 interviews.

A.13.1 This question is only applicable if you are planning to produce recorded or visual media:

How will you ensure that there is a clear agreement with participants as to how these recorded media or photographs may be stored, used and (if appropriate) destroyed?

The participants will be made aware of the need for audio and video recordings at the very early stages of the research (information leaflet and initial discussions). They will be told when the video and audio recordings will take place and will be reminded of the methods of data protection. The files will be stored on a password protected computer with personal access only (the computer is not stored in a public place). The audio and video files will be stored up until the research has been formally examined by the University. In the initial discussions with participants, in the information leaflets and consent forms, participants will be made aware that film and audio clips will be kept by myself on security protected disks after the research exercise is complete. They will be informed that if these clips were to be used by myself for further analysis or for training purposes then further (written) permission would be asked for (from the young people/parent(s)/carer(s)/staff). As part of this request they would be informed or how/why the clips were to be re-analysed and who specifically would have access to the recordings. Participants would be informed that they would have the right to stop or decline this request for further analysis or distribution. This information will be provided in the initial discussions, in the information leaflet and consent form; and also when the request for re-analysis or distribution is being made.

Additional Information

My boundaries

As well as being a researcher, I am also an Educational Psychologist (EP) in training for the Local Authority and a 25 year old female. I have a variety of identities which may impact upon my research and it is important that these are identified and reflected upon through-out in my research diary. I will be part of the research process itself-I will be immersed in it as both a participant and researcher. Power imbalances will be inevitable however, many attempts are made to reduce them. Similarly, how I am perceived by the staff and young women involved in the project could affect the research process and the results obtained. I am not the Educational Psychologist for the setting, which reduces the complexities of my role slightly however, it is important that I am in communication with the designated EP throughout.

CRB

I have an enhanced CRB disclosure that was carried out by the Local Authority and issued on 27th May 2009. A CRB disclosure was also issued by the University of Sheffield (where I am a full time student) on 20th June 2008. These numbers along with my British Psychological Society and Association of Educational Psychologists' membership will be communicated to the Local Authority, Setting and Parent(s)/Carer(s).

References

Bion, W. (1961) *Experiences in Groups and Other Papers*. London: Tavistock Papers.

Prokofiev, F. (1998) Adapting the Art Therapy Group for children in Skaife, S. and Huet, V (Eds) *Art Psychotherapy Groups Between Pictures and Words*. London: Routledge.

Reddick, D. (2008) Working with the Whole Class in Primary Schools in Case, C. And Dalley, T. (2008) *Art Therapy with Children: From infancy to Adolescents*. London: Routledge.

University of Sheffield School of Education
RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATION FORM

PART B - THE SIGNED DECLARATION

Title of Research Project:

How do adolescent females and staff at a provision for excluded pupils perceive the use of an arts programme within the setting?

Name of Applicant: Caroline Jayne Murphy

I confirm my responsibility to deliver the research project in accordance with the University of Sheffield's policies and procedures, which include the University's '*Financial Regulations*', '*Good research Practice Standards*' and the '*Ethics Policy for Research Involving Human Participants, Data and Tissue*' (Ethics Policy) and, where externally funded, with the terms and conditions of the research funder.

In signing this research ethics application I am confirming that:

1. The above-named project will abide by the University's Ethics Policy for Research Involving Human Participants, Data and Tissue': <http://www.shef.ac.uk/content/1/c6/07/21/15/Tissue.doc>
2. The above-named project will abide by the University's 'Good Research Practice Standards': www.shef.ac.uk/content/1/c6/03/25/82/collatedGRP.pdf
3. The research ethics application form for the above-named project is accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.
4. There is no potential material interest that may, or may appear to, impair the independence and objectivity of researchers conducting this project.
5. Subject to the research being approved, I undertake to adhere to the project protocol without unagreed deviation and to comply with any conditions set out in the letter from the University ethics reviewers notifying me of this.
6. I undertake to inform the ethics reviewers of significant changes to the protocol (by contacting my supervisor or the Ethics Administrator as appropriate
7. I am aware of my responsibility to be up to date and comply with the requirements of the law and relevant guidelines relating to security and confidentiality of personal data, including the need to register when necessary with the appropriate Data Protection Officer (within the University the Data Protection Officer is based in CICS).
8. I understand that the project, including research records and data, may be subject to inspection for audit purposes, if required in future.

9. I understand that personal data about me as a researcher in this form will be held by those involved in the ethics review procedure (eg the Ethics Administrator and/or ethics reviewers/supervisors) and that this will be managed according to Data Protection Act principles.
10. If this is an application for a 'generic'/'en block' project all the individual projects that fit under the generic project are compatible with this application.
11. I will inform the Chair of Ethics Review Panel if prospective participants make a complaint about the above-named project.

Name of the Principal Investigator (or the name of the Supervisor if this is a student project): Ruth Slater

If this is a student project insert the student's name here: Caroline Jayne Murphy

Signature of Principal Investigator (or the Supervisor):

Signature of student:

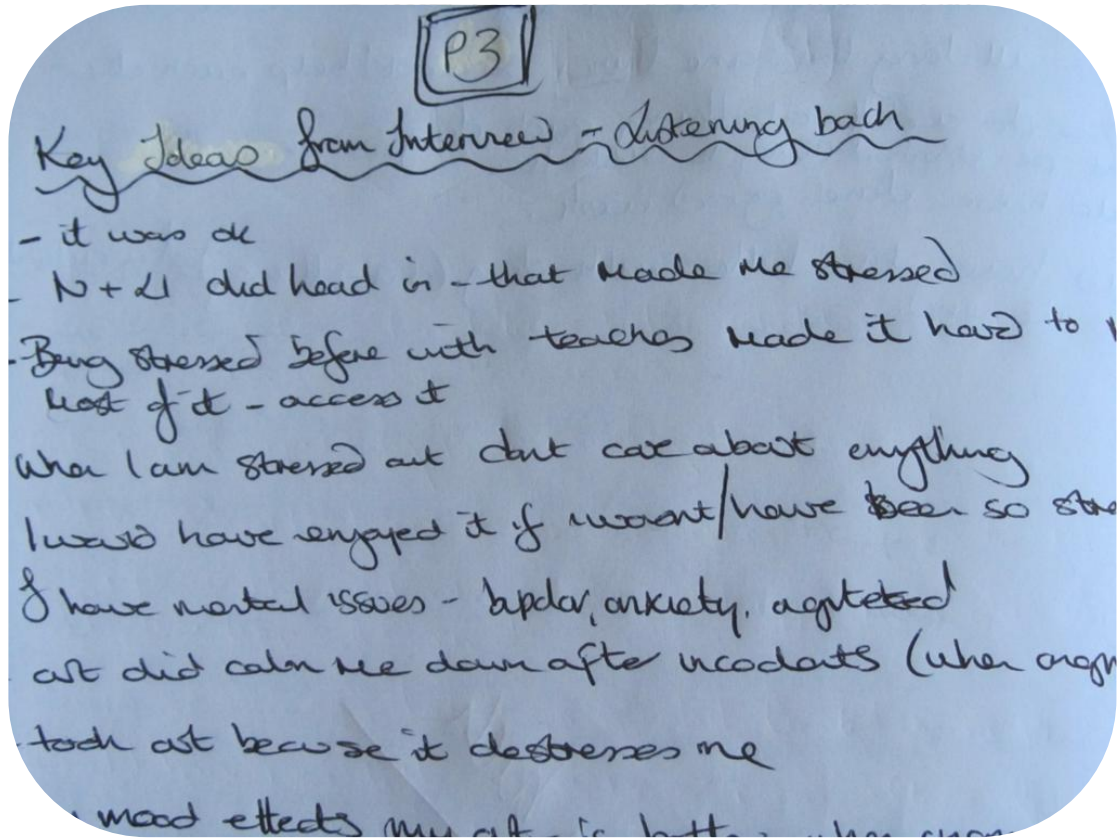
Date:

Email the completed application form and provide a signed, hard copy of 'Part B' to the course/programme secretary

For staff projects contact the Ethics Secretary, Colleen Woodward

Email: c.woodward@sheffield.ac.uk for details of how to submit

Appendix XV-Photograph of notes from research diary when listening back through the interview: taking notes to identify key thoughts



Appendix XVI-Example of transcription and initial coding/note taking (Staff interview with S2)

INITIAL CODES	Transcript/data extract
<p>S2</p> <p>Adult Enjoyment</p> <p>Adult Liked lack of structure Kids want/need to be instructed of what to do</p> <p>Adult enjoyment Novel opportunity for staff</p> <p>Stressful Felt responsible for the pupils' behaviour Couldn't switch off from TA role Stressful Felt responsible for pupil's behaviour Enjoyed making</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ready? Yes 2. Yeah 3. The first question is... in a way could you tell me about your experiences of the art programme kinda and how you found it? 4. I've actually really enjoyed it, as an adult. I've enjoyed it because you don't really get to do much of this in the school because it is more structured all the time. 5. I don't know whether the kids have enjoyed it as much because there was less structure ...and maybe if they're toldwhat they are doing every week I don't know whether that would have helped ...more... 6. but I think all the adults have really enjoyed the experience- because it is just something different for us to do. 7. So I suppose...is there anything else you would want to say as a person how you found it, as an individual, as in your experience may be different to everybody else? 8. I think I found it sometimes a little bit stressful because the girls weren't joining in and I felt responsible for themnot joining in and, having to follow them around outside and things like that. So probably... at times it has been a bit... stressful... trying to get them to...to... be a bit more involved in it. But... 9. Other than that the stuff I have actually made and the things I have done I have actually really enjoyed that...

Appendix XVII – Example list of initial codes from pupil interviews

Symbolic method used to link similar codes together-Staff interviews (Note the numbers to the right represent the transcript paragraph number to which the interpreted extract belongs)

INITIAL codes

E

Code	Description	Transcript Paragraph Number
●	Adult Enjoyment	4
☺	Adult Liked lack of structure	4
✓	Kids want/need to be instructed of what to do	5
●	Adult enjoyment	6
●	Novel opportunity for staff	8, 6
S	Stressful	8
i	Felt responsible for the pupils' behaviour	8
—	Couldn't switch off from TA role	8
S	Stressful	8
i	Felt responsible for pupil's behaviour	8
—	Enjoyed making	9
—	Enjoyed making	13
—	Using new materials	13

ADULT LIST OF CODES
PART (E)

^ pupils set up on each day
 ✓ pupils need instruction
 → external issues imp on ability to access the prog
 ✓ others are proud of work
 ← Behaviour was to be expected
 ∩ too many distractions
 ✓ proud of work
 ∩ disappointed that not @

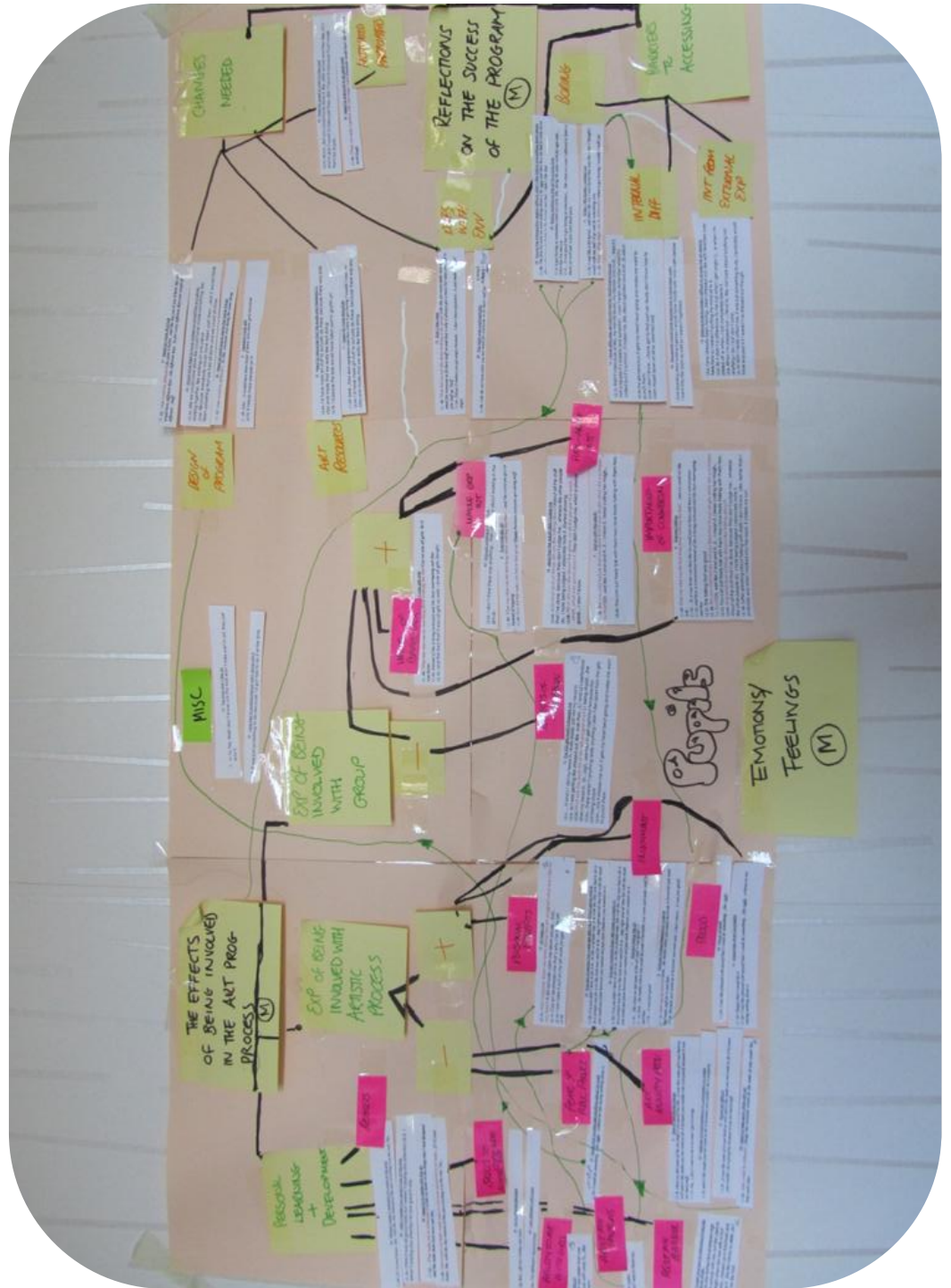
List of codes resulting:

1. Enjoyed doing the art
2. Fear of perceived failure
3. Enjoyed choice/freedom in making
4. When I felt bored I walked out
5. Liked that it was girls only
6. Enjoyed talking
7. Got on with the adults
8. Everyone got on
9. Needed more girls
10. Didn't like mess
11. Need for more resources
12. The KS3 girls spoil it/stressed me
13. External events made it difficult to access the art sessions
14. I have difficulties (emotional/mental health/behavioural)
15. Art helps me
16. Happiness when successful
17. My mood effects my art
18. Liked that the adults didn't judge me
19. Need for resources that the pupils are interested in.
20. Boring working on the art for a long time
21. Didn't like the silence
22. Found art difficult
23. Feelings of incompetency in comparison to others
24. Enjoyed materials that were less risky i.e. without going wrong
25. Enjoyed materials that I felt more successful in
26. Proud of work
27. Good that no-one said anything about my work
28. Found the introduction session difficult (didn't like talking and writing down ideas)
29. The room was claustrophobic
30. Need to try better with the art
31. Need for more structure
32. Need all participants doing the same things
33. Need to help each other with art
34. Need for everyone to do good work
35. Wished I hadn't wrecked my work at the end
36. I was told to participate-just went along with it
37. I didn't realise how good it was at the time
38. All my friends are boys
39. I am different with boys
40. I normally find getting on with girls difficult
41. Learnt from being with the KS3 girls about myself and how my behaviour in the past has impacted on others.
42. Enjoyed working in the group
43. Would have liked to have worked on something as a group
44. Group work would have required me to have been calm

Appendix XVIII-Photographs of the initial thematic networks/maps produced linking codes and their extracts together to create themes

(Note-white cut-outs display clustered extracts for codes)

Pupils



Staff

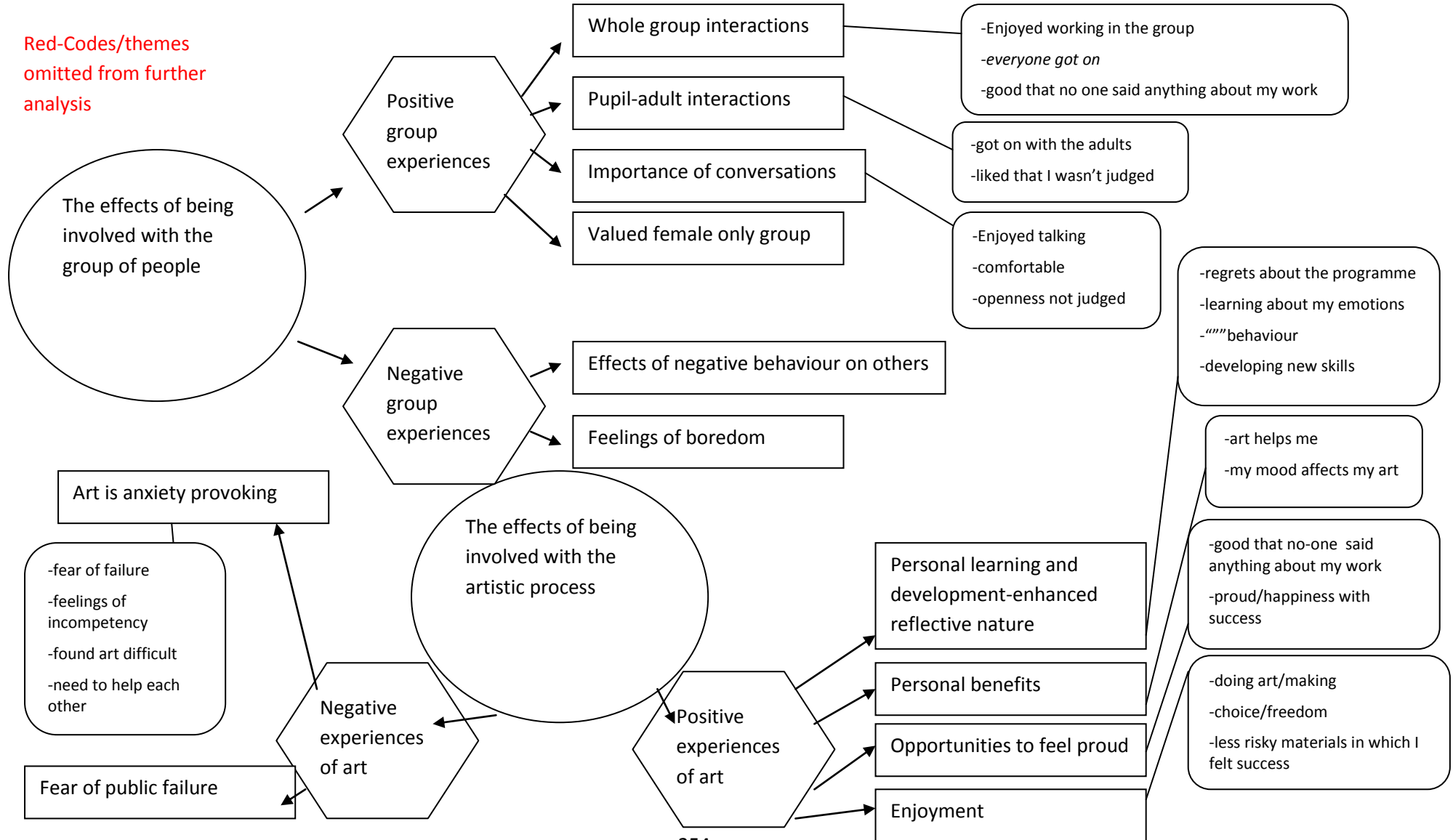


My reflective research diary

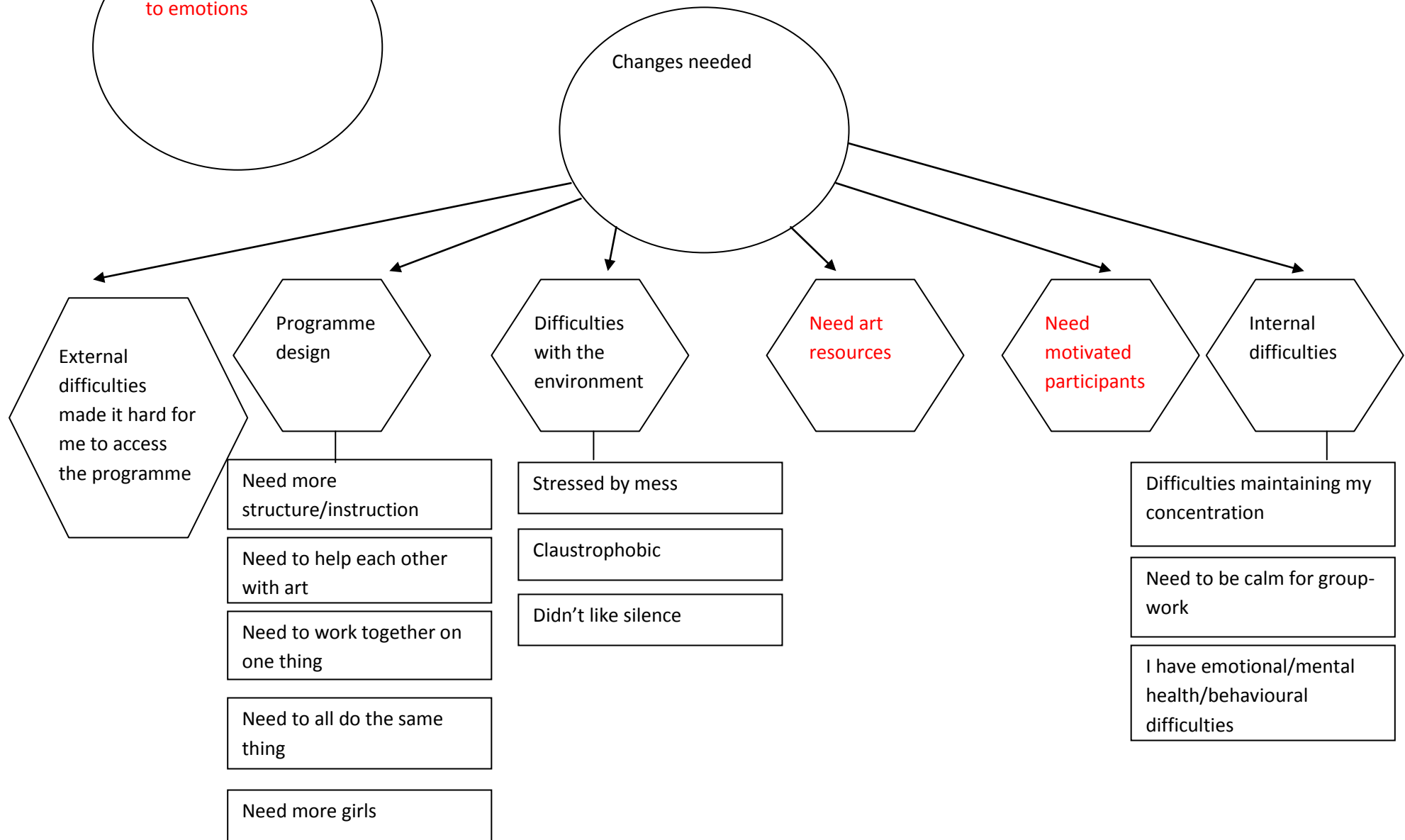


Appendix XIX-Simplification of initial mind-map/thematic networks: Pupil interview data.

Red-Codes/themes omitted from further analysis

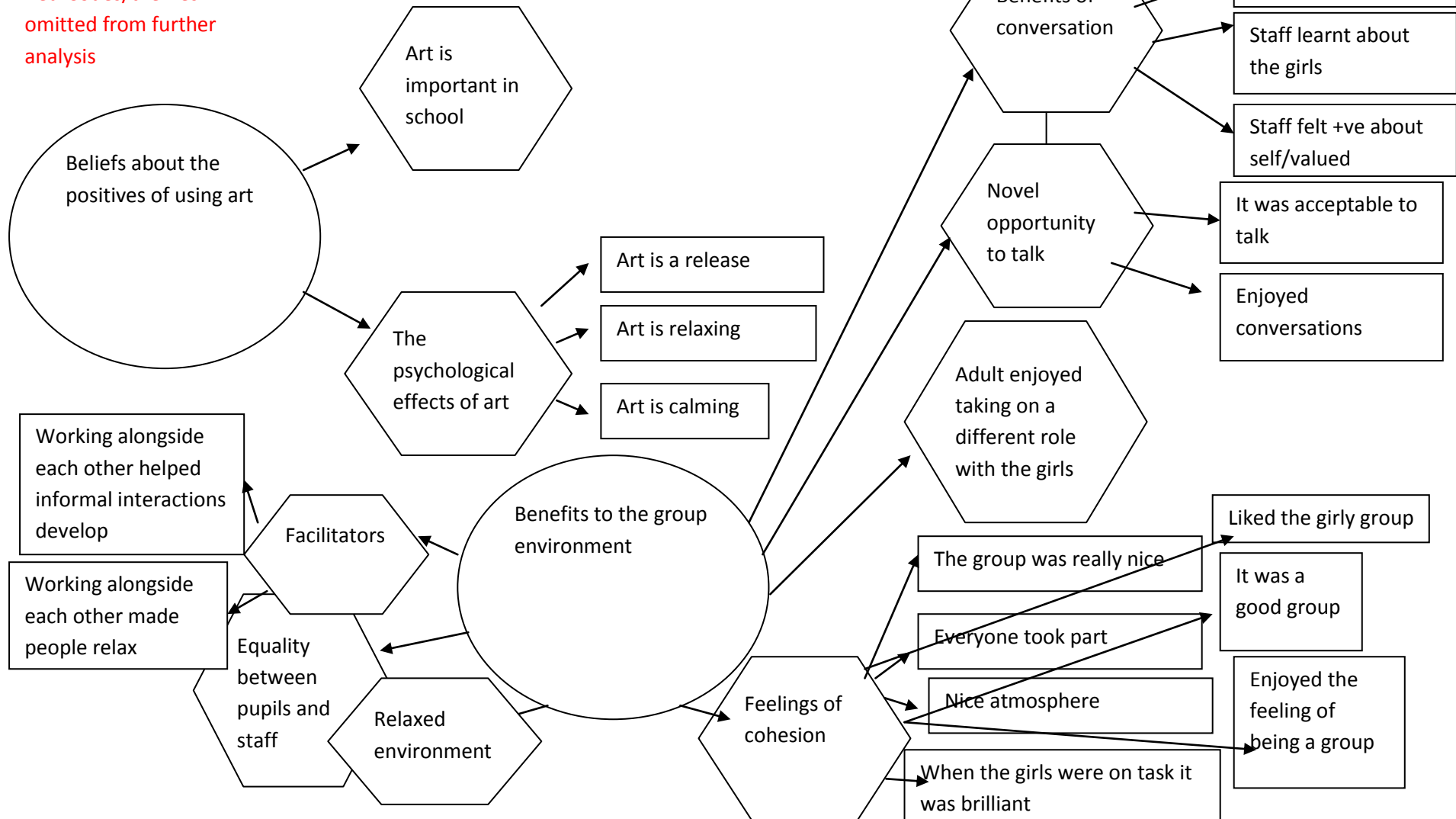


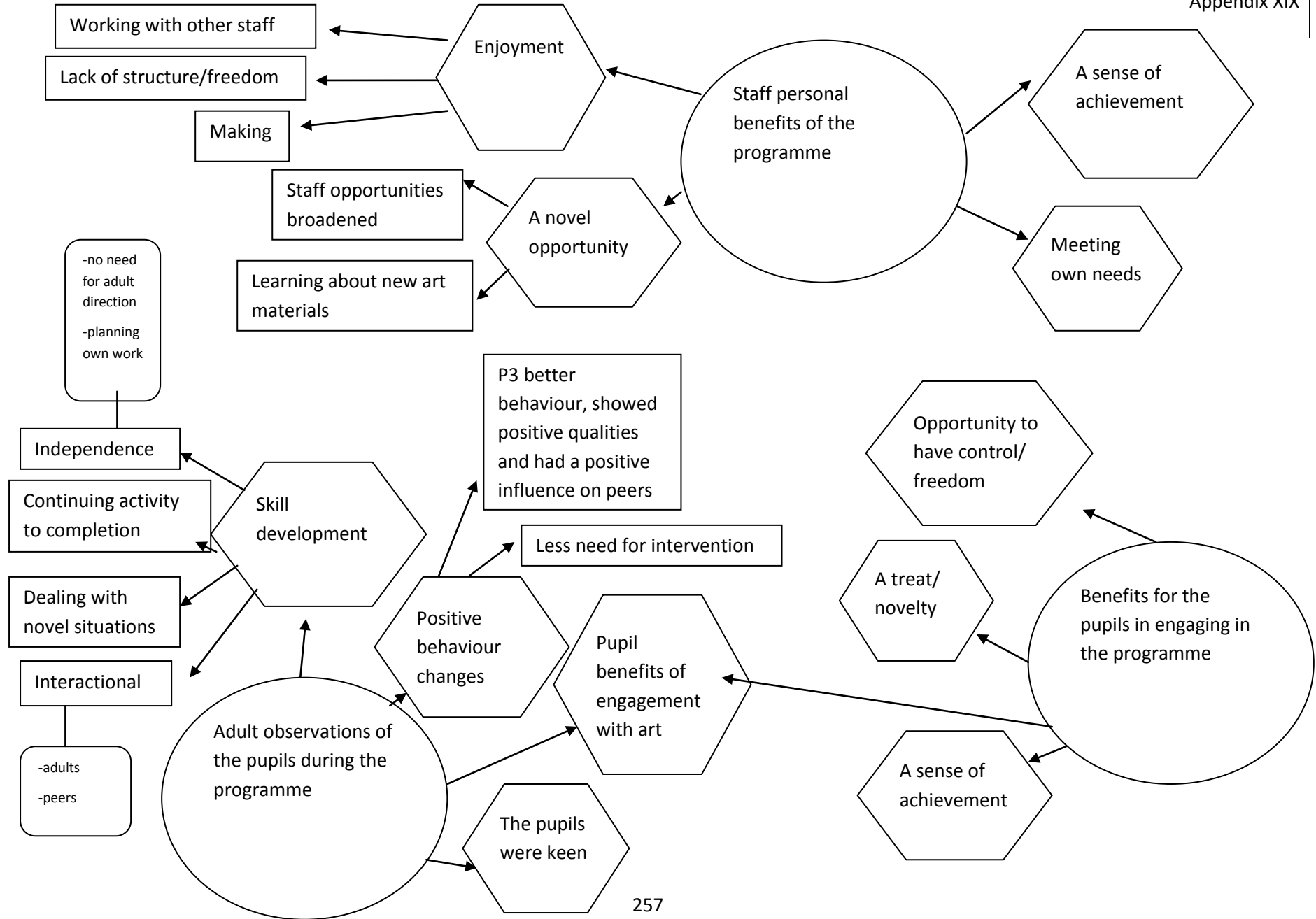
Conversations linked to emotions

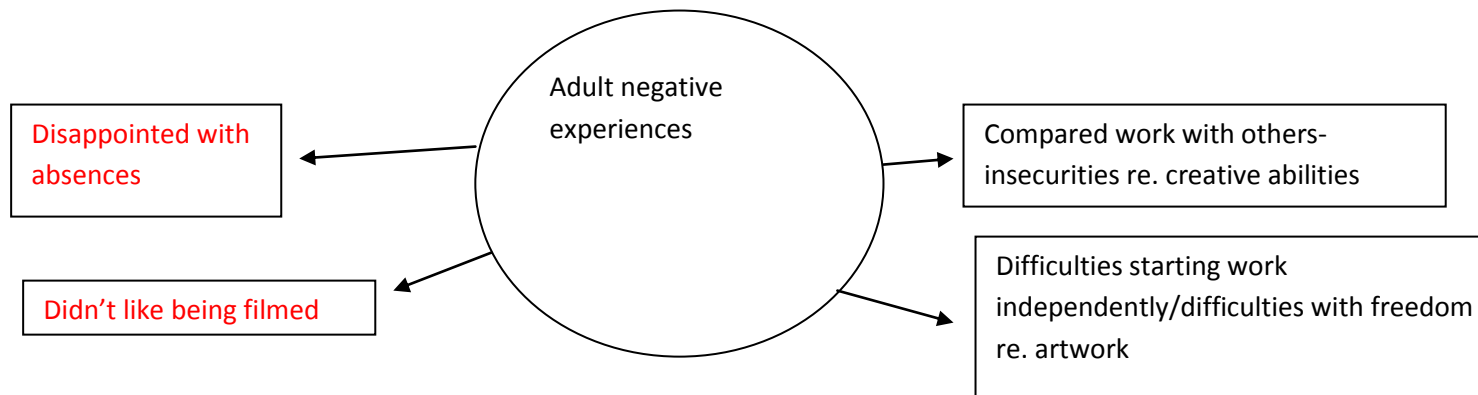
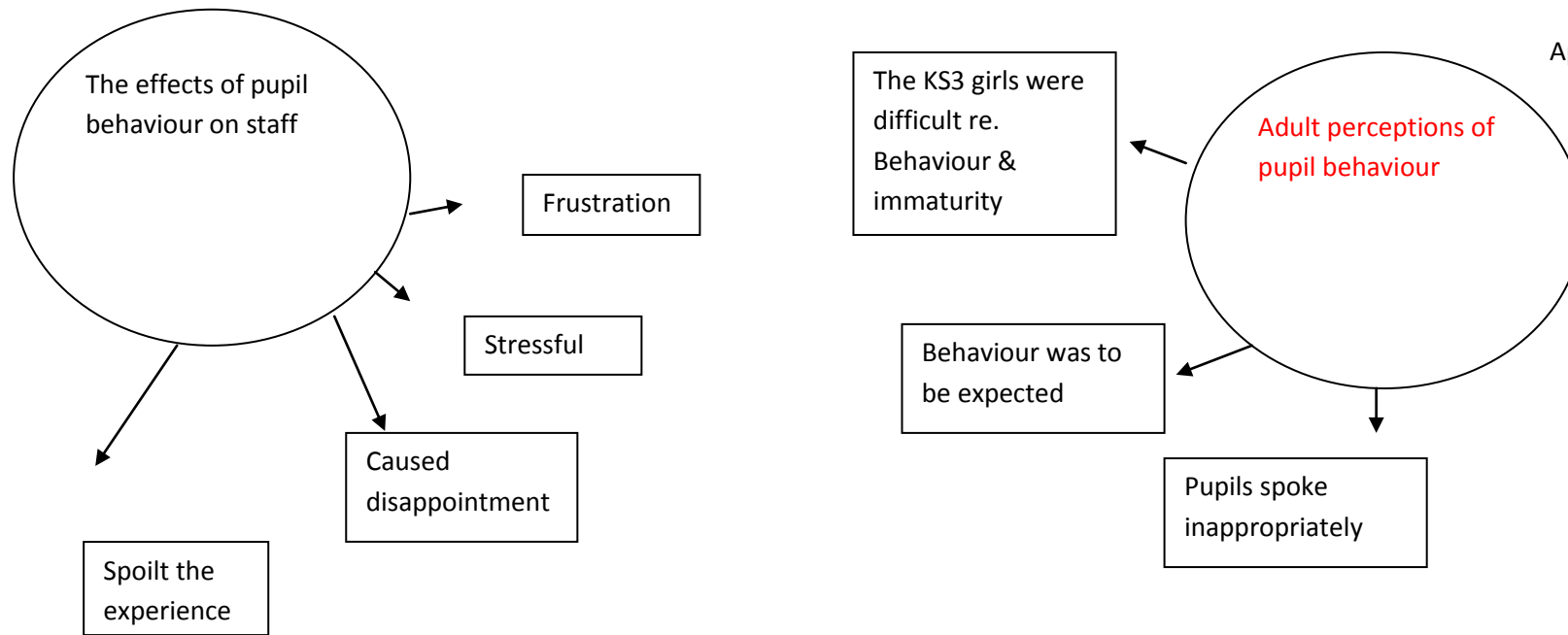


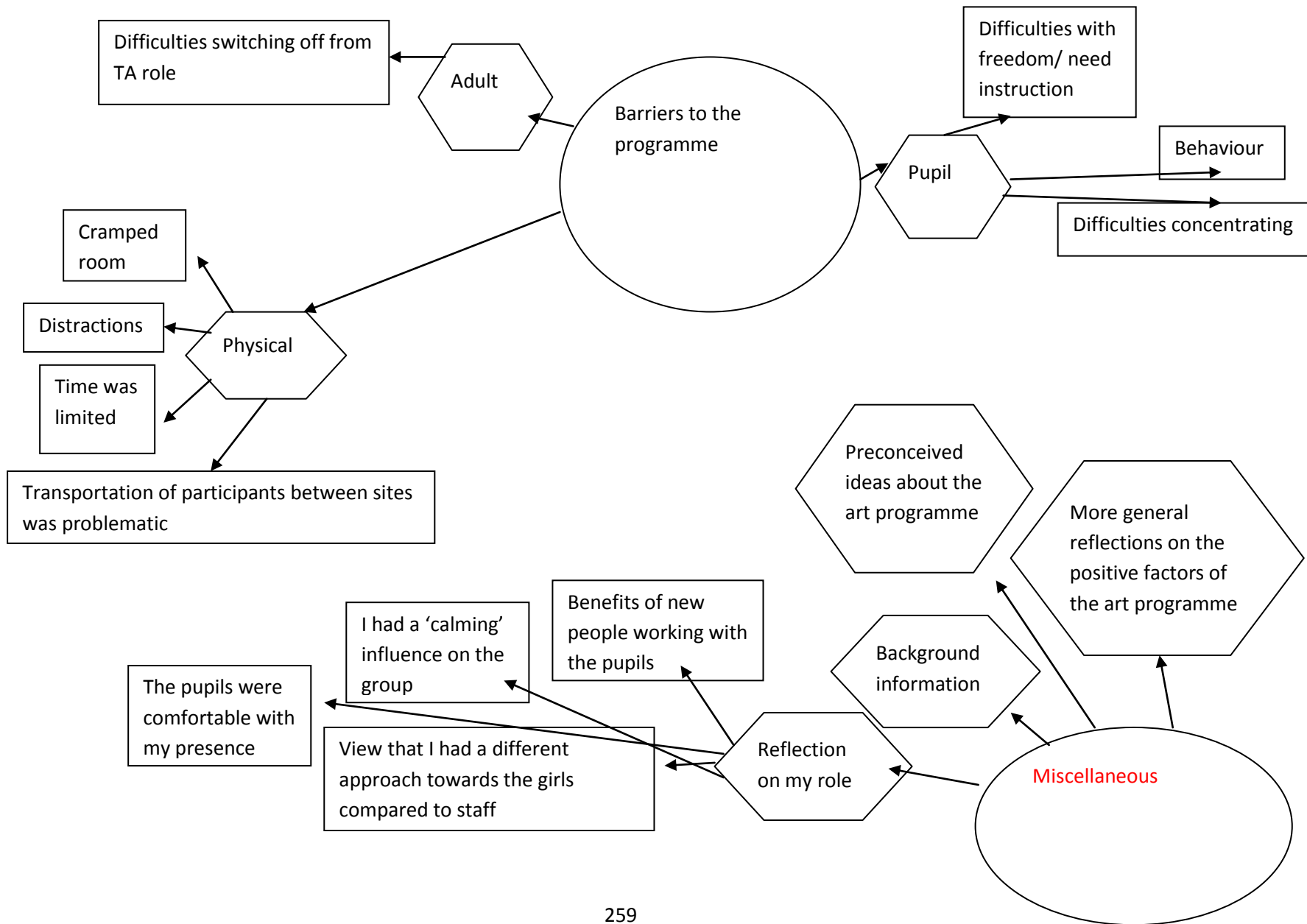
Simplification of initial mind-map/thematic networks: Staff interview data.

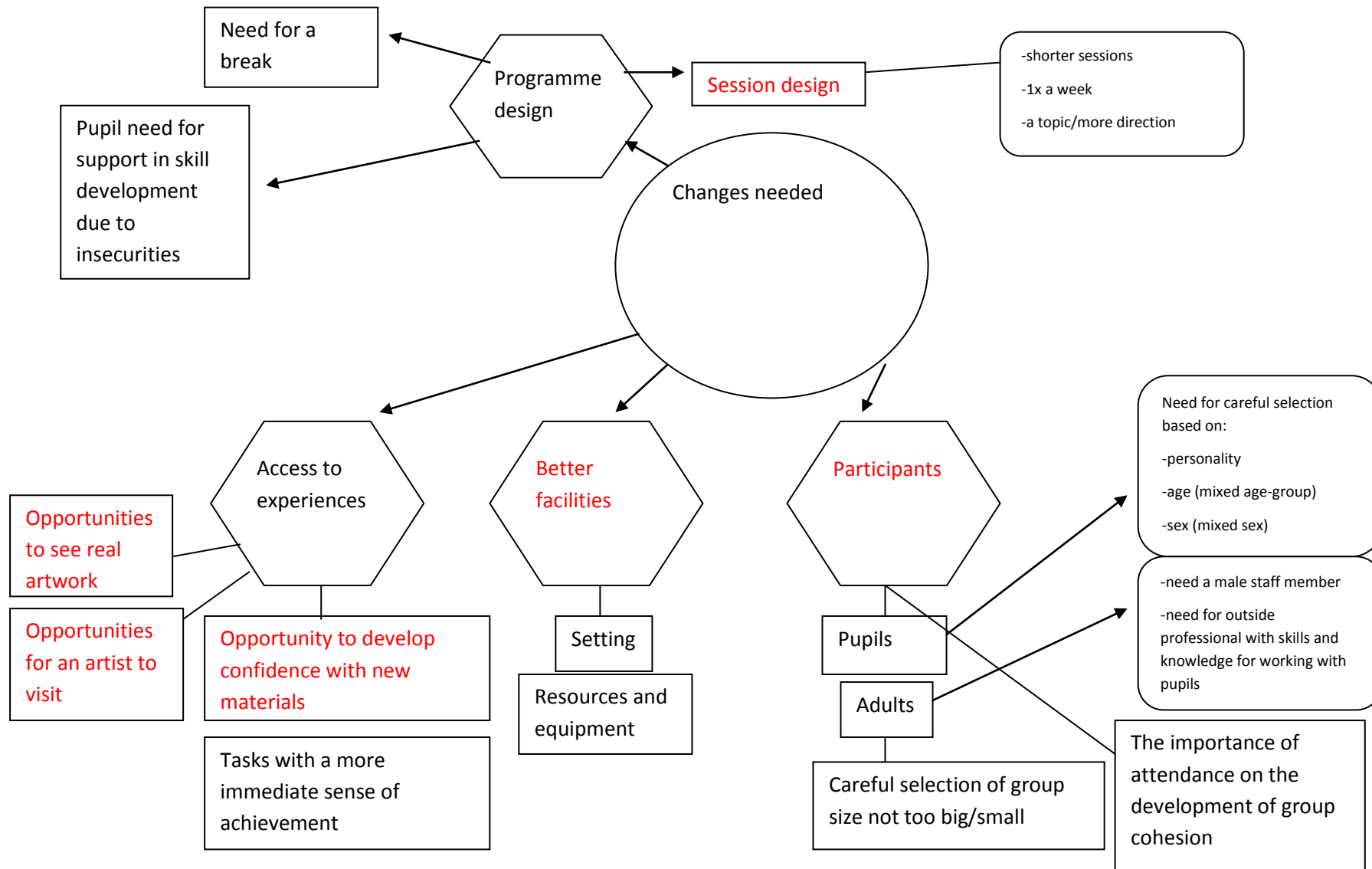
Red-Codes/themes omitted from further analysis





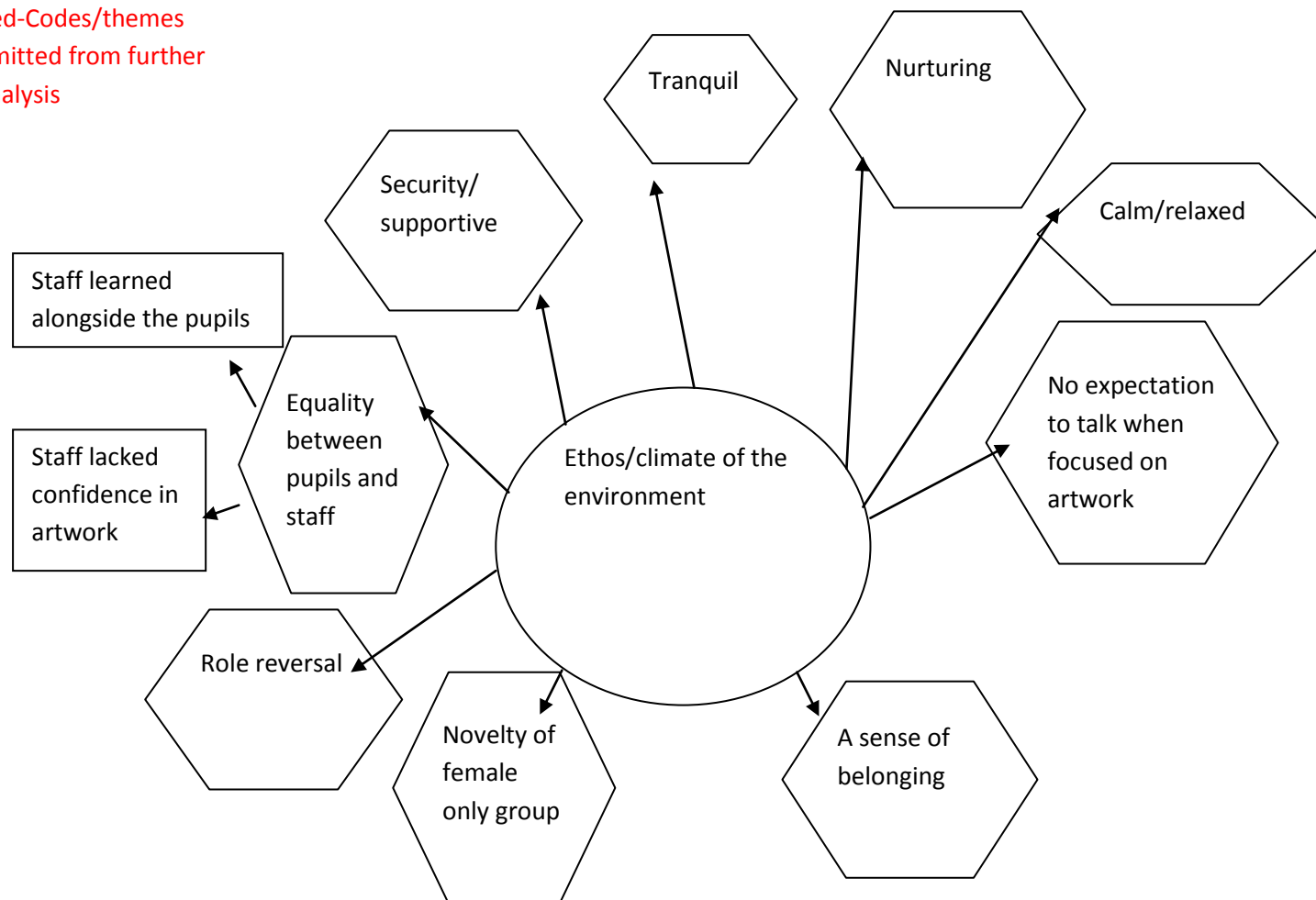


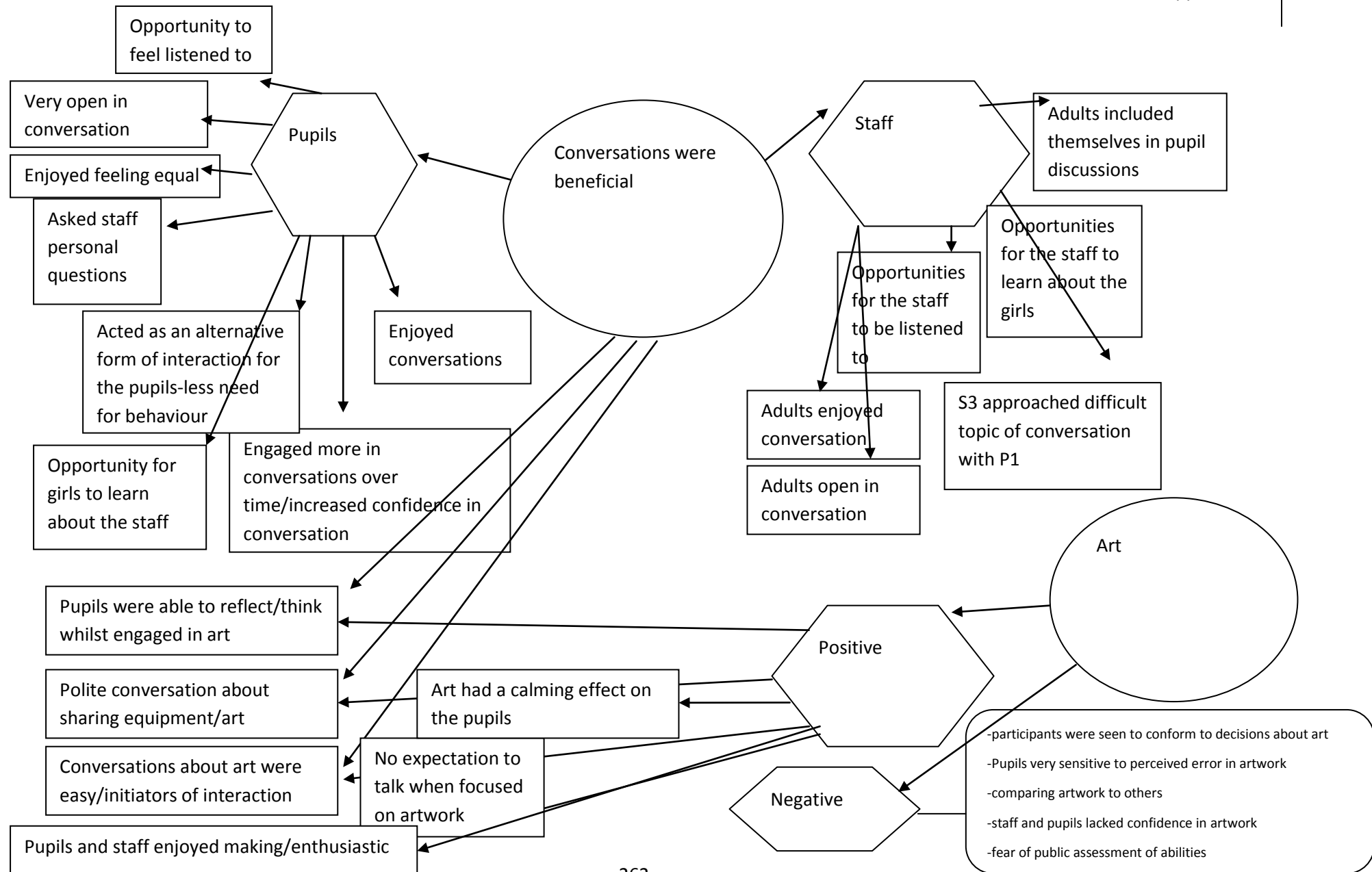


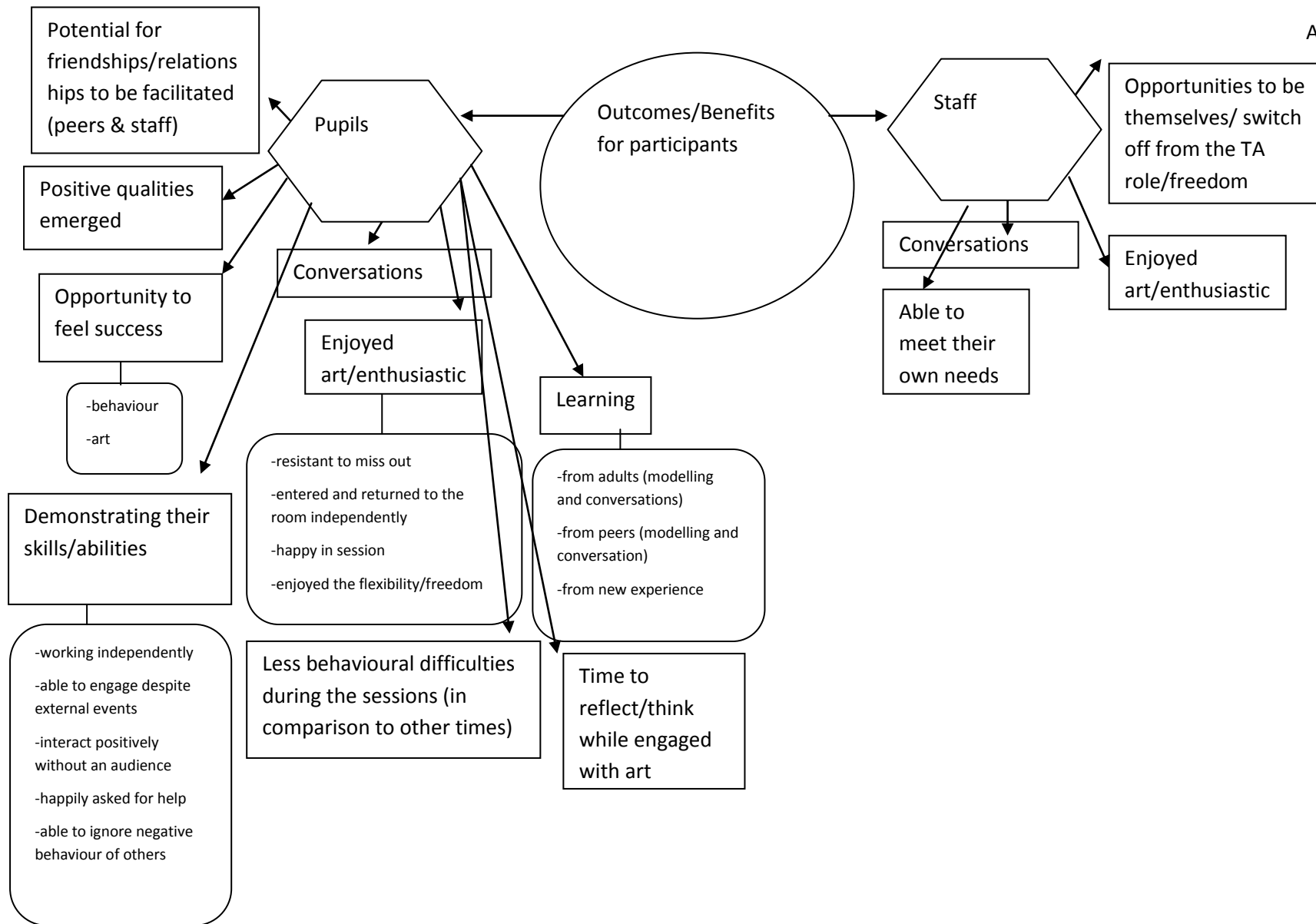


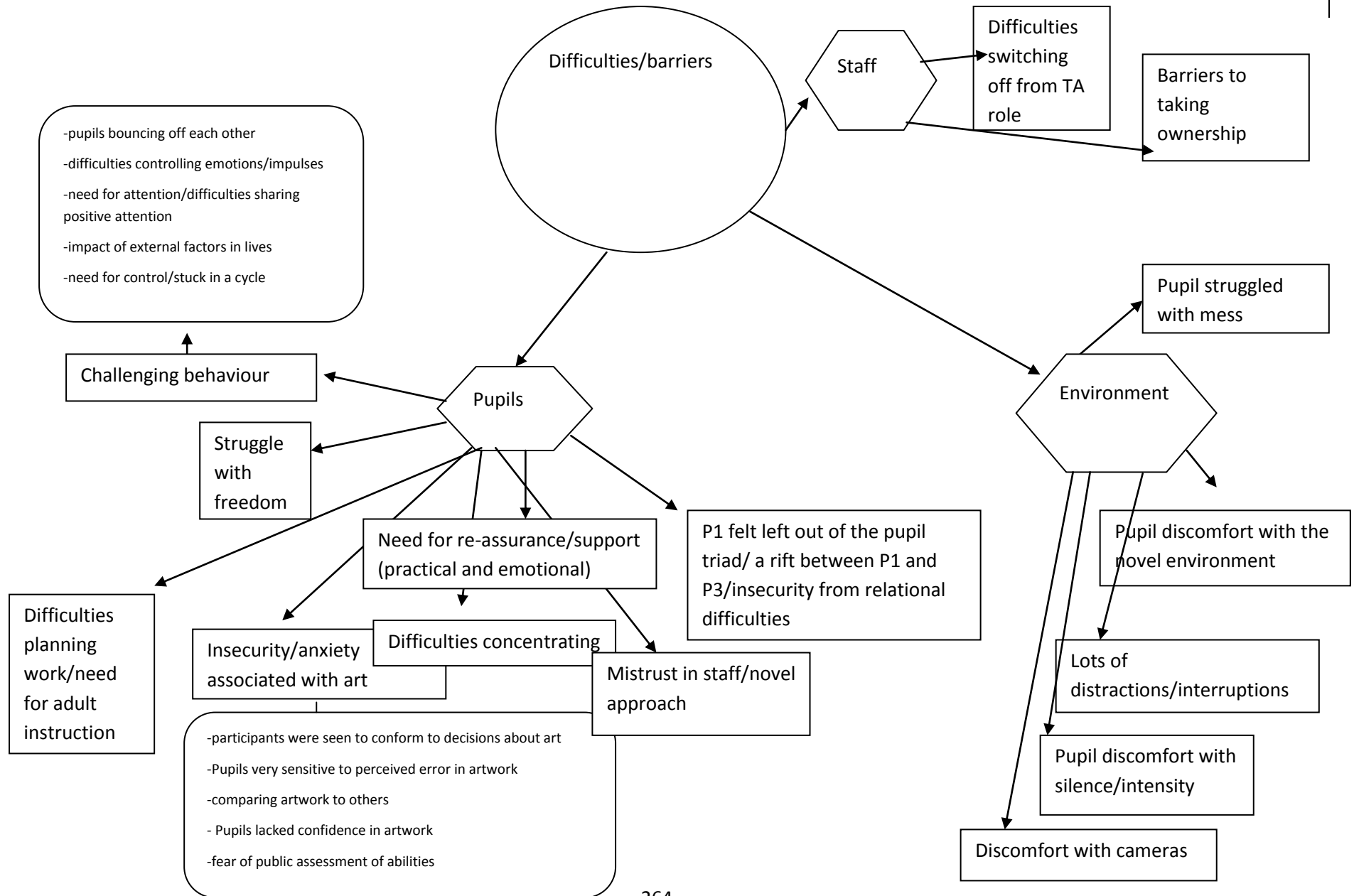
Simplification of initial mind-map/thematic networks: My reflective diary data.

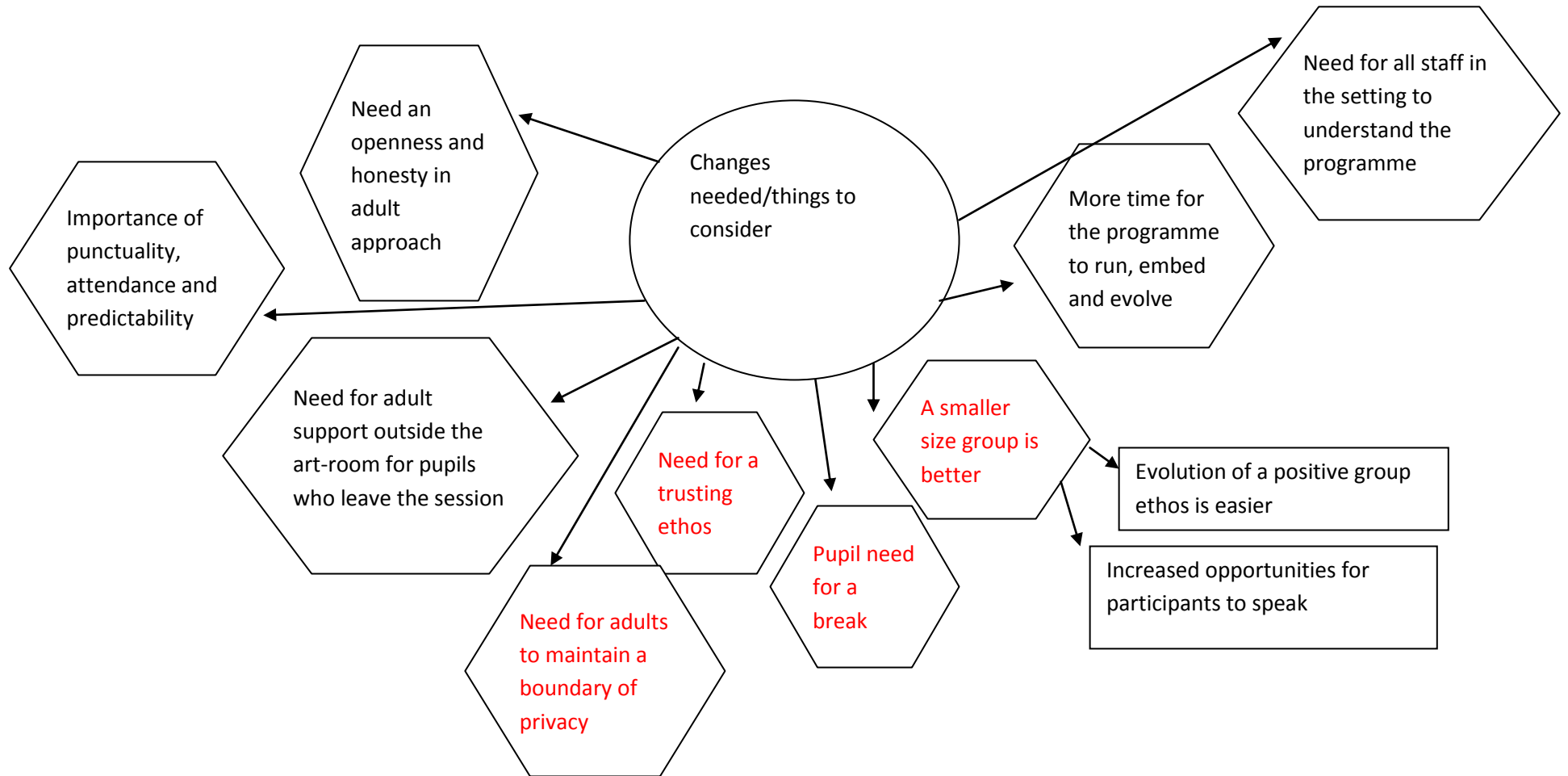
Red-Codes/themes
omitted from further
analysis

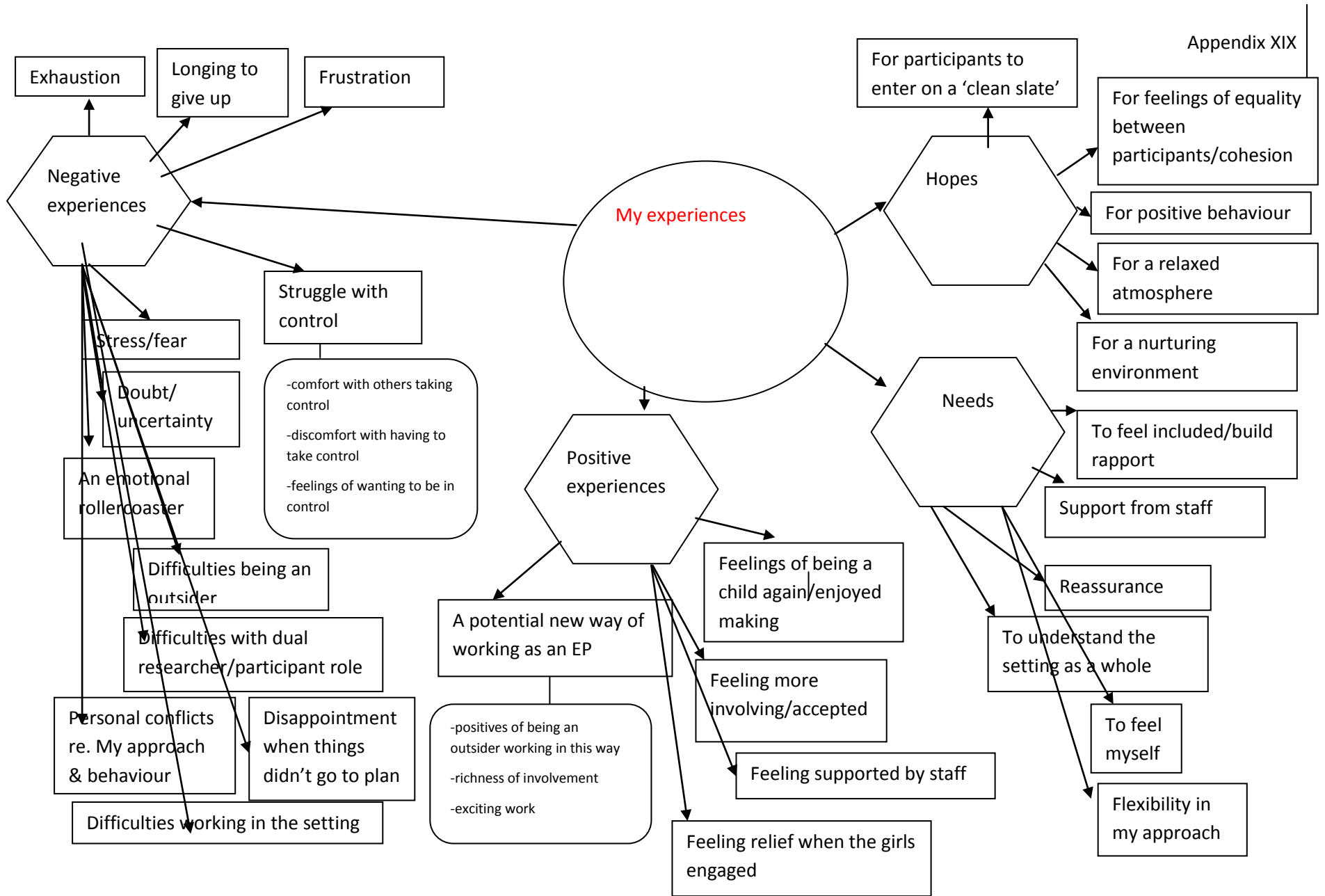


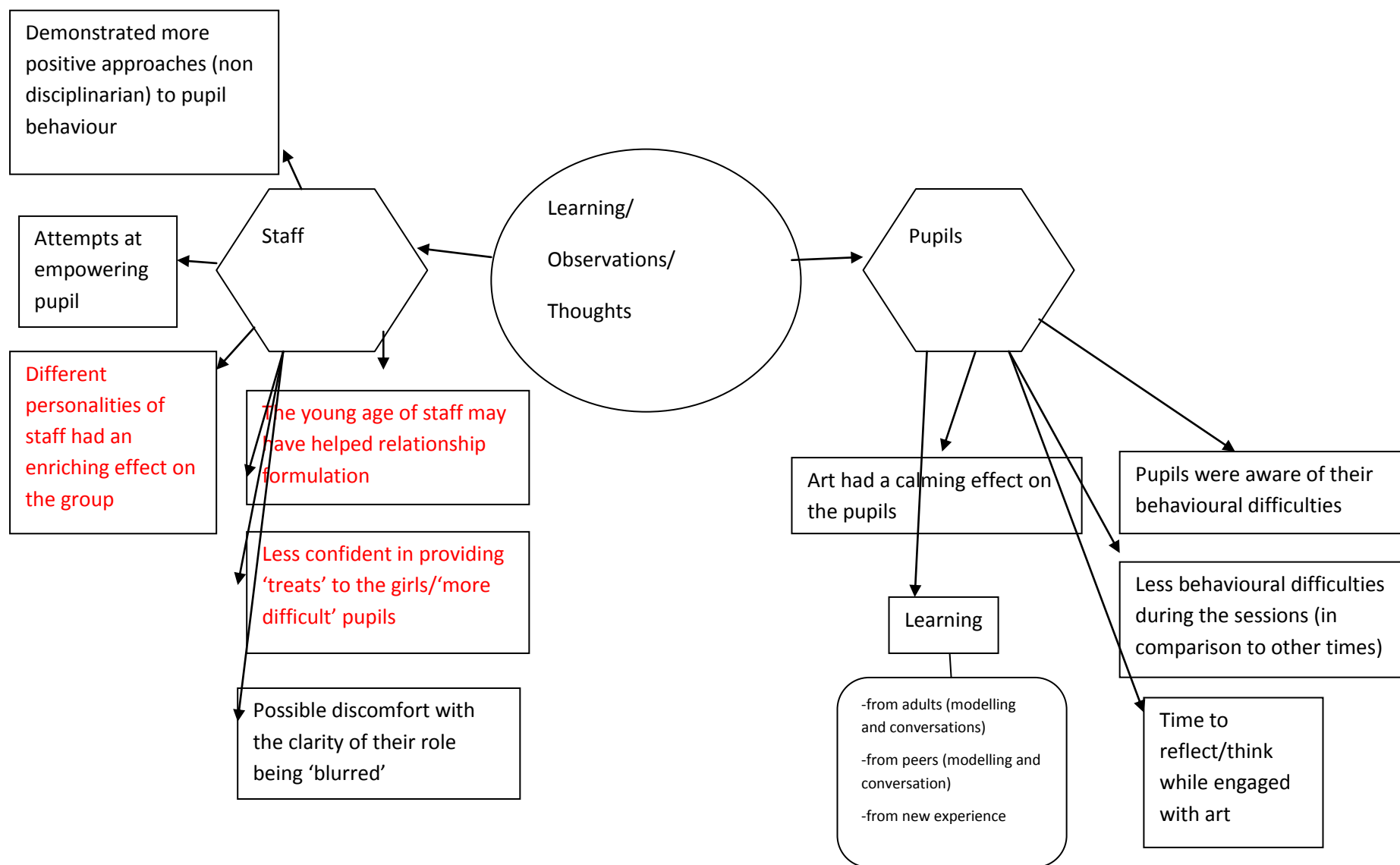












Appendix XX:

Table 5 showing the prevalence and strength of each Main overarching theme (MOT) and lower-order themes (LOTs) in the 3 data sets.

Prevalence is measured relating to:

1) Whether each MOT/LOT appeared in each of the data sets and

2) the number of occurrences (extracts) of the main overarching/lower order theme across each of the datasets. ¹¹

(From Braun and Clarke, 2006, p82)

<u>MOT/LOT</u>	<u>Number of Extracts/occurrences across each (pupil/staff/my) and total dataset</u> Pupil interview extracts+staff+my reflective diary= total dataset	<u>Datasets in which the MOT/lower-order theme appeared</u>
<u>Ethos/Climate of the environment</u>	10+24+66=100 total dataset	All three datasets
*Equality	21 (2+5+14)	All three datasets
*Value of female only group	11(4+1+6)	All three datasets
*Relaxed/calm/tranquil	21(5+16)	Staff interview/my reflective research diary
*Cohesion	3(2+1)	Staff/pupil interview
Safe learning environment	2	Pupil interview
Enjoyment of group 'feel'	6	Staff interview
(Staff value of taking a different role)	5	Staff interview
*Sense of belonging/wanted to be there	17	My reflective research diary
Nurturing	2	My reflective research diary
*Secure/supportive	11	My reflective research diary
(Art-Benefits re. Ethos of working on art alongside each other)	1	Staff interview

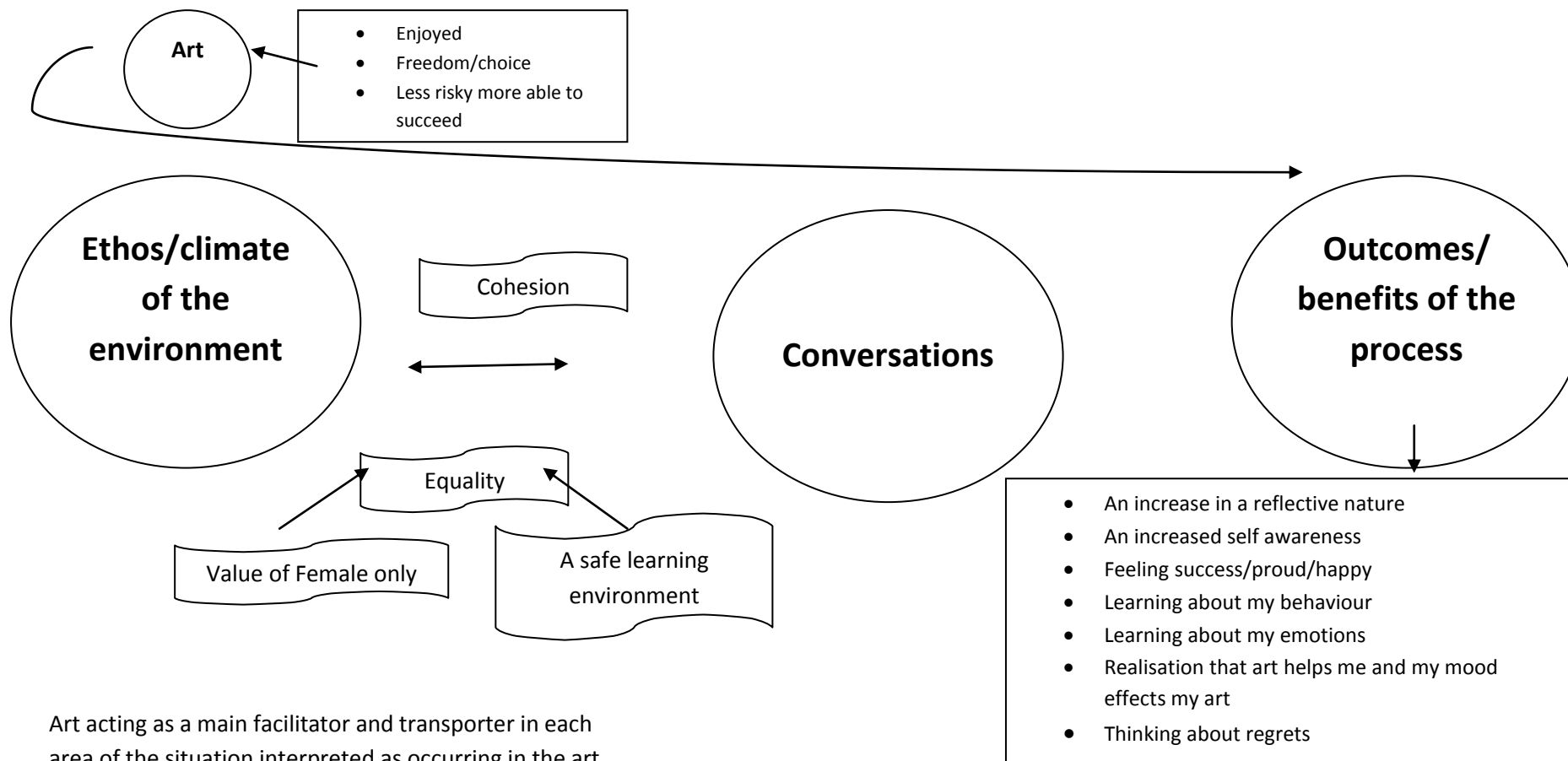
¹¹ Note: the most highly prevalent LOTs for each MOT are indicated with a * .(bracketed LOT) indicates those discussed/interpreted in another MOT.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Conversations</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">*Value/enjoyed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*Staff learnt about the girls (Benefits re. conversation of working on art alongside each other)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pupils learnt from each other</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Staff felt positive about self/valued</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ideas were shared</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pupils enjoyed feeling equal in conversations</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*Pupil opportunity to be open/discuss difficulties</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pupil access to positive interactions with staff-less need for behaviour</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pupil opportunity to be listened to</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*Pupil opportunity to learn about staff</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Staff opportunity to be open</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Staff opportunity to be listened to</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">6+15+81=102 total dataset</p> <p style="text-align: center;">22 (6+11+5)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10(3+7)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">11(1+10)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">14</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">All three datasets</p> <p>All three datasets</p> <p>Staff interview/my reflective research diary</p> <p>Staff interview/my reflective research diary</p> <p>Staff interview</p> <p>Staff interview</p> <p>Staff interview</p> <p>my reflective research diary</p> <p>my reflective research diary</p> <p>my reflective research diary</p> <p>my reflective research diary</p> <p>my reflective research diary</p> <p>my reflective research diary</p> <p>my reflective research diary</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Art</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">*Enjoyed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*Pupils enjoyed the opportunity to have control/freedom</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*Helps to re-engage/calms/a release/relaxing/valuable in school</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*Benefits re. conversation & ethos of working on art alongside each other</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Staff-a sense of achievement</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Art is less risky when more able to succeed</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Provides an opportunity for the pupils to reflect and think</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Helps me and my mood affects my art</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Staff enjoy learning about new art materials</p> <p style="text-align: center;">A new way of learning through watching rather than direction</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*Provides an opportunity for pupil success</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">14+38+63=115 total dataset</p> <p style="text-align: center;">36(2+4+30)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10(3+7)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">24(11+13)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">12(2+10)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">6</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8(2+1+5)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">All three datasets</p> <p>All three datasets</p> <p>Pupil interview/Staff interview</p> <p>Staff interview/my reflective research diary</p> <p>Staff interview/my reflective research diary</p> <p>Staff interview</p> <p>Pupil interview</p> <p>my reflective research diary</p> <p>pupil interview</p> <p>Staff interview</p> <p>staff interview</p> <p>All three datasets</p>

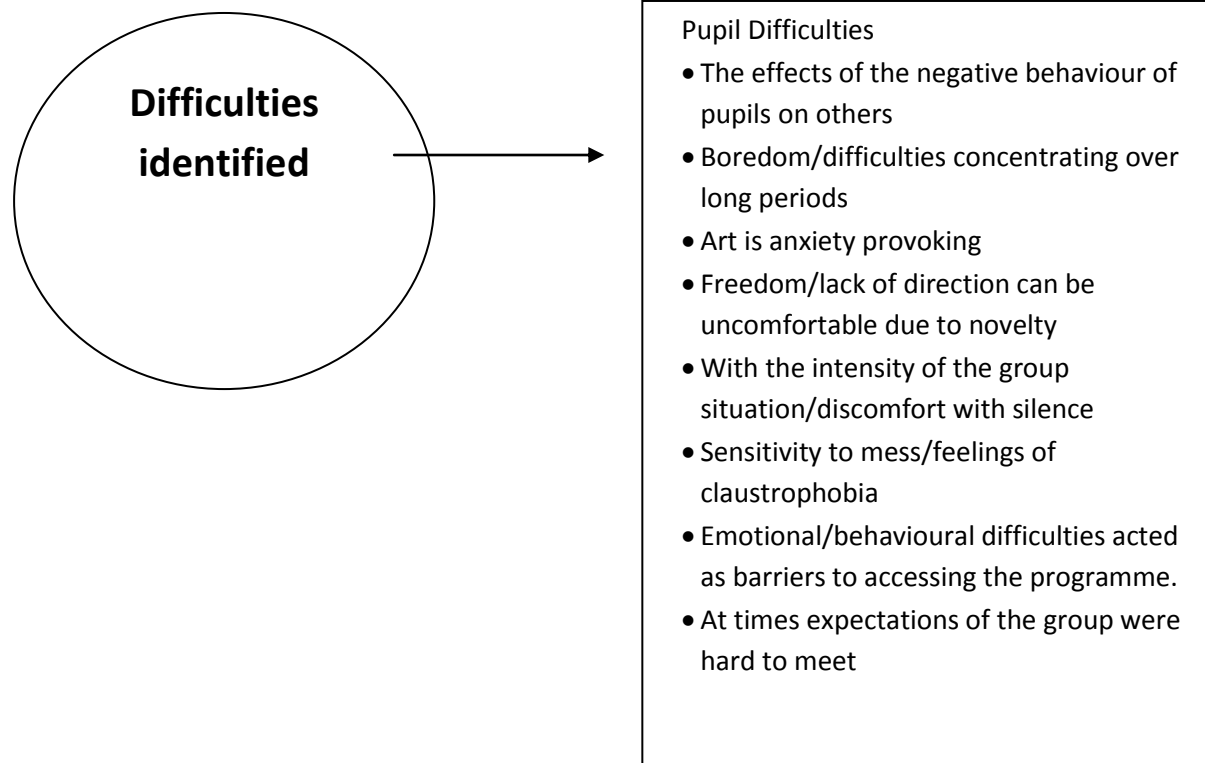
<u>Outcomes of the process/Key benefits</u>	50+98+289=437 total dataset	All three datasets
(Pupils and staff enjoyed conversation)	22(6+11+5)	All three datasets
*Pupils learning new skills and for staff to see that pupils were able	118(4+20+94)	All three datasets
(Pupils and staff enjoyed art)	36(2+4+30)	All three datasets
*Staff meeting their own needs and a sense of achievement	10(8+2)	Staff interview/my reflective research diary
*Positive behaviour changes and pupil sense of achievement	13(1+9+3)	All three datasets
*Staff enjoyed taking on a different role/being themselves/freedom	15(5+10)	Staff interview/my reflective research diary
*Staff enjoyed working/interacting with girls in a different way	18(7+11)	Staff interview/my reflective research diary
*Pupils demonstrated an increased reflective nature and self awareness	28(24+4)	Pupil interview/ my reflective research diary
Conversations-staff learnt about the girls	10(3+7)	Staff interview/my reflective research diary
(Art-Benefits re. conversation & ethos of working on art alongside each other)	12(2+10)	Staff interview/my reflective research diary
(Art-Pupils enjoyed the opportunity to have control/freedom)	10(3+7)	Pupil interview/Staff interview
(Art-helps to re-engage/calms/a release/relaxing/valuable in school)	24(11+13)	Staff interview//my reflective research diary
Staff opportunities were broadened	5	Staff interview
Staff enjoyed working with different staff	1	Staff interview
Pupil-positive behaviour changes	9	Staff interview
*Pupils positive qualities emerged	23	my reflective research diary
Conversation-pupils learnt from each-other	1	Staff interview
Conversations-staff felt positive about self/valued	2	Staff interview
Conversations-ideas were shared	3	Staff interview
Conversation-pupils enjoyed feeling equal in conversations	3	my reflective research diary
Conversations-pupil opportunities to be open/discuss difficulties	14	my reflective research diary
Pupil access to positive interactions with staff-less need for behaviour	9	my reflective research diary
Conversation-pupil opportunity to be listened to	7	my reflective research diary
(Conversation-pupil opportunity to learn about staff)	10	my reflective research diary
Conversation-opportunity for staff to be open	9	my reflective research diary
Conversation-opportunity for staff to be listened to	1	my reflective research diary
Art is less risky when more able to succeed	2	Pupil interview
Art-Helps me and my mood affects my art	6	Pupil interview
Art-Staff enjoy learning about new art materials	3	Staff interview
Art-A new way of learning through watching rather than direction	3	Staff interview
Potential for friendships/ relationships to be facilitated	3	My reflective research diary
(Art-provides an opportunity for pupils to feel success)	8(2+1+5)	All 3 datasets

<u>Difficulties identified</u>	36+76+188=300 total dataset	All three datasets
*Sensitivity to mess/claustraphobia	12(2+4+6)	All three datasets
*Pupils difficult behaviour	63(9+6+48)	All three datasets
*Pupils difficulties concentrating	13(5+6+2)	All three datasets
*Pupils art is anxiety provoking	32(4+4+24)	All three datasets
*Pupils difficulties with freedom/lack of instruction	31(5+11+15)	All three datasets
Pupils difficulties with the intensity of the group/silences	5(3+2)	Pupil interview/ my reflective research diary
*Pupil need for support with skill development/re-assurance (practical & emotional) re. insecurities with artwork	26(4+22)	Staff interview/my reflective research diary
Staff insecurities/lack of confidence in artwork	12(5+7)	Staff interview/my reflective research diary
Staff difficulties switching off from TA role	10(3+7)	Staff interview/my reflective research diary
time was limited	4(2+2)	Staff interview/my reflective research diary
external distracters	14(7+7)	Staff interview/my reflective research diary
attendance/absences affected confidence and group cohesion	13(7+6)	Staff interview/my reflective research diary
negative effects of negative behaviour of others on pupils	6	Pupil interview
negative impact of pupil behaviour on staff	17	Staff interview
pupil mistrust in staff/novel approach	2	my reflective research diary
*relationship difficulties affects feelings of security in the group	21	my reflective research diary
staff possible discomfort with clarity of role being blurred	3	my reflective research diary
staff barriers to taking ownership	5	my reflective research diary
pupil discomfort with novel environment	1	my reflective research diary
need an openness and honesty in adult approach	7	my reflective research diary
need all staff in the setting to understand the programme	2	my reflective research diary
need adult support outside the art room for pupils who leave	1	my reflective research diary

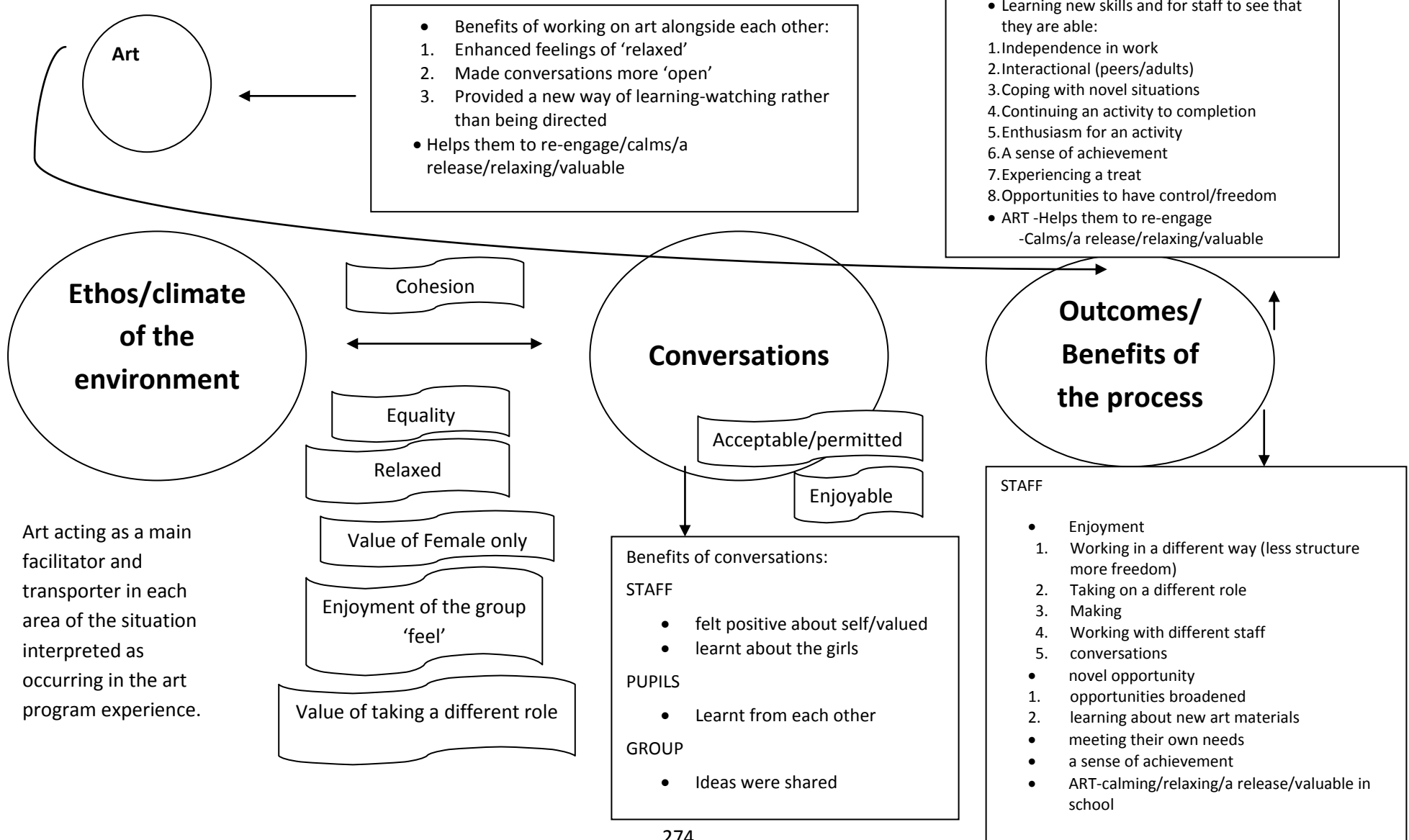
Appendix XXI-Visual representation of main over-arching themes analysed in the pupil interview data.

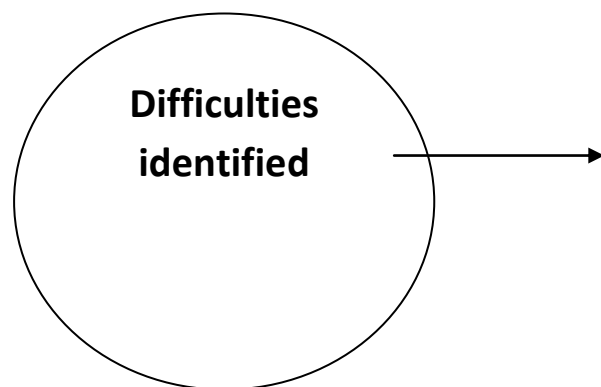


Art acting as a main facilitator and transporter in each area of the situation interpreted as occurring in the art program experience.



Visual representation of main over-arching themes analysed in the staff interview data.





Pupil Difficulties

- With freedom/lack of direction
- With concentration
- With behaviour

Pupil need for support in skill development re. Insecurities re. artwork

The impact of pupil behaviour on staff

- Stressful
- Spoil the experience
- Disappointment
- frustration

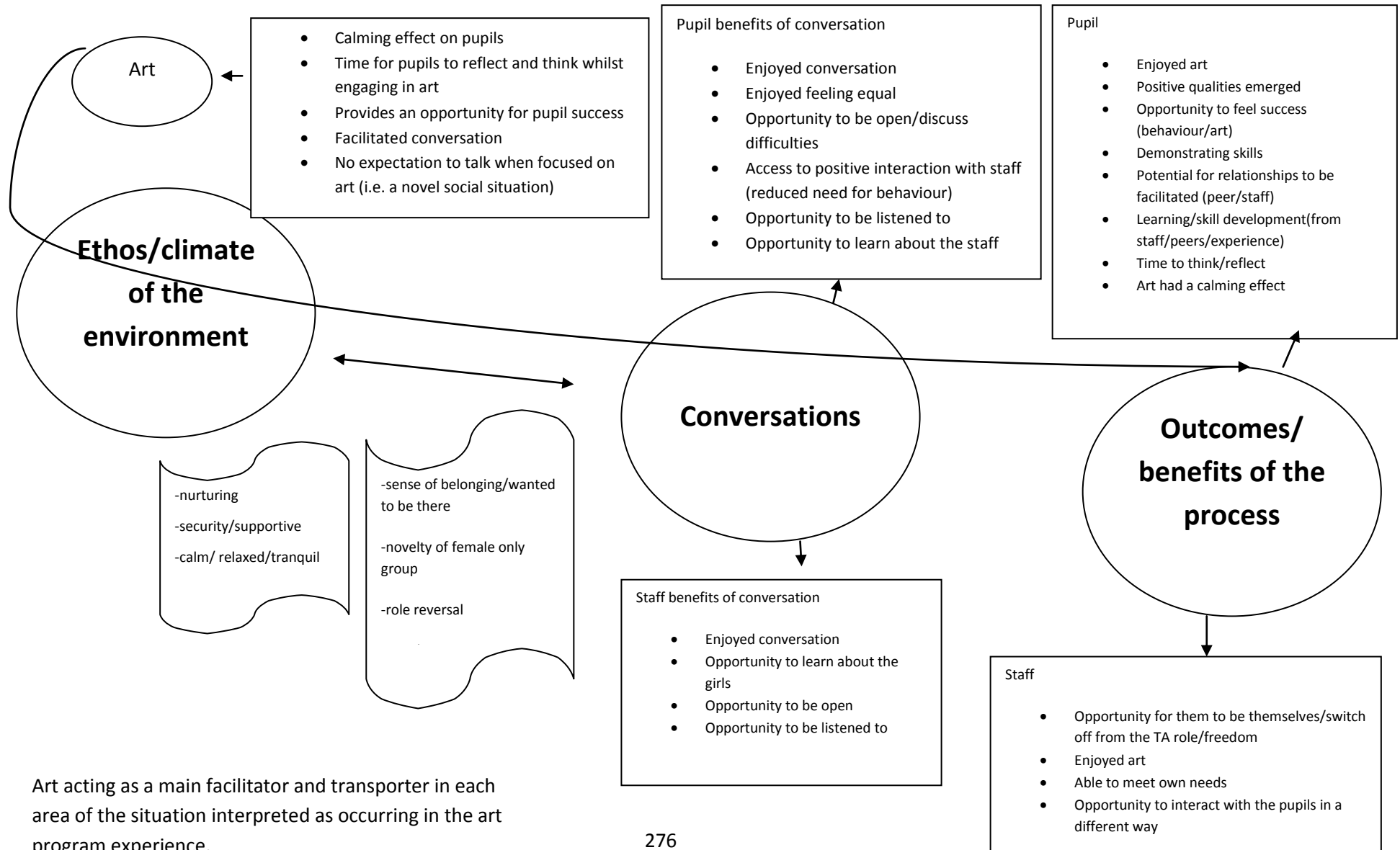
Staff difficulties

- With freedom/starting work independently
- Insecurity-comparing work with others
- Switching off from TA role

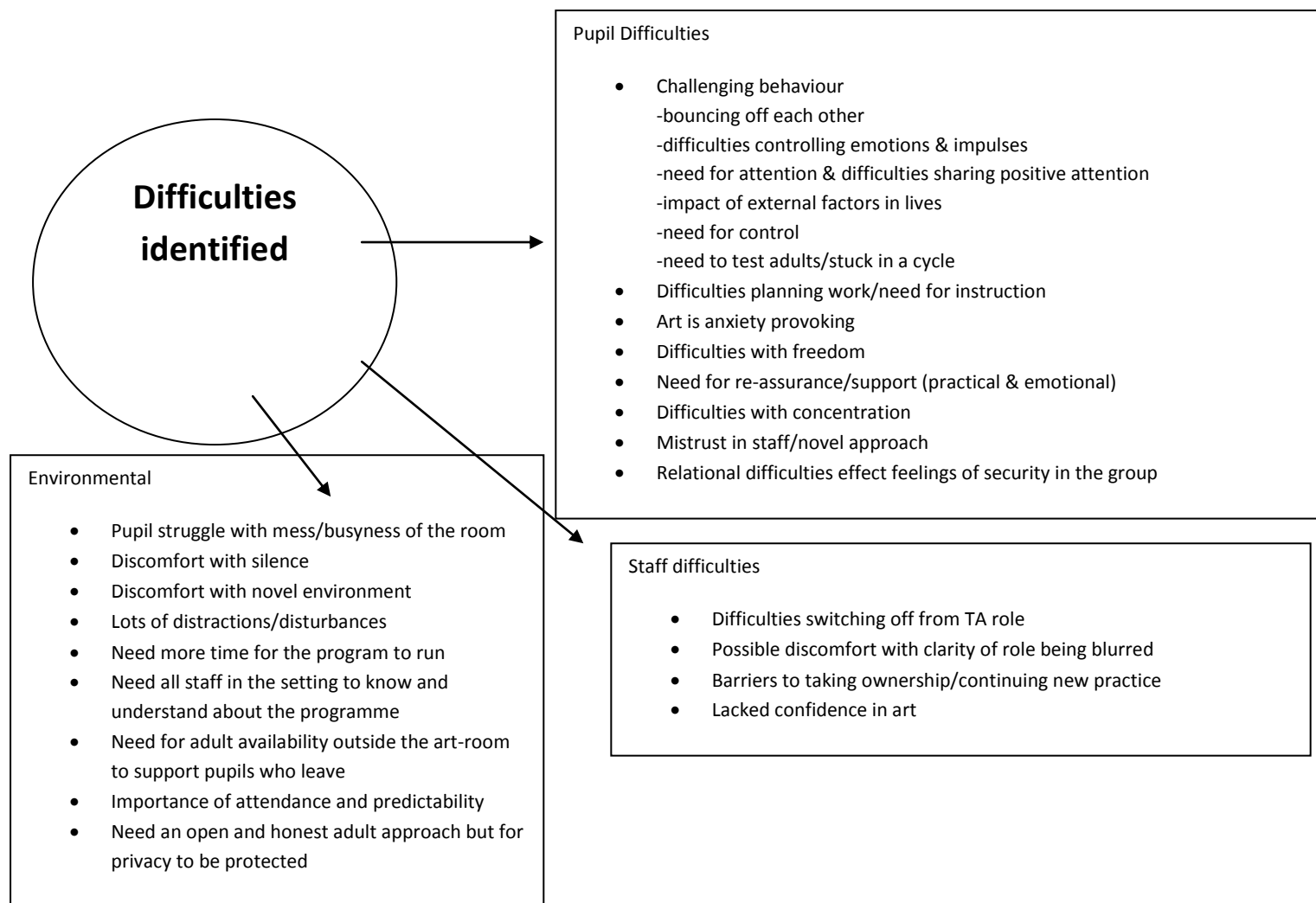
Environmental

- Time was limited
- Claustrophobic room
- External distractions
- Attendance-absences effected group cohesion and confidence

Visual representation of main over-arching themes analysed in my reflective diary data.

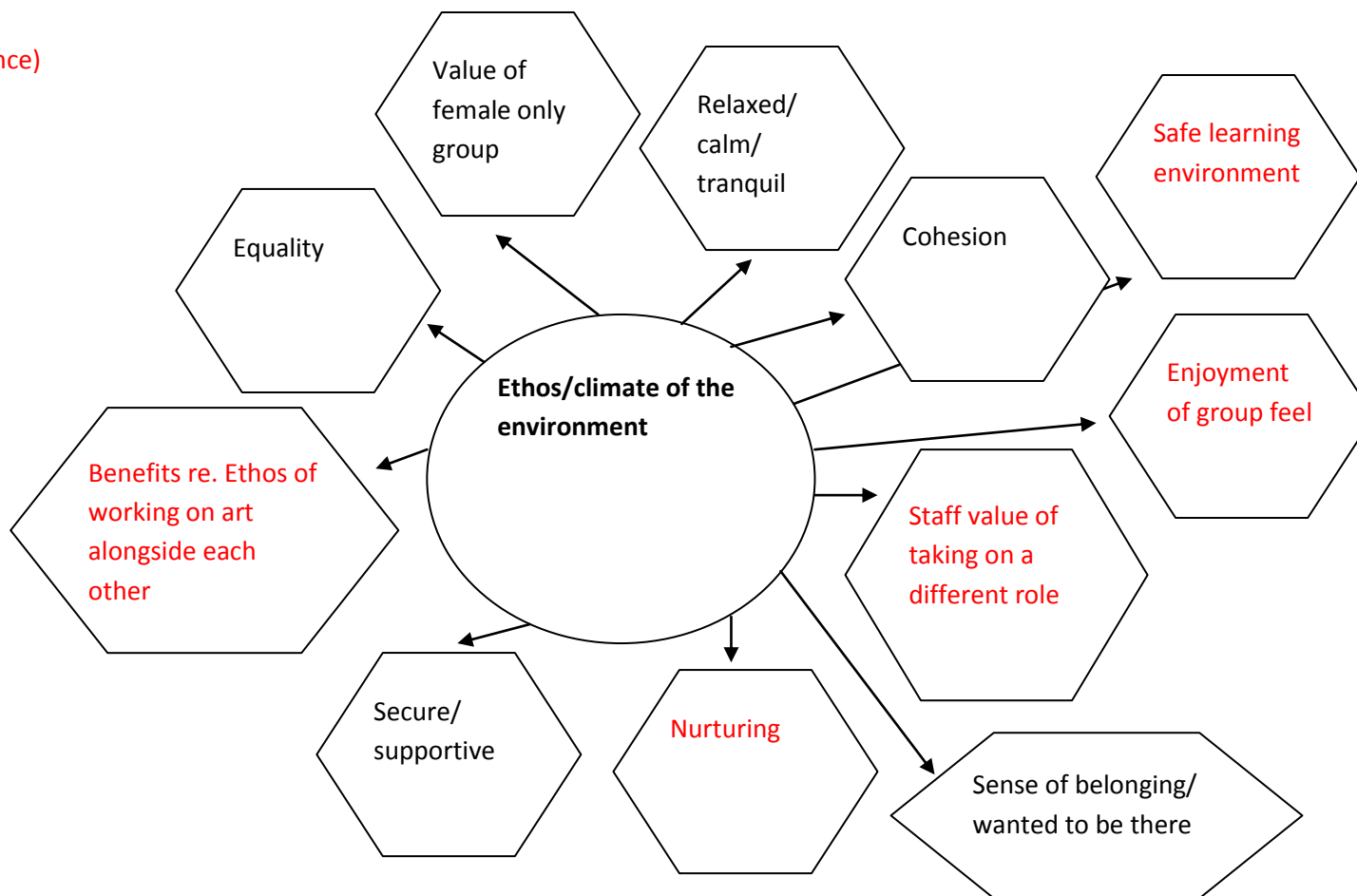


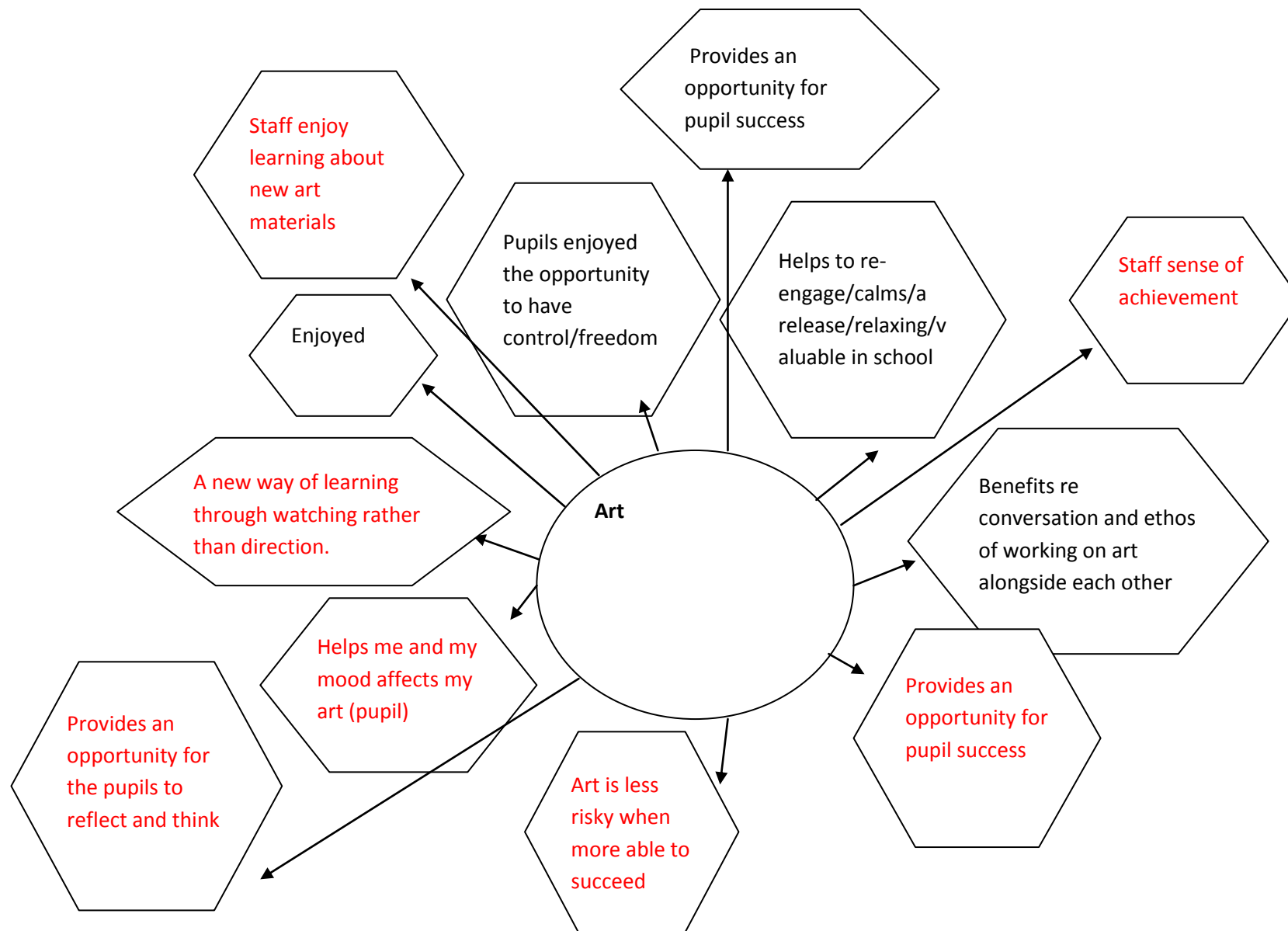
Art acting as a main facilitator and transporter in each area of the situation interpreted as occurring in the art program experience.

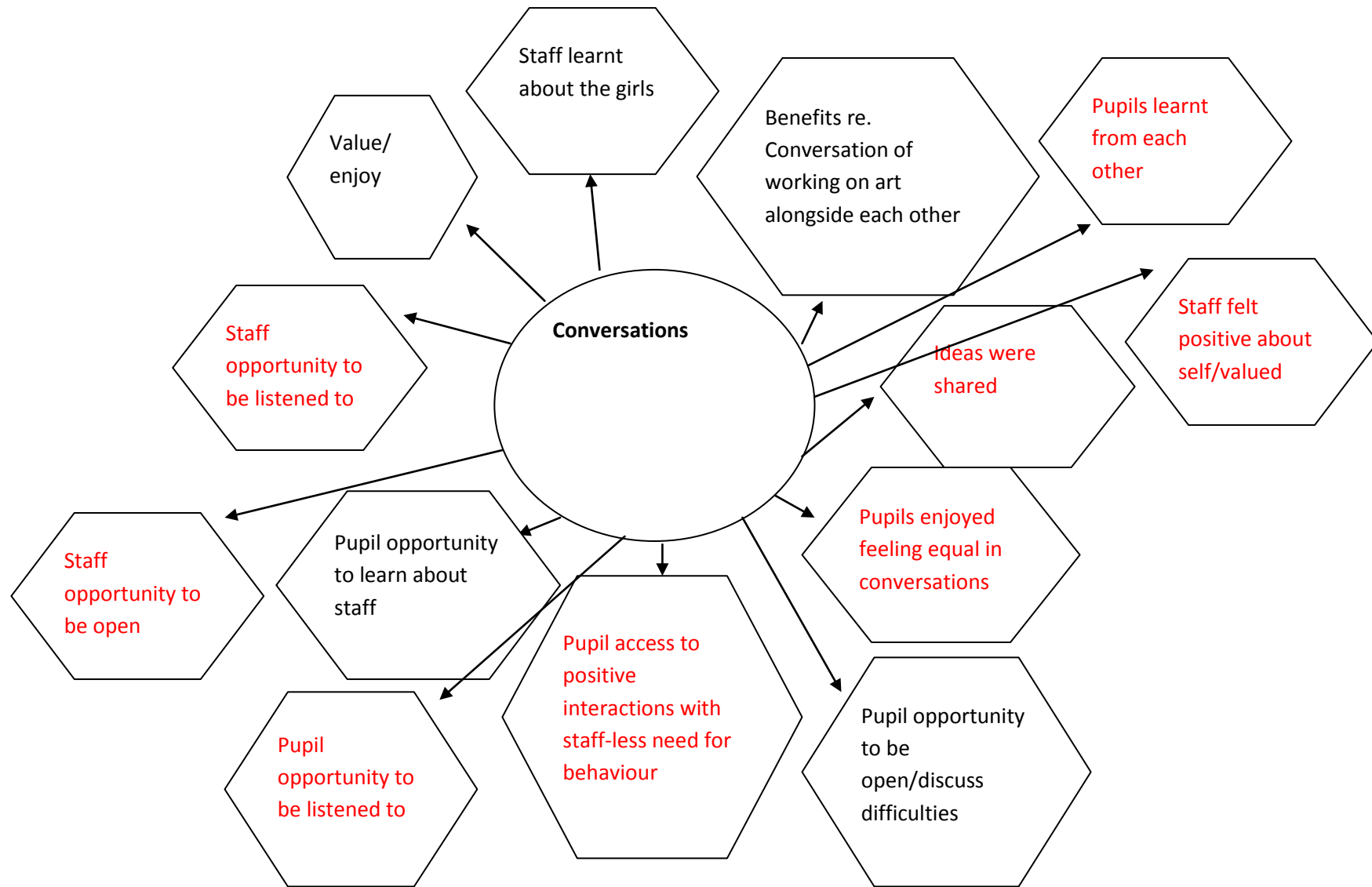


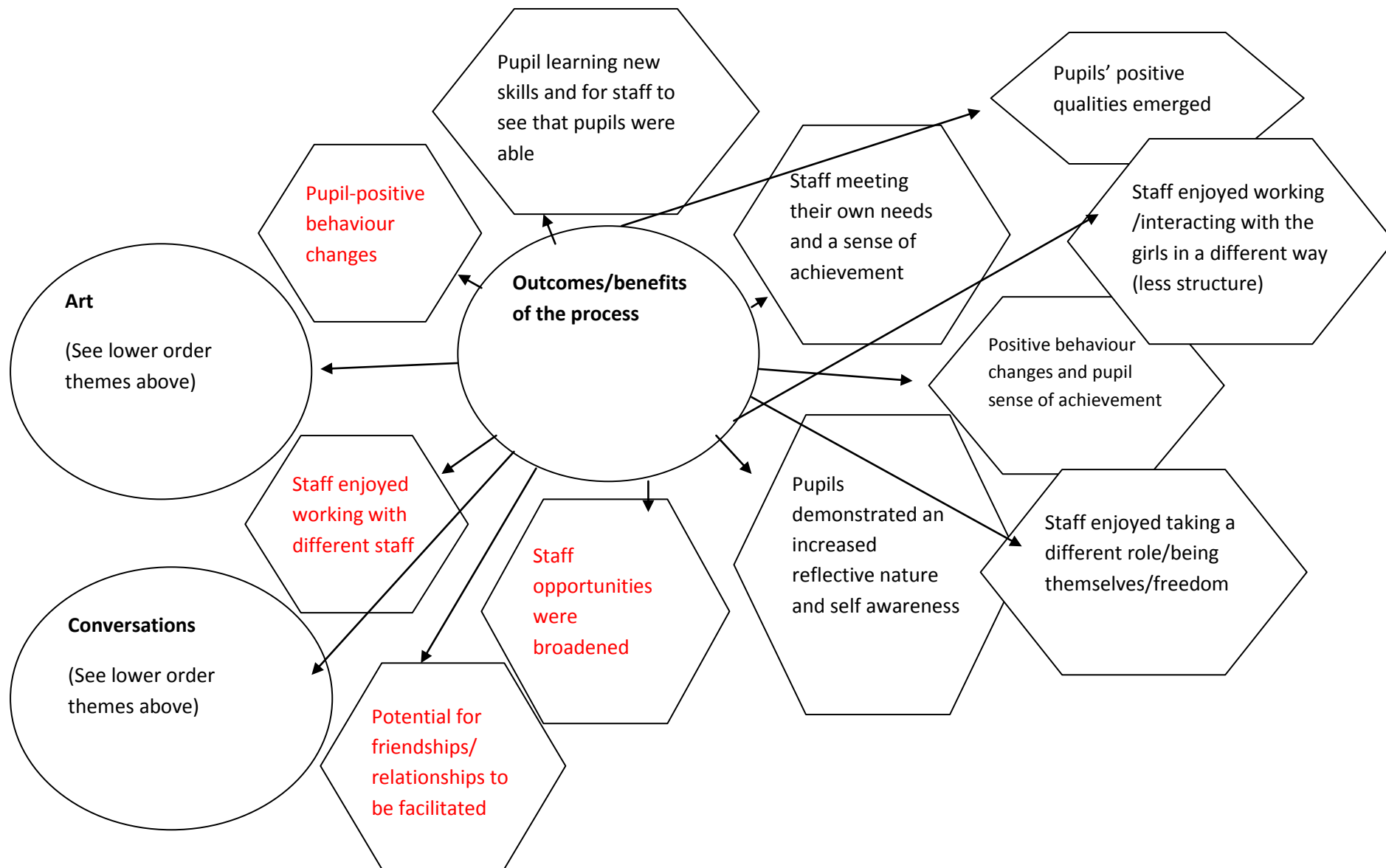
Appendix XXII-Simplification of final mind-map/thematic networks: the 3 dataset types.

Red-lower-order
themes omitted from
write up (decision
based on prevalence)











Appendix XXIII-Diagram IX: What was happening in the art programme phenomenon? A visual representation of my hypotheses of those salient themes emerging from interpretation

