

The Silent Minority :
Developing Talk in the Primary Classroom

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SUMMARY

The Silent Minority : Developing Talk in the Primary Classroom

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Language is central to children's emotional and cognitive development and the first language skills to be learned are listening and speaking. Class or group discussions are, however, often dominated by a small number of confident, not necessarily articulate children. Many other children remain silent, frequently showing reluctance to speak either to pupils or to teachers. The teacher is too often in the position of having to respond to the vocal and potentially disruptive pupils with the result that the silent minority are ignored.

This study focusses on a group of twelve habitually quiet pupils - all originally in the same class at primary school - who seemed unable or unwilling to communicate freely in school with either teachers or peers. This study:

- explores ways in which quiet pupils are educationally disadvantaged by an inability or unwillingness to talk to pupil and teachers in school;

- examines underlying factors which may have contributed to a child's reluctance to participate in class lessons;

- recommends teaching strategies which enable teachers to develop pupils' self-esteem through positive relationships, thus empowering them to take a more active role in their own education.

Data were collected over a three year period: through a series of semi-structured interviews (with pupils, parents and teachers); observations of classroom interactions; transcripts of group discussions; detailed case studies and a teacher's journal. The data was analysed following ethnographic principles.

Drawing on a review of Attachment Theory, the study concludes that much habitually quiet behaviour witnessed in schools may have its origins in anxious or deviant attachments in early parent-child relationships. The study also provides evidence that, enlightened teaching strategies (for example, cooperative small group activities) are effective in empowering quiet pupils to participate fully in the social and academic life of the classroom.

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In a sense, I have been writing this all my life. The roots go a long way down; growth has at times been retarded by frosts and storms of circumstance. But in an unobtrusive corner of the mind, the idea has been growing very slowly and steadily...

Ian Suttie, The Origins of Love and Hate, 1935

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INTRODUCTION

In focussing on work with quiet withdrawn pupils, this thesis highlights the special educational needs of a group of pupils who are often overlooked by teachers and educational researchers. In the context of the study, pupils are identified as quiet and withdrawn when they are unable or unwilling to communicate freely with either their teachers or peers in school. The fact that quiet, seemingly compliant, behaviour does not pose an obvious threat to classroom discipline means that the emotional and behavioural difficulties of these pupils often go undetected. However, the main thesis that I shall advance, is that habitually quiet behaviour is detrimental to learning and that habitual non-participation prevents children from making the most of the educational opportunities presented to them.

The underlying cause of much of the quiet withdrawn behaviour witnessed in school is encapsulated in a comment made by one of the pupils highlighted by this study. In response to the question "Do you talk to your teacher?", Diana replied:

... you can't really talk to him when he is trying to learn the children... (Diana, 1st interview, line 142)

Here Diana expresses something of her isolation from both her teacher and the other children in her class. She is reluctant to talk to the teacher for fear that her attempts at conversation may be seen as an interruption of his teaching. Moreover, because she sees herself from the rest of her class she effectively excludes herself from the group of children

who are being taught.

Psychoanalysts have long recognised the importance of parent-child relationships in the psychological and emotional development of children. Indeed, my study draws extensively on developments in the area of "attachment theory" which was first postulated by John Bowlby in the 1960s. Although pioneering at the time, there is now a wide scale acceptance that anxious attachments in early childhood can distort psychological and emotional development. It is now timely, I shall argue, to review the work of Bowlby and others in the light of post-feminist insights in this field. Meanwhile, educationalists have been slow to acknowledge the effect of anxious attachments on the learning experiences of children in school, and to apply findings to the classroom.

Based on the work of psychoanalyst Karen Horney, I shall explore the nature of the links between anxious attachments in early childhood and patterns of withdrawn behaviour in school. In Karen Horney's terms "basic anxiety" leads individuals to habitually "move towards", "away from" or "against" others. When compared with their peers all the pupil highlighted by this study would be described as "moving away" from others. However, closer examination suggests a range of behaviour which, in my model of learning styles, are described as "ready to learn", "excluding", "afraid" and "at risk". This model of four learning styles is used throughout the thesis to describe and explain the quiet withdrawn behaviour I observed in school.

However, although psychoanalytic theory offers teachers a useful explanation for some of the behaviour which they observe in school, care must be taken to ensure that such theories are not applied inappropriately or insensitively. Evidence drawn from the present study illustrates that patterns of parenting are not simple predictors of possible behaviour. Rather, an individual's pattern of behaviour is best thought of as a unique response to specific circumstances.

In addition to considering the educational implications of anxious attachments between parents and children, I shall also investigate the possibility of redefining the parenting role. Traditionally, accounts of parent-child relationships have focussed almost exclusively on the nature of mother-child attachments. Though an analysis of separation and connectedness as portrayed in post-feminist accounts of parenting, I challenge long held assumptions that only mothers can nurture children. A review of select readings in the field provide evidence to support my view that traditional male and female roles are learned rather than innate and consequently that fathers can nurture their children. Moreover, an appreciation that individuals can recognise and develop both the male and female aspects of their personality leads to an acceptance of lone-parent families as viable family units. A crucial principle that guides the thesis is that it is the quality of the parent-child relationship which is crucial, not the number, nor indeed the sex, of the child's primary attachment figures.

An understanding of attachment theory can help teachers to understand the underlying causes of much of the non-participatory behaviour they witness in schools. In addition, an appreciation of the need for both separation and connectedness in relationships has clear implications for the quality of relationships in school. If difficulty with interpersonal relationships is the cause of quiet withdrawn behaviour, then relationships which offer appropriate levels of security and challenge must lie at the heart of effective teaching and learning. The development of relationships which encourage genuine dialogue in schools are central to providing an appropriate learning environment for all pupils. However, I shall seek to show that, the need for appropriate levels of separation and connectedness in relationships (between teachers and pupils and among peers) is particularly acute for quiet withdrawn pupils already silenced by anxious or deviant attachments with parents or significant others.

Based on my work with habitually quiet pupils in their mainstream classrooms, I shall identify teaching strategies which have proved useful in empowering quiet withdrawn pupils to participate fully in the social and academic life of the classroom.

PART ONE : PERSPECTIVES ON DISCOURSE IN LEARNING

This study focuses on twelve quiet children - all originally in the same class at primary school - who, for whatever reason, seemed unable or unwilling to communicate freely in school with either teachers or pupils. Quiet in this context means a habitual tendency to refuse to participate in class discussions or to engage with the teacher in task-related dialogue. In more extreme cases it also means a withdrawal from the social (pupil-pupil and pupil-teacher) conversations of the classroom. The study is based on the basic, perhaps obvious, premise that habitually quiet or passive behaviour is detrimental to learning and, as such, children who do not talk freely in school may be considered to have special educational needs.

The account of work with quiet pupils has three major and related aims:

First, to explore the ways in which quiet pupils are educationally disadvantaged by an inability or unwillingness to talk to teachers and pupils in school,

Second, to examine the factors which may have contributed to the child's reluctance to participate in class lessons; these may be related to the child's diminished sense of self-worth or their difficulties in forming and sustaining relationships with others,

Third, to devise and implement teaching strategies which enable teachers to develop pupils' self-esteem through positive relationships, thus empowering them to take an increasingly active role in their education.

Consequently, this first part of the thesis is divided into three interrelated sections, each of which highlights the

major issues relating to each area, in order to introduce the central themes of the study. The first of these sections considers quiet pupils:

SECTION 1.1. : QUIET PUPILS

Section 1.1.a, *Silence is Detrimental to Learning*, examines some of the ways in which pupils are educationally disadvantaged by their reluctance or inability to talk freely in school. First, it examines the notion that children who do not talk freely with their teacher are disadvantaged in their academic work, as illustrated by an example drawn from this study. It develops this theme, with the suggestion that habitual quietness prevents children from realising their particular human potentialities and social identities. This kind of personal development is central to **self-realisation**, the development of the true self, a concept which is fundamental to the concerns of this study. The study proposes that self-realisation involves an exploration of feelings and emotions; this in turn, requires a level of communication skills and quality of relationships with others which quiet pupils are likely to find difficult. Traditionally, the development of these aspects of self has found a natural home in areas of the curriculum, such as English or Personal and Social Education, which are devoted to the exploration and development of emotions and attitudes.

Section 1.1.b focuses specifically on the potential **Factors which Contribute to Quiet or Passive Behaviour**. It examines how on the surface there may be as many different causes of quiet behaviour as there are pupils who exhibit it. For example, such behaviour may be a way of gaining attention or of avoiding it. Similarly, home background, ethnic/cultural identity and gender may influence the extent to which an individual feels confident in the school environment. However, the argument of this section proposes that, underlying these differences, there may be distorted psychological and emotional development which is related to low self-esteem and problems with interpersonal relationships. An understanding of underlying causes, the surface factors and the relationship between them, is crucial for teachers seeking to support pupils in the development of self-esteem and growth towards self-realisation.

Section 1.1.c, **The Road to Empowerment**, works from the premise (proposed in 1.1.a) that passive or withdrawn behaviour is detrimental to learning. It demonstrates, through an example drawn from the study, how some pupils are aware of the limitations of their behaviour, yet feel unable to change. For quiet pupils, such a change in behaviour involves tremendous personal risk, especially in so far as their quiet behaviour is linked with poor self-esteem or difficulties in interpersonal relationships. This highlights the role of positive relationships in supporting personal development and learning in school. The section concludes by examining the notion of "liberating" or pupil-centred education, and

suggests how it can enable quiet pupils to take a more active role in their own learning.

1.1.a) Silence is Detrimental to Learning

An obvious way in which pupils are educationally disadvantaged by their unwillingness or inability to talk in class is that they are unlikely to initiate, and may even actively withdraw from, contact with their teacher. As a consequence of minimal contact quiet pupils may not receive the academic support they need and mistakes in their academic work may not be identified or corrected. Similarly, such pupils are unlikely to receive encouragement in the form of positive feedback from teachers.

A brief example drawn from the present study will serve to illustrate how one pupil's learning was affected by her lack of contact with her teacher.

In an interview carried out at the beginning of the enquiry Mandy tells how, motivated by a desire to progress quickly through an individualised maths scheme, she had decided to set herself homework. Although it was not stated, subsequent events would suggest that the teacher was unaware of this decision and consequently was not in a position to encourage this commitment to learning. Unfortunately, whilst Mandy was clearly well-motivated, she had not understood the work to be done. Working both at home and at school without guidance

from the teacher, her mistakes were not identified for some time. Consequently, when her work was finally marked she found that she had to do pages of corrections. For Mandy this was a blow to her perception of herself as an able mathematician. In order to avoid repeating this experience she simply stopped doing homework, thus potentially limiting her opportunities for improvement. More than this, however, I would suggest that such a negative encounter with her teacher, at a time when she might have felt certain of praise for her extra hard work, may have further reduced her willingness to seek the teacher's attention in the future.

This incident is a clear example of how a pupil's lack of communication with their teacher may disrupt their learning. It is quoted here, not as an illustration of bad teaching but, rather, to demonstrate how easy it is for the specific needs of quiet pupils to be overlooked in the busy cut-and-thrust of a school day. Class teachers do not have the luxury of time to talk at length to pupils individually. Instead they are compelled to attempt the near-impossible task of trying to meet the educational and social needs of between twenty and thirty pupils at a time. Clearly the difficulty of this task is increased by the presence of loud, sometimes aggressive individuals (who may, paradoxically, have similar problems of self-esteem and personal relationships).

Whilst not wishing to marginalise the impact of minimal pupil-teacher contact on academic learning, the study recognises that this is not the only way in which quiet pupils are

disadvantaged in school. Indeed, in examining the special educational needs of quiet pupils, the main focus of this study will be to explore how their habitually quiet behaviour is a kind of defence mechanism which prevents them from exploring or developing their true potentialities. A limited repertoire of communication strategies, which may in turn be related to difficulties in forming relationships with others, prevents quiet pupils from engaging in the kind of dialogue which would extend their perceptions of themselves and bring them to self-realisation.

Of particular interest to this study will be the pupils' developing sense of "self" and "other", as they are expressed in terms of their self-image and their relationships with others. However, it has to be remembered that self-image and interpersonal relationships do not develop in isolation from each other. On the contrary, the two are inextricably bound together, and have their roots in early parent-child relationships. Consequently, an understanding of the underlying causes of a pupil's behaviour in school is strengthened by an awareness of their early childhood experiences.

A fundamental concern of this study is how "good enough" (Winnicott, 1971) early childhood relationships influence an individual's propensity to self-realisation. Clearly such work requires an understanding of the connection between self-realisation and relationships with significant others. Linked to this is an exploration of what is meant by the concept of

"good enough" parent-child relationships. Here the notion of an appropriate balance of security and challenge in relationships is central. A natural progression from this line of thinking is to a consideration of what can go wrong with these relationships, and the anxiety which is created in children when the balance between security and challenge is inappropriate for the individual's specific needs or stage of development.

The study proposes that much of the withdrawn behaviour witnessed by teachers in school has its origins in the child's earlier experience of anxiety and conflict in relationships with parents and significant others. Thus, an individual's experiences may influence their willingness or indeed ability to enter into relationships in school. If, for example, children feel betrayed or abandoned by parents, they are unlikely to trust relationships with other adults. Such a mistrust of relationships and an unwillingness to be open to further potential pain is illustrated by an example drawn from the study. Traumatized by her mother leaving the family home, Susie initially rejected all efforts to comfort and care for her. In an interview carried out at the start of the enquiry her father recalls how she would physically flinch away from him. Fortunately Susie's relationship with her father improved over time. However, despite an obvious need to be liked and accepted by others, Susie remained suspicious of relationships with both teachers and pupils in school.

Nevertheless it is inappropriate to assume that all the

difficulties of communication which a child exhibits in school have their origins at home. For many children going to school is a rigorous, sometimes even traumatic socialisation process, during which they may become disenchanted or downright afraid. Consequently, an exploration of the influence of relationships on the self-realisation of individuals has to include an examination of the relationships which exist in schools. Obviously, the quality of the relationships which exist between children and teachers are important. These relationships are reflected, in part, by the atmosphere which exists in the classroom and the teaching styles used. In addition, through the skilful use of small group work to develop a non-competitive learning environment, the study identifies the importance of peer group relationships in offering support for quiet pupils. In an account of the pupil's perceptions of bullying in school, the study also considers some negative aspects of peer relationships.

1.1.b) Factors which Contribute to Quiet or Passive Behaviour

In coming to an understanding of the surface factors which contribute to quiet or passive behaviour, it should be remembered that there are possibly as many reasons for such behaviour as there are pupils who exhibit it.

In the context of this study, quiet pupils are described as being those who are unable or unwilling to communicate freely

with teachers or peers. This reluctance to talk seems, at least in the school context, to be habitual. These quiet pupils do not exhibit a wide repertoire of behaviour. It is as if they do not have access to a wide variety of responses; it is as if they have no choice.

Indeed, a limited repertoire of response is, at least on the surface, the only factor which links the quiet pupils highlighted by this study. These pupils come from a wide range of home backgrounds and represent a number of ethnic/cultural groups. Moreover, whilst quiet or passive behaviour may be more common amongst girls, this study finds evidence for the view that it is by no means an exclusively female trait. Consequentially, whilst gender, race and home background may, in the context of this study, prove to be contributory factors, they are not of themselves predictors of behaviour.

Also, pupils differed in the extent to which they demonstrated their reluctance to talk. As a general trend, all pupils disliked talking in the public forum of whole class discussions. Moreover, they seemed reluctant to initiate a conversation with their teachers. Some pupils would engage in private conversations with their teacher or give a direct response to a specific question. Others would be even more hesitant to be drawn into conversation; they either offered a minimal response or, in the most extreme cases, refused to talk at all.

Whilst pupil behaviour is clearly influenced by a number of surface factors, evidence from the study suggests that quiet withdrawn behaviour has its origins in psychological and emotional development which may have gone "off course" in one way or another. This is related to a limited sense of self and poor interpersonal relationships. Once again this raises the central concerns of this study, namely; the need for self-realisation through relationships with significant others. In order for such relationships to be "good enough" they have to offer an appropriate balance of security and challenge which will support the individual in coping with their basic anxiety without resort to habitual defence strategies.

However, whilst an understanding of psychological theories provides invaluable insights into the psychological development of quiet pupils, such theories have to be adapted to suit individual cases - which may, in turn, lead to a modification of theory. They have, in the words of Patrick Casement, "to be rediscovered not merely applied" (1990, p 27). In reality an individual's behaviour will be a unique response to specific circumstances.

To talk of "surface factors" and "underlying causes" as if they are separate issues which can be clearly defined is, of course, a linguistic convenience. The detailed individual case studies which form the basis of Part Five of this study demonstrate the complexity of an individual's life experience and the sensitivity which is needed in order to unravel the different strands.

1.1.c) The Road to Empowerment

Work aimed at empowering quiet pupils to take a more active role in their education begins with the premise that quiet or passive behaviour is detrimental to learning. Individual pupils may be all too aware of the way in which they are limited by their behaviour and feel frustrated by their seeming inability to change. In interviews carried out during the study, Justina reflects on the fact that her inability to mix with other children of her age could be misconstrued by her mother as ignorance. She also talks about how her desire to be good in class, by being quiet when asked, conflicts with her desire to "learn the questions and answers" which implies the need to talk.

In this way Justina shows herself to be aware of the educational and social advantages of changing her behaviour. For her, the limitation is not a lack of personal awareness of the problem, but that she feels constrained by her view of what it is to be a "good" pupil. However, for all quiet pupils, especially those for whom their quietness is a response to poor self-esteem and difficulty in interpersonal relationships, a change in behaviour involves tremendous personal risk. Consequently, such pupils may have to be persuaded of the advantages of increased participation in class activities. In the classroom context an individual's willingness or ability to risk change will depend: on their growing self-esteem, on the degree to which they trust the teacher's motives and on their perceptions of the amount of

support they will receive. Once again the quality of the relationships which exist in school can be seen as central to personal development and learning.

The kinds of pupil-teacher relationships which enliven discourse are those described by Paulo Freire (1972) as those associated with liberating or "problem-posing" education. Here education is concerned not so much with the transmission of knowledge from teacher to pupil, as with a genuine pursuit of shared understanding. Problem-posing education, claims Freire, affirms people

as beings who transcend themselves, who move forward and look ahead, for whom immobility represents a fatal threat, for whom looking at the past must only be a means of understanding more clearly what and who they are so that they can more wisely build the future.

(Freire, 1972, p 57)

Thus a liberating education enables teachers and pupils to become partners, in an educational process which actually draws on the real experiences of pupils.

In schools a growing trend towards a recognition of pupils' actual life experiences has been developed under the umbrella of equal opportunities initiatives. In aiming for equality of opportunity for all pupils, schools have, for some time, been engaged in the development of anti-sexist, anti-racist and multicultural policies. Similarly, the importance of active pupil participation and the corresponding importance of pupil talk in schools has long been recognised. An examination of initiatives in English or Personal and Social Education suggests that fostering positive learning relationships which

enable pupils to develop a positive self-image is well within the scope of "non-specialist" caring class teachers.

However, for a variety of reasons, teachers are not always willing or able to implement teaching strategies or curriculum changes which aim to liberate learning. The language of government initiatives in the 1980s and 1990s to reform education and establish a National Curriculum (Brighouse and Moon, 1990) might well have contributed to some of the authoritarian teaching styles observed during this study. Another, more fundamental reason for the persistence of teacher-dominated talk in school might reflect an inability to address the tensions which are inherent in pupil-centred education.

Empowering quiet pupils requires a reassessment of the power relationships in the classroom. This may involve developing ways of handling loud, potentially aggressive pupils in order to create the space for quieter pupils to have their say. It also involves an important shift of emphasis as the teacher becomes a **facilitator** of enquiry rather than custodian and final arbitrator of knowledge. Asking pupils to work in co-operative small groups is effectively giving them greater control over their own learning. As pupils address the tasks set for them they naturally develop them in their own ways and to meet their own needs. When this happens pupils may raise issues which are outside the aims and objectives of their teacher - issues which may indeed be outside the teacher's experience. Little wonder that some teachers and pupils

resist change and perpetuate relatively safe, if limiting, traditional teaching styles.

Yet the study reveals how even the most recalcitrant pupils can be encouraged to develop their personal skills by participating in co-operative small group work. Indeed evidence emerges which suggests that participation in supportive small group work offered some pupils valuable insights into issues which had previously caused them anxieties. For example, by working together on the theme of families, Justina was encouraged to re-examine her definition of "a family" in the light of the knowledge that Diana was proud of her father's achievements in providing for her despite being a lone-parent. Incidents such as these demonstrate the importance of peer relationships in learning. Indeed such relationships are central to the effectiveness of small group work.

While enlightened teaching may be sufficient to meet the needs of the majority of quiet pupils, there may well be some who are so damaged by their life experiences that further support is required. In the terms of this study, which focuses on work with unstatemented pupils in a mainstream school, such support could include counselling or, in extreme cases, educational therapy. Given that quiet pupils may have difficulty in forming relationships there may well be tremendous advantages to be gained from using suitably qualified class teachers to offer this support rather than "experts" from outside the school. However, in the most acute

cases or where the pupil-teacher relationship has broken down, more specialised support might well be the appropriate form of action.

To sum up, section 1.1. has provided an outline of the major aims of the study and raised the basic themes which will underlie it. These themes are:

First, that the move to self-realisation is a basic human need; ways to empower pupils towards the realisation of their true potentialities should be central to the teaching styles and curriculum of a liberating education,

Second, that self-realisation and the related concepts of "self" and "other" come about through relationships with significant others - in school this means the development of positive relationships with teachers and pupils,

Third, that an individual's ability or willingness to enter into positive relationships is deeply influenced by their early childhood relationships with parents.

Section 1.2., The Importance of Language in Learning, will examine the role of language in self-realisation.

Section 1.3. will offer a reflection of some significant incidents in my personal and professional life which have contributed to a concern for, and understanding of, quiet pupils in school. This autobiographical account explains The Origin of the Study, by tracing its roots in actual lived experience.

SECTION 1.2. : LANGUAGE AND LEARNING

My central concern is to examine how self-realisation may be achieved, through relationships with significant others in learning. This chapter examines the role of language in this process. It also explores how an inability to communicate freely inhibits learning and can, in extreme cases, lead to a denial of self. Language, and especially spoken language, is the means by which individuals learn about and make sense of their world. Moreover, spoken language is the medium through which relationships in school are formed and sustained. Consequently, throughout the study language, learning and self-identity are interrelated.

Section 1.2.a, *Language of Empowerment*, begins with Paulo Freire's (1972) notion of a "liberating education" in which individuals achieve self-realisation by being encouraged to "name the world". Here learning takes place through participation in genuine dialogue in which the pupil-teacher relationship is one of mutual trust and exploration. Freire's definition highlights the limitations of traditional or "banking education" in which pupils are expected to be passive recipients of knowledge transmitted by teachers. Thus, work with quiet or passive pupils is concerned with building self-esteem and encouraging them to take ownership of their learning.

Section 1.2.b, develops this theme through an examination of *Classroom Talk* and examines how traditional patterns of pupil-

teacher communication exclude quiet pupils. It begins with a discussion of **teacher directed talk** as observed by Douglas Barnes (1979) and more recent commentators. Research suggests that the opportunities for pupils to enter into genuine dialogue are rare. Much classroom talk continues to be dominated by the teacher. Moreover, the public and competitive nature of whole class discussion makes it a particularly difficult forum for quiet pupils. The section then focuses on **pupil directed talk** and, specifically, the reasons why it is difficult for teachers to adopt teaching strategies which encourage pupils to engage in genuine dialogue. In contrast with teacher-directed talk, the small group activities developed in the study offer pupils an informal and supportive environment in which they can "name the world" and take an active role in their own education. This section concludes with an example of **genuine dialogue** drawn from the study.

Section 1.2.c, examines how talk in school may be affected by **National Curriculum** initiatives. Clearly, government reforms and the implementation of the National Curriculum constitute a major shift in educational principles and practice. Giving speaking and listening comparable status with reading and writing in the English curriculum is a positive trend towards the recognition of the importance of talk in learning. However, the prescriptive language of curriculum documents suggests a return to a traditional form of teaching which is far removed from the "liberating education" suggested by Freire. Moreover, some critics argue that the broader aims of

the Education Reform Act, such as the promotion of "spiritual, moral and cultural development", are unlikely to be met by Programmes of Study which are organised in discrete subjects. The implementation of a subject-based curriculum could lead to the marginalisation of the kind of "personal and social educational" initiatives which this thesis demonstrates are so important for quiet pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

1.2.a) Language of Empowerment

In Paulo Freire's definition of "liberating education" learning is synonymous with being human and, "To exist, humanly, is to name the world, to change it", (Freire, 1972, p 61). However, quiet pupils are, for whatever reason, unable or unwilling to name the world. They either remain silent, denying both their experiences and themselves, or they use other people's words in a parody of communication. An example of how a sexually abused child was trapped by an inability to articulate her pain is provided in section 1.3.b.

Less extreme, but no less damaging, are the experiences of individuals who lack the confidence to use their own words to define their world. As an example drawn from the study, Vicky responded to even the most inconsequential questions with a parody of adult speech which communicated nothing of her own feelings. Thus when she was asked about her recent holiday

her comment about the quality of the beach was in the language of a holiday brochure. Similarly, when asked about her new bedroom all that she would say was that it had double glazing. Her unwillingness to be drawn into conversation suggests an extreme form of remoteness, hiding or insecurity, which typifies the behaviour of many quiet pupils.

Pupils who are compelled to use silence, or non communication, to protect themselves and others from their anxieties are emotionally insecure. Such pupils are prevented, by their lack of security, from naming their world; consequently their learning is inhibited. A willingness to risk oneself in a genuine pursuit of understanding is central to learning.

Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry men pursue in the world, with the world and with each other.

(Freire, 1972, p 46)

This suggests an urgency and an energy. a "need to name the world", which is sadly lacking in much of the dialogue which occurs in school. As will be discussed in the following section, classroom talk rarely reflects the kind of exciting interchange suggested by Freire.

Within what Freire called "banking education" the pupil-teacher relationship is essentially narrative in character. "This relationship involves a narrating Subject (the teacher) and patient, listening objects (the students)", (Freire, 1972, p 45). Within such a relationship teachers talk about reality as if it were motionless, static, compartmentalised and

predictable. Or else they expound on a topic completely alien to the existential experiences of the pupils. Narration, with the teacher as narrator, leads pupils to memorise mechanically the narrated content. Worse still, it turns them into "containers", into receptacles to be filled by the teacher. The more completely the teacher fills the receptacles, the better a teacher they are reckoned to be. The more meekly the receptacles permit themselves to be filled, the better students they are. In inner city schools the gap between the school knowledge narrated by the teacher and the existential experience of pupils is vast. When pupils are aggressive the mismatch is obvious. However, quiet behaviour can be mistaken for a commitment to learning.

By contrast, in "liberating education" the emphasis is on pupils taking possession of the world. Here the pupil-teacher relationship is one of dialogue.

If it is in speaking their word that men transform the world by naming it, dialogue imposes itself as the way in which men achieve significance as men. Dialogue is thus an existential necessity.

(Freire, 1972, p 61)

Since dialogue is the way in which individuals come together in order to transform and humanise the world, this dialogue cannot be reduced to the act of one person "depositing" ideas in another, nor can it become a simple exchange of ideas to be "consumed" by the participants in the discussion. The naming of the world cannot be done by some on behalf of others:

It is an act of creation; it must not serve as a crafty instrument for the domination of one man by another.

(Freire, 1972, p 62)

Without dialogue there is no communication, and without communication there can be no true education. Consequently, it is important that pupils in school have the opportunity to ask questions and take ownership of their learning.

However, the idea that pupils take control of their learning is fraught with tensions. Genuine dialogue occurs between people who are prepared to meet as equals in a trusting relationship. This is extremely difficult for pupils with a poor self-image and difficulties in forming and sustaining relationships. Moreover, inequalities are inherent in the school system. Even in the most liberal of classrooms pupils and teachers do not meet as equals. Teachers who wish to give credit to the existential experiences of their pupils are constrained by their own standards and expectations and those of the school. Consequently, pupils and parents who wish to be accepted by the school, learn not to disclose views which challenge the school ethos. In examples drawn from this study, several parents interviewed at home felt free to express racist attitudes which they admitted they would not repeat to teachers in school. Thus the mismatch between the attitudes of home and school are not addressed. Moreover, pupils are compelled to hold two contradictory views in some kind of "double-think".

Inequalities also exist amongst peers in school. Class discussions are dominated by loud, not necessarily articulate, children whilst the needs of quiet pupils are often overlooked. The underachievement of girls (Spender, 1980;

Walkerline, 1989; Swann, 1992), black pupils (Wright, 1992) and pupils from working-class backgrounds (Bernstein, 1971) is well documented. Similarly, pupils with special educational needs may be unnecessarily disadvantaged in school by being restricted to a narrower curriculum than that provided for other pupils (Wade & Moore, 1987, 1993). Thus in school, as in the rest of society, an individual's opportunity to "name the world, to change it" is subject to a number of constraints and is influenced by her or his status in society.

As will be discussed in the following section, much of the talk which takes place in school is initiated and controlled by teachers. Thus genuine dialogue, especially of a kind which includes quiet pupils, is rare. An understanding of why teacher-dominated talk is so prevalent is an important first step towards developing genuine dialogue in schools.

1.2.b) Classroom Talk

The importance of pupil talk in learning first came into prominence in the 1970's with the work of Douglas Barnes (1979; 1977), Andrew Wilkinson (1975), Courtney Cazden (1972) and others. However, whilst this influenced many teachers to re-examine their teaching strategies, for a number of reasons, these initiatives were not sustained by curriculum reform. In the case of secondary schools, teachers' awareness was re-awakened by the introduction of oral modes of assessment for

G.C.S.E. in 1986. It has taken the introduction of the National Curriculum (DES & WO, 1990) to emphasize the importance of speaking and listening skills in primary schools.

This sub-section examines a number of key issues connected with pupil talk in school. It begins with an account of **Teacher-Directed Talk** which, despite the pioneering work of Barnes and others, continues to be the most common form of talk in classrooms. It then suggests why, despite its obvious importance in learning and self-realisation, teachers are reluctant to develop teaching strategies which encourage **Pupil-Directed Talk**. The sub-section concludes with an example of **Genuine Dialogue** drawn from the study.

Teacher-Directed Talk

Douglas Barnes (1979) was critical of the pupil-teacher exchanges he observed. His criticisms were that they were not genuine conversations and that within the narrative format the one asking the questions obviously knew the answer that they wanted and was in the position to reject alternative responses. These pseudo-questions were commonplace, and the successful pupils were the ones who had learned to read the teacher's mind. Barnes, and later Tizard and Hughes (1984), found that, although it was the pupils who were supposed to be the ones doing the learning, they rarely spoke in school except in monosyllables. It was the teacher who had total

control of the material to be learned. This is

controlling not just negatively, as a traffic policeman does to avoid collisions, but also positively, to enhance the purposes of education. (Cazden, 1988, p 3)

Yet, however positive the motives of the teacher, talk which is controlled and directed by the teacher is neither genuine dialogue nor true education. Participation in pseudo-conversations is merely a sophisticated form of "banking education" where the pupil receptacles are led to believe that they have some control of their education. In reality the pupils are simply being led along a predetermined route towards the teacher's definition of reality. When these pseudo-conversations occur in public and highly competitive "whole class discussions" quiet pupils are unlikely to participate. Consequently, quiet pupils are even denied the opportunity of being a part of the teacher's "naming of the world".

Sadly there is evidence to suggest that pupils are denied the opportunity to engage in genuine dialogue with their teachers from the moment they begin their formal education. In a comparison of children's conversations at home and at school, Tizard and Hughes (1984) observed thirty four-year-old girls, at home with their mothers, and during their mornings at nursery school and noted that:

Of those questions that were asked at school, a much smaller proportion were "curiosity" questions and "Why" questions, and a much larger proportion were "business" questions, of the "Where is the glue?" type, than was the case at home. "Challenges" were very rare at school, and "passages of intellectual search" were entirely absent. (Tizard and Hughes, 1984, p 20)

Of this sample nearly half of the children asked five questions or fewer during two mornings at school, a further three children asked no questions at all. All the girls asked more questions at home than they did at school. Even children young enough to attend nursery school seemed to accept that their role was to answer rather than ask questions. At school they assumed the passive role of "receptacle to be filled" and were unable or unwilling to enter into the genuine dialogue which typified their talk with their mothers at home. It is as if they abandoned their natural curiosity at the school gates.

The kind of talk initiated and allowed by teachers contributes to this pattern. Cazden (1988) observed "show and tell" lessons in a nursery school and found that these pupil-teacher interactions had the same basic structure. The teacher initiates the sequence by calling on a child to share. The nominated child responds by telling a narrative. The teacher comments on the narrative before calling on the next child. Cazden found that this three part sequence of initiation, pupil response, teacher evaluation (IRE) was the most common pattern of discourse at all levels of compulsory education (1988, p 29). Indeed, so pervasive is this approach that teachers are likely to evaluate statements made by the pupils about subjects in which the pupils are the experts. Cazden cited instances in which teachers evaluated the pupils' answers even when (for example, when talking about their parents' place of birth) the children were the only ones who could know the answer (Cazden, 1988, p 31).

Thus, classroom talk is dominated by the teacher and follows predetermined, largely universal rules:

- a) Teachers decide who will speak and for how long.
 - b) Teachers plan and run the system by which those who wish to speak can have the opportunity to do so. This is usually the "hands-up" system, although teachers have the power to bypass this, for instance by asking children without their hands up.
 - c) Teachers have the final say over the acceptability of particular contributions. They can indicate their approval, or lack of it, verbally or non-verbally.
 - d) Teachers can alter any of the rules at their discretion. They may, for instance, allow greater freedom of talking in certain lessons (eg. art), or on certain occasions (eg. discussion times).
- (Wray & Medwell, 1991, pp 13-14)

Talk produced in these conditions is not genuine dialogue, yet it continues to be the most common form of talk in schools. An explanation for the continuing neglect of pupil directed talk in schools suggests complex practical and political issues.

Pupil Directed Talk

Andrew Wilkinson (1968) commented on the fact that spoken language, or oracy (his term), was neglected in English education. A discussion of his comments, in the light of recent trends in language development, demonstrates both the extent of the progress that has been made and the relative limitations of current practice. Wilkinson suggested three kinds of reasons to explain why pupil-directed talk was

neglected in school:

One is certainly practical - that it is much more difficult to teach oracy than literacy. These difficulties are connected with such matters as the size of classes, the problem of control, the thinness of walls and the absence of teaching patterns. The second is connected with the structure of society - its attitudes, assumptions and rewards. The third is psychological - lack of knowledge until comparatively recently of the relationship between language and thought.

(Wilkinson, 1968, p 124)

To begin with Wilkinson's third point, the connection between language and thought has become increasingly well established. The Newsom Report spoke of our ignorance of how many "normal" children "never develop intellectually because they lack the words with which to think and reason", (1963, para. 43).

Moreover, the development of the personality is seen as inextricably bound up with the development of language. An individual's ability

to direct rather than be directed by experience, his ability to establish human relationships, are intimately related to his capacity for language; the frustrations of the inarticulate go deep.

(Wilkinson, 1965, p 40)

This study provides evidence of the "frustrations" experienced by quiet withdrawn pupils. Heather's vivid account of the frustration and anger that she felt at being "shut in and quiet" in her primary school will serve to illustrate the point.

But at the same time you're screaming inside and you're shouting at people inside and nobody can hear you and you can't really hear them because it's like because you're that far away inside yourself you like shut yourself off don't you, you bury yourself really really deep until you can't really see yourself or you can't really see out...

(Heather, 1st interview, line 60)

Implicit in this account of acute distress is the feeling that

Heather considered herself in danger of becoming so withdrawn, so buried, that she would cease to exist at all. It illustrates how the development of language is central to an individual's growth towards self-realisation and the humanising of the species. Thus talk should be seen as a condition of learning in all subjects and a "state of being in which the whole school should operate" (Wilkinson, 1965, p 58).

However, since language is the medium for knowledge, culture and power, the choice of language to be used in learning, and the methods of teaching that language, are politically laden issues. Traditionally, the standard, or "elaborated codes" (Bernstein, 1971) of the white middle class have been adopted as the language of education and non-standard dialects have been regarded as inferior. Whilst much has been written in support of non-standard forms of English (see, for example, Harrison & Marbach, 1994) and the importance of mother-tongue teaching (see, for example, Harrison, 1994), progress in schools is slow. Teachers who work in inner city schools are caught in a dilemma. Their desire to value the pupil's home language and to encourage them to have the confidence to "name the world" conflicts with their knowledge that access to standard forms of English continues to be a prerequisite for academic success.

These tensions, which reflect the hierarchical structure of English society, relate to Wilkinson's second reason for the neglect of pupil-directed talk in school. He suggested that

historically children were encouraged to be passive recipients of knowledge in order to fit them for their appropriate role in society and, "Had they been encouraged to speak, they might have answered back" (Wilkinson, 1968, p 125).

A fear that pupils who are allowed to talk might "answer back" and challenge the authority of the teacher goes beyond important and sensitive issues of classroom discipline. When pupils are encouraged to ask questions, invariably they will raise subjects beyond the expertise of the teacher. Teachers are no longer able to maintain an image of themselves as the custodians of all knowledge. Whilst this image is, by definition, both unrealistic and false, it protects individuals from addressing what they fear are their own inadequacies as a teacher.

The way in which teachers can be threatened by pupils' insatiable curiosity is illustrated in a poignant episode in Petals of Blood, by Ngugi wa Thiong'o (1977). Godfrey Munira, one of the novel's main characters, teaches in the village school. One day he takes his pupils out into the open air for a botany lesson in which he aims to provide the pupils with "hands on" experiential learning. He teaches the children the names of the flowers and the names of their constituent parts and he feels proud to be imparting hard, factual, reliable information. But the fragile social order between himself and the children is maintained by nothing more substantial than his factual knowledge and his academic language. It begins to crumble when the children use vivid poetic metaphors to

describe the flowers and when, noticing that some flowers are worm eaten, they ask disquieting questions about why beauty gets destroyed, and why God allows it to happen. His answer that it is all the laws of nature does not satisfy the children and they respond with formidable questions about humankind, law, God and nature:

Man... law... God... nature: he had never thought deeply about these things, and he swore that he would never again take the children to the fields. Enclosed in the four walls he was the master, aloof, dispensing knowledge to a concentration of faces looking up to him. There he could avoid being drawn in... But out in the fields, outside the walls, he felt insecure.

(Ngugi, 1977, p 22)

Applying the theories of a liberating education means that learning has to be through firsthand experience and through passionate reflection, argument and dialogue. Learning does not only take place in classrooms, nor should it be limited to didactic instruction by teachers, and deferential note-taking by learners. However, as the excerpt from Petals of Blood demonstrates, genuine dialogue between teachers and pupils forces teachers to address uncomfortable issues and their own inadequacies in providing answers. This is a risk which many teachers are not prepared to take. The outcome for the teacher is that they are in danger of denying their true selves and becoming

loveless, bounceless, humourless, sexless, visionless - the very model of a modern (and, alas, of an ancient) bossy pedagogue. (Richardson, 1990, p 4)

Then pupils are silenced by a form of teaching which restricts self-expression and denies them the opportunity to participate in genuine dialogue.

Wilkinson's first reason for the neglect of pupil-directed talk in schools arises directly from the teachers basic fear of losing control of the learning process. Since Wilkinson published "The Implications of Oracy" in 1968 much has been achieved in the development of small group "teaching patterns" which encourage pupil participation in classroom talk. Research into pupil participation in classroom interactions which was pioneered by Barnes (1977), has subsequently been developed by, amongst others, Edwards & Westgate (1987), Walsh (1988) and Galton & Williamson (1992). This sub-section concludes with an example of genuine dialogue drawn from the present study.

Genuine Dialogue

One of the aims of the study is to devise and implement teaching strategies which empower quiet pupils to take an active role in their education. The example of pupil dialogue which is discussed below occurred as a part of a series of small group activities which I carried out during the study.

The aim of the small group work was to enable pupils to explore a number of selected issues through talk with one or two chosen peers. I believed that friendship groups of this kind would provide a secure environment for a genuine exchange of ideas. Teacher involvement in these discussions was kept to an absolute minimum in order that the pupils' talk would

not be unduly influenced by the teacher. However, tape recordings of selected episodes of talk supported classroom observations and provided opportunity for the teacher to offer appropriate feedback to the pupils. The pupils also kept records of their contribution to discussions in the form of self-evaluation check lists.

The themes for discussion during the small group activities fell under the umbrella of "relationships" or "equal opportunities issues". Specific topics were chosen because I felt that they had particular relevance to the children's actual experiences. An exploration of such topics led to work about relationships within the family and at school. At the request of the class teacher, I used poetry extensively to introduce or develop topics.

The episode of dialogue which is discussed below occurred towards the end of a lesson which had focussed on a consideration of the needs of disabled pupils in mainstream schools. The theme had been introduced by the teacher who talked about the difficulties which her mentally handicapped nephew experienced in being accepted in mainstream school. During the teacher-directed introduction pupils were encouraged to consider the needs of any handicapped people they knew personally or had heard about. I also drew the pupils' attention to considering the needs of public figures such as Christy Brown, author of My Left Foot (1954), which had recently been screened on television.

Pupils were then asked to discuss, with their partner, a number of issues related to the education of handicapped children in mainstream schools. The pupils were told that they would be expected to report some of their ideas to a larger group and were consequently advised to make notes which would help to remind them what they had talked about. The transcript of one such discussion offers a powerful illustration of genuine dialogue between pupils. A detailed account of this discussion and how it relates to the talk which preceded it is provided later (section 5.3). However, a brief outline of some salient points is appropriate here.

Although the pupils attempted to complete the teacher-directed task, the transcript shows that their conversation becomes more animated and vivid when one of them asks a question of her own.

Like say if you were pregnant and you'd just found that if it were going to be disabled well like would you divorce it... what... Have it aborted like.

(Class lesson, 18-4-91, line 55)

It is significant that Roxana is so intent on finding an answer to her question that she is hardly notices when one of the other pupils corrects her terminology. As each of the pupils gives a negative response to this question Roxana remains quiet. It is only when Owen suggests an alternative answer that she is prepared to suggest that an abortion might be a humane way to reduce suffering.

Throughout the discussion pupils use anecdotes to support their points of view. Within this context of genuine and

supportive dialogue Susie found the courage to talk about the death of her two year-old, brain-damaged sister. This happened at a time when background noise made it difficult for the group to hear her. Indeed only Natasha seems to have heard what Susie had said. However, this disclosure is significant in that this was the first time that Susie had talked about the death of her sister in school. It is difficult to imagine that such a disclosure, or indeed the initial question which led to it, would have happened in the context of a teacher-directed whole class discussion.

This episode of pupil talk illustrates many of the features of genuine dialogue which typifies liberating education. The tone of pupils' contributions and the way in which they support their views with anecdotes from their own experience, suggests that they have been able to generate a genuine interest in the subject being discussed. By asking their own questions, they control and direct the shape of the conversation. Moreover, they are able to use their own language and experiences in order to name the world. That they can disagree with each other and correct mistakes without taking offence suggests that, in this context, they have established a warm and trusting relationship.

In this way the interest and vitality of this pupil-directed talk offers an interesting contrast to the dry and limiting teacher-directed talk described earlier (section 1.2.b). It shows how quiet pupils can be empowered by appropriate teaching strategies and relationships which are stimulating

yet supportive and which provide space as well as support.

To what extent, though, are such initiatives encouraged through the implementation of the National Curriculum?

1.2.c) National Curriculum Initiatives

At the time of writing, the National Curriculum - introduced by the 1988 Education Act - is undergoing major modifications. Sir Ron Dearing has just produced his final report (Dearing, 1994) which includes recommendations related to:

- i the scope for slimming down the curriculum;
- ii how the central administration of the National Curriculum and testing arrangements could be improved;
- iii how the testing arrangements might be simplified; and
- iv the future of the ten-level scale for reorganising children's attainment. (Dearing, 1994, section 1.1)

It is expected that these recommendations will form the basis of a "new curriculum" which will be distributed to schools in January 1995 for implementation in September of that year.

In the light of these changes it is only possible for me to comment on what appear to be emerging trends in curriculum development. Given the scope of the present study I will limit my discussion to aspects of the National Curriculum which relate to the development of oracy and the emphasis

placed on personal and social education. With regard to the National Curriculum, issues relating to the development of oracy are largely contained in the curriculum orders for English (DES & WO, 1990). By comparison, personal and social education is not highlighted in any of the Programmes of Study.

Without doubt the implementation of the National Curriculum highlights the importance of spoken language. Indeed, oracy is listed as one of the "basics of learning" along with "literacy, numeracy and a basic competence in the use of information technology" (Dearing, 1994, section 2.9). Sadly however, the importance of the "mastery of the basics" is linked to the primary years which implies that oracy may not have the same prominence at Key Stages 2, 3 and 4.

Whilst the "back to basics" approach emphasises the importance of developing oracy in schools, the prescriptive language of the curriculum orders implies a form of teacher-directed communication which prohibits pupils from "taking possession of their learning" and "making the learning their own". As Ann Lewis identified (1991) this is linked to a contradiction which lies at the heart of the Education Reform Act. Sections 1 and 2 of the Act reflect contrasting approaches to aims and content in education.

Section 1 is broad, referring to the need for a curriculum which promotes "spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development" and prepares pupils for the "opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life". By contrast, Section 2 of the Act discusses the planned outlines of work in the discrete foundation subjects (plus RE). (Lewis, 1991, p 8)

Thus, section 2 addresses only part of the aims given in Section 1; the broader aims are not met by the statutory programmes of study.

In response to criticisms that the programmes of study do not meet the broader aims of the National Curriculum, Dearing recommends that at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 the Curriculum Orders should be slimmed down and less prescriptive. This would "free some 20% of teaching time for use at the discretion of the school" (Dearing, 1994, section 2.2). However, this does not necessarily release time for schools to focus on issues such as personal and social education.

The first priority for discretionary time must be to support work in the basics of literacy, oracy and numeracy. Beyond this, the bulk of the time released should be used for work in those National Curriculum subjects which the school chooses to explore in more depth. (Dearing, 1994, section 2.4)

In a paper presented at the annual ASPE conference, Robin Alexander (1993) expressed concern that an emphasis on the "basics of learning" and a slimming down of the curriculum, as recommended by the Dearing report, would further marginalise some important subjects.

Since the three core subjects (English, Maths and Science) are to be given protected status in this exercise, there is a clear implication that it is the none-core foundation subjects which are to lose most. They, and particular art, music and PE, can least afford to be subject to further pruning. (Alexander, 1993, p 3)

In these terms Dearing's "slimming down" can in no way be seen as whole-curriculum thinking. It is merely a strategy for coping with the logistics of manageability while safeguarding the basics.

Evidence drawn from the present study would support the need to safeguard those aspects of the curriculum which enhance the personal and social development of pupils. The need for pupils to leave the primary school with "an appetite for learning and with a belief in themselves and their talents" is recognised by Dearing (Dearing, 1994, section 3.12). What is not addressed in the report, nor in the Education Act which preceded it, is an acknowledgement that both appropriate curriculum objectives and enlightened teaching strategies have a vital role to play in the development of pupils' self-esteem. One of the main aims of the present study is to identify and implement teaching strategies which place the enhancement of self-esteem and the development of interpersonal relationships at the very heart of the learning process.

SECTION 1.3. : THE ORIGINS OF THIS STUDY

Although I was unable to articulate it at the time of planning, the study has its origins in my personal and professional history. Therefore, a brief, select autobiographical reflection is appropriate, perhaps even essential, to an understanding of my interest in, and work with, quiet pupils. As the study progressed and I worked towards an explanation of quiet behaviour I realised that in some fundamental areas I had been silenced throughout childhood. Addressing issues that had been repressed for years was naturally a painful process, but through it I feel that I have come to a richer understanding of some of the concepts which are central to this study.

Biography and life history are currently enjoying a revival in educational research and development (Maclure, 1993). Maggie Maclure (1993) argues that the biographical attitude may be adopted for a number of different purposes which she calls "self-revelatory", "administrative", "emancipatory" and "methodological" (1993, p 312). Acknowledging the connection between my early childhood experiences and my work with quiet withdrawn pupils was certainly "self-revelatory".

1.3.a) Personal Experience

I was born with a congenital heart disease. Essentially, the

thick wall which separates the two ventricles had not closed up in the way which is expected in normal foetal development. In lay terms, having a "hole in the heart" deprives the body tissues of vital oxygen.

Having diagnosed the problem doctors were not optimistic of my chance of survival. My parents were told that if I survived to school age they might be able to perform corrective surgery. Open heart surgery was at that time, the late 50's, in the pioneering stage and successful operations were the subject of the same kind of media coverage that heart transplants were to enjoy later.

My parents' accounts of my childhood - the first six or seven years of which I remember little - are a catalogue of illnesses which were, because of my condition, potentially life threatening. Furthermore, as I grew older the condition itself became increasingly debilitating. Whilst I was able to attend normal school and maintain a surprisingly high level of attendance, I experienced a gradual, and at times alarming lack of energy. For example, when I was eleven - shortly before undergoing surgery - walking the seventy five yards home from school would leave me in a state of near collapse.

Undergoing the surgery itself was the climax of years of intensive medical care. I remember with some affection a team of nurses who showed tremendous compassion during that time. However, despite their best efforts the kind of treatments appropriate to this condition are intrusive, frightening and

unpleasant.

Throughout my childhood my parents exhibited a fierce determination that I would not be "made an invalid". Whilst I was given the best of care I lived with the feeling that to give in to illness was a sign of great weakness and to be avoided at all cost. I learned to make light of my increasing illness and talk frankly about it. I grew up with the certain knowledge that I had a fifty-fifty chance of surviving the operation and that failure would mean permanent paralysis or death.

Even as a small child I knew that my parents' relative briskness was due, in part, to the fact that they were experiencing major difficulties in addressing their own anxieties over my future. Consequently, whilst my father and I would talk at length about my condition and related medical procedures, I knew instinctively that it was somehow inappropriate to discuss my feelings and fears with him. Essentially, we coped with anxiety by denying its existence.

It is only recently that I have come to give voice to those fears, and regard them as an integral aspect of my life experiences. A major turning point in this process was the harrowing experience of seeing my father destroyed by cancer. Watching his obvious distress at facing both his own mortality and the indignities of illness finally legitimated my childhood anxieties. After years of denial I was free to talk about my anger and hurt.

My parent's insistence that I be treated as a normal child meant that few teachers ever knew of my medical condition. Except for the period immediately after the operation, I was treated, and expected to behave, like any able bodied pupil of my age. However, despite the obvious advantage of allowing me to consider myself "normal", this approach also had its drawbacks. As my "special needs" were never recognised, participation in physical activities was physically and mentally stressful because my needs were not articulated.

Moreover, at times, the teachers' inability to know the disabled side of my existence seemed unfeeling. For example, I saw a secondary school biology lesson on the development of the circulatory system as a natural forum to talk about congenital heart defects. However, the teacher would not, or could not be swayed from her planned syllabus and my hesitant questions were ignored. Consequently, I was left with the distinct impression that, so far as the school was concerned, my personal experience was irrelevant.

My childhood experiences probably influenced, albeit subconsciously, my subsequent work with emotionally disturbed pupils. My interest in working specifically with quiet pupils has more obvious origins.

At the start of his school career my younger brother, to whom I was specially close, displayed all the traits of elective mutism. Although never a particularly noisy child, Nigel would talk freely with members of the family and a close

circle of family friends. However, outside this small community, and most noticeably at school, his refusal to talk was total. In retrospect he links his behaviour with a powerful desire to maintain some control over his environment. He clearly recalls individual incidents in which he was engaged in what he saw as a power struggle with adults prepared to go to any lengths to make him speak.

Naturally, without the benefit of evidence collected at the time, any suggestion as to the motives underlying this need for control can be little more than supposition. However, it is surely more than a coincidence that Nigel's refusal to talk in school occurred at the time when I was hospitalised for surgery. A possible illustration of the extent to which Nigel was traumatised by this situation is provided by an account of how he was physically removed kicking and screaming from my bedside by his parents. In a world which had suddenly become unpredictable and frightening it is understandable that he wanted to maintain some control.

As frequently happens in cases of elective mutism in school, Nigel was "befriended" by another seemingly more confident pupil who voluntarily spoke on his behalf, thus withdrawing totally the need for him to talk. Whilst in one sense this pattern of befriending can help to integrate an elective mute into the school and form the basis of further relationships, the corresponding disadvantage is that the motivation and pressure to articulate may be almost entirely removed. Nigel was fortunate in that he had a number of understanding

teachers who gradually encouraged him to talk. However, in common with the rest of the family, he never received the counselling support which his refusal to talk suggested he might need.

Before moving on to examine how early professional experiences have helped to shape my perceptions of the needs of quiet pupils, it is appropriate to summarise the possible insights gained from an exploration of my childhood experiences.

First, and most obviously, my childhood experiences suggested ways in which individuals are silenced by an inability to cope with anxieties. As no one in the family found the emotional resources to talk about their fears, my own anxieties remained hidden. Related to this is an appreciation of the sheer relief an individual can feel when hidden anxieties are finally addressed.

Second, I am aware that I am exceptionally fortunate in having had a secure base of loving parents to offer support in times of distress. Arising from this is the realisation that many children, especially those who are physically or sexually abused, may not have any support and have to face their difficulties alone. Through my experiences I can begin to empathise with those who have faced tremendous personal challenges alone.

Third, the realisation that in order to offer support to others either as a parent, a teacher or a counsellor the

individual must be aware of, and be prepared to address, their own anxieties. The notion that those who support should themselves be supported is an integral aspect of most counselling traditions.

In retrospect the insights I gained in childhood probably helped to inform my teaching of emotionally disturbed pupils. My own experiences certainly helped me to acknowledge that quiet withdrawn behaviour could be linked to a denial of emotional or psychological difficulties. Where this is the case, supporting pupils in addressing those needs is an important precursor for learning.

In the next sub-section the experiences of two emotionally disturbed pupils are compared. Paul's violent, aggressive and often offensive behaviour drew attention to his needs, with the result that much teacher time was devoted to offering support. In sharp contrast, Heather's silence in the classroom meant that no one in the school was ever aware that she was an abused child. Heather's story is an extreme case; clearly quiet behaviour does not, of itself, indicate either physical or sexual abuse. However, her experience serves as a useful signifier for the quiet and compliant pupils who can so easily be overlooked by busy teachers.

1.3.b) Professional Experience

Paul's Story

Paul's reputation for aggressive behaviour preceded him. Even so it was difficult to come to terms with the fact that he spent the first days of term on the classroom roof shouting obscenities at the top of his voice. Whilst the staff could not condone such behaviour they could, given his "deprived home background", understand it. Understandably, individuals who experience real hurt in early relationships with parents find it difficult to risk further damage by entering into other relationships. Paul's reaction to his experience of maternal neglect and cruelty was to fight, with body and mind, any one who came near. Reaching out to such pupils demands a great deal of time, patience and firm, even ruthless, love. (By "ruthless", I mean a stubborn refusal to "give up" on the pupil, even when they seem to reject any approaches made.)

In this particular school, teachers were divided as to what they thought was the appropriate support for pupils like Paul. Some wanted to work with them within mainstream education and offer stability in an otherwise turbulent life. Others thought that such pupils had specific emotional or psychological needs which would be better provided for in some form of "special school". A lack of coherence meant that Paul, and pupils like him, frequently had to deal with different kinds of response from individual members of staff.

Irrespective of where they are educated, the violent, aggressive language and behaviour of pupils like Paul force teachers to acknowledge, if not actually meet, their needs. Advice to the teaching profession on ways of handling disruptive, potentially aggressive pupil behaviour is well documented (for example, Rutter 1975; Tattum 1986; Wildake 1986; Booth 1987), as are teachers' own accounts of critical incidents involving aggressive individuals (for example, Ball 1985; Nias 1989).

However, as Heather's story below illustrates, in the flurry of activity which typifies life in an inner city school, the needs of quiet or passive pupils are often overlooked. These pupils do not present discipline problems for their teachers; on the contrary teachers may either condone quiet behaviour or simply ignore quiet pupils in their anxiety to cope with demands made by those who are potentially disruptive.

Yet, it is inaccurate to assume that compliance is synonymous with a commitment to learning. In spite of their appearance as model pupils, quiet children may be seen as

playing truant in mind whilst present in body, who see neither the relevance nor the reason for all they are asked to do. (Young, 1984, p 12)

They may complete the bare minimum of work with little interest or investment in the outcome.

They conform, and even play the system, but many do not allow the knowledge presented to them to make any deep impact upon their view of reality. (Barnes, 1979, p 17)

Thus, whilst it may be convenient for hard pressed teachers to equate compliance with a commitment to learning, this denies the educational needs of quiet pupils. Moreover, as Heather's story illustrates, some of those quiet pupils may well have emotional and psychological needs which are being denied.

Heather's Story

It is symptomatic of the difficulties faced by quiet pupils that, whilst I can vividly remember many details about Paul and his behaviour, I can only dimly remember Heather. Heather was quiet and unassuming, she attended school regularly, completed her work adequately and despite some difficulties with academic work she caused no problems to school discipline. It was only many years later in a relationship founded on a chance meeting that I learned of her horrendous life story.

In early childhood Heather was for some years sexually abused, first by her father and then by her step-father - a fact denied by her mother, to whom Heather naturally turned to for help. Consequently, even as a small child, Heather was forced to face her situation alone. She "coped" by bottling up her anxieties throughout primary school.

As she got older Heather rebelled against her abuse; she left home to live rough on the streets and began a predictable, if not inevitable, downward spiral of drug abuse and crime. It

was only after a prison sentence for arson that Heather finally received the counselling which she so desperately needed. At this stage in her life her self-image was so damaged that she prefaced even the most casual physical contact with the suggestion that she should not be touched because "I contaminate people".

In so far as Heather is now receiving appropriate professional counselling and is beginning to build a new life for herself there is hope that this story might lead to a happier sequel. However, as her former class teacher, I am horrified that neither I nor my colleagues were aware of Heather's inner emotional turmoil. As a result of no-one taking the trouble to get to know this particular quiet and unassuming pupil Heather's plight was not recognised. By denying Heather the space to disclose her abuse, neither her mother nor her teachers are entirely without blame. Andrew Wilkinson (1975) pointed out that ignoring someone is in itself a form of abuse:

There are various ways in which it is possible to damage human beings psychologically: by annoying them, insulting them, threatening them, persecuting them. But often it is far more effective to do none of these things: to do nothing to them, to leave them entirely alone. So in prison solitary confinement is recognised as a severe punishment. (Wilkinson, 1975, p 95)

There is a sense in which Heather's inability or unwillingness to make herself visible to her teachers unwittingly subjected her to a period of solitary confinement. A desire to prevent other quiet pupils from similar feelings of isolation is one of the motivations which underlies the present study.

To summarise, **Part One** began with a discussion of the ways in which silence is detrimental to learning. It then explored the connection between language and learning before offering a critical account of the relative merits of teacher-directed and pupil-directed talk. **Part One** concluded with an explanation of how my concern for quiet withdrawn pupils has its origins in my own childhood experiences of being silenced by anxiety. In this way **Part One** establishes the foundations on which my study is built.

PART TWO : A CRITICAL REVIEW
OF SOME RELEVANT READINGS AND STUDIES

This critical review will seek to develop the basic themes which underlie the study as outlined in Part One. It is appropriate, then, to recall those themes.

First, that the move to self-realisation is a basic human need; ways to empower pupils towards the realisation of their true potentialities should be central to the teaching styles and curriculum of a liberating education,

Second, that self-realisation and the related concepts of "self" and "other" come about through relationships with significant others - in school this means the development of positive relationships with teachers and pupils,

Third, that an individual's ability or willingness to enter into positive relationships is, in part, influenced by their early childhood relationships with parents.

Arising from these themes are some key questions. What is meant by self-realisation? How do relationships with significant others empower individuals to achieve an appropriate sense of "self" and "other"? What happens if early childhood relationships are inappropriate or if the growth to self-realisation goes off course?

In order to address these questions, this review will operate from a number of different perspectives:

Part two A : Object Relations and the Self examines, in particular, how the work of the object-relations theorist Harry Guntrip contributed to an understanding of the importance of relationships in empowering individuals to grow towards self-realisation. The connection between a strong sense of self and positive relationships is supported by

reference to R. D. Laing's notion of "ontological security", as understood in gestalt therapy. The way in which inappropriate parenting can lead to a denial of self is developed through a discussion of the work of the psychoanalyst Karen Horney. This section concludes with a critical review of John Bowlby's attachment theory, in the light of recent developments in the field.

Part two B : Post-Feminist Accounts of Parenting explores insights into the concepts of separateness and attachment that have been developed since the earlier work by Guntrip, Bowlby, Winnicott and others. These challenge previously held assumptions that only mothers can nurture children. The suggestion that traditional male and female roles are socially constructed, rather than inherent, leads naturally to the notion that fathers can take an active role in the care of their children. The suggestion that individuals benefit from acknowledging both the male and female aspects of their personality also leads to an acceptance of one-parent families as viable family units.

Part two C: Implications for the Classroom begins with the basic premise that habitually quiet or passive behaviour is detrimental to learning and, as such, children who do not talk in class may be considered to have special educational needs. A recognition that pupils who exhibit quiet withdrawn behaviour are educationally disadvantaged challenges previously held definitions of emotional and behavioural difficulties. In addition a critical review of current

thinking in the field of special needs education emphasises issues of rights and opportunities, as they relate to quiet withdrawn pupils in school.

PART TWO A : OBJECT-RELATIONS AND THE SELF

SECTION 2.1. : OBJECT RELATIONS AND THE SELF

The Work of Harry Guntrip

This section is divided into five interrelated sub-sections. Section 2.1.a examines the concept of **growth towards self-realisation** and the related concepts of a sense of "self" and "other". A discussion of the connection between these two concepts leads naturally to a discussion of R. D. Laing's concept of **ontological security** in section 2.1.b. Section 2.1.c develops Guntrip's definition of **good-enough** parental relationships and how such relationships provide the growing child with an appropriate combination of security and distance. Section 2.1.d describes the positions of "paranoid", "schizoid" and "depressive" which an individual might adopt in response to inappropriate parenting or stressful life experiences. Guntrip describes how such positions lead to a **denial of self**. Section 2.1.e develops the notion of the real self in respect of relationships within an educational context and proposes that there is a need for **intimacy and distance in the learning relationship**.

2.1.a) The Growth Towards Self-Realisation

In Psychoanalytic Theory, Therapy and the Self (1985) Harry Guntrip describes how object-relationists had moved away from the Freudian concept of development based on stages of

instinct-maturation towards a scheme based on the idea of the quality of ego-experience in object-relations. Object-relations theory is based on the premise that becoming a person involves a growth towards self-identity which begins after birth in the context of relationships with significant others.

A human being is an organism with a potentiality for becoming a person, but that potentiality for personality is his real and essential nature, which he does not always realise. (Guntrip, 1949, p 159)

Thus Guntrip argued that everyone has the potentiality for realising their real and essential selves. Moreover, this "striving for the personal life" is always present even when we live more at the "organismal level than at the personal level" (Guntrip, 1949, p 159). As will be demonstrated later (section 2.6.), a curriculum policy based on a belief in the innate capacity for growth towards self-realisation is an important prerequisite to work with emotionally disturbed pupils.

Guntrip emphasised that "becoming a person" requires that two seemingly contradictory aspects of personality are recognised and held in balance.

Two things must remain inviolate if a human personality is to remain strong: (i) an inner core of the sense of separate individuality, of "me-ness", of ego identity, strong enough both to relate to, and accept communication from the outer world without anxiety over possible ego-loss; (ii) a still deeper ultimate core of the feeling of "at-oneness" which is the soil out of which the separateness can grow. (Guntrip, 1968, p 268)

Thus a strong sense of separate identity develops through feelings of connectedness with significant others. If these

contradictory aspects of personality are not held in balance then the individual can not grow towards self-realisation and the personal life.

To feel separate and individual while cut off from any foundation of "at-oneness" is terrifying and destroys the ego. This, however, involves the opposite danger of the basic need for "at-oneness" threatening to paralyse and extinguish the separateness. (Guntrip, 1968, p 268)

The real self belongs, and only belongs, to the individual and it must be supported whilst it is growing. A lack of either connectedness and separateness prevents healthy development in the growing child. However, Guntrip acknowledged that;

It is hard for individuals in our culture to realise that true independence is rooted in and only grows out of primary dependence. (Guntrip, 1968, p 268)

In a patriarchal society independence and separateness are associated with masculinity and are valued over the "female traits" of dependence and connectedness. However, given that self-realisation grows out of relationship with others, the connection between independence and dependence is clear. Moreover, a critical review of post-feminist literature on parenting leads to the assertion that to talk in terms of "male" and "female" traits is an inappropriate social construct. The traditional male and female dichotomy denies that these traits are simply aspects of an individual's personality which ought to be recognised and held in balance.

2.1.b) Ontological Security

During the course of this study I found R.D. Laing's description of the concept of "ontological security" particularly useful. On a personal level it helped me to understand the traumas I experienced during my father's illness and death. It also suggested a way of interpreting some pupils' sudden need to withdraw from the social and academic life in the classroom. A lack of "ontological security" seemed an ideal way to describe the feeling of "losing oneself" which I had experienced and could identify in the behaviour of others.

In The Divided Self (1959) R. D. Laing emphasised the relationship between independence and connectedness. An individual who has a sense of their presence in the world as a "real, alive, whole, and, in a temporal sense, a continuous person" (Laing, 1959, p 39) acquires this strong sense of self through relationships with others. Moreover;

Such a basically ontological secure person will encounter all the hazards of life, social, ethical, spiritual, biological, from a centrally firm sense of his own and other people's reality and identity.

(Laing, 1959, p 39)

An ontologically secure person is not threatened by the possibility of entering into relationships. By comparison, as a later chapter dealing with basic anxiety in relationships will demonstrate, ontological insecurity leads an individual to become absorbed in contriving ways of avoiding or coping with possible infringement by others.

If the individual cannot take the realness, aliveness, autonomy, and identity of himself and others for granted, then he has to become absorbed in contriving ways of trying to be real, of keeping himself or others alive, of preserving his identity, in efforts, as he will often put it, to prevent himself from losing himself.

(Laing, 1959, pp 42-43)

In The Divided Self (1959) Laing cites a powerful example of how a person can feel threatened by seemingly minor events. During an argument between two patients one stopped, suddenly, saying that he could not continue. The reason he gave was that, whilst the other person was arguing simply to have the pleasure of winning and at worst could only lose the argument, he himself was arguing "in order to preserve my existence", (Laing, 1959, p 43). The idea that a person can feel their very existence threatened by contact with others is an important consideration in work with excessively quiet pupils. In the context of the study, much of the quiet behaviour witnessed in school may well have its origins in an individual's lack of ontological security which implies a poor sense of self and difficulty in forming and sustaining relationships.

2.1.c) The "Good Enough" Relationship

The striving for the personal life occurs in the context of striving towards relationships with others.

We cannot realise our nature as personal except in relationship with other persons...

(Guntrip, 1949, p 159)

Thus the basic drive to object relations is both the drive to self-development and to self-fulfilment as a person. It is only through relationships that an individual can realise their true potential. In Personality Structure and Human Interaction (1961) Guntrip paraphrased MacMurray (1935), in saying that good personal relationships are those in which we can be our whole selves and have complete freedom to express everything that makes us what we are. Guntrip suggested that within such relationships suppression and inhibition are unnecessary.

However, this definition fails to address the seeming contradiction inherent in human relationships. Whilst good personal relationships provide the freedom for an individual to express their "true selves", an aspect of the true self may be the need for concealment and privacy. The terms "suppression" and "inhibition" have negative connotations which deny the basic human need to maintain a strong and separate sense of self.

We must feel able to shut out the external world and maintain our right to an inviolable privacy within ourselves at need if we are to remain healthy persons.
(Guntrip, 1968, p 268)

Moreover, some degree of suppression may be inherent in all relationships. In section 2.2. (below), a review of the work of Karen Horney suggests that in relationships with parents children experience conflict which they have to suppress because of their dependency upon the parents for survival. In this context neither the conflict nor the anxiety which arises from it is seen as necessarily harmful to the growing child.

Indeed some parental constraint is essential if the individual is to develop a distinction between self and other. Thus whilst personal relationships may never be ideal they can conceivably be, in Winnicott's words, "good enough".

In describing the child's first relationship, Guntrip placed great emphasis on the role of the mother as prime carer. As I shall argue later, post-feminist reading of his work would offer a modified view of good object relationships which would further acknowledge the unique bonding which can exist between mother and baby (Chodorow, 1978; Benjamin, 1990) and yet not discount the important role fathers can, and increasingly do, play in nurturing their children (Lewis, 1987).

Through relationships with significant others the growing infant develops a sense of self-identity. However, an infant cannot develop a secure ego-sense either in a vacuum or under intolerable pressure. In a "good enough" relationship the parent achieves the difficult balance of meeting the infant's needs without forcing themselves on the child in ways and at times which the child does not want. An inability or unwillingness to meet the child's basic needs constitutes neglect or in extreme cases actual abuse. At the opposite extreme over-attentiveness constitutes "impingement" on the as yet weak, immature and sensitive ego of the infant.

2.1.d) A Denial of Self

In Psychoanalytic Theory, Therapy and the Self (1985) Guntrip described how individuals may respond to inappropriate relationships with parents or difficult life experiences by adopting one of three positions which he called "schizoid", "paranoid" and "depressive". An unnatural adherence to any of these positions denies the true self and prevents the development of the "personal life". An understanding of the difference between these positions may help to shed light on the motivation which underlies the quiet behaviour exhibited by pupils in school.

In the schizoid position the infant is withdrawn from object-relations. In the paranoid position, the infant is *in* relationship but feels persecuted by his objects. In the depressive position he has to overcome these difficulties and has become able to enter more fully into whole-object relationships, only to be exposed to *guilt and depression* over the discovery that he can hurt those he has become capable of loving.

(Guntrip, 1985, pp 61-62)

Later in the same volume Guntrip identified the root cause of the different positions. He said that those who experienced paranoia are those who can be assumed to have had good-enough mothering and for whom serious stresses and strains in family and personal life disturb their proper development. They do not suffer any fundamental incapacity to enter into human relationships but struggle with feelings of persecution within relationships. In contrast, those who are described as adopting the schizoid position cannot be assumed to have had good-enough mothering from the start and their difficulties are more deeply rooted. They are the people who have deep-

seated doubts about the reality of their very "self", and who are ultimately found to be suffering from varying degrees of depersonalisation, unreality, the dread feeling of "not belonging", of being fundamentally isolated and out of touch with their world. This is broadly the "schizoid problem", the problem of those who feel cut off and unable to become part of any real relationships.

Guntrip's definition of the "schizoid problem" relates closely to R. D. Laing's concept of "ontological insecurity". Moreover, Guntrip's three positions of "paranoid", "schizoid" and "depressive" are similar to Karen Horney's positions of "moving against", "moving away from" and "moving towards" which are discussed at length in section 2.2.c of this literature review.

In Schizoid Phenomena : Object Relations and the Self (1968) Guntrip dwells in considerable detail on the tragedy of the schizoid individual, who feels the pain, isolation and lonely loss of relationships; and who also feels the fear and threat of being smothered by any relationships that do seem likely to grow. However, Guntrip's view is that the suffering endured by the schizoid is potentially anyone's given unfavourable conditions.

The poor mixer, the poor conversationalist, the strong silent man, the person who lives in a narrow world of his own and fears all new ideas and ways, the diffident and shrinking and shy person, the mildly apathetic person who is not particularly interested in anything, the person of dull mechanical routine and robot-like activity into which little feeling enters, who never ventures on anything unfamiliar, are all in various degrees withdrawn and out of the full mainstream of living. They are in

the grip of fear deep down and remain drawn back out of reach of being hurt. (Guntrip, 1968, pp 62-63)

Even in cases where parental relationships are "good enough" it is difficult for parents and children to establish appropriate feelings of connectedness and separateness. This is especially true where the parents themselves do not have a strong sense of self in relationship. Thus not only are bad object relationships in childhood internalised and become part of the child's personality, negative experiences set a pattern for future relationships. Adults who experienced neglect, brutality, or over protective love, in early childhood are likely to repeat these patterns of behaviour in their relationships with their own children. In extreme cases, for example, individuals who were sexually abused as children may become child abusers themselves.

2.1.e) Intimacy and Distance in the Learning Relationship

Guntrip is concerned with the primary relationship between mother and child, yet the need to achieve balance between necessary intimacy and appropriate distance is inherent in relationships and is of particular importance in discourse between teachers and pupils. Bernard Harrison (1976) described the difficulty which teachers may experience in bringing their "authentic loving selves" to relationships with pupils. He suggested that the often expressed need to maintain a "professional distance" implies a recognition of

the difficulty in achieving teacher-pupil relationships which avoid confounding a caring approach with possessive attitudes. He also acknowledged that the pupil-teacher relationship may be further complicated if the teacher becomes aware of unresolved anxieties of their own which they may try to resolve through the teaching relationship. What is implied but not explicitly stated in this discussion of "Intimacy Versus Appropriate Distance" is the difficulty which the pupils themselves may experience in entering into relationships with their teachers. The present study contributes to an understanding of intimacy and distance in the pupil-teacher relationship by focussing on the pupil's perspective.

As illustrated by *Heather's Story* (section 1.3.b) some pupils, having experienced poor object-relationships in infancy or early childhood, have difficulty in forming or sustaining relationships at school. This seeming reluctance can mask an urgent need on the part of the child. However, such needs may be overlooked by a busy teacher especially if the pupil is seen to conform to the school's code of behaviour.

In a chapter in which he described his clinical diagnostic framework Guntrip cites the case of a woman who knew that as a child she had craved contact with her teachers. In essence this case follows a similar pattern to that illustrated by *Heather's Story* in the introduction to the study. Like Heather, the woman quoted by Guntrip was cruelly brought up and felt utterly useless and worthless. At her first school,

the women felt a terrible need to be noticed by the teachers and bent all her energies towards pleasing them through good work and good behaviour. As a result she was simply taken for granted as a girl who would not cause any trouble. Being already schizoid, this made her feel depersonalised. She could not stand this and when she changed schools she felt she must compel the teachers to take notice of her or she would feel nothing at all. So she became a "bad" girl and a ringleader in mischief. She got plenty of notice then and felt much safer that way.

As with Heather's story, this serves as a powerful reminder of the need for teachers to negotiate a relationship with those pupils who exhibit quiet compliant behaviour and who are often overlooked. It also offers one explanation for some of the pupil "acting out" behaviour which is witnessed in schools.

SECTION 2.2. : BASIC ANXIETY IN RELATIONSHIPS

The work of Karen Horney

This account of the work of Karen Horney develops many themes introduced so far in the review of Guntrip and others. Of particular note is Horney's concept of **basic anxiety** leading to the adoption of one of the three moves - "**towards**", "**away from**" and "**against**" others - in response to this anxiety. Whilst these moves are similar to Guntrip's positions of "depressive", "schizoid" and "paranoid", Horney's terms are preferred for the present study since, being less "clinical", they are more easily acceptable as representing aspects of normal development which have somehow "gone off course".

This section opens with a reflection on the basic human need for self-realisation through relationships. Section 2.2.a then gives an account of **the formation of basic anxiety**. Section 2.2.b explains how individuals are driven to adopt one of three moves "towards", "away from" or "against" others as a **response to anxiety**. Section 2.2.c adapts Horney's model of behaviour and applies it in an educational setting. The resulting **four modes of pupil behaviour** form the basis of the pupil case studies in Part Five of the thesis. Section 2.2.d concludes with an acknowledgement of the extent to which the adoption of one mode of behaviour can lead to a **denial of self**.

Karen Horney worked primarily with neurotic patients in her role of psychoanalyst, yet her book Neurosis and Human Growth

(1951) is subtitled "The Struggle Towards Self-Realisation", implying that this is a universal human struggle, not confined to those suffering neurosis. The move towards self-realisation begins in infancy in the relationship between parent and child. Within such relationships an individual needs an atmosphere of warmth to give her both a feeling of inner security and the inner freedom enabling her to have her own feelings and thoughts and to express herself. Through a balance of these elements of security and freedom in a relationship an individual can develop a sense of both "self" and "other". In "good enough" relationships the parent sets limits on the child's behaviour thus protecting the child from the disintegration that occurs when the absolute self has its way. The child's ability to recognise the parent as a person in their own right, with their own needs, is a significant stage in the child's development of self identity as a separate person.

2.2.a) The Formation of Basic Anxiety

In examining the parent-child relationship Horney touches on a particularly problematic source of conflict for the child: conflict with parents, the very individuals upon whom they must depend for survival. In Neurosis and Human Growth (1951) Horney suggested that conflict exists between dependency on the parents and rebellion against them. Hostility towards them has to be repressed because of the dependency. Hostility

also has to be repressed because society places value on those who do not give way to aggression. This is especially true of the socialisation of girls in a society which regards aggression as unfeminine.

In Horney's terms this conflict leads to what she calls "basic anxiety". Basic anxiety is defined as the feeling a child has of being isolated and helpless in a potentially hostile world. According to this concept the child feels in danger of her individuality being obliterated, her freedom taken away, her happiness prevented. In an environment in which the basic anxiety develops, the child's free use of energies is thwarted, her self-esteem and self-reliance are undermined, fear is instilled by intimidation and isolation, her expansiveness is warped through brutality, neglect, or over-protective love.

In Our Inner Conflicts (1945) Horney describes a wide range of adverse factors in the environment which can produce insecurity in a child. In particular she draws attention to the child's sense of lurking hypocrisy in the environment, and "his reaction to all the contradictions he senses in the parent's behaviour" (1945, pp 41-42). Thus she proposes that there are two sources of anxiety. The first is the parents' genuine mistreatment of the child, a far more common phenomenon than has previously been acknowledged (Miller, 1991). The second source of basic anxiety is the child's awareness of contradictions in their parents' behaviour. In so far as contradictions are inherent in all human

relationships this would suggest that all children develop some form of basic anxiety, although the degree of anxiety and the extent to which it is perceived as a handicap will vary considerably among individuals.

Whatever the cause of the conflict, the effect on the child is to prevent her from relating herself to others with the spontaneity of her real feelings. She must, perhaps unconsciously, deal with relationships in ways which do not increase, but rather allay her basic anxiety. The particular attitudes resulting from such unconscious strategies are determined both by the child's given temperament and by the contingencies of the environment. She may try to cling to the most powerful person around her; she may try to rebel and fight; she may try to shut others out of her inner life and withdraw emotionally from them. Thus the child's needs are not purely instinctive but in part at least grow out of the child's need to cope with a difficult environment.

2.2.b) A Response to Anxiety

In a chapter on "The Basic Conflict" in Our Inner Conflicts (1945) Horney described the three moves towards, against and away from people and linked them respectively with states of helplessness, hostility and isolation. It has to be remembered however that any of these moves could represent healthy adaptation to factors in the environment and are not

intrinsically negative. In a healthy human relationship the moves toward, against, or away from others are not mutually exclusive. The ability to want and to give affection, the ability to fight, and the ability to keep to oneself, are complementary capacities necessary for good human relations. But in the child who feels on precarious ground because of her basic anxiety, these moves become extreme and rigid. Affection, for instance, becomes clinging; compliance becomes appeasement. Similarly, she is driven to rebel or keep aloof, without reference to her real feelings and regardless of the inappropriateness of her attitude in a particular situation. Horney suggested that the degree of blindness and rigidity in her attitudes is in proportion to the intensity of the basic anxiety lurking within her. However, this ignores the influence of other people's expectations as to an individual's ability to change their behaviour. For example, a pupil who had been extremely quiet in class was encouraged to participate in group discussions. It was relatively easy to convince her of the value of talking in class but more difficult to persuade other pupils to accept her "uncharacteristic" behaviour. They continued to speak on her behalf even when she had expressed a wish to speak for herself.

Clearly Horney's explanation of behaviour has relevance to teachers working with quiet pupils. Her account of defensive moves adopted to cope with conflicts in the environment accords with the types of behaviour a teacher is likely to observe in the classroom. However, they are by definition an

oversimplification. People do not fit into distinctly defined categories. Thus a child who "moves towards" adults may completely withdraw from contact with children. Similarly an individual may adopt completely contradictory behaviour towards the same group of people in different situations. For psychoanalytic theory to be useful it has, to use Patrick Casement's words, "to be discovered, not merely applied" (1990, p 29). The theory has to be modified to fit each individual's unique experiences.

2.2.c) Four Modes of Pupil Behaviour

Figure 1 extends, in diagrammatic form, Horney's three positions, as applied to work with quiet pupils, within an educational context (Collins, 1993). When compared with their peers all the pupils highlighted in this study would be described as "moving away" from others. However, a closer examination of the behaviour exhibited by quiet pupils suggests different trends of behaviour. Within this group pupils tend "towards", "away from" or "against" others. Thus these forms of behaviour have to be regarded as relative rather than absolute. In the diagram the positions are represented as interlocking circles, as an indication that an individual's behaviour may not fit into clearly defined categories. For example, pupils may exhibit a range of behaviours over time and in different situations, they may also exhibit behaviour which is best described as a position

on a continuum between categories.

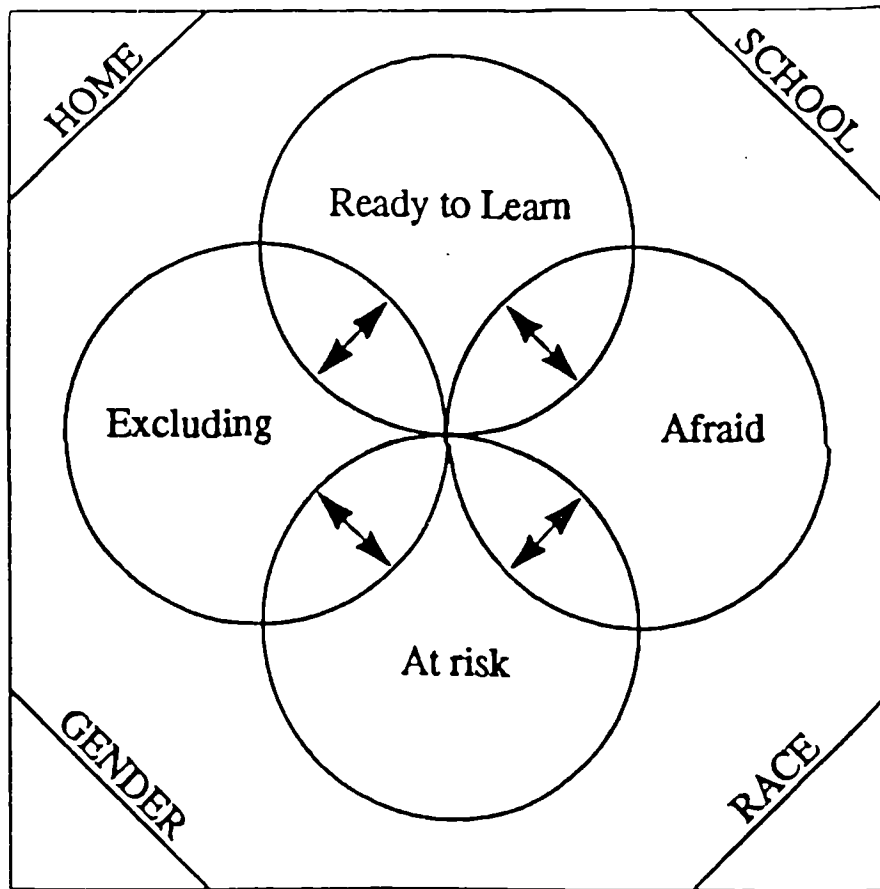


Figure 1 : Learning Positions (derived from Horney)

Behaviour described in the diagram as **excluding** relates to Horney's position of "moving away" from others. Pupils exhibiting such behaviour are likely to be socially isolated within the classroom setting. At the most extreme, such behaviour may be described as elective mutism.

The term **afraid** relates to Horney's position of "moving against" others in that both represent a degree of conflict within relationships. The important distinction is that whilst "moving against" implies the initiation of active

behaviour against others, the term "afraid" suggests the possibility of a more passive response. Thus, for example, the term afraid can include the behaviour of both the bully and the victim in that both can be seen to experience conflict within relationships.

In an educational context Horney's "moving towards" position is represented by **ready to learn** behaviour. In so far as being able and willing to enter into relationships with others is an important precursor to learning, it is necessary for teachers to enable their pupils to move towards the position of ready to learn.

However, whilst pupils at one end of the continuum are close to, or moving towards such a position, the behaviour of pupils at the other extreme of the continuum is described as **at risk**. This fourth category represents a departure from Horney's three positions. It was included in recognition of those pupils who seem most disaffected by their experience of school. Such disaffection may be connected to perceived conflict between the values or expectations of home and school. "At risk" pupils may be physically or emotionally absent from the classroom and as such they are outside the social community of the school. In this context pupils are "at risk" educationally. The term does not necessarily indicate sexual or physical abuse although clearly none of the four categories described by the diagram precludes children who are abused in this way.

The diagram includes the four main factors, **Home, School, Gender and Race**, which may influence pupil behaviour. These factors are huge and all-inclusive, and it is inappropriate to elaborate on them here. However, there is no direct correlation between the factors and the categories as depicted by the diagram. For example, neither gender nor family background can be used as simple predictors of possible behaviour. Similarly, children from different ethnic backgrounds are to be found represented in all categories of behaviour. What emerges from an application of this model is that an individual's pattern of behaviour results from a unique response to a specific combination of factors. This model of pupil behaviour represents a departure from Horney's work in that it acknowledges the influence of factors other than parental relationships in the development and resolution of basic anxiety.

2.2.d) A Denial of Self

What is clear from Horney's description of the three moves is that the rigid application of one move to the exclusion of all others, irrespective of the situation can lead to a denial of self. "In more severe cases these mean more than a mere impairment of self-esteem; they bring about a complete suppression of the spontaneous individual self" (Horney, 1939, p 91). Not only is the individual's real self prevented from growth, but in addition her need to evolve artificial,

strategic ways to cope with others forces her to override her genuine feelings, wishes, and thoughts. To the extent that safety becomes paramount, her innermost feelings and thoughts recede in importance, they have to be silenced and thus they become indistinct. It does not matter what she feels, if only she is safe. Her feelings and wishes thus cease to be determining factors; she is no longer, so to speak, the driver, but is driven.

It is however feasible for individuals to gain self-confidence outside the parent-child relationship through positive relationships with other members of the family, understanding teachers etc.

The past in some way or other is always contained in the present... it is a question not of "actual versus past", but of developmental processes versus repetition.

(Horney, 1939, p 153)

SECTION 2.3. : ATTACHMENT BEHAVIOUR

The Work of John Bowlby

This section focuses on the work of John Bowlby. It discusses the extent to which his attachment theory is useful in helping to understand an individual's experience of, and reaction to, their relationships with their parents and significant others. It is divided into four interrelated sub-sections. Section 2.3.a offers a critical reflection of Bowlby's account of attachment theory and related concepts of attachment behaviour and attachment figures. Central to Bowlby's work is the notion that separation from attachment figures can cause children distress. He suggested that prolonged separation may affect personality development. Section 2.3.b offers a critical analysis of these assumptions and their implications for patterns of parenting and the provision of child care. Section 2.3.c examines what Bowlby described as deviant patterns of attachment behaviour. Whilst his distinction between the different types of deviant attachment has been influential in therapeutic work, I suggest that it is less useful to teachers working in mainstream classrooms. I found that the three types of anxious attachment as described by Muriel Barrett and Jane Trevitt (1991), (a discussion of which forms the basis of section 2.3.d) were more appropriate for my needs as teacher and researcher.

2.3.a) Attachment Theory

John Bowlby was an experienced psychoanalytic theoretician, a child psychiatrist, and an eminent researcher. His work is clearly part of a tradition of psychoanalytic thinking. However, unlike Guntrip and Horney, who based their understanding on patients demonstrating pathological symptoms, Bowlby based his theories on empirical observations of "healthy" infants and young children. Consequently, the resulting **attachment theory** might be presumed to have universal application and appeal. Yet, as this critical review will demonstrate, some specific aspects of Bowlby's description of attachment theory are no longer as acceptable as they were at the time they were first formulated.

In particular, Bowlby's emphasis on the mother as the prime attachment figure is questioned by recent post-feminist accounts of parenting (for example, Benjamin, 1990; Chodorow, 1978; Olivier, 1989). Nevertheless, attachment theory has much to recommend it as a way of understanding and describing parent-child relationships and is worthy of full and detailed consideration.

In an article entitled "The Making and Breaking of Affectional Bonds" (1977) John Bowlby defined **attachment theory** as;

a way of conceptualising the propensity of human beings to make strong affectional bonds to particular others...
(Bowlby, 1977, p 201)

In connection with this Bowlby described attachment behaviour

as that which results in a person "attaining or retaining proximity to some other differentiated and preferred individual", the attachment figure, who is usually "conceived as stronger and/or wiser", and thus better able to cope with the world (Bowlby, 1989, p 129).

Thus Bowlby's view of the parent child-relationship is one in which the infant has an innate propensity to seek stimulation and promote attachment to significant others who will provide protection and support. However, whilst this definition focuses on the behavioural aspects of attachment, Bowlby also acknowledges the emotional aspects of attachment. In addition to offering protection, the formation of an attachment also offers a resource of intermediary psychological functions, such as soothing, holding, providing a sense of security, being liked and admired, existing as a source of stabilizing identification.

The unchallenged maintenance of a bond is experienced as a source of security and the renewal of a bond as a source of joy. (Bowlby, 1977, p 203)

However (as will be explored in the following section) the disruption of an attachment bond can be distressing. Whilst the threat of loss is associated with anxiety, the actual loss of an attachment figure is associated with sorrow; both are likely to arouse anger. Bowlby acknowledged that attachment bonds could be a source of both security and potential distress. Thus ambiguity in the parent-child relationship is implied but not explicitly stated. This is a theme which will be developed in a later review of post-feminist accounts of

parenting.

Besides the need for close contact, the attachment theory also supposes a second innate tendency: the urge to explore the outside world. Bowlby hypothesised that the infants' urge to explore and play, which takes them away from their attachment figure, counteracts a need for safety through proximity. The knowledge that an attachment figure is available and responsive provides a strong and pervasive feeling of security. The child can tolerate separation from her or his attachment figure when their memory of them is secure. The term "secure base" was first used by Bowlby's colleague Mary Ainsworth (1967), to describe an infant's use of an attachment figure as a base from which to explore. Bowlby emphasised the important role for parents in providing the child "with a secure base and... ..encourage him to explore from it" (Bowlby, 1977, p 206). Thus Bowlby touches on a theme, the apparent contradiction between "dependence" and "independence" in relationships, which is developed by post-feminist accounts of parenting (for example, Nancy Chodorow, 1978; Jessica Benjamin 1990).

The human infant's attachment to its primary caregiver is not only a prerequisite for survival and a secure base from which they can venture out to explore the world, it is also a test bed for all the other attachments an individual will make. Out of this first relationship stems a set of expectations and assumptions which will influence subsequent relationships and which will not be easily changed. In this way a child's early

attachments will influence their ability and willingness to enter into relationships with teachers and pupils in school.

Moreover, in applying attachment theory it is important to acknowledge that "whilst attachment behaviour is at its most obvious in early childhood, it can be observed throughout the life cycle, especially in emergencies" (Bowlby, 1989b, p 69). Moreover, the particular patterns of attachment behaviour shown by an individual depend partly on their present age, sex, and circumstances, and partly on the experiences they had with attachment figures earlier in life (Parkes, Stevenson-Hinde, and Marris, 1991).

Such a view would suggest that there is nothing intrinsically childish or pathological about attachment behaviour. Indeed for Bowlby, the need for attachment figures as a source of comfort and caregiving when one feels frightened or ill is fully compatible with maturity and mental health. However, this suggestion, that society views attachment as a healthy and mature response, is challenged by Chodorow (1978) and Benjamin (1990). As will be discussed in a review of post-feminist accounts of parenting, they link society's disregard for attachment or connectedness with the subjugation of women in a patriarchal society.

2.3 b) Separation

Central to Bowlby's attachment theory is the notion that separation from attachment figures, which Bowlby thought of in terms of maternal deprivation, causes distress to children and can have a detrimental effect on personality development.

Advocates of attachment theory argue that many forms of psychiatric disturbance can be attributed to either deviations in the development of attachment behaviour or, more rarely, to failure of its development; and also that the theory casts light on both the origin and the treatment of these conditions. As such it is Bowlby's claim that attachment theory explains, "the many forms of emotional distress and personality disturbance, including anxiety, anger, depression, and emotional detachment, to which unwilling separation and loss give rise" (Bowlby, 1985, p 39). He stressed that the loss of the mother can be traumatic "from the second half of the first year and that grief and mourning can result" (Bowlby, 1989b, p 47). This theory was based on observations of children separated from their mothers during enforced separation due to periods of hospitalisation.

Whilst evidence from the present study supports the concept that children can be distressed at separation from attachment figures it modifies Bowlby's theories in several important areas.

First, and most importantly, it challenges the notion that the prime attachment figure is, or ought to be, the mother.

second, it highlights the importance of secondary attachment figures in enabling the child to develop as social beings. Third, it suggests that not all children exhibit the phases of protest, despair and detachment as identified by Bowlby. Finally, it emphasises that, far from being harmful, age appropriate separation from attachment figures is a healthy and desirable development in the transition from home to school. Taken as a whole these modifications amount to: a support of shared parenting in which fathers are encouraged to take a more active role in the care of their children; the realisation that, temporary separation from parents is not intrinsically harmful to children, and that parents should not feel guilty of availing themselves of good quality, age appropriate, childcare.

These issues are discussed further under the headings **the choice of attachment figure** and **attachment behaviour re-examined**. The implications for parenting and childcare are developed in the sections of this review (sections 2.4. and 2.5.) which focus on a post-feminist account of parenting.

The choice of attachment figures

In his early work on attachment behaviour Bowlby focused primarily on the relationship between mothers and infants, making little reference to the role of fathers in early childcare. He did however, acknowledge that whilst it is usual for a child's natural mother to be the principal

attachment-figure, the role can be taken effectively by others. Bowlby stated that it was "a matter of empirical fact" that the people in question are most likely to be the child's "natural mother, father, older siblings, and perhaps grandparents", and that,

it is from amongst these figures that a child is most likely to select both his principal attachment-figures and his subsidiary figures. (Bowlby, 1989a, p 315)

Thus Bowlby admitted that, for example, children might become more intensely attached to their father than to their mother if fathers "who were not frequently available interacted strongly with their infants when they were with them" (Bowlby, 1989a, p 315). This implies that who a child selects as their principle attachment-figure, and to how many other figures they became attached, depends to a large part on who cares for them and on the composition of the household in which they live.

However, even here, Bowlby does not really accept the notion of fathers as primary attachment figures. He refers to the idea that fathers do not have the time to get to know their children. This assumes that fathers have full time employment which is certainly not true in the families highlighted by the present study. Moreover, Bowlby over-emphasised the role of women in childcare. In the studies he quoted (Bowlby, 1989b), only those children who were living with their natural mothers were selected for observation. Yet, even among these children several patterns of attachment emerged. Several children were said to be attached to both mother and father, whilst one

child "whose mother was in full time work, chose grandmother who looked after him most of the day" (Bowlby, 1989b, p 306). Thus whilst Bowlby admits the possibility that the prime attachment figure could be someone other than the natural mother, such cases appear to be "deviant" rather than healthy alternatives. The importance of the "specific mother figure" is implied throughout.

However, measures of attachment, other than separation protest and greeting behaviour, confirm that most infants are attached to both their parents from the age of six months onwards. In stress-free situations, infants appear to show no preference for either parent (Lamb, 1977; 1977b), moreover, when infants are distressed, they organise their attachment behaviours similarly around which ever parent is present (Lamb, 1976; Feldman & Ingram, 1975; Willemson et al, 1974). Thus empirical evidence fails to confirm the existence of monotropy "the bias of a child to attach himself especially to one figure" (Bowlby, 1989b, p 309). Contrary to Bowlby's view, infants clearly do become attached to both parents at about the same time.

The relationship Bowlby observed between strong attachment behaviour and general sociability as described in Attachment and Loss : Volume 1 (1989b, p 308) is developed by recent research into parent-child relationships (Main & Weston, 1981). They observed some sixty infants, first with one parent and, six months later with the other. They found that, when looked at as a group, the patterns of attachment that

were shown to fathers resembled closely the patterns that were shown to mothers. However, when the patterns shown by each child individually were examined, no correlation was found between the pattern shown with one parent and the pattern shown with the other. Thus it was found that children may have secure relationships with either parent, both parents, or neither parent. Moreover, in their approach to new people and new tasks the children reacted in different ways along a continuum. Children with a secure relationship to both parents were most confident and most competent; children who had a secure relationship to neither were least so; and those with a secure relationship to one parent but not the other came in between.

Whilst providing evidence that fathers may become primary attachment figures for their children, this research perpetuates an image of a nuclear family which does not equate with the actual experiences of many children. The issues related to shared and lone-parenting are discussed in section 2.5. of this literature review.

Attachment behaviour re-examined

In The Making and Breaking of Affectional Bonds (1989b) Bowlby described how a child separated from their prime attachment figure commonly exhibits a predictable sequence of behaviour which can be broken down into three phases. He called these phases **protest**, **despair** and **detachment**. An account of these

phases implies that they can be clearly differentiated, however in reality each merges into the next, so that a child may spend days or even weeks in the transition between phases. Similarly, a child could exhibit behaviour which is best described as alternating between phases. Moreover, the present study would suggest that an individual may not exhibit all three phases of behaviour. Examples from the study quoted below suggest that some children may, for whatever reason, react to separation in a way which, while it fits a general trend, is idiosyncratic. Furthermore, it is possible that children of primary school age are sophisticated enough to mask their true feelings and find an alternative form of expression for the anger and anxiety they feel. Such alternative behaviour patterns could include extreme withdrawal.

Bowlby (1989b) described how the initial phase of **protest**, may begin immediately or may be delayed and how it could last anything from a few hours to a week or more. During it the young child appears acutely distressed at having lost their prime carer and seeks to recapture them by the full exercise of their limited resources. In this phase a child will be very vocal in exhibiting their distress. All their behaviour suggests a strong expectation that the carer will return. However, separation may affect children in very different ways. Examples drawn from the present study will serve to illustrate the point. Susie's father described how she responded to her initial separation from her mother by rejecting care from others including himself. By comparison,

Pamela's mother described how Pamela's separation from her father was followed by uncharacteristic clinging to her mother whenever their separation seemed imminent.

According to Bowlby, during the phase of **despair** which succeeds protest, the child's preoccupation with their missing carer is still evident, though their behaviour suggests increasing hopelessness. The active physical movements diminish or come to an end, and they cry monotonously or intermittently. The children become withdrawn and inactive, make no demands on people around them, and appear to begin a state of deep mourning. This is a quiet stage, and sometimes it is erroneously presumed to indicate a diminution of distress.

Because the child shows more interest in their surroundings, the phase of **detachment** which sooner or later succeeds protest and despair is often welcomed as a sign of recovery. The child no longer rejects those who care for them and they may even smile and be sociable. However, on the return of the prime carer the child fails to exhibit characteristic attachment behaviour. Instead of greeting the prime carer they may seem not to know them; instead of clinging to them they may remain remote and apathetic; instead of open displays of affection there is a listless turning away. The child appears to have lost all interest in their attachment figure.

During an interview at the start of the present study, Angie's mother described how Angie had exhibited this kind of sulky

and sullen behaviour after separation from her mother. However, whilst Angie appeared unhappy when her mother returned she did not exhibit any form of "protest" behaviour when she was left with a child minder or at nursery. This supports the view that not all children exhibit all three phases of attachment behaviour as described by Bowlby. Moreover, a child's behaviour is affected by a number of factors and may be idiosyncratic.

In Bowlby's account, attachment behaviour may be activated by a number of conditions including strangeness, hunger, fatigue, and anything frightening. The terminating conditions include sight or sound of the attachment figure and, especially, happy interaction with them. When attachment behaviour is strongly aroused, termination might require physical contact. Conversely, a "secure" child ceases to show attachment behaviour and instead explores their environment. Thus the more isolated a child and the more they are confined, the more vigorous the protest; whereas the less strange the environment and the more they are in the care of a single parent substitute the less the distress. Bowlby (1989b) identified some features that seem to reduce the intensity of reaction. These include, either the presence of a sibling, even a very young one, or care by a single mother-substitute, especially when the child has met them beforehand in the presence of their mother. Another variable found to be regularly associated with increased disturbance, both during separation and after return home, is the length of the child's separation from their attachment figure. As children get older they are,

of course, able to tolerate increased separation from the attachment figure.

The extent to which children are thought to be affected by short term separation from their attachment figure during daily childcare is important, both for working parents and for the provision of child care. Since the publication of Bowlby's findings much research has been devoted to a comparison of the mother-child relationship with children being cared for at home to that of children of working mothers. Such research suggests that child-care outside the home need not have a damaging effect on children (Belsky and Steinberg, 1978; Kilmer, 1979; Silverstein, 1981; Rutter, 1986), and that children in day-care were just as securely attached as children who stay at home. Moreover, mothers working outside the home who find satisfaction in their work, have a good day-care system, are not overworked and do not feel guilty are just as "good" for their children as the stay-at-home mothers, and sometimes better (Hoffman, 1974; 1979). Children in day-care appeared well able to develop an attachment with the carer or teacher, but most of the children preferred their mother at times of stress (Farron & Ramey, 1977; Cummings, 1980; Ricciuti, 1974). From this research it became apparent that daily separation did not stand in the way of attachment to the mother.

Conclusive though this research appears, two aspects of the research raise doubts as to a wider application of the findings. The first relates to the type of experimental

method used to assess the quality of the relationship between mother and child. As Elly Singer points out in Child-care and the Psychology of Development (1992), the quality of the relationship was mainly based on a single assessment procedure: *The Strange Situation Test* conducted in laboratory conditions. Whilst there is the inherent danger that behaviour in such conditions may be untypical of behaviour in more "natural" circumstances, such as at home, "neither the mother's reactions to these strange situations nor their influence on the children were noted" (Singer, 1992, p 126).

A further limitation of the research relates to the fact that most of the evidence about the impact of day-care on children was based on studies of children in high-quality, university-based day-care, which is not representative of the child-care arrangements utilised by most parents. Such research does not take into account the experience of, for example, the children of single parents who are forced by necessity to work long hours and who because of financial considerations have to rely on friends and neighbours to provide child care. Whilst it cannot be assumed that such children are in any way neglected, it is clear that there may well be additional pressures on the parent-child relationship in such circumstances. The subject of child care provision and the dilemmas faced by working parents will be developed in the review of post-feminist accounts of parenting.

The debate over the possible harm caused by parental separation continues. A common sense approach would be to

assume that, whilst age-appropriate separation from parents represents healthy development, children can suffer from separation which is premature or prolonged. Bowlby's work suggests that if a child's reaction to prolonged separation is not recognised and responded to appropriately, this may have a harmful effect on personality development. This is emphasised in his accounts of **deviant patterns of attachment behaviour**, a discussion of which forms the basis of the following section.

2.3.c) Deviant Patterns of Attachment Behaviour

If parents do not have a good grasp of the particular nature of their child's attachment behaviour, or if they are unwilling or unable to meet it, they will not provide the child with a "secure base" from which to securely explore the world. The resulting anger over what the child perceives to be the thwarting of their need for love and care as well as the anxiety engendered by the uncertainty about the continuing availability of the parents will forestall the child's development of trust, cooperativeness, and helpfulness towards others. Moreover, the child is unlikely to develop a

representational model of himself as being both able to help himself and as worthy of being helped should difficulties arise. (Bowlby, 1977, p 206)

This combination of a lack of self-confidence and a distrust of interpersonal relationships would seem to be an appropriate description of the behaviour of the pupils highlighted by the

present study.

In "The Making and Breaking of Affectional Bonds" (1977) Bowlby described four deviant patterns of attachment behaviour which may manifest themselves at any stage of life from childhood through to adulthood. The deviant patterns are **anxious attachment, compulsive self-reliance, compulsive caregiving, and detachment**. As pupils may well exhibit these patterns of behaviour in school, especially where the teacher is perceived to be an attachment figure, Bowlby's account is of interest. However, as the distinction between the different patterns of behaviour is unclear, these are less useful to the class teacher than the **types of anxious attachment** described by Muriel Barrett and Jane Trevitt (1991) which are discussed at length in the following section. Consequently, this account of Bowlby's "deviant patterns of attachment" is relatively brief.

Anxious Attachment

According to Bowlby's account, people suffering from **anxious attachment** are chronically fearful that they might lose their attachment figure. A consequence of this is that they will exhibit attachment behaviour in circumstances in which it is normally considered unnecessary. Such individuals may well be described as overly dependent or immature, and they are likely to develop neurotic symptoms, for example, depression or phobia under stress.

A particular form of this distortion of the normal attachment relationship is where the parent uses the child as an attachment figure for themselves. As this tends to be mediated by the encouragement of a premature sense of guilty responsibility for others, these children tend to become over conscientious, guilt ridden people, as well as, or because of, suffering from a sense of anxious attachment. Bowlby asserted that most cases of school phobia and agoraphobia develop in these situations.

The anger that is aroused in the child by all of these forms of parental behaviour tends not to be expressed directly but becomes partially repressed. The resentment that it generates, however, becomes displaced later in life towards others who are weaker, and the yearning for love and support it conceals may manifest itself

in some aberrant form of care-eliciting behaviour, for example, half-hearted suicide attempts, conversion symptoms, anorexia nervosa [or] hypochondria.

(Bowlby, 1977, p 207)

In the context of the present study it may be appropriate to consider that Roxana's mother's obsession with imagined ill health, and an inability to offer support to her daughter, has its origins in "anxious attachment" with her own mother. In that Roxana is over-anxious and afraid, it is easy to see how deviant patterns of attachment may be repeated in subsequent generations.

Compulsive Self-reliance

According to Bowlby (1977) those who are **compulsively self-reliant** have had similar experiences as children to those who exhibit anxious attachment. Thus whilst this behaviour is the opposite of anxious attachment, these people also yearn for the love and support; however, their reaction has been to protect themselves from rejection by withdrawing from close relationships. They take care of themselves in all circumstances and reject offers of help from others. An example from the study of a child who tries to be totally self-reliant would be **Charlene**. Unable to rely on her alcoholic mother to "be there for her" Charlene is used to cooking her own meals and taking care of her own laundry. When she does attend school her general demeanour is one which discourages others from getting too close. A quiet pupil, Charlene keeps herself very much to herself possibly as a defence against revealing, to herself as much as to others, her real vulnerability.

Compulsive Caregiving and Detachment

Compulsive caregiving is a form of attachment behaviour in which relationships may be close, but the affectional bond is always one-sided. Like the person who is compulsively self-reliant, compulsive caregivers do not seek anything from anyone but, unlike them, constantly extend their attention and concern to others, irrespective of whether it is welcomed or

not. As children, these people typically cared for a disabled mother or younger siblings, and they may have grown up in institutions. They harbour the same underlying yearning for love, and resentment at its frustration, as well as an anxiety and a guilt about expressing these feelings. Bowlby (1977) equated the compulsive caregiver with the "false-self" personality configuration described by Winnicott (1971). Treatment for such an individual is directed toward enabling them to contact their "true self".

Whilst several children highlighted by the study often "care for" their siblings or parents there is no evidence to suggest that their care is either compulsive or one-sided. Similarly, whilst all the children in the study may be considered as withdrawn none of them exhibit the extreme behaviour of the emotionally detached individual. According to Bowlby's definition (1977) such an individual, is incapable of developing a stable affectional bond with anyone.

Thus, Bowlby's general notion of "deviant attachment behaviour", which can result in a lack of self-reliance and a distrust of interpersonal relationships, is extremely useful in describing, and understanding, the children highlighted by the study. However, his four categories of deviant attachment behaviour are too loosely defined to be of specific use to class teachers working in mainstream schools. Of more obvious practical use are Muriel Barrett and Jane Trevitt's definition of **types of anxious attachment** (1991) which develops Bowlby's own definition and owes much to his pioneering work.

2.3.d) Three Types of Anxious Attachment

Muriel Barrett and Jane Trevitt begin Attachment Behaviour and the Schoolchild (1991) with a description of children who feel secure enough about their attachments within the family to be able to accept the transition to school without undue anxiety.

They have learned to tolerate separation from those who are important to them (attachment figures), secure in the knowledge that reunion will follow.

(Barrett & Trevitt, 1991, p 8)

It is important to note that what makes these children "secure" is the ability to tolerate separation from attachment figures. This reinforces the view that, far from being harmful, pre-school experience of separation and reunion are essential for a smooth transition from home to school.

Secure pupils appear confident and can relate positively to their teachers and peers. They expect others to respond positively towards them, they are able to wait for attention, and are not overwhelmed by apparent rejection. Such children are self-reliant and can be observed finding solutions to problems independently or in co-operation with their peers. They show a responsive interest and a lively curiosity in a school environment that is initially unfamiliar to them.

However, the connection between confidence and secure attachment is only true for "most" children. It is possible that some children appear confident despite relatively insecure attachments at home. For such children outgoing behaviour could be their way of hiding or compensating for

their discomfort. Conversely, it could be true that for some children from severely dysfunctional families their relationship with their teacher and the predictable routines of classroom life provide a welcome respite from the unpredictable hostility of the outside world.

What is clear is that insecure attachments in early childhood, or an inappropriate "secure base" from which to explore the environment, can render children unable to learn. These "learning disabled" children come to their teachers' attention not only because of their slow academic progress, but also because of their behaviour which can range from disruptive acting out to total withdrawal. However, as withdrawal behaviour does not cause discipline problems for the teacher, it is likely that the withdrawn child will not receive the same level of attention as the potentially disruptive child. Indeed, an awareness of the attention given to loud, aggressive pupils can lead to a dramatic change in the behaviour of previously quiet pupils (see for example, Heather's story, section 1.3.b).

In Attachment Behaviour and the Schoolchild (1991) Barrett and Trevitt distinguish three types of insecure, or anxious, attachments which can occur between parent and child. These are **rejection**, **overprotection** and **confusion**. This distinction is of particular importance for teachers working in mainstream education. It can help to explain the behaviour which pupils exhibit in school. Moreover, it gives some insights into the teacher-pupil relationships which exist, or need to be formed,

in order to provide children with the "secure base" which is a prerequisite for learning.

Of the three kinds of behaviour described, the inherent characteristics of overprotective parenting mean that this is the kind of relationship most commonly observed by primary school teachers. This is simply because the overprotective parent is more likely than other parents to visit school regularly to discuss their child. Consequently, this seems an appropriate starting point for a discussion of different types of anxious attachment.

Overprotective Attachment

In the case of **overprotection** the parent is unable to allow the infant to explore independently, so the child has few opportunities to learn that they can survive separately. The resulting relationship is sometimes referred to as symbiotic or "smothering mothering". A child with an overprotective parent is rarely allowed to experience frustration as all their needs are met almost before they have become aware of them themselves. Consequently they have no chance to develop problem-solving strategies nor can they discover that frustration and anger can be survived. This can result in omnipotent behaviour with the child never discovering that their wishes are not demands. Alternatively, children can grow up fearful and unable to cope, for example when they are in school, they are expected to be independent and self-

reliant. Without any experience of individualisation the child cannot develop a realistic sense of self.

Several children highlighted by the study can be thought of as experiencing overprotective parenting. Possibly the most extreme example was Duncan. Duncan was a diminutive boy living with both his natural parents and two much older boys from his mother's previous marriage. Duncan was an unhappy child frequently reduced to tears over seemingly minor incidents. Anxious about his inability to settle after his transfer to middle school his mother became a "teacher's helper", regularly visiting Duncan's classroom to assist with art or project work. During her visits Duncan would work alone, seemingly happy to ignore her presence. However, at the end of her visit he became very distressed exhibiting signs of "protest behaviour". Both Duncan and his mother seemed oblivious to the fact that such displays of behaviour might be considered inappropriate for a child of eight of that they made him vulnerable to taunts and teasing from his peers.

In his mother's absence Duncan would seek out and "cling" to members of staff trying to hold their attention with constant, often irrelevant and unstructured monologue. He habitually avoided contact with peers and showed extreme reluctance to answer questions in class. Duncan's peer-avoiding behaviour continued when he transferred to secondary school where he found the journeys to and from school particularly problematic. He would walk a significant distance and rely on an infrequent bus service rather than travel home with a crowd

of pupils. His form tutor remarked on how his isolation made him a vulnerable figure especially on dark winter nights.

Rejection

By comparison, when a parent is unable to tolerate the child within their space this can result in their rejection of the child. In such a case it is difficult for the child to develop an idea of themselves as a valued individual, unless that is, they are able to develop a more positive interaction with an alternative attachment figure.

A rejecting parent is unable to be emotionally available for their child and consequently the child is unable to gain the reassurance, support and encouragement that are essential to them. The child's basic needs may be met but without reference to their feelings and they are therefore deprived of any meaningful interactions. Such children may direct all their energy towards trying to attract their parent's attention, although if this fails they may develop their own rejecting responses. As highlighted in a paper given by Lynne Murray at "The 7th International Therapy Conference" (1992) parental inability to respond appropriately to a child's attempts at communication may be thought of as a rejection of the child. Even with small babies the result can be that the child loses interest and stops trying to maintain contact with the parent.

Barrett and Trevitt (1991) suggest that some children who have experienced rejecting parenting continue to avoid personal interaction and channel their energies into intensive scholastic learning (Barrett & Trevitt, 1991, p 12). However, the present study would argue that such children may be rendered unable to learn efficiently because of their underdeveloped sense of self-worth and inexperience of meaningful personal relationships.

Whilst it might be relatively easy for class teachers to identify overprotective parenting it is difficult to observe rejecting parenting. This is due in part to the fact that "rejecting" parents are less likely to visit school and show an active interest in their child. Moreover, given the "common sentimentality surrounding motherhood" (Benjamin, 1990, p 14), which dismisses or denies post-natal depression and rejection of children by mothers, it is likely that parents would hide or deny their rejecting behaviour even if they were aware of it.

In the context of the present study it is difficult to ascertain if individuals have experienced rejecting parenting. Angie's mother openly admitted to having suffered post-natal depression although she does not relate how this may have affected her relationship with her daughter. The account of their relationship certainly offers no clear evidence of continued rejecting behaviour.

Confused Attachment

Barrett and Trevitt (1991) describe **confused** attachment as one in which neither the parent nor the child have discovered a shared, fixed point and they give the impression of spinning within an uncontained space. No contact seems possible and there is no apparent opportunity for the formulation of any attachment since the parent's emotional availability is inconsistent. The infant's behaviour appears to be excessively anxious. They may be offered tantalising glimpses of closeness by their parent only to have them instantly withdrawn. Both parent and infant seem to alternate between perpetual motion and sinking into deep despair. Whilst excessive activity can provide a defence against feelings of depression for some children, others may attempt to take control for themselves by adopting a parenting role.

As with rejecting parenting it is difficult for teachers to identify confused attachment. In the context of the present study the best example might be the relationship between Roxana and her mother. Roxana's mother suffers from extreme, and often unfounded, anxieties about her own health which border on hypochondria. Thus, whilst she seems genuinely concerned for Roxana's welfare, she lacks her own "secure base" from which to offer Roxana support and security. For example, when Roxana was being bullied at school her mother was unable to talk through the situation and offer constructive support. Instead she assumed that Roxana was ill and took her to the doctor. In this way Roxana's mother

appears to "care for" her daughter but is clearly unable to deal appropriately with her practical and emotional needs.

As the above account demonstrates the three types of anxious attachment, **overprotective**, **rejecting** and **confused**, described by Barrett and Trevitt (1991) offer class teachers a useful explanation of some of the pupil behaviour which they observe in school. Thus a review of this literature has identified how knowledge of "attachment theory" can contribute to an understanding of relationships in school. However, as with the application of any psychological theories, care must be taken that such theories are not applied inappropriately or insensitively. Patterns of parenting are not simple predictors of possible behaviour. An individual's pattern of behaviour results from a unique response to specific circumstances.

PART TWO B : POST-FEMINIST ACCOUNTS OF PARENTING

Having examined the work of the "object-relationist" school on the need for self-realisation through relationships with significant others, this review returns to post-feminist accounts of parenting. The link between this and the previous work is an awareness of the seeming contradictions inherent in a growing child's need for both separation and connectedness in relationships. The difficulties which parents, and indeed teachers, face in offering an appropriate balance of security and challenge in relationships runs throughout this review of the literature. However, a post-feminist account of parenting has a specific contribution to make to the parenting debate.

Post-feminist literature discusses parental relationships in the context of prevailing social behaviour and expectations. Thus it highlights the fact that in a patriarchal society, separation and independence are valued, whilst the importance of connectedness and dependence are largely denied. Linked to this is the assumption that women should have the prime responsibility for child care, a vitally important role which commands little social status or respect. By challenging traditional parenting roles post-feminist literature opens the way to fathers playing an increasingly active role in the care of their children. The recognition that traditional parenting roles have more to do with social custom than with innate male or female qualities also suggests increased acceptance of single parent families. Moreover, as post-feminist theories are grounded in the real lived experiences of parents and

children these accounts highlight the unique, complex and ambivalent nature of relationships, The inescapable conclusion of a review of post-feminist accounts of parenting is that what really matters is the quality of the parent-child relationship, not the sex of the parent.

SECTION 2.4. : THE MOTHER-DAUGHTER RELATIONSHIP

Section 2.4. re-examines concepts of self-realisation and attachment in the context of mother-daughter relationships. It begins with a critique of the mother-daughter relationship proposed by Nancy Chodorow (1978) and supported by Jessica Benjamin (1990). They argue that the mother-daughter relationship is characterised by a close bond which poses **the problem of separation** for daughters. A major criticism of this view is that it fails to take into account of **the actual lived experiences** of mothers and daughters. The basic assumption of a close bond is challenged by Christiane Olivier (1989) who proposes an **alternative view**, that a girl's need for relationships arises as a result of a lack of relationship between mothers and daughters. The discussion of the dependence/independence dichotomy leads to the notion that framing the discussion in these terms represents and perpetuates **the distortion of a relationship**.

2.4.a) The Problem of Separation

Post-feminist literature on parenting is dominated by the mother-infant, or more specifically, the mother-daughter dyad. Jessica Benjamin began The Bonds of Love (1990) with an acknowledgement that the shift in psychoanalysis since Freud, towards ever earlier phases of development in childhood and infancy, "has given the mother-daughter dyad an importance in

psychic development rivalling the Oedipal triangle" (Benjamin, 1990, p 11). This has to be understood historically and contextually, "as a reaction to and a dialogue with the nearly exclusive Freudian focus on the father and the Oedipus complex", (Chodorow, 1989, p 6).

Nancy Chodorow's book The Reproduction of Mothering (1978) signalled a paradigmatic shift in American feminist thinking. In it she discussed the contribution of psychoanalysis to feminism, the underlying causes of women's oppression, differential development in boys and girls, and the reasons for women's desire to bear and rear children. As a self-proclaimed "object-relations feminist", the focus of her work has been on the development of self through relationship to others, and the conscious and unconscious experience of negotiating separation and connection in this development.

Chodorow is most commonly identified with her account of how women's universal responsibility for mothering creates asymmetrical relational capacities in girls and boys. Chodorow argued that, when women provide parenting the infant's earliest experience and development is in the context of, and proceeds out of, an interpersonal relationship to its mother.

It is aspects of the relationship to her that are internalised defensively; it is her care that must be consistent and reliable; it is her absence that produces anxiety. (Chodorow, 1978, p 60-61)

This appears to deny the possible role which fathers may play in childcare and child development. However, Chodorow drew

attention to this omission when she later refers to the person who provides primary care, "not, inevitably, the mother" (Chodorow, 1978, p 73). It is interesting that she does not develop the idea of fathers as providers of primary care, especially as she highlighted the inherent limitations when, "psychoanalytic theory (and accounts influenced by it) assumes the inevitable and necessary *single* mother-infant relationship" (Chodorow, 1978, p 73). According to Chodorow such limitations include "major limits to changing the social organisation of gender" (Chodorow, 1978, p 73), and yet she was prepared to base her argument on the notion of an exclusive mother-infant relationship. This ambiguity runs through much of the literature on parenting and will be examined further (section 2.5.).

Chodorow based her view of the mother-daughter dyad on the assumption that, as they are the same gender, mothers of daughters tend not to experience these infant daughters as separate from them in the same way as do mothers of infant sons. "In both cases, a mother is likely to experience a sense of oneness and continuity with her infant. However, this sense is stronger, and lasts longer, vis-a-vis daughters" (Chodorow, 1978, p 109). Chodorow stated that an important element in the daughter's introduction to "reality", is her separation from the mother and the creation of an individual identity. Thus, Chodorow sees the father-daughter relationship in terms of providing a source of separation in relationship, which counter-balances the close identification between mother and daughter. The notion of a father-daughter

relationship based on close identification is not discussed.

Consequently, Chodorow argued that, as girls are mothered by someone of the same gender, they develop more fluid or permeable ego boundaries than boys, and a sense of self that is continuous with others. In turn, this sense of self-in-representation and need for connection underlies the desire to mother. As subsequent case studies will illustrate, girls tend to be defined, by themselves as well as by others, primarily as future, "wives and mothers, thus in particularistic relation to someone else" (Chodorow, 1978, p 178). In addition girls often adopt mothering roles in their relationship with siblings and significant others, for example, Diana accepts her father's description of her as a "little mother to her sister". Thus, regardless of whether or not they become mothers, motherhood is central to the ways in which women are defined. Moreover, motherhood is "romanticised and idealised as the supreme physical and emotional achievement in women's lives" (Phoenix et al., 1991, p 13). By comparison men are defined primarily in universalistic occupational terms. Indeed, in a patriarchal society, it is considered weak and effeminate for men to describe themselves in terms of their relationships with others. Running throughout the study, and developed at length elsewhere, is the notion that such a male/female dichotomy is socially constructed rather than innate.

Jessica Benjamin in The Bonds of Love (1990) offers a slightly different account of the mother-daughter relationship. In her

scenario, the girl wishes for recognition of her agency and autonomy from one who is like herself or with whom she identifies. However, the mother's capacity to recognise her daughter's agency is limited by her perception of herself as an object of relationship. Consequently, the girl turns for this recognition to her father, not only as a hostile response to the mother, but also as an expression of the wish for agency and autonomy. This position challenges Chodorow's notion that autonomy should be understood as a masculine, defensive reaction to early identification with the mother.

Benjamin argued that, the idea of separation from oneness is that it contains the implicit assumption that

we grow out of relationships rather than become more active and sovereign *within* them, that we start in a state of dual oneness and wind up in a state of singular oneness. (Benjamin, 1990, p 18)

This implies that relationships based on, or associated with, attachment and connectedness are immature and undervalued when compared with a state of separation and autonomy. The implications for this are three-fold; it devalues early childhood relationships and regards them as problematic; it prescribes a low status to those who care for children, and it has serious implications for the socialisation of children. Closeness in relationship is regarded as "feminine", and as such is ascribed a lower status than relationships based on separation which are thought of as "masculine". Those who advocate non-sexist child rearing practices testify to the way in which the difference in status adds to the difficulty of

encouraging children to challenge gender prescribed roles (Arcana, 1981; 1983; Grabrucker, 1988).

Chodorow and Benjamin present a negative account of the mother-daughter relationship in that identification is regarded as partial. Not only is the care of others devalued, the daughter assumes her mother's devalued status and her servicing role to others but does not acquire any of her mother's strengths. This is an early relationship in which the daughter has to reject her mother, in favour of first the father and then the husband, and in doing so denigrates both her mother and herself. Vivien Nice (1992) holds that,

the connection between mother and daughter that is so dangerous to patriarchy is allowed only in so far as it serves male interest, that is in the passing on of the subordinate role from mother to daughter.

(Nice, 1992, p 12)

Thus, there is a sense in which the accounts of the mother-daughter relationship proposed by Chodorow and Benjamin perpetuates the subordination of women. They not only offer a negative view of the mother figure and the nature of female relationships, but they also suggest, a limited view of paternal relationships. These issues are fundamental to a feminist understanding of parenting and are discussed later in this review. The following section focuses specifically on the actual experiences of mothers and daughters.

2.4.b) The Experiences of Mothers and Daughters

A major criticism of the accounts of the mother-daughter relationship as portrayed by Chodorow or Benjamin is that it does not necessarily equate with the actual lived experiences of individuals. It does not acknowledge the complexity inherent in relationships, nor does it take into account the importance of environmental or social factors.

The present study, for example, identifies two cases which do not easily accord with the account of the mother-child relationship proposed by Chodorow and Benjamin. The first is a relationship in which a boy experienced overprotective, or (to quote Muriel Barrett, 1991, p 12) "smothering mothering". This contradicts the absurd view that women cannot, or do not, form a close relationship with their male children. However, it has to be acknowledged that, in the terms of the study, such a close relationship is viewed as both unusual and problematic. The second example drawn from the study features a girl with strong "mothering instincts" towards her younger sister even though she had been brought up primarily by her father. Either, she was compensating for a lack of nurturing brought about by the absence of her mother, or more likely, she had learnt her caring behaviour from her father.

Similarly, whilst the issues of separation and identification run throughout actual accounts of mother-daughter relationships (Hammer, 1976; Arcana, 1981; Apter, 1990), the way in which it is experienced and portrayed differs

considerably. Judith Arcana (1981) is most successful in capturing the difficulties for women caused by patriarchal society. By allowing women their own voice she gets across some of the complexity of mother-daughter relationships. Singe Hammer based her book Daughters and Mothers : Mothers and Daughters (1976) on interviews with over seventy-five mothers, daughters and grandmothers. In it she describes how issues of primary identification, feelings of oneness and the related need for separateness follow mother-daughter pairs from a daughter's earliest infancy until she is a mother or even a grandmother herself.

Moreover, in common with other psychological accounts, Chodorow and Benjamin ignore, or pay only lip service to, the actual environment into which the infant is born. Social constraints barely get a mention; "it is as if poverty, poor housing, social isolation, ill health and so on, make no impact on the kind of care an infant receives" (Nice, 1992, p 31). This denial of social constraints, including race and class, leads to a "white solipsism"

not the consciously held *belief* that one race is inherently superior to all the others, but a tunnel-vision which simply does not see nonwhite experience or existence as precious or significant.

(Rich, 1980, p 306)

This is the tendency to think, imagine, and speak as if whiteness described the world. This in turn suggests an implicit assumption that sexism can be split off from other forms of oppression, and is best explored where these other oppressions do not exist. The interpretations that come out

of such accounts cannot be held to be universal for all women, or even for all women living in Western industrialised countries. Care should be taken not to assume "universality" even when, as in Signe Hammer's case, the work is based on interviews with women "from all classes and a variety of ethnic groups" (Hammer, 1976, p xii).

By comparison, Valerie Walkerdine and Helen Lucey explore the connection between social class and dependency. In Democracy in the Kitchen (1989) they analysed data originally gathered by Tizard and Hughes (1984), and found class differences in the types of dependency mothers sanctioned in their daughters. Middle-class mothers tended to sanction physical dependency but pushed for intellectual independence. By comparison, working-class mothers were likely to expect more physical self-reliance but were more tolerant of daughters not knowing something. Whilst the division between middle-class and working-class may be regarded as a crude dichotomy, it could be argued that these mothers are relating to their daughters in the context of how they see the world and which attributes they consider to be of particular value.

Thus, many writers acknowledge that issues of separation and dependency are important aspects of the parent-child relationship. However, they also recognise that such relationships are complex and influenced by a variety of factors. Consequently, such writers modify, rather than reject, the view of the mother-daughter relationship proposed by Chodorow and Benjamin. However, as will be seen in the

following section, other writers challenge the basic assumptions which underlie these definitions. One such writer is Christiane Olivier who challenges the assumption that there is necessarily a close bond between mother and daughter.

2.4.c) An Alternative Interpretation

Whilst the literature reviewed above presupposes a close bond between mother and daughter, an entirely different interpretation of the mother-daughter relationship is offered by Christiane Olivier in Jocasta's Children (1989). She argued that because the mother does not feel sexually motivated towards her daughter a close mother-child bond never develops. Thus, "even the most loving of mothers will be *ambivalent* towards her daughter" (Olivier, 1989, p 37). Olivier maintains that a girl's constant search for her mother's approval and reassurances is frustrated as the mother fails to see her as an object of sexual desire. By comparison a boy turns against the bond he has with his mother, which is initially intense and satisfying to both, in a battle for independence from all women.

Olivier goes on to suggest that the difference in the way mothers treat their daughters and sons leads to an important difference in the acquisition of language. She relates the fact that girls often learn to talk earlier than their male peers, to the suggestion that girls feel alone and need to

restore links with their mothers.

Olivier's account of a lack of relationship between mother and daughter is supported by Luise Eichenbaum and Susie Orbach (1987). They suggested that daughters feel both an injunction to stay close to their mother but with the unconscious message not to expect too much from that closeness. For them the problem for women does not lie in the ability to separate from the mother but in the difficulties that have occurred in the original merger.

Separation, we contend, is such a very difficult area for women because it rests on the dilemma of the person who has not yet sufficient emotional supplies to consolidate a psychological self which can allow for a genuine separation. (Eichenbaum & Orbach, 1987, p 63)

This suggests that daughters never have, or alternatively lose very early on, the nurturing they need from their mothers. Whilst there is a wealth of evidence to support the notion of close mother-daughter relationships (Hammer, 1976; Friday, 1979; Arcana, 1981; Apter, 1990; Morris, 1992), there is little evidence to support the alternative view suggested by Olivier, Eichenbaum and Orbach. Two explanations are possible. Either, the alternative view does not equate with the majority of women's experience, or conversely, the notion of a close mother-daughter relationship pervades thinking on the subject to such an extent that generations of women have come to define their relationships in this way. Whatever the case, accounts of mother-daughter relationships suggest that individual relationships are complex, contradictory and unique.

In introducing the notion of ambivalence, Olivier touches on a recurring theme in work on mother-daughter relationships. The daughter is seen as having ambivalent feelings towards her mother. These feelings of love and hate are interpreted, both by theorists and by the daughters themselves, as unhealthy and potentially problematic. The mother is also considered to hold ambivalent feelings towards her daughter and yet feels that she must, for both their sakes, push her away.

Vivien Nice acknowledges that, "problems are caused when ambivalence is not considered normal in a close relationship and feelings have to be denied" (Nice, 1992, p 11). Yet denial of ambivalent feelings seems inevitable in the mother-daughter relationship. Prescribed motherhood maintains that mothers are, and must be, totally loving. One consequence of this view is the denial of abuse of children by mothers (Welldon, 1988). Conversely, a daughter's ambivalent feelings "have to be turned to 'hate' in order for her to properly 'separate' from her mother (and in order to break any possible allegiance between two women)" (Nice, 1992, p 12). Nancy Friday's (1979) myopic view of her mother testifies to the bitterness and anger which can be directed at mothers when ambivalent feelings are denied.

Thus, even when feminists have sought to contribute to the parenting debate, there often remains a mother-blaming, mother-hating element which in turn suggests that mothers are responsible for perpetuating female oppression. As will be

discussed in the following section, this is seen by some writers as the distortion of a relationship.

2.4.d) The Distortion of a Relationship

In The Distortion of a Relationship (1992) Vivien Nice maintains that the mother-daughter relationship has been interpreted by psychological theories of development which are steeped in male defined concepts. She argues that;

Individuation, separation, independence - the language of the individualised, competitive hierarchical male - are considered developmentally mature, whereas women's connectedness, mutuality, concern with relationships are seen as developmentally immature. (Nice, 1992, p 9)

She maintains that such interpretations leave no room for positive images of connectedness, interdependency and support between women and between mothers and daughters. Consequently, the language, concepts and theories of patriarchy seek to erect barriers between women and between the sexes. By comparison, Vivien Nice (1992) bases her book on the premise that the mother-daughter relationship, "has the potential to offer the basis of supportive, affiliative growth for women whether they are daughters or daughters and mothers" (Nice, 1992, p 16). Indeed studies have shown that supportive behaviour from the mother has a very positive effect on the ego development of the daughter (Grotevant and Cooper, 1983).

Rather than looking to the early mother-daughter relationship

to explain typical sex role behaviour, Uta Enders-Dragaesser (1988) considers it more important to be aware of the continual pressure on girls and women of a "paradoxical reality" where their "lived reality is hidden beneath definitions, values and words expressing ideas of normality" (Enders-Dragaesser, 1988, p 585). An example of "paradoxical reality" offered by Nice (1992) is the way in which women are told that they are dependent on men and yet are expected to meet men's dependency needs. An example from an educational setting might be the way in which girls are told that "good pupils" are quiet while it is often the pupils who talk with their teachers who are successful.

Adrienne Rich in Of Women Born (1992) stated that the liberation of women involves changing theory itself;

to reintegrate what has been named the unconscious, the subjective, the emotional with the structural, the rational, the intellectual; to "connect the prose and the passion" in E. M. Forster's phrase; and finally to annihilate those dichotomies. (Rich, 1992, p 81)

Yet, in one sense the dichotomy between separation and connectedness is a false one. The development of a strong sense of self can, and it might be argued for women does, include a concern for, a connection to, and a care for others. An ability to care for others presupposes a strong sense of self as separate from others. It is difficult to imagine, for example, how someone without a well developed sense of self can anticipate, or empathise with, the needs of others.

Alix Pirani in The Absent Father (1989) commented that social

conditioning has produced, "a correlative but quite different 'male' and 'female' distinction which is largely about roles" (Pirani, 1989, p xiv). Similarly, Chodorow drew attention to the fact that parenting is carried out in ways which are systematically gender linked, "not because of qualities inherent in persons of either gender but because of family organisations" (Chodorow, 1978, p 121).

Thus, there is a serious contradiction running through much that is written on parenting. The image of the mother as prime carer permeates the literature on early childhood relationships, yet the way in which families are organised has more to do with socially ascribed roles than with inherent qualities. This suggests that fathers as well as mothers can provide primary care for their children. Section 2.5. develops this debate by examining the changing role of fathers.

SECTION 2.5. : THE CHANGING ROLE OF FATHERS

As was highlighted in the previous section, literature on early childhood relationships tends to assume that women have prime, or sole, responsibility for the care of children. In examining the changing role of fathers this section begins by discussing **why women mother**. It explores the basis of this assumption and explores how far it contributes to an understanding of what is meant by the terms **"mother"** and **"father"**. This leads to a discussion of the changing role of fathers and the possible benefits of **shared parenting** for both parents and children. The notion of fathers as providers of nurturing care is developed in a discussion of **non-traditional families**, specifically lone-parents and step-families. In developing an earlier theme this section supports the view that traditional **"male"** and **"female"** parenting roles are socially constructed rather than innate. The view that it is the quality of parent care, not the sex of the parent, which is fundamental to developing a positive self-image is supported by evidence from the study.

2.5.a) Why Women Mother

The assumption that women care for children permeates much of the work on early childhood relationships (Arcana, 1981; Benjamin, 1990; Nice, 1992; Rich, 1992). For example, Nancy Chodorow began The Reproduction of Mothering (1978) with the

assertion that women not only bear children but that they also, "take primary responsibility for infant care, ...and sustain primary emotional ties with infants" (Chodorow, 1978, p 3). She is not alone in assuming that when biological mothers do not parent, other women, rather than men, virtually always take their place (Apter, 1985; Smith, 1990). This appears to preclude the possibility of fathers providing primary care for their children.

Two arguments are put forward to justify the connection between women and mothering. The first is "biological determinism", which suggests that women are predisposed to mother by their biological experience of menstruation and childbirth. The second argument is that girls are taught to care for children by their experience of being mothered by women. The two views are not necessarily mutually exclusive and a nature-nurture debate continues, even among feminists, and is itself fraught with contradictions and ambiguities.

Some writers, such as Chodorow (1978), acknowledged the influence of biological experiences, but also maintained the importance of the sociological and psychological determinants of gender and of mothering. Thus Chodorow concluded her chapter on Why Women Mother by stating that;

Women's capacities for mothering and their abilities to get gratification from it are strongly internalised and psychologically enforced, and are built developmentally into the feminine psychic structure.

(Chodorow, 1978, p 39)

Her premise is that women are prepared psychologically for

mothering through the developmental situation in which they grow up, mothered by women. By comparison, men do not identify with their mothers and consequently do not develop, or even worse repress, any predetermination to nurture which they may have.

However, whilst Chodorow confidently plays down the connection between biological experience and motherhood, the alternative viewpoint has recently been strengthened by the work of psychotherapist Alessandra Piontelli (1992). In a longitudinal study described in From Fetus to Child, Piontelli describes her observations of the behaviour of several children from a very early stage in the womb using ultrasound scans, through birth, to infancy and childhood. This study is the first of its kind and therefore her findings can not be verified. However, as her findings suggest a "remarkable continuity of behaviour before and after birth" (Piontelli, 1992, p ix), this could be cited as evidence of a strong and unique attachment between mother and child. Certainly her work with sets of twins supports the view that their relationship is formed in the womb. Replication of this work would involve overcoming the ethical issue connected with extensive use of ultrasound and its possible effect on the developing fetus.

Other writers such as Jenny Morris (1992) cite the actual experiences of women, in celebrating the special relationship between mother and child which begins with childbirth. For some mothers the moment of birth is seen as a joyful and

overwhelming experience which is associated with "a huge, unconditional, mutual love" (Morris, 1992, p 6).

However, positive experiences of childbirth are not universal nor are nurturing or "maternal" instincts limited to women. Post-natal depression and rejection of children by their mother are often dismissed or denied by the "common sentimentality surrounding motherhood" (Benjamin, 1990, p 14). Moreover, work by Stein Braten (1992) on the relationship formed between a father and his premature daughter confirms that some men, at least, are capable of nurturing relationships with very small children. His work suggests that increasing parental involvement may require little more than a change of attitude on the part of medical staff and parents. To what extent such a change of attitude may be regarded as desirable is a separate issue which will be discussed in the section focussing on shared parenting.

The nature-nurture debate is an important aspect of the parenting debate and as such represents a fundamental dilemma. If "mothering" is learned rather than innate, or conversely if nurturing is seen as a universal human characteristic, then there is no reason for precluding fathers from caring for their children. Moreover, if relationships with children are rewarding and fulfilling then fathers are being deprived if they do not have the opportunity to spend some time with, and get to know, their children. Yet many women do not wish to deny the special relationships they feel they have with their children through their experiences of pregnancy and

childbirth. In addition, shared parenting and childcare has serious implications for patterns of employment. There is no consensus on the issue of the employment of mothers outside the home. Some women choose to work in order to maintain their independence and careers; others are forced to work by financial considerations.

Some writers feel that providing childcare and maintaining an independent identity are not mutually exclusive. In her account of mothering, Jessica Benjamin expresses a wish that the mother maintain her independent identity, whilst having total responsibility for the care of her child. Benjamin stresses the need to view the mother as a subject in her own right, "principally because of contemporary feminism, which made us aware of the disastrous results for women of being reduced to the mere extension of a two-month-old" (Benjamin, 1990, p 23). Sadly she does not discuss how this might be achieved.

The issue of "mothering" is further complicated by the fact that the term "to mother" has come to include care and support for men. "Women of all classes are now expected to nurture and support husbands in addition to providing them with food and a clean house" (Chodorow, 1978, p 5). There can be an unbreachable line between public and private values which rests on "the tacit assumption that women will continue to preserve and protect personal life, the task to which they have been assigned" (Benjamin, 1990, p 197). As Terri Apter (1985) implied when she called her book Why Women Don't Have

Wives, women are held responsible for caring, not only for their children but also for their husbands.

However, this care is often ignored or undervalued. Carol Gilligan (1982) argued that while women have taken care of men, men have, in "their theories of psychological development, as in their economic arrangements, tended to assume or devalue that care" (Gilligan, 1982, p 17). The physical care which women provide is to some extent overt and quantifiable; women do the bulk of household chores.

Emotional care is more difficult to quantify, it takes the form of supportive listening, ego-stroking and ego-building, approval and support (Cline & Spender, 1987). Moreover, girls are taught or encouraged, depending on the view of socialisation adopted, to do this from a very early age.

Caring for others, especially children, is an important task which has a low status in our society. This contradiction is part of the dilemma inherent in assigning parental roles. The following section examines the roles of mothers and fathers and discusses to what extent these roles are changing.

2.5.b) The Difference Between "Mothering" and "Fathering"

In many ways the terms "mothering" and "fathering" mean something very different. One fundamental difference is that, when fathers take an active part in caring for their children

they do so from choice; by comparison, when women "mother" they are fulfilling a socially prescribed role (Smith, 1990). The assumption that women "mother" means that a mother's absence from her children is less acceptable and more harshly judged than the absence of the father.

Moreover, the terms are not interchangeable. Whilst in some circumstances a father may be described as "mothering" his child, a mother is never thought of as "fathering" her children, "even in the rare societies in which a high ranking woman may take a wife and be the social father of her wife's children" (Chodorow, 1978, p 11). Incidentally, this reference to "high ranking women" suggests that, while it is reasonably acceptable for women in high status positions to leave the care of their children to others, it is less acceptable for women of low status. This has serious implications for women's role in the job market, irrespective of whether they are there by choice or necessity. Whilst men may automatically leave the care of their children to others, women are criticised for doing the same, unless doing so enables them to earn a high salary or make a major contribution to society.

However, June Statham (1986) argued that the second half of the 1970's saw a rise in the image of the involved father "given, naturally, the constraints imposed by their full-time job outside the home" (Statham, 1986, p 11). According to Statham, the term "fathering" is acquiring a new meaning. While originally it referred only to *being* the biological

father and did not require a man to actually *do* anything (beyond his role in conception), it is coming to be used in a similar way to the word "mothering". Similarly, she suggests that the verb "to parent" is finding its way into the English language, apparently in response to a felt need for a term that could apply to tasks that both parents do alike (Statham, 1986).

In Reassessing Fatherhood (1987) Charles Lewis coined the term "new father" to describe a man who is both highly nurturant to his children and increasingly involved in their care and the housework. However he cautions that, "despite a wave of optimism driving contemporary accounts, the evidence for the existence of such a man is much less convincing" (Lewis & O'Brien, 1987, p 1). There is evidence to suggest that the majority of fathers who live with their children do not take responsibility for childcare (Lewis & O'Brien, 1987).

Nevertheless, nurturing fathers do exist; indeed two out of the twelve children featured in the present study were cared for by their fathers following parental separation and divorce. However, it has to be acknowledged that there might be a tendency in some theoretical studies to over-estimate paternal involvement in childcare simply because "it is judged against the expectation of non-involvement, child raising being seen as basically a mother's responsibility" (Statham, 1986, p 15).

Vivien Nice (1992) claims that, whilst responsibility for

childcare rests with women, legal anomalies ensure paternal rights over the child. She maintains that, "the basic tenet of current patriarchy is that mothers are merely carriers of male seed, and only fathers are related to their children" (Nice, 1992, p 3). As evidence she cites the laws relating to paternal inheritance and the contemporary use of mothers as "surrogates". This is an extreme view which fails to acknowledge the anger and frustration fathers experience when they are separated from their children and denied access (McCormack, 1990). Issues of paternal rights and responsibilities is a difficult and emotive subject. Only time will tell how effective the 1989 Children Act will be in clarifying anomalies of law such as that raised by the Baby M case quoted by Phyllis Chester in Sacred Bond (1990).

Legal anomalies aside, an increase in paternal involvement in childcare does not necessarily indicate that women feel free from maternal ties. The connection between maternal separation and deprivation is long-standing and permeate much that is written on early childhood relationships. Consequently, maternal separation is continually linked with guilt for the mother, and suffering - even deprivation - for the child. This is true even when the separation is brief and childcare is assumed by a known and trusted adult. Developmental theories that focus exclusively upon maternal influences are one factor which form a major barrier to genuine shared parenting. Other possible conceptual barriers to shared parenting may include stereotypic conceptions of family roles and an underestimation of a young child's ability

to adapt to a number of social relationships (Pederson, 1980).

The following section examines the possible effects of shared parenting on both parents and children.

2.5.c) Shared Parenting

The emphasis of this section is that, whilst many and varied claims have been made for and against the notion of shared parenting, these may not equate with actual experience and are not necessarily borne out by research findings. This section addresses the claims made for shared parenting by Christiane Olivier and by Nancy Chodorow. It then compares these claims with research evidence provided by a team of three workers featured in Reassessing Fatherhood (1987) edited by Charles Lewis and Margaret O'Brien.

Christiane Olivier (1989) based her defence of shared parenting, and a related fear of lone-parenting, on a negative view of the mother-child relationship. She argued that both boys and girls need their fathers in order to counter the negative, even dangerous effects of mothers.

According to Olivier, girls have a negative relationship with their mothers and, especially as they reach adolescence, actively fight against any tendency to become like them. Thus, she describes an adolescent need for independent

identity in the negative terms of "mother-hating", a very different account of the relationship to that portrayed by Terri Apter (1985). Olivier felt that sole parenting by women was equally damaging to sons, as there is a danger that the all-powerful mother lives with her son without any male images to break up his dangerous one-to-one relationship. "Not only do we have the absent father; we also have the permanently present mother" (Olivier, 1989, p 131). Thus Olivier denies the extremely powerful masculine influences portrayed by society, and through the media, which counteract the effects of women trying to rear their sons in a non-sexist way (Arcana, 1983).

Her negative view of the mother-child relationship led Olivier to argue for shared parenting and away from lone parenting by women, "in spite of the express wishes of some of them, and against what men believe" (Olivier, 1989, p 9). Moreover, she envisaged the need for a "new man" who will not only father a "new son" capable of independence from his mother, but who will also father a "new daughter" who, right from the moment of birth, will have an adequate "sexual object".

Interestingly, Olivier begins her chapter on "The Family" with a quote from David Cooper;

We don't need mother and father any more. We only need
mothering and fathering. (Olivier, 1989, p 130)

This implies that the roles of mothering and fathering can be carried out by parents of either sex and that either mothers or fathers can be adequate parents for their children.

However, she did not develop this theme. Instead she drew attention to the difficulty of adopting non-traditional roles. Despite wishing to be involved in the care of their children, fathers are excluded from physical connectedness to their children by mothers who "keep the child to themselves" (Olivier, 1989, p 135). She did however acknowledge the emergence of a new kind of woman: one who wants to live *with* her child not *through* it. Such a woman wants to be socially active even when she has young children. Yet as Olivier admitted, childcare provision is woefully lacking, even if the mother can overcome the guilt which society expects her to feel at leaving her child to the care of others.

Nancy Chodorow (1978) left the subject of equal or shared parenting to the end of her book where it appears rather as an afterthought. Her general thesis was that in a number of ways shared parenting would ensure increased social equality. However she is vague as to exactly how this might be achieved.

She stated that equal parenting would not threaten anyone's primary sense of gendered self but admits "nor do we know what this self would look like in a non-sexist society" (Chodorow, 1978, p 218).

Anyone who has good primary relationships has the foundation for nurturance and love, and women would retain these even as men would gain them. Men would be able to retain the autonomy which comes from differentiation without that differentiation being rigid and reactive, and women would have more opportunity to gain it. People's sexual choices might become more flexible, less desperate. (Chodorow, 1978, p 218)

Her expectation is that equal parenting would blur gender

differences by giving both men and women the positive capacities associated with people of the opposite sex. This contradicts the view that shared parenting would not threaten a primary sense of gendered self. Surely, if men and women acquired the good characteristics traditionally associated with the opposite sex then gender differences cease to have any meaning. Moreover, what is there to stop individuals from inheriting negative characteristics as well as positive ones. One criticism often levelled at women who have achieved success in male dominated public spheres is that they have done so by forfeiting traditional female characteristics.

Chodorow particularly stressed the effect which shared parenting may have on the development of boys. She maintained that for boys, identification processes and masculine role learning are not likely to be embedded in relationships with their fathers or men, but rather involve, "the denial of affective relationships to their mothers" (Chodorow, 1978, p 177). Consequently, boys who develop their sense of self in opposition to the mother, establish more rigid ego boundaries and often a defensive denigration of that which is feminine or associated with the mother.

Thus, Chodorow identified men's fear of the pre-oedipal mother, and of losing their sense of masculinity, as fuelling male dominance in society. In this way she developed Karen Horney's thesis that a masculine contempt for and devaluation of women is a manifestation of a deeper "dread of women". "A masculine fear and terror of maternal omnipotence that arises

as one major consequence of their early caretaking and socialisation by women" (Chodorow, 1978, p 183).

However, in Public Man, Private Women (1981) Jean Elshtain expresses concern over Chodorow's notion that male parenting would change the male stance toward women. Benjamin (1990) links this to the "preconscious assumption" that men would raise their children with the "same impersonal rationality that they display in public enterprise" leading to a "fear of being left in the father's care" (Benjamin, 1990, p 204). The connection between a psychoanalytic model and social or political change is not self evident, and it is not clear, for example, that shared parenting is a completely adequate response to patriarchal structures.

Whilst shared parenting may not be sufficient to overturn patriarchal structures it is not of itself harmful to children. Chodorow quoted research which supported the view that children do not suffer from multiple parenting or shared childcare. She maintained that where children do suffer is in multiple parenting situations associated with;

sudden separation from their primary caretaker, major family crisis or disruption in their life, inadequate interaction with those caretakers they do have, or with so many caretakers that the child cannot form a growing and ongoing bond with a small number of people.

(Chodorow, 1978, p 75)

Thus it is acknowledged that it is the quality of care which is important, not that it be provided by a biological mother. This significantly qualifies attachment theories as proposed by Bowlby (1989a, 1989b).

In Reassessing Fatherhood (1987) Michael Lamb (et al.) examined the influence of a "change to more egalitarian parental and occupational roles on the family" (Lamb et al, 1987, p 109). They considered the losses and gains for men and women in shared parenting and presented a broad spectrum of issues which must be considered when attempting to understand greater paternal involvement in childcare. Not surprisingly, given the complex issues involved, they concluded that there was little evidence that increased paternal involvement has any clear cut or direct effects. They felt that paternal involvement could only be understood in the context of individual families, and as such, that it was misguided to see increased paternal involvement as a universally desirable goal. They preferred that "attempts should be made to increase the options available to fathers, so that those who want to be can become more involved in their children's' lives" (Lamb et al, 1987, p 109). Thus the fathering role is seen in terms of paternal choice rather than socially prescribed roles. Presumably, an increase in the number of men choosing to care for their children may in turn affect the extent to which paternal care assumes the status of "socially prescribed role".

One of the possible advantages of shared parenting for fathers is thought to be closer, richer and more enjoyable personal relationships between fathers and children. However, Lamb et al (1987) cautioned against such an interpretation. They considered that there was insufficient evidence to conclude

that "involvement produced sensitivity and competence rather than that the more competent and sensitive fathers choose to become more involved" (Lamb et al, 1987, p 118). The assertion that only competent and sensitive fathers choose to care for their children seems reasonable but it is difficult to verify. Moreover, many fathers who had been prime caretakers had fairly negative perceptions of their experiences. These fathers "felt deprived of adult contacts and they found their lives boring and repetitive" (Lamb et al, 1987, p 120). This is perhaps an experience shared by many mothers.

A negative aspect of shared parenting is that women may find it difficult to relinquish the care of their children, especially if they feel that due to a lack of experience these responsibilities are, "being fulfilled by others less vigorously (or at least differently) than they would like" (Lamb et al, 1987, p 122). Even when the mother feels that the father provides adequate childcare he may neglect the housework which the mother feels is an integral part of the "mothering" role.

More seriously, another possible consequence of increased paternal involvement is that it may diminish, or even eliminate, maternal domination in the child-rearing role. Some women may well resent this "both because of its effects on the marital power balance as well as because it may dilute and make less exclusive mother-child relationships" (Lamb et al, 1987, p 122). Thinking in terms of social equality,

agreeing to share childcare may facilitate women's opportunities to work and have a career. However, there is the risk that they may leave themselves without an arena in which they dominate. Similarly, by choosing to be involved in the care of their children, men may have to relinquish career status or advancement. Thus, increased parental involvement could influence employment patterns and practices, such as job sharing and paternity leave. Yet it has to be remembered that not all parents are employed, and of those that are in work many will not have careers where such changes in employment practice are likely to be possible.

On balance, and for a variety of reasons, shared parenting tends to be viewed as a potentially positive move towards greater social equality for parents. It is also viewed as an opportunity for children of both sexes to experience closeness and separation in relationships with both men and women. This may influence not only their relationships with other people, but also the way in which they come to regard themselves and the roles they choose to adopt. However, changing from a traditional family to a more egalitarian one is a difficult process with inherent tensions and difficulties. The idea that what matters is the quality of nurturing care which children receive, not that it is provided by the biological mother, is continued in the following section which examines other non-traditional family patterns such as those adopted by lone and step-parents.

2.5.d) Other Non-Traditional Families

"There is now no single British family but a rich variety of forms, states, traditions, norms and usages" (Laslett, 1982, p xii). Moreover, it is important to regard lone-parents and their children as households and families in their own right, and not as a mutant form of the so-called "normal" two-parent family. For unless, and until, belief in the cultural "normality" of the two-parent family is suspended, there will be a stigma attached to non-traditional families, and such families will be condemned to unfavourable comparison. This section examines two examples of non-traditional parenting, namely lone-parenting and step-parenting.

Lone-parenting

The routes to lone parenting are many and varied. Moreover, as each individual's experience is unique it is meaningless to think in terms of a "typical" lone-parent. Whilst the majority of parents come to lone-parenting through separation, divorce, or the death of a partner, an increasing number of women are actively choosing lone-parenting (Morris, 1992). However, there is evidence to suggest that this route to lone-parenting is primarily a middle-class choice (Renvoize, 1985). For lesbians, becoming single mothers by choice may be "a very significant step forward informing their identity" (Leonard & Speakman, 1986, p 60).

In broad terms, lone-parents occupy a marginal position in contemporary British society. They are marginalised by financial considerations. Lone-parents are more likely than other parents to be trying to survive on state benefits or low wages (Glendenings & Millar, 1987). Moreover, low incomes may also imply poor housing; "In both a tenural and a geographical sense, lone-parent households are concentrated in the poorer parts of the urban system" (Hardey & Crow, 1991, p 47).

In addition lone parents occupy a marginal position in social life, being effectively excluded from full participation in mainstream activities "by the couple-centred 'family' ideology which permeates the social structure" (Hardey & Crow, 1991, p 1). Sandra Shaw (1991) in her study of Sheffield women emphasised that the specific loneliness experienced by lone-parents is the loneliness of not having a partner, implying that this was different to the need for another parent for their children. She drew attention to the role of support groups in providing a social outlet for both parents and children, as well as practical and emotional support. Family and friends were also seen as an invaluable source of support.

Similarly, Margaret O'Brien (1987) identified different patterns of kinship and friendships among lone fathers as compared with married fathers. She suggested that, whilst single fathers occupy an ambivalent role in society, the fact that they have moved into the private domain of home and childcare opens up, "for men the possibility of closer relationships of a different kind with women" (O'Brien, 1987,

p 242).

One consequence of regarding two parents as the "norm" is that lone-parents are often portrayed as powerless victims of social disadvantage thus reinforcing the stereotypical image of lone-parents as dependent. Against this background it is easy for lone-parents who are poor to be mistakenly perceived as "poor parents", just as lone-parents are also especially vulnerable to the label "problem families".

One of the major criticisms of lone-parenting has been that children, especially boys, are likely to be negatively affected by the absence of their father (Pirani, 1989; Olivier, 1989). However, Stephen Collins (1991) finds no evidence to support the link between lone-parenting and delinquency. While he admits that there is evidence of a higher than average rate of delinquency among children of divorced parents, he does not find evidence of any "necessary shortcomings in the emotional lives of lone-parent households" (Collins, 1991, p 161). Instead he links an increase in delinquency to the pain and uncertainty of divorce, poverty, and a bias against lone-parent families within the judicial system. Thus it could be that what may be regarded as mere high-spirits is thought of as delinquent when the child is known to come from a one-parent family. This is difficult to confirm from Stephen Collins' work as he does not offer a definition of delinquency.

Whilst it is often the negative aspects of lone-parenting

which are stressed there are positive aspects of lone-parenting. These include not having to care for a partner which could be viewed as reducing the household chores which have to be performed, financial independence and control, as well as the emotional gains which "can be seen to revolve around ideas of independence, pride and self-esteem, confidence, and a feeling of doing a hard job (that is, parenting) well" (Shaw, 1991, p 147).

Vivien Nice (1992) also recognises that single parenting may have benefits. She suggests that a mother without a male partner may actually be at an advantage;

as she does not have to continually balance the needs of children and partner, and she may feel freer to seek the support and companionship of female friends or relatives without being accused of disloyalty. (Nice, 1992, p 31)

However, in considering lone-parenting it must be remembered that, in common with the rest of the population, parents are likely to hold contradictory views about their situation. Thus an individual may be aware of both the positive and negative aspects of being a lone-parent.

Step-parents

Work on divorced and step-families tends to be descriptive rather than analytical. Moreover, accounts of actual lived experience often explode commonly held beliefs. One such example is Ann Mitchell's (1985) interviews with children who had experienced parental divorce. This study contradicts the

commonly held view that children are happier if their parents separate than if they continue to live in a family where the parents argue or fight. Similarly, the notion that fathers are not affected by being separated from their children is contradicted by the work of Mary McCormack (1990). She uses personal accounts to testify to the pain and anger which fathers can feel when they lose contact with their children.

On the subject of step-families Donna Smith (1990) emphasises that the relationships between women and step-children may be different from those experienced by other kinds of mothers, such as those who foster or adopt. There is no reason to suppose that this does not also hold true for step-fathers. Foster-parents and parents who adopt are seeking fulfilment through the care of children, whilst by comparison, step-parents are seeking fulfilment through an adult relationship. "Step-children may add to the richness of relationship... ..but that is seldom the primary reason for entering the relationship (Smith, 1990, p 25). In so far as a step-parent is outside the relationship between the child and its natural parent the step-relationship can be strained, and there can be hostility, perhaps based on jealousy, between the adults and the children.

The role of step-parent, in common with all other forms of parenting is fraught with contradictions and preconceptions. Children come to school with assumptions of parenting based on their own experiences. It is important that teachers accept the children's experiences whilst fostering tolerance of other

forms of parenting. Similarly teachers should be aware of how their own assumptions about parents and families could colour their expectations of the children they teach.

Psychoanalytic interpretations are based on some essential truths which equate with actual experience. However, there is a danger that these experiences are manipulated to fit a theory which then becomes the received and accepted truth. When the theory and the experience do not equate, the tendency is to deny the experience. For example, many, perhaps all, women will recognise and relate to the idea of the "little girl within", (Eichenbaum & Orbach, 1985). It is then only a short step to believing that this "little girl" exists because of inadequacies in our relationship with our mothers.

To summarise, post-feminist accounts of parenting challenge previously held assumptions that only mothers can nurture children. The suggestion that traditional male and female roles are constructed, rather than inherent, leads naturally to the notion that fathers can take an active role in the nurturing of their children. The suggestion that individuals benefit from acknowledging both the male and female aspects of their personality leads to an acceptance of one parent families as viable family units. An examination of issues of separation and connectedness in parent-child relationships has clear implications for parents. However, what I would like to emphasise here are the possible implications for teachers

working with quiet withdrawn pupils in mainstream classrooms.

I believe that an understanding of separation and connectedness as portrayed by post-feminist accounts of parenting should lead teachers to:

- * Re-examine the quality of their relationships with parents. In particular teachers should examine the ways in which stereotypical views, which regard nuclear two-parent families as the "norm", may exclude or marginalise fathers and lone-parents.

- * A re-examination of the parenting role should also influence the ways in which parents are portrayed in school. It is important that text books and other teaching materials do not portray lone-parent families as a mutant form of the so-called "normal" two-parent family. Similarly, teachers should be aware of how their own assumptions about parents and families could colour their expectations of the children they teach.

- * A re-examination of parenting roles leads naturally to a consideration of the way in which children are socialised in school. Enlightened practice should encourage children to develop all aspects of their personality and not limit them to traditional male or female roles.

- * An understanding of the complementary nature of separation and connectedness in relationships should also lead teachers to reexamine the nature of their relationships with pupils. I believe that an appropriate balance of separation and connectedness is important for all pupils. However, being able to relate to, and feel connected with, teachers and peers may be a crucial precursor to learning for those pupils already silenced by what they perceive to be anxiety in relationships. My experience as both a teacher and a researcher suggests that successful teachers are those who recognise the importance of pupils and teachers bringing their "authentic loving selves" to the learning relationship.

PART TWO C : IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CLASSROOM

SECTION 2.6. : SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

A review of object relations theory (sections 2.1., 2.2. and 2.3.) and post-feminist accounts of parenting (sections 2.4. and 2.5.) suggested that much of the quiet withdrawn behaviour observed in schools has its origins in deviant patterns of parent-child attachments. This review identified how deviant patterns of attachment may be linked to distorted emotional and psychological development which is related to problems with interpersonal relationships and low self-esteem. That quiet withdrawn pupils are likely to experience difficulty in forming relationships with teachers and peers is one way in which they may be considered to have special educational needs.

In addition, as established in Part One of this study, an inability or unwillingness to talk freely in class is, of itself, detrimental to learning. Such behaviour precludes pupils from taking an active role in their own learning and prevents genuine dialogue between pupil and teacher and amongst peers. In short, habitually quiet withdrawn behaviour prevents pupils from "naming their world" (Freire, 1972) and taking ownership of the knowledge presented to them.

Thus there are two levels at which quiet pupils can be considered to have special educational needs. Depending on the relative severity or the origins of their behaviour it may

be appropriate to regard them as having behavioural and/or emotional needs. An examination of the current special needs debate which follows will explore the value of such a definition and its possible effect upon the pupils and their experience of school.

2.6.a) A New Category of Special Educational Need?

In the context of this study the connection between habitually quiet behaviour and special educational need is clear.

However, in many respects making this connection is paramount to creating a new category of special educational need. The present study argues that whilst **emotional and/or behavioural difficulty** is the second largest category of special educational need identified in school (Beveridge, 1993) it is not normally used to define habitually quiet behaviour. The reasons for this are discussed below and are related to what is considered to be socially acceptable behaviour.

The nature and extent of emotional and behavioural problems are wide-ranging and, apart from the most severe cases, difficult to define. Teacher judgements are based on their professional experience and are likely to incorporate comparisons with the general standard of conduct in the class. Inevitably though, they may also be influenced by personal values and expectations about what is considered to be appropriate social and emotional behaviour. Typically, boys

are more likely than girls to be identified as having emotional and behavioural difficulties, as are pupils from particular minority ethnic backgrounds (Tomlinson, 1982).

It has been suggested (for example, ILEA, 1985) that teachers are less alert to signs of emotional difficulty that create problems for the individual pupil than they are to the more overt behaviour that presents them with problems of class control. Others, (for example Croll and Moses, 1985), argued that teachers do differentiate between problems of discipline and other forms of educational and behavioural difficulty.

This view is supported by Beveridge (1993) who suggests that:

On the whole, it would seem that pupils are identified by their teachers when their behaviour is judged to interfere with their own learning or that of other pupils, or to disrupt their relationships with peers and staff.
(Beveridge, 1993, p 49)

However, evidence from the present study suggests that quiet withdrawn pupils are often overlooked in busy classrooms. Moreover, the fact that few writers include habitually quiet behaviour in their definition of disaffection implies that the term "emotional and behavioural difficulty" is more likely to be used to define loud, disruptive and potentially aggressive pupils.

One possible exception is the definition of disaffection offered by Paul Cooper (1993). In Effective Schools for Disaffected Pupils he begins by including withdrawn behaviour within his definition of disaffection. Moreover, in talking about the difficulties which teachers experience in trying to

motivate pupils he implies that withdrawal and disruption are opposite ends of a continuum of anti-social behaviour. He describes how the teacher's optimistic and positive intentions

are met with apathy, are ignored or, worse (?) openly resisted and disrupted. (Cooper, 1993, p 2)

Thus he implies that apathy and disruption may be equally serious. However, with this one exception the book defines disaffection exclusively in terms of disruptive, potentially aggressive, behaviour. Cooper is concerned with the "common ground" covered by such terms as "disaffection", "problem behaviour", "emotional and/or behavioural difficulties" and "deviance". He also examines the way in which these terms are used to

describe behaviour that is perceived to be in some sense deviant and problematic to the smooth running of the organisation in which they are applied.

(Cooper, 1993, p 3)

The emphasis on loud potentially disruptive behaviour implies that the concept of special educational need is a form of social control and is used primarily for those pupils who cannot be easily controlled in mainstream classes or who hinder the smooth running of the school.

The link between special educational needs and social control was emphasised by Ford (1982) who asked:

To what extent, therefore, is the establishment of special education provision an expression of the wish to control a deviant section of the school population?

(Ford et al, 1982, p 27)

Certainly, it is easy to see how social control could be a powerful motivation behind special needs provision for loud, aggressive pupils. However, work which aims to empower quiet

pupils and enable them to experience alternative forms of behaviour is more difficult to define in these terms. Consequently, whilst quiet behaviour is detrimental to both individual learning and emotional development, seemingly compliant pupils do not offer a threat to school discipline and consequently the needs of such pupils are unlikely to be either identified or met. Nevertheless, the present study will demonstrate (sections 4.3., 4.4. and 4.5.) how many of the recommendations made by Cooper (1993) in Effective Schools for Disaffected Students are also appropriate for quiet withdrawn pupils.

By including quiet withdrawn pupils in the definition of special needs this study accepts a wider definition of need such as that proposed by Mel Ainscow and Jim Muncey (1989). In Meeting Individual Needs they endeavoured to carry the definition offered by the Warnock Report (DES, 1978) to its logical conclusion by arguing that all pupils have special educational needs and

not just those who at some time for some reason depart too far from some mythical expected standards and rates of progress. (Ainscow & Muncey, 1989, p x)

This is a significant development from the narrow "deficit model" definition which preceded the Warnock Report. However, as the following review of the literature will illustrate, there are problems and limitations to the notion of individual need and what Roaf and Bines (1989) have called "the cult of individualisation". The tensions inherent in the "special versus individual" needs debate emerge in the following

discussion of different approaches to need as proposed by Mike Oliver (1988).

2.6.b) Different Approaches to Special Educational Need

In a chapter entitled "The Social and Political Context of Education Policy" Mike Oliver (1988) argued that there are three different approaches to the definition of disability and special need. He implied that the approach to, and consequently the definition of, disability has changed over time

... initially, disability was perceived as an individual problem; it then came to be seen as a social construction and, finally, it is beginning to be perceived as a social creation. (Oliver, 1988, p 13)

Thus Oliver implies a clearly defined and developmental shift in the approach to, and definition of, disability. An examination of what is meant by each of the three terms **individual problem, social construction and social creation** highlights the relative merits of each approach and introduces the key issues which pervade the special educational needs debate as it relates to quiet withdrawn pupils in mainstream school. This discussion also suggests that, contrary to Oliver's definition, the three ways of looking at the issue of need are interrelated and that a **combination of approaches** is in fact the most helpful in defining and meeting individual needs.

Needs are an individual problem

Oliver (1988) suggested that this definition underlies most approaches in the field of professional practice adopted by teachers, social workers, doctors, occupational therapists and psychologists. Stated simply, this position maintains that it is the individual with disability who has the problem and intervention aims to provide the individual with the appropriate skills to cope with their disability.

In terms of the quiet withdrawn pupils highlighted by this study, this type of definition would suggest that the problem lies solely in the individual's inability to form relationships with others. This is a medical model which implies that the individual has a clearly defined problem which can be reduced or cured by appropriate treatment.

One major criticism of this approach is that it emphasises what are seen as deficiencies within the individual which can lead to categorisation and labelling of pupils. The relative merits and demerits of categories and labels remains a dilemma for all teachers working in the field of special needs. Some writers (for example, Ainscow & Tweddle, 1988) believe that all labels and categories are essentially discriminatory and should be abolished.

Instead we should find ways of acknowledging the individuality of each pupil, that all children experience learning difficulties and that all can experience success. The aim must be to organise schools in ways that help teachers to respond to, and indeed, celebrate the personal qualities and interests of each member of

their class. The achievement of this would be to the benefit of all pupils.

(Ainscow & Tweddle, 1988, p 69)

Thus an approach which emphasises pupils' strengths rather than their weaknesses is of benefit to all pupils. Indeed the present study demonstrates how appropriate teaching strategies can raise pupil self-esteem and empower quiet pupils to take a more active role in their own education. Yet, paradoxically, this was only achieved after the detrimental effects of habitually quiet behaviour were realised and the possible root causes of quiet behaviour were identified. This suggests the value of identifying the specific needs of a group whilst not underestimating the potential of individual pupils.

Roaf and Bines (1989) acknowledged the value of an individual approach but went on to argue that in view of the "prejudice and discrimination in our society" (1989, p 94) it is not sufficient to merely abandon the labels. Instead, they argued that for teachers to be effective advocates for young people they have to be

able to recognise characteristics in common, not to encourage stereotyped reactions, but as a way of recognising that there are important group differences between people which are a valued part of their individuality. (Roaf & Bines, 1989, p 95)

The need to be able to identify common characteristics without resorting to crude stereotypical reactions is highlighted in the present study. An example will serve to illustrate the point. For some pupils, their quiet withdrawn behaviour could be related to early or prolonged separation from primary attachment figures. However, as the study shows, it would be inappropriate to assume that all pupils from lone-parent

families are equally affected by the absence of the other parent. Moreover, deviant attachment can occur in two-parent families. As will be discussed further in Part Four of this thesis (section 4.3) the balance between common characteristics and individual need is a delicate one which can only be achieved in schools when teachers begin to know, and relate to, their pupils as individuals.

Roaf and Bines (1989) valued the individual approach to need but they also realised the limitations of such an approach. They argued that to treat an individual, underachieving because of class or race issues at school, simply at an individual level is neither adequate nor effective. The argument here is that since so many needs arise from expressions of social, ethnic or other group prejudice and discrimination, failure to alert the school and society to these groups needs is also a large part of the failure to meet individual needs. The section of the chapter which focuses on "student differences" concludes with the statement that:

While the larger structural issues remain unaddressed so will individual approaches remain cosmetic.

(Roaf & Bines, 1989, p 95)

This suggests that approaches to need have to consider both the individual and the social or environmental aspect of creating and meeting special educational needs. Certainly, the present study illustrates how work which aims to empower quiet withdrawn pupils has to consider both the possible root causes of an individual's behaviour and the social environment in which the behaviour occurs. The social component of need

is highlighted in subsequent discussion of different approaches to need.

Needs are socially constructed

Oliver (1988) suggested that this definition has been used by many academics and writers who have taken an interest in special needs. It has also been relied upon heavily by policy makers who seek to solve problems through changing terminology. This position is that the solutions to the problem of disability have usually failed because the problem was wrongly defined in the first place, and that once we identify it correctly, the solution will be forthcoming. According to this argument the problem lies in the fact that some human beings define other human beings as disabled, and therefore treat them differently. This type of definition maintains that if you change the way in which people think about disability you eliminate the problem of disabled people.

Thus a logical consequence of redefining special educational need to include pupils who exhibit quiet withdrawn behaviour is likely to alter the way in which such pupils are regarded by their teachers. A positive outcome of a change in the definition of need could be that the specific needs of an overlooked section of the school population are identified and met. Indeed, many of the pupils highlighted by the present study would welcome such changes. An analysis of the pupils' perceptions of themselves (section 4.1.a) reveals that not

only do they define themselves as quiet or shy but that they perceive this to be detrimental to both their social life and academic learning. Moreover, some of the pupils were aware of the difficulties which they experienced in asking their teachers for help.

However, whilst it is important for the teaching profession to acknowledge the needs of quiet withdrawn pupils there is a danger that this could lead to the negative or stigmatised labelling of individual children. The negative effects of using categories and labels to describe children is long established. In How to Reach the Hard to Teach (1984) Paul Widlake went so far as to argue that:

The process by which we label pupils may turn out to be more influential in causing learning difficulties than any other activities teachers engage in.

(Widlake, 1984, p 33)

Thus a definition which regards need as socially constructed implies a desire to disregard disability and to treat everyone as if they were normal. However, as Roaf and Bines (1989) pointed out, the issue of relevant and irrelevant difference is a highly complex area which cannot be avoided by anyone concerned with needs and rights and one which has proved to be a major stumbling block. They argued that simplistic remarks such as, "we all have special needs", "all children are special" or, "I don't see them as black or white / girls or boys, they're all just children to me", originate in a genuine confusion about when a difference is relevant and when it is not. The important but difficult task for the teacher, as for the manager of scarce resources, is to be able to distinguish

between the two in a way which is just and fair.

To ignore differences altogether, or to pay too much attention to irrelevant differences, are both equally unjust. (Roaf & Bines, 1989, p 93)

As quiet withdrawn behaviour is detrimental to learning, such behaviour has to be regarded as a "relevant difference" and should be identified as such by teachers. However, recognising need without negative labelling requires delicate handling.

Needs are socially created

The third approach suggested by Oliver (1988) is that needs are socially created. This position is often articulated by disabled people and has involved intense disputes with able-bodied professionals and academics about what the problem actually is. This position argues that society disables people with impairments by the way it responds to those impairments. For example, any limitations in the means of access to buildings stem from decisions to design them in particular ways and not from the inability of some people to walk. The solution to this particular problem is to create a barrier-free environment, not to attempt to provide disabled people with the skills necessary to cope with steps.

There is a growing trend toward the disabled community defining disability and need (Barton, 1988). Moreover, disabled people are increasingly determined to control their

own lives and are vociferously expressing their views both as private persons and through their own associations (Wade & Moore, 1993). Not surprisingly this has led to tensions as criticisms are expressed not only over the role of professionals in the lives of disabled people, but also over the way in which able-bodied people are constant sources of oppression and dehumanisation (Sutherland, 1981).

In the case of the quiet withdrawn pupils highlighted by the present study, the social creation of need would maintain that these pupils are silenced not by their innate inability or unwillingness to communicate but by an environment which does not allow them sufficient space and encouragement to talk.

Thus, inappropriate teaching materials and techniques may be seen as having generated or at least exacerbated the range of learning difficulties experienced by pupils.

(Roaf and Bines, 1989, p 6)

As this study demonstrates, appropriate teaching styles and an emphasis on the quality of relationships in school are frequently sufficient to empower pupils to take more active roles in their own education. However, an acknowledgement that schools may cause or exacerbate pupil difficulties may be hard for teachers to appreciate. Accounts of children's disaffection in schools which focus attention exclusively on family background factors are not uncommon (Cooper, 1993).

Moreover,

those who over emphasise family and individual pathology explanations can be blind to the influence which they and their institutions can have on these problems.

(Cooper, 1993, p 14)

In particular, teachers can be unaware of the extent to which

the very possession of such views can interact with the problem situation and so exacerbate and, in some cases, create further difficulties.

In addition, as Cooper (1993) illustrates, the most vulnerable, those who experience humiliation, fear or anxiety, "are the very people in the school system who are likely to be given least opportunity to voice their concerns" (Cooper, 1993, p 17). It is difficult for quiet pupils to find a voice in the classroom. It is also difficult for members of that community to accept both the change in behaviour and the possible criticisms which may accompany it. In examples drawn from the present study, a teacher is likely to feel threatened by Justina's remarks about unfair treatment when her request for help was denied. Similarly, Angie could seriously upset the status quo of the classroom if she expressed her concerns about the lack of multicultural or anti-racist material readily available in school.

Combining different Approaches to Need

Whilst Oliver suggests three distinctly different approaches to the subject of need I would argue that these three approaches are not mutually exclusive and can exist simultaneously. For example in Educational Opportunities for All? (1985) the Inner London Education Authority offer a description of disability which almost captures all three approaches: the individual, the social constructionist and the

social creationist view of special educational needs as suggested by Oliver (1988).

Disabilities and difficulties become more or less handicapping depending on the expectations of others and on social contexts. Handicaps arise from the mis-match between the intellectual physical, emotional and social behaviour and aspirations of the individual and the expectations, appropriate or otherwise, of the community and society at large. Individuals with disabilities or significant difficulties may be handicapped by their own attitude to them and by the attitude of others. Of equal significance, the degree to which the individual is handicapped is determined by the educational, social, physical and emotional situations which he or she encounters. Handicapping effects will vary from situation to situation and may change over time.

(ILEA, 1985, p 4)

This passage is quoted at length because it illustrates something of the myriad of complex factors which combine in the definition of disability or need. In the context of the present study a similar point can be made with reference to the different factors which underlie an individual pupil's quiet withdrawn behaviour.

Susie's quiet behaviour can be seen in terms of her individual need and her inability or unwillingness to talk freely in class. This could be related to an "anxious attachment" to her mother during early childhood. Conversely Susie's quiet behaviour can be discussed in terms of the social context of the classroom. Her quietness may be a response to teacher-directed talk which precludes active pupil participation. Similarly, she might be silenced by a fear of being bullied by her peers. On the other hand, if Susie has been criticised for talking in class she is likely to believe that talking is naughty or even anti-social. Whatever the underlying cause of

susie's quiet withdrawn behaviour it has to be discussed in terms of her **individual need** as expressed in specific **social contexts** and in the light of **prevailing views** about the nature of talk and learning. Thus Oliver's three ways of defining need are inextricably linked.

A definition of need which combines both the individual and social components of need can be found both in the Warnock Report (DES, 1978) and the 1981 Education Act which preceded it. As the current definition of special educational need is based on the deliberations of the Warnock Committee it is appropriate to examine its recommendations in detail.

2.6.c) The Legislative Framework

The Warnock Report

The Warnock Committee (DES, 1978), had a governmental brief to investigate and make recommendations about special education provision. The Warnock Committee brought together and articulated the views that were current among many of those working in special education and was a major development in official thinking about special educational needs. Many of the Reports' recommendations were subsequently incorporated in the 1981 Education Act which came into force in 1983.

Significantly, the Warnock Report recommended that the

existing categorisation of disability was educationally inappropriate and should be abolished. The Committee proposed that such categories should be replaced with a generic term of "learning difficulties" which could be further described as "mild", "moderate", "severe" or "specific". In both the Warnock Report, and the 1981 Education Act which followed, the terms "special educational need" and "learning difficulty" are used interchangeably.

The change in terminology, from categories of handicap to more generic and flexible concepts, represented a major development in special education. It was an attempt to remove the formal distinction between handicapped and non-handicapped students and to encourage the integration of pupils into mainstream education (Fish, 1989; Roaf and Bines, 1989). Moreover, it reflected a shift in emphasis from medical or psychological criteria of assessment and placement towards an educational, interactive and relative approach which would take into account all the factors which could have a bearing on educational progress. Thus special educational needs were considered to be individual and they were defined for the first time in terms of the curriculum, the means of access to it and the social and emotional environment in which it was taught.

In broad terms the Warnock Report defined special educational needs as being likely to take the form of need in one or more of the following:

i) the provision of special means of access to the curriculum through special equipment, facilities or resources, modification of the physical environment or specialised teaching techniques;

ii) the provision of a special or modified curriculum;

iii) particular attention to the social structure and emotional climate in which education takes place.

(DES, 1978, para 3.19)

These are three broad based areas which could be used to cover most, if not all, aspects of education. However, in work with quiet withdrawn pupils with behavioural and/or emotional difficulties the emphasis on the "social structure and emotional climate" is of supreme importance. For these pupils their special needs are fundamentally associated with the quality of the relationships which they are helped to develop in school. Section 2.7. of this thesis outlines the kind of classroom environment in which pupils feel willing and able to play an active role in their own education. In this context, issues of specific teaching techniques and an appropriate curriculum follow naturally from good relationships and a supportive environment.

Thus in many respects the recommendations of the present study correspond to the three ways of meeting special educational needs as identified by the Warnock Report. However, in considering ways in which counselling and/or therapy can help some individuals to address the root causes of their quiet behaviour (section 4.6.) the present study represents a departure from the Warnock recommendations.

The 1981 and 1993 Education Acts

Following on from the Warnock Report the 1981 Education Act also defined special educational needs in relative terms. Special needs were seen as learning difficulties of all kinds rather than as individual defects. Moreover, special educational needs were seen as arising from physical, sensory or intellectual disabilities and not as identical with them (Fish, 1989). However, one of the major effects of the definition of need offered by the 1981 Education Act was that need became inextricably linked to the provision of extra resources.

For the purposes of this Act a child has "special educational needs" if he has a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for him. (Education Act, 1981, section 1)

In terms of this definition it is arguable whether or not the pupils highlighted by the present study can be considered to have special educational needs. I would argue that the majority of resources needed to empower quiet withdrawn pupils are well within the scope of ordinary class teachers in mainstream school. The fact that the social and emotional climate of many classrooms is not conducive to active pupil participation does not mean that the necessary changes in relationships or teaching styles should be regarded as either "extra" or "special". As will be demonstrated in Part Four of this thesis, the "resources" needed to meet the needs of the majority of quiet pupils are good quality pupil-teacher relationships and co-operative group work based on friendship groupings.

The present study suggests that it is only in cases where pupils need support, in order to deal with major crises or unresolved issues, that the additional resources of trained counsellors or therapists are needed. However, given the number of children traumatised by family breakdown, bereavement and abuse, I would suggest that there is need for all teachers to receive some training in counselling skills. At the very least, and as Heather's story illustrates, teachers need to be able to identify those pupils who need, or would benefit from, additional specialist support. In addition there is a growing body of evidence to support the view that such specialist support is especially effective if provided by appropriately trained members of staff within the school (Cooper, 1993). Again this suggests that resources to meet the needs of quiet pupils should be readily available to all and not provided as additional or special resources for a minority of pupils defined as having special educational need.

The 1993 Education Act defines "learning difficulty" in the same terms as the 1981 Education Act. Thus, a child is considered to have learning difficulties if;

- a) he has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his age; or
- b) he has a disability which either prevents or hinders him from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of his age in schools, within the area of the local education authority concerned, for children of his age; or
- c) he is under the age of five years and is, or would be if special education provision were not made for him, likely to fall within para (a) or (b) when over that age,
(Education Act, 1993, section 156)

So far as the pupils highlighted by the study are concerned I feel that they are not able to make "use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided". However, I am reluctant to describe the origins of their quiet behaviour as a "disability". The term disability suggests both within-child factors and a medical model of handicap which denies the social factors of need as defined by Oliver (1988).

At the time of their conception, the Warnock Report and 1981 Education Act reflected a major shift in defining both special educational need and the educational provision for such pupils. However, the whole concept of need has now come under criticism from writers such as Barton (1988) and Roaf and Bines (1989) who want to move beyond the notion of need towards a discussion of "rights and opportunities" issues. Before discussing the current equal opportunities debate it is appropriate to consider some of the criticisms and limitations of the concept of need.

2.6.d) Need as an inappropriate concept

Roaf and Bines (1989) pointed out that despite the changes in definition of special educational need, it remains a very difficult and complex concept in practice.

It has the appearance of simplicity and familiarity, yet its use in so many contexts, the fact that it appears to have both normative and non-normative meaning and that it is essentially concerned with values and priorities,

should alert us to its complexity.

(Roaf & Bines, 1989, p 9)

This is especially true at the present time when we are already a long way from the days when it was only handicapped children who were perceived as having needs.

In a chapter entitled Needs, Rights and Opportunities in Special Education Roaf and Bines (1989) suggested four reasons why "need" was a problematic term.

The first criticism is that the term "need" is ill-defined and as a consequence too broad. It is often used in relation to the development and learning of all children. Given their individuality and idiosyncrasy, defining what constitutes a *special* educational need in any particular case can be difficult. The arguments for and against the inclusion of quiet withdrawn pupils in the category of special educational need offers a clear illustration of some of these difficulties.

The implications for using a broad and ill-defined term like need are especially serious when such a term is used as the basis for special resource allocation. Another related difficulty with the term "need" is that whilst "special educational needs" is now the generic term, the number of specific descriptive categories has not been reduced. Indeed the Warnock Report and 1981 Act, while attempting to remove the difference between handicapped and non-handicapped pupils, did not take special education out of the realm of handicap.

Instead, more students have been brought within its brief under the much broader and ill-defined category of learning difficulty, and further divisions have emerged, particularly between students who have statements of special educational need and those who do not. Indeed the broadening of the definition of need is illustrated by the fact that, in the context of this study, the generic term special educational need is being extended to include habitually quiet pupils.

The second criticism offered by Roaf and Bines (1989) is that the relativism of needs as currently understood can lead to haphazard and unequal provision. "Special educational need" is a legal and administrative term as well as an educational and descriptive one thus taking on different meanings according to the context in which it is used. Such relativism is also a feature of the legislative definitions within the 1981 Education Act, where need is defined in terms of the level of difficulty experienced by other children and the kind of educational provision available. Being considered to have special educational need may, therefore, largely depend on which school is attended and in which locality, leading to considerable variations in assessment, placement and subsequent educational treatment. This relativism and unequal provision may be partially responsible for the fact that quiet withdrawn pupils are not recognised as having special educational needs. As was suggested at the start of this study, loud potentially aggressive pupils are more likely to come to the attention of harassed teachers in busy classrooms than their quiet peers. Seemingly compliant behaviour can

easily be confused with a commitment to learning.

The third criticism is also related to this relativism and is that needs are a matter of professional and value judgements. Roaf and Bines (1989) argued that the moral and political basis of such judgements are usually neglected because we still focus on the *receiver* - the individual or group with needs. Yet hidden within these conceptions of needs are social interests - for example, to make the disabled productive or to control troublesome children - together with a range of assumptions about what is *normal* (Tomlinson, 1982). By focusing on needs and particularly by taking assumptions about the nature of those needs for granted, we do not ask who has the power to define the needs of others. We do not enquire why it is the professionals who mostly define needs, as opposed to parents or the students themselves. Nor do we fully explore the normative nature of our assumptions - for example, that they are grounded in conceptions of "normal" cognitive development or behaviour whether such assumptions are informally operated by teachers in the classroom or more formally operated by normative testing. The focus is on what seem to be the genuine needs of the individual who lacks something and who has a need. However, that needs may be generated by valuing certain aspects of development and attainment more than others is not considered .

The final criticism, and one with particular significance to work with quiet withdrawn pupils, is that the term "needs" has now become a euphemism for labelling individuals as "special".

This is partly due to its hidden implications and partly to limited change in traditional approaches and practice. The idea of having a difficulty suggests something can be done about it (or even that the cause may be the difficulty of the learning on offer). Thus the concept of "needs" remains deficit-based, despite attempts to relate it to context, with an inbuilt tendency to slip back towards individuals and their problems. However, it could be argued that despite its individualistic approach to difficulties and handicaps the term "special educational need" also clouds issues of values, power and function (Tomlinson, 1982). Moreover, despite intentions to limit stigma and labelling, it "has become a new euphemism for failure" (Roaf and Bines, 1989, p 7).

Thus Roaf and Bines (1989) claim that the concept of "need" is inadequate on its own as a means of achieving the goals of education for those identified as having special needs. They believe that the discourse of equal opportunities and rights, with its emphasis on entitlement, provides a more effective base for policy and practice.

2.6.e) Needs, Rights and Opportunities

Roaf's and Bines' (1989) suggestion of replacing the concept of needs with that of rights and entitlement has a number of advantages.

First, thinking in terms of rights and opportunities links the special needs debate with other equal opportunity initiatives, for example, the Sex Discrimination Act (1975), the Race Relations Act (1976) and the development of the concept of equal opportunities in education from the mid-seventies onwards (ILEA, 1985; Potts, 1986). Thus special education becomes part of a larger struggle for equality, and racial or gender dimensions of being "special" can also be raised. A lot of work has already been done on equality of opportunity in other areas - for example, class, gender, race - on which the special needs debate could draw (Adams, 1988; Byrne, 1985; ILEA, 1985). Inequality is now understood as both structural, institutional and interpersonal and strategies to deal with each of these levels have been established (Lynch, 1986; Straker-Welds, 1984). Moreover, it is understood how discrimination, and therefore lack of opportunity, may be subtly or indeed explicitly reflected in aspects of schooling such as the curriculum and teaching materials. Teachers could apply this understanding in relation to special educational needs. Equal opportunity is also an effective touchstone for evaluating provision.

The connection between different aspects of discrimination is of particular relevance to the quiet withdrawn pupils highlighted by the present study. Evidence suggests that several of these pupils were discriminated against in a number of ways. The majority of the pupils were working class girls. Moreover, the experiences of the four Black pupils suggests a clear link between race and other forms of discrimination.

As Roaf and Bines (1989) summarise, it would seem to be

beneficial to operate the more radical notion of opportunity, arguing for positive discrimination in terms of staffing or resources in order to ensure that children and young people experiencing impairment or other difficulties do get full benefit from ordinary education. It would also seem worthwhile to make the connections between disadvantage arising out of class, race or gender and disadvantage arising out of special needs as traditionally perceived. (Roaf & Bines, 1989, p 12)

This implies a redefinition of the concept of need and an accompanying reappraisal of resource allocation.

Nevertheless, equality of opportunity still seems to imply being dependent on the gift of others and on making the best of yourself, which not all young people can do.

The second benefit of linking needs with issues of rights and opportunities is that it should

free us from individualised, deficit-based approaches to special needs and enable us to consider ways in which the entitlement and rights of children designated as having special needs can be ensured and extended.

(Roaf & Bines, 1989, p 1)

Thus considering issues of rights and opportunities implies a move away from a deficit-based approach, which in turn re-emphasises the social construction and creation of disability and need.

More fundamentally, to regard children with special educational needs as children whose rights are being infringed in some way would

substantially alter the status not only of children themselves, but also of special needs teachers and others who work on their behalf in their negotiations with the educational hierarchy. (Roaf and Bines, 1989, p 13)

For Bandman (1973), being perceived as having rights "enables us to stand with dignity, if necessary to demand what is our due without having to grovel, plead or beg". "Having need" is too often associated with a lack of dignity and respect. As Freeman (1987) argued

Children have not been accorded either dignity or respect. They have been reified, denied the status of participant in the social system, labelled as a problem population, reduced to being seen as property. Too often justice for the young has been trumped by considerations of utility or, worse, of convenience.

(Freeman, 1987, p 300)

The emergence of children's rights as an important social and political issue is thus to be welcomed. However, in the "rights" approach there are difficult issues to be faced by educators.

First, there has been much confusion generally between liberal (access) and radical (outcomes) versions of the equality debate (Evetts, 1973). Secondly, for the individual the issue of rights implies identification with a group of similarly disadvantaged people. Thus rights can presume a level of categorisation which may well seem contradictory to special needs teachers who have been encouraged to abandon categories. Thirdly, it can be difficult to achieve equality of opportunity without encountering contradictions such as the difficulty of balancing normalization with the need for positive discrimination and provision. Such difficulties may be even more pertinent to debates about special educational needs because physical and other impairments may not just mean overcoming structural disadvantage and discrimination but also providing compensatory measures.

2.6.f) An Integrated Approach

Rather than abandoning "needs", it may be more appropriate to ensure that they are put back in their place: that is,

as a means of identifying, from a set of wide-ranging and often interlocking circumstances or characteristics, those which apply in a particular case, be it an individual or a group. (Roaf and Bines, 1989, p 14)

The problem with "needs", as currently understood, is that it is a term which often serves to mask category and disadvantage without actually specifying or overcoming these in any way. Indeed, an unintended effect of the Warnock Report is that "needs" has become a category as in "special needs children", gathering together widely different groups who are then assumed to be defective in some way. Perhaps it should be recognised that even with a radical standpoint, students are not helped by teachers unable to look at specific needs and provide appropriately for them. The question is not whether quiet withdrawn children have needs; all children do. The real issue is to identify the nature of those needs and how they are constructed, perceived and maintained.

Thus, "needs statements" in themselves should not be regarded as a sufficient basis for developing policy and practice, because of the tendency to reinforce individualised, deficit-based approaches. Instead, needs should be tied to entitlement of rights and opportunity, in order to emphasise a systems approach and to strengthen and assert the interests and equity of those considered to have such needs. This would also remove some of the burden of guilt and stigma which is

still associated with having special educational needs.

To be entitled to something is very different and more positive than to need it, since it gives both validity and value to the claim. (Roaf & Bines, 1989, p 15)

This emphasis on entitlement underlines one of the major aims of the present study which is to **empower quiet withdrawn pupils to take a more active role in their own education**. How this was achieved in the context of this study is discussed at length in Part Four of this thesis. This critical review of select literature concludes with an examination of issues relating to the **social and emotional climate** of the classroom which is, of course, one of the three areas of concern identified by the Warnock Report (DES, 1978).

SECTION 2.7. : THE SOCIAL / EMOTIONAL CLIMATE OF THE CLASSROOM

of particular interest in relation to this study is research which examines school effectiveness in relation to pupils with special educational needs. However, whilst insights into the characteristics of an effective school are useful, an analysis of some research into school effectiveness reveals that it has little to contribute to an understanding of pupil-teacher communication or of what contributes effective relationships for learning.

2.7.a) School Effectiveness

In School Matters : The Junior Years Mortimore et al (1988) identified the characteristics of effective primary schools. Here "effective" related to high performance in academic areas such as reading and writing and in non-academic areas, for example low truancy levels. In School Effectiveness : Research, Policy and Practice Reynolds and Cuttance (1992) offers a summary of the characteristics of an effective school as identified by Mortimore's research. From that summary I have identified a number of characteristics which have direct relevance to the present study in that they formed the basis of the teaching approach which I devised and implemented during the course of the study (see sections 4.4. & 4.5.).

These include:

Consistency among teachers. Continuity of staffing had a positive effect but pupils also performed better when the approach to teaching was consistent.

A structured day. Children performed better when their school day was structured in some way. In effective schools, pupils' work was organised by the teacher, who ensured there was plenty for them to do yet allowed them some freedom within the structure.

Intellectually challenging teaching. Not surprisingly, pupil progress was greater where teachers were stimulating and enthusiastic. The incidence of "higher order" questions and statements was seen to be vital - that is, where teachers frequently made children use powers of problem solving.

A work-centred environment. This was characterised by a high level of pupils' industry, with children enjoying their work and being eager to start new tasks.

(Reynolds & Cuttance, 1992, p 12)

I have no difficulty in accepting the above criteria as being important aspects of effective teaching and learning. Thus in my own teaching (discussed in sections 4.4. & 4.5. of this thesis) I aimed to be consistent and create a **work-centred environment** which was **intellectually challenging** and which at the same time offered the pupils an appropriate balance of **structure and freedom**.

However, on the issue of pupil-teacher conversations, data collected during the present study challenges Reynolds' summary of what makes for effective communication in the classroom. The importance of talk for learning, as highlighted by the present study, is recognised by Reynolds (1992) who cites **maximum communication between teachers and pupils** as a characteristic of an effective school. Yet, my research contradicts the assumption that effective communication is synonymous with whole class teaching. In summarising Mortimore's research Reynolds and Cuttance argues that:

Children performed better the more communication they had with their teacher about the content of their work. Most teachers devoted most of their time to individuals, so each child could only expect a small number of contacts a day. Teachers who used opportunities to talk to the whole class by, for example, reading a story or asking a question were more effective.

(Reynolds & Cuttance, 1992, p 12)

In contrast, evidence from the present study suggests that an effective school would be one in which teachers acknowledged the limitations of whole class teaching especially for quiet withdrawn pupils. Thus I would define an effective school as one in which teachers used appropriate small group activities to maximise the **number and quality** of pupil-teacher interactions.

In this way "School Effectiveness Research" appears to have little to contribute to an understanding of the nature of effective pupil-teacher communication in the classroom.

Similarly, as identified by Reynolds & Packer (1992), school effectiveness research has concentrated on the first dimension of schooling, "the formal, reified, organisational structure" without looking in enough detail at;

the second - cultural and informal - world of values, attitudes and perceptions, which together with the third dimension - the complicated web of personal relationships within schools - will determine a schools effectiveness or ineffectiveness. (Reynolds & Packer, 1992, p 179)

Thus Reynolds and Packer suggest that the school improvement debate in the 1990's should concern itself with the deep structure of values, relationships and interpersonal processes, as well as the world of behaviour. Central to the present study is an examination of the quality of relationships which exist between pupils, parents and teachers.

2.7.b) Importance of Relationships for Learning

In a chapter entitled "The Social and Emotional Context for Learning" Sally Beveridge (1993) acknowledges that the informal or "hidden" curriculum of relationships and interactions at school can;

pose considerable demands on pupils with respect to their social competence and their personal resources, such as self-confidence. (Beveridge, 1993, p 91)

Understanding the complex interrelationships between children's learning achievements and their social and personal development is one of the underlying themes of the present study which focuses on empowering pupils to create relationships for learning.

In considering the qualities of an effective pupil-teacher relationship, it is generally accepted that pupils learn most effectively when they feel valued and secure, trust their teachers, and both understand and accept the full range of classroom demands (Pollard, 1988). Therefore, a consideration of the social context and emotional climate for learning is important for all pupils. However, both the Warnock Report (DES, 1978) and the National Curriculum Council (1989) have argued that this may be particularly important for pupils with special educational needs.

Beveridge (1993) claims that pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties "may need additional help in order to establish positive relationships with their teachers and their peers" (p 94). She also stresses the importance of addressing

such needs both on an individual and a whole class basis.

For example, where pupils have difficulties in peer relationships which interfere with their learning, it is important not only to help them as individuals to develop their confidence and social skills, but also to work with the class as a whole in order to ensure that they do not become the subject of teasing, ridicule or rejection.

(Beveridge, 1993, p 96)

Whilst it is important to recognise and meet special educational needs on an individual basis, such strategies are likely to be most effective when they are part of a whole-school policy. Smith and Thompson (1991) identify the effectiveness of whole-school policies in helping to combat bullying in schools. According to Thompson and Arora (1991) a whole-school approach would include such measures as:

increased liaison with all parents;

review of the pastoral care curriculum throughout the school;

a staff development policy which included consistent support for staff to develop their abilities to handle children in emotionally tense situations.

(Thompson & Arora, 1991, p 9)

Although these recommendations emerge from research into bullying, they appear to have direct relevance to work aimed at empowering quiet withdrawn pupils.

In the context of this study I was able to work with pupils both on an individual and a whole-class basis. Strategies for empowering quiet pupils which proved effective - in withdrawal groups and as part of whole class teaching - are discussed in section 4.4. and 4.5. of this thesis. However, whilst appreciating the benefits of whole-school approaches, my work with quiet withdrawn pupils was not part of a whole-school initiative.

Beveridge (1993) identifies a number of patterns of teacher behaviour which give rise to positive teacher-pupil relationships. These include: creating a climate of mutual respect; genuine interest in the pupils as individuals; care and concern for the class as a whole; and promoting pupils' self-esteem and motivation for learning through the provision of relevant and achievable tasks, and by regular constructive feedback and praise.

In Experiencing Special Education (1993) Barrie Wade and Maggie Moore begin their research, into the experiences of pupils with special educational needs, with a summary of early studies of what children think about their teachers. These early studies (for example, Dale, 1967; Makins 1969;) emphasised the crucial importance of relationships for children. Moreover, the characteristics of a good teacher identified by pupils have as much to do with the personality of the teacher as with their teaching abilities. Thus one study by Virginia Makins (1969) concluded that;

how children were taught matters more to them than what they are taught. Her sample placed emphasis on teachers who were lively and interesting, interested in their students and approachable. The main teaching ability mentioned was that of giving clear explanations to help understanding; the main dislike was shouting.

(Wade & Moore, 1993, p 29)

Wade and Moore's (1993) own research emphasises the importance of relationships (between pupils, teachers and parents) for learning. It also emphasises the frustration and anger experienced by pupils with special educational needs when their specific needs are over emphasised or ignored. In both

respects this research has clear implications for work with quiet withdrawn pupils in mainstream classrooms.

To summarise, section 2.6 began with the premise that habitually quiet pupils have special educational needs. It examined different approaches to special educational needs and considered the relative merits of each approach. It concluded with a discussion of the inadequacies of the term "needs" and suggested that it may be more appropriate to think in terms of "rights" and "opportunities". Section 2.7 developed the themes raised, through an examination of school effectiveness research in relation to pupils with special educational needs. The main focus of this section was a consideration of the social and emotional climate of the classroom and the importance of relationships for learning.

Before moving on to a discussion of the fieldwork it is appropriate to conclude this review with a summary of the emerging themes which form the basis of the subsequent data analysis.

* Habitually quiet behaviour is detrimental to learning and in extreme cases can lead to a denial of self.

* Much of the quiet withdrawn behaviour witnessed in schools has its origin in the formation of basic anxiety which is a response to perceived anxiety in early childhood relationships with parents and significant others.

* Difficulties with interpersonal relationships can be related to anxious or deviant attachments or an inappropriate level of separation and connectedness in relationships.

* The four modes of pupil behaviour "ready to learn", "excluding", "afraid" and "at risk" represent a development of Horney's "positions" as applied to work with quiet withdrawn pupils in an educational setting.

* Children who are habitually quiet in school have difficulty in forming relationships both with teachers and peers and may be considered to have special educational needs.

* In order to meet these needs it is necessary for teachers to consider the social and emotional climate of the classroom, especially the extent to which this affects the quality of relationships in school.

* Genuine dialogue based on "good-enough" relationships (between teachers and pupils, teachers and parents and among peers) is central to the learning process. Teaching strategies which encourage pupil-centred dialogue are especially important for children already silenced by their experience of anxiety in relationships with parents or significant others.

PART THREE : FIELDWORK

Section 3.1. : The Setting

3.1.a) Research Aims

To recapitulate my outline in Part One of this thesis, this account of work with quiet pupils has three major and related aims:

First, to explore the ways in which quiet pupils are educationally disadvantaged by inability or unwillingness to talk to teachers and pupils in school,

Second, to examine the factors which may have contributed to the child's reluctance to participate in class lessons; these may be related to the child's diminished sense of self-worth, or their difficulties in forming and sustaining relationships with others,

Third, to devise and implement teaching strategies which enable teachers to develop pupils' self-esteem through positive relationships, thus empowering them to take an increasingly active role in their education.

In meeting these aims it was my intention to try to understand quiet withdrawn behaviour from the pupils' own perspective. During the course of the study I sought an understanding of quiet, withdrawn behaviour through selective ethnographic methods which included in-depth interviewing (with pupils parents and teachers) and participant observation (of the pupils in their mainstream classrooms and during small group activities). Before describing these methods in detail (section 3.3.) it is appropriate to draw links between the research aims and the types of data collected.

Classroom observations supported by comments made by pupils and their parents during one-to-one interviews were used to identify ways in which pupils are educationally disadvantaged by an inability or unwillingness to talk freely to pupils and teachers in school. (For analysis of these see section 4.4.).

One-to-one interviews with pupils and their parents form the basis of an analysis of the underlying factors which may contribute to the child's reluctance to participate in class lessons. (For analysis of the quality of parent/child relationships see section 4.2.) The school-based factors which contribute to quiet withdrawn behaviour in schools are identified through classroom observations and are discussed in section 4.3.

Teaching strategies which enabled pupils to take a more active role in their education were devised in the light of classroom observations but were implemented during participant observations of my own teaching of the pupils in withdrawal groups and in a whole class context. (For an analysis of this work see sections 4.4. and 4.5. respectively).

Section 3.1.b) Researching My Own Classroom

As the study grew out of observations of a specific group of pupils in my own classroom it seemed appropriate that the research should focus on them. Consequently, my research began in the small inner city middle school where I had worked as class teacher and language development post holder during the previous four years.

The fact that I was known in the school and in the local community brought significant advantages which, I would argue far outweighed any disadvantages I might experience in researching the familiar.

The main advantage was that I had already established a good relationship with both the pupils and their parents. I felt that research with quiet withdrawn pupils would be more effective if such work grew out of existing relationships. Although the majority of the pupils had known me for two years before the study began, it still took a long time for some of them to trust me enough to confide in me. For example, Susie's concerns about her relationship with her mother were revealed gradually over time. Moreover, the fact that she never publicly admitted the existence of her step-family suggests that she might not have talked about these experiences to me if I had been a stranger prior to the study.

Similarly, I feel that the fact I was already known and trusted in the local community made it easier for parents to welcome me into their homes and their lives. Certainly, an analysis of the range of issues raised by some parents during the one-to-one interviews suggests that our previous relationship did not prevent them from being honest. Some parents criticised their children's school and the quality of the education they received. Others expressed blatantly racist comments which, they admitted, they were unlikely to repeat in school.

In addition, the fact that I had taught the pupils before was an important prerequisite to being able to carry out the whole class teaching during the second phase of the study.

Experience of supply teaching in the same school demonstrated to me some of the difficulties which an experienced teacher

can face when working with a group of children for the first time. I felt that the Y6 class which featured in the study would have been less receptive if I had not already established a relationship with them.

I found that the most obvious disadvantage of carrying out research in a school where I had previously taught was in convincing some staff of the validity of my new role. Whilst nothing was said directly, I felt that the class teacher was always a little suspicious of my motives for the research. He seemed uncomfortable with the idea of having me observe his teaching. Moreover, during the course of the study he put forward a number of reasons as to why he was unable to find time to be interviewed about his work and the pupils. I felt that he would have refused me access to his class if I had been an unknown researcher from outside the school. The fact that I was a former colleague put him in a difficult situation in which he felt unable to be honest about his feelings. This situation in which, despite my best efforts, I was unable to establish a trusting relationship with a former colleague served as a powerful reminder of the way in which research can put people on the defensive.

The potential difficulties of being an "inside" researcher were outlined by Judith Bell (1987) when describing the experiences of a research student:

The close contact with the institution and colleagues made objectivity difficult to attain and, he felt, gaining confidential knowledge had the potential for affecting his relationships with colleagues.

(Bell, 1987, p 45)

I was not trying to achieve "objectivity" but, - to invoke a term from phenomenological enquiry - a "proper subjectivity". (This term, in accepting that there is nothing ultimately to be known "as facts" about the realised world, helps to remind us that knowledge is a matter of interrelations between the person, the onlooker and the world.) Nevertheless, I do identify with the difficulties associated with trying to carry out research in an school where I had previously worked as a teacher. In addition, the fact that the teacher-researcher is well known can prohibit staff from regarding them as an authority, with the result that their ideas are rejected. In planning this study I had hoped that the class teacher would come to appreciate the value of small group activities and that he might consider using the approach with me in a team teaching situation. To this end I invited him into my classroom so that he could observe small group work in action and perhaps offer some critical reflection on my teaching. However, he remained reticent about developing small group activities in his own teaching. I am extremely grateful to the Headteacher for her continuing support without which the study could not have been completed in its present form.

3.1.c) Background to the Primary School

At the time of the research the school was an 8 to 12 years middle school with an annual intake of fewer than sixty pupils. The school was situated in the middle of an inner city area

and was housed in half of a large 1920's building which had been built as a secondary modern school. The area had a high level of unemployment and the majority of the pupils lived in rented houses or maisonettes.

The school drew its intake from a multi-ethnic catchment area in which fifty percent of the population were black, the majority of those being of African-Caribbean origin. The remainder of the black families originated from the Asian subcontinent although the pupils attending the school were born in Britain. Involvement in the study revealed a level of racial disharmony in the area, of which I had not been aware during the period of my teaching at the school. In addition to racial tensions between the black and white sectors of the community there were also racial conflicts between African-Caribbean and Asian families. Whilst the school worked hard at fostering understanding and tolerance between races, the pupils lived in a world in which racial disharmony was rife.

Participation in the study also alerted me to the fact that the area was known, by the community and by the police, to be inhabited by a number of drug dealers. Indeed, during the whole class teaching in phase two of the study, I was alarmed by the extent to which some pupils were aware of drug abuse and related crimes.

3.1.d) Choice of Pupils

At the start of the study the pupils with whom I chose to work were in the same Y6 class and were approaching their eleventh birthday.

My experience of working with the class prior to the start of the study meant that I knew the majority of the pupils extremely well. As a consequence, the decision as to which pupils should be included in the study was based on first hand knowledge of how those pupils had behaved whilst I had been their class teacher. Subsequent observations of the selected pupils working with other teachers, both in primary and secondary schools, confirmed that these pupils were likely to exhibit quiet withdrawn behaviour with other teachers and in a range of settings. Thus observations carried out during the course of the study have confirmed my view that the pupils' quiet behaviour was, in some respects, habitual and not merely a response to my own teaching.

By reflecting on the experience of teaching the class I drew up a list of ten pupils whom I considered to be quiet and withdrawn in class. I then consulted the class teacher about pupils who were new to the school and of whom I had no background knowledge. In this way Pamela and Pete were added to the group, following consultation with the class teacher.

Being quiet and withdrawn in class was the one criterion which united the group of selected pupils. In many other respects

the pupils were extremely diverse. Ten of the twelve selected pupils were girls, which raised the issue of a possible link between quiet compliant behaviour and gender. During the early days of this study an exploration of the connection between gender and language nearly led to the writing of a completely different thesis, which would have focused exclusively on girls and their acquisition of language. However, a recognition of the difficulties which quiet boys - for example, Duncan and my own brother Nigel - experience when they do not conform to a stereo-typical view of "male behaviour", was sufficient to ensure that I worked with both boys and girls.

In terms of racial origins the group was mixed. Two pupils, Angie and Justina, were of African-Caribbean origin, whilst Charlene was of mixed race with a black father and a white mother; Rasheeda was the only Asian pupil to be included in the study.

Additional to the pupils who were included in the study was one other Asian girl, Masserat, who met the criterion of being quiet and withdrawn. However, since her family and I did not share a common language, I accepted that this would make one-to-one interviews difficult, without a good interpreter. Similarly, as Masserat had severe learning difficulties quite apart from her quiet behaviour, I felt it inappropriate to include her in the study. Yet she did take part in the whole class teaching in phase two of the study.

During the three years of data collection, and despite the fact that the pupils transferred from one primary school to seven secondary schools, I was able to maintain contact with ten of the twelve pupils and their families. It is perhaps indicative of the relationship between Charlene's family and the school that I was unable to obtain an interview with either her mother or sister. I lost contact with Charlene altogether during the second year of data gathering when, after a period of intermittent truanting, Charlene and her family "disappeared" from the area without leaving a forwarding address. Similarly, although I maintained contact with Rasheeda's family and was able to carry out the second parent interview with her mother and sister, I lost contact with Rasheeda when she left the city to attend a secondary school near her father.

However, I was able to maintain contact with the remaining ten children who took part in all aspects of the study. My relationship with some of those pupils became extremely close and I was pleased that some of them kept in contact with me long after the study finished.

Section 3.2. : An Ethnographic Approach

I chose to adopt an ethnographic approach to the understanding of quiet withdrawn behaviour, since ethnography is concerned with how people make sense of their everyday world. As

proposed by Harold Garfinkel (1968), ethnography sets out to;

treat practical activities, practical circumstances, and practical sociological reasonings as topics of empirical study, and by paying to the most commonplace activities of daily life the attention usually accorded extraordinary events, seeks to learn about them as phenomena in their own right.

(Garfinkel, 1968, p 33)

More specifically, ethnography is directed at the mechanisms by which participants achieve and sustain interaction in a social encounter; the assumptions they make, the conventions they utilise, and the practices they adopt. Thus ethnography seeks to understand social accomplishments in their own terms and it is concerned to understand them *from within*.

In Research and the Teacher Graham Hitchcock and David Hughes (1989) provided a useful summary of the characteristics of ethnography, These include:

- 1 the production of **descriptive cultural knowledge** of a group;
- 2 the description of activities in relation to a particular cultural context from the point of view of the **members of that group themselves**;
- 3 the production of a list of features constitutive of **membership in a group or culture**;
- 4 the **description and analysis of patterns of social interaction**;
- 5 the provision as far as possible of **"insider accounts"**;
- 6 the **development of theory**.

(Hitchcock & Hughes, 1989, pp 52-53)

In carrying out this research I wanted to provide an analysis of the data collected in a way which interpreted the experiences of quiet withdrawn pupils from their own

perspective. As discussed below, a range of data from a variety of sources is used to provide insights into the pupils' perceptions of their experience. Thus, for example, semi-structured interviews form the main focus of the enquiry. However, issues raised during interviews with pupils would be considered alongside data gathered from other sources such as classroom observations and interviews with parents and teachers. The resulting analysis aims to draw together a wealth of data into a tight framework of enquiry.

Section 3.3. : Data Collection

The data consisted of: **semi-structured interviews** with pupils parents and teacher, **observations of classroom interactions** in both primary and secondary schools and **observations of small group interactions** both in withdrawal groups and as part of whole class teaching.

During the study I carried out **forty-five interviews** with the pupils, **twenty-two interviews** with parents and **ten interviews** with **secondary school teachers**. As these interviews lasted between 30 and 45 minutes each, this amounted to over **forty hours** of tapes, all of which were transcribed as accurately as possible.

In terms of **classroom observations**, I spent **ten hours** observing the pupils in their **primary classroom**. Opportunity

to observe pupils in their secondary schools differed considerably from school to school. For example, in Justina's secondary school I had no difficulty in gaining permission to shadow her throughout a school day. In other schools access was more restricted and had to be limited to two hours of lessons. Despite these restrictions, during the course of the study I spent over **twenty hours** observing the pupils at work in their **secondary schools** - a total of more than **thirty** classroom observation hours.

Teaching the pupils (in withdrawal groups during phase one and in a whole class context in phase two of the study) occupied over **thirty-five hours**. In addition to recording my observations in a "teacher's journal", I also tape recorded hundreds of episodes of talk. Whilst some of these have been transcribed for analysis, this aspect of my research generated far more data than it was possible to analyse in a thesis of this length. Whilst appreciating the advantages of recording small group discussions for analysis, I learned the hard way to be more selective in my use of tape-recorders in the classroom.

In addition to the data discussed above, informal conversations with pupils, teachers and parents added important insights to my understanding of the pupils' experiences. I also got into the habit of recording my own, often very private, reflections in my teacher's journal. In this way my teacher's journal recorded both the progress of the project and developments in my own thinking.

Having outlined the quantity of data collected it is appropriate to focus on the nature and quality of that data.

3.3.a) Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were chosen because they provided an ideal opportunity for me to provide a context for the interviews whilst, at the same time, allowing the interviewees to answer the questions in their own way and to introduce their own issues and agenda if they so wished. During the course of the study I carried out semi-structured interviews with pupils, parents and teachers. All the interviews, each of which lasted between thirty and forty five minutes, were tape recorded and subsequently transcribed. What follows is a brief description of the interviews. The interview schedules and examples of the transcriptions are included in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 respectively.

Of all the research methods I employed in this study, it was the interviews which gave me most pleasure and which yielded the richest, most easily accessible data. Having the opportunity to talk with individual pupils was a tremendous privilege. I am aware that this opportunity is not normally available to class teachers in the course of an ordinary school day. However, hearing pupils talk about their lives convinced me of the tremendous benefits to be gained from

spending time with individual pupils and their families.

Interviews with Pupils

During the course of the study I carried out four semi-structured interviews with each of the pupils. The first took place at the beginning of the study and focussed on the pupils' interpretations of their life stories as portrayed on their personal time line. These pictorial representations of significant events in the pupils' lives were produced as part of a whole class activity prior to the interviews. During this first interview pupils were also asked about their perception of their present school and about what they might do after leaving school. In addition pupils were also asked to describe their perceptions of themselves and how far they regarded themselves as being talkative and shy. This first interview provided me with valuable information about the pupils' perceptions of their lives - past, present and future. It also formed the basis of subsequent work both in the withdrawal groups and in one-to-one interviews.

The **second** pupil interviews took place approximately four months later, that is, towards the end of my work with the pupils in withdrawal groups. The interviews began with an opportunity for the pupils to talk about what had happened to them since the first interview. I also encouraged the pupils to reflect on their school experiences during the previous academic year. Whilst pupils could talk about what they had

done during the year they seemed to have difficulty in predicting what their class teacher was likely to write on their end of year report. Similarly, the pupils had little to say about their predictions for the following year. Using a class list as an *aide-memoire* the pupils were then asked to identify which pupils were; clever, talkative, a good talker and a good listener. From this I encouraged the pupils to identify the characteristics which they believed made a good talker and listener. The second interviews concluded with the pupils being asked to provide a description of themselves.

The third pupil interviews took place during the second year of the study (phase two) and ran concurrently with my teaching the quiet pupils in a whole class context. As the focus of the third interviews was to provide pupils with an opportunity to raise any issues which they felt were important, they were asked about a variety of issues such as: "Who is the most important person in you life?"; "What makes you angry?" and "What was your proudest moment?". In addition to the questions which were asked of all the pupils, supplementary questions were asked of individual pupils about issues which they had raised previously. For example, Angie was asked to elaborate on three points: her choice of pet; playing with her mother's things and her view that shyness was natural.

(Copies of the interview schedules are included in Appendix 1). In the third interview, unlike in the first two interviews when I asked the questions, the pupils were given a copy of the questions written on individual cards. In this interview pupils were asked to answer the questions in any

order they liked. Perhaps as a result of a number of factors (familiarity with being interviewed, a growing relationship with me, the type of questions being asked and the style of the interview) these interviews provided more personal reflection than had been the case in either of the two previous interviews.

The fourth pupil interviews took place shortly after the pupils moved to their secondary schools (phase three). These interviews focussed on the pupils' perceptions of their new schools and how they felt they had adjusted to the new environment. In addition to finding out about how the pupils had adapted to the different practical and academic challenges posed by their new schools, I was particularly interested in hearing about the relationships which the pupils had made both with teachers and with peers. In this interview pupils were asked to nominate up to three members of staff whom they felt it would be appropriate for me to approach for an interview. I felt that the pupils' reasons for their selection were as important as the selection itself.

Interviews with Parents or "Significant Others"

Given that many of the pupils highlighted by the study came from lone-parent families I thought it appropriate to ask the pupils to nominate someone at home whom I could approach for an interview. In the event, eight pupils nominated their mother, two pupils nominated their father and two pupils

nominated an elder sister as the best person for me to talk to. With one exception, everyone I approached agreed to take part in the interviews. Sadly Charlene's sister never kept any of the six appointments I made in order to talk with her.

All but one of the "parent" interviews took place in the pupils' homes. When asked where it was most convenient to meet, Angie's mother said that it was easier for her to visit me for the first interview. The second interview took place in her office at work. My experience of interviewing parents in their own homes convinced me of the value of home visits in creating genuine dialogue between parents and teachers. For example, I learnt far more about individual pupils and the aspirations and values of their families during two home visits than I had previously learnt in a number of school-based parents' evenings. In their own homes parents were far more honest about their children's education and about the community in which they lived than they were likely to be in the relatively formal setting of a school open day. However, I do recognise that the notion of "equal partnership" challenges the idea of the teacher as sole "expert", a shift in emphasis which many teachers would be unhappy to accept.

The first "parent" interviews took place at the start of the study and focussed on a discussion of their child's early development and experience of school. Whilst the interviews did include a direct question about the child's relationships within the family, much could be gleaned about the quality of parent child relationships from the way in which the parents

answered other questions. For example, the way in which Susie's dad spoke of the way in which she was "dumped" on him suggested a degree of conflict in his relationship with his daughter which was later supported by Susie's decision to go and live with her mother. Similarly, the love which parents had for their children was often evident in the way in which the parents spoke of their children. Thus, in addition to providing important biographical information, these first parent interviews provided valuable insights into the quality of the parent/child relationships.

The second parent interviews took place towards the end of the study after the pupils had transferred to their secondary schools. The interviews focussed on the new school, particularly the parents' reasons for choosing the school and their initial impressions of it. In order to provide a context for their comments about their child's education, the parents were also asked about their own experiences of school and especially about the ways in which they felt that they had been successful in school.

Interviews with Teachers

Sadly, despite repeated requests at different points of the study, I was never able to carry out interviews with the class teacher of the pupils during their final two years in primary school. The teacher's reason was that he did not have the time to give interviews. He argued that it was more

appropriate to spend any spare time he did have preparing and marking. The implication was that neither he nor the pupils would benefit from dialogue between us. Whilst both the Headteacher and I tried hard to encourage him to talk to me about his perceptions of the pupils, he could not be persuaded. I was left with the impression that either my research was of no interest to him or conversely that he was in some way threatened by the idea of participating in the study.

At the start of the study the pupils were in the same class of their primary school. However, when they came to transfer to secondary school the pupils chose a wide variety of schools. Consequently, in order for me to complete the data collection it was necessary for me to make contact with, and visit, seven different secondary schools in two Local Education Authorities.

When the pupils entered secondary school I asked permission - of parents, pupils and staff - to shadow the pupils during lessons. In addition I asked the pupils to nominate up to three members of staff whom I could approach for an interview. In the majority of cases the first teacher I approached agreed to being involved in a semi-structured interview lasting approximately half an hour. It was only in Duncan's school that I was unable to interview the teacher who was the pupil's first choice.

The interview with the secondary school teachers was divided

into four sections. First, I tried to establish the nature of the contact between the pupil and the teacher. Second, I asked about the teacher's first impressions of the pupil. Third, I asked about the pupil's transition to secondary school. Finally, to provide a context for the interview, I asked the teacher for a brief description of their role and position in the school.

3.3.b) Observations of Classroom Interactions

During the course of the study I had the opportunity to observe pupils at work in their ordinary classrooms in both their primary and secondary schools. During phase one and two of the study I observed the pupils working with their primary school class teacher a great deal. Ten hours of observations were written up for inclusion in this study.

The amount of time I spent shadowing pupils in their secondary schools varied considerably from school to school. For example, whilst the staff of Justina's school were happy for me to spend the whole day observing her at work, Angie's teachers preferred me to visit for the minimum time possible. I spent at least two hours shadowing each pupil in their secondary schools. Data collected during these observations provided me with insights into the nature of the pupils withdrawn behaviour (discussed in section 4.3.). These observations also provided me with the opportunity to analyse

which teaching strategies appeared to increase or alleviate the pupils' need to withdraw from classroom activities.

Throughout the observations of the pupils at work in their mainstream classrooms I adopted the role of "participant observer". The phrase **participant observation** is used here to refer to,

research that involves social interaction between the researcher and informants in the milieu of the latter, during which data are systematically and unobtrusively collected. (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984, p 15)

Perhaps because the secondary school observations took place towards the end of the study, I found the role of participant observer much easier when shadowing pupils in their secondary schools. This may be because I had limited contact with any particular class or teacher. Another factor might be that in these classrooms I was unknown by the teacher and the majority of the pupils. The fact that I was unknown made it easier to sit and observe the selected pupils without feeling drawn into the activities of the rest of the class.

3.3.c) Observations of Small Group Interactions

In order to devise and implement teaching strategies which would empower quiet pupils to take a more active role in their education it was necessary for me to engage in a qualified version of action research and to teach the pupils myself. According to Halsey's definition, quoted in Cohen (1986):

Action research is small-scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects of such intervention. (Cohen, 1986, p 208)

An analysis of tape-recorded small group discussions supplemented my own observations to provide me with data for a close examination of the effects of my intervention.

Being free from the pressures of full time teaching meant that I did not experience any difficulties in combining the roles of teacher and researcher. In fact, compared with my previous experience of trying to juggle the demands of full time teaching with part time M.Ed. research, participation in the teaching components of this research was a delight. Freed from the constraints and responsibilities of full time teaching I was able to focus all my energies on my limited teaching commitment. Whilst luxuriating in the time for reflection which full time research gave me, I began to think of schemes which would enable all teachers to have time out of their classrooms. However, the stumbling block was invariably the practical constraints of a shortage of time and money. It should not be necessary for professionals to have to give up full time contracts in order to find the time and energy for research.

One of the direct consequences of my participation in this study was a re-examination of my role of teacher and of the way in which I worked with, and responded to, the pupils in my care. (For further discussion see section 4.4.e).

During phase one of the study I withdrew the pupils from their

mainstream classroom and taught them for a total of twelve hours spread over a twelve week period. Extensive use of tape recorders during this time allowed me to analyse the pupils' contributions in these small group discussions. (For a discussion of the work carried out by the withdrawal groups see section 4.4. of this thesis.)

In order to demonstrate that the teaching strategies which were proven to empower quiet pupils were appropriate to whole class teaching, in phase two of the study I taught the quiet pupils alongside their mainstream peers in a whole class context. I worked with the whole class for an hour a week throughout their final year in primary school. However, for this study I analysed twenty hours of teaching. As with the withdrawal groups, extensive use of tape recorders allowed me the opportunity to analyse pupils' participation in small group discussions. During this phase of the study I also used a video camera to record the pupils at work with their peers. The video recordings augmented the audio tapes in providing an opportunity to analyse the peer group interactions in these small groups.

Section 3.4. : Data Analysis

Making sense of the wealth of data gathered was, without doubt, the most difficult aspect of the whole study. There is an inevitability and a logic to the analysis in its final form

which has grown out of months of uncertainty, organisation and restructuring. In order to interpret the experiences of quiet pupils from their own perspective it was crucial that I allowed their story to emerge from the data. I immersed myself in the data, reading and re-reading the interviews until I felt I understood the pupils' perspective. Only then did I trust myself to interpret the classroom observations from the pupils' point of view.

Running concurrent with my analysis of the data was an extensive library search during which I tried to develop a theoretical framework which would help me to explain my data. My reading of post-feminist accounts of attachment and separateness in relationships with parents were central to my understanding and reinterpreting Bowlby's attachment theories. In addition, and on a personal note, the literature which highlighted the importance of fathers also helped me to come to terms with the recent death of my own father with whom I was extremely close.

Gradually I organised the analysis of the data around three major themes. First, the pupils' sense of self as revealed during semi-structured interviews with the pupils and their parents. Second, the quality of the pupils' relationships with parents as revealed during interviews with pupils and their parents. Finally, the nature of the pupils' interactions with teachers and peers in school as observed by me in both their mainstream classroom and during small group activities devised and implemented by me. An examination of

these themes and how they relate to all the pupils highlighted by the present study forms the basis of Part Four of this thesis.

By comparison, Part Five of this thesis uses the same data as the basis for illustrative case studies of pupils described elsewhere (section 2.2.) as "Ready to Learn", "Excluding", "Afraid" and "At Risk". During the first year of the study I began to think of the twelve pupils as belonging to one of four groups, on the basis of an intuitive understanding of their habitually quiet behaviour as observed in the classroom. Subsequent reading of the work of Karen Horney allowed me to make links between my perceptions of the pupils and what she described as of modes of behaviour. My model of four learning styles (derived from Horney) was a useful tool in helping to explain the nature and causes of the pupils' behaviour. At no time - during the study or since - have I used these categories when talking to the pupils, their parents or teachers.

Diana, Mandy and Justina seemed similar in their willingness to learn and in their steady, conscientious approach to their work. I came to regard these pupils as ready to learn. Angie, Pete and Vicky were the most withdrawn of the group. In the context of this study they are referred to as excluding. What Roxana, Susie and Duncan had in common was a tendency to perceive conflict in relationships. Believing themselves to be victims of bullying and acts of unkindness by other pupils I thought of these pupils as being afraid. At

Risk was the phrase I chose for the remaining pupils, Rasheeda, Charlene and Pamela. Despite participation in the study, I never really felt as if I had got to know these pupils and they appeared to remain on the fringe of the social and academic life of the classroom. The way in which two of these pupils "disappeared" during the course of the study may be indicative of the lack of relationship between their families and myself as representative of the school.

Drawing on the data as outlined in this section, **Part Four** examines the major themes of the study as they relate to all the pupils. By comparison, **Part Five** uses the same data as the basis for four illustrative case studies.

PART FOUR : ANALYSIS OF DATA (1)

This analysis examines and develops issues introduced in the review of the literature by applying them to the specific experiences of the children highlighted by the study. As revealed in part three, it is based on three kinds of data: semi-structured interviews (with pupils, parents and teachers), classroom observations and an account of pupil participation in small group activities.

The first two sections of the analysis focus on the possible underlying causes of the quiet withdrawn behaviour witnessed in school. Section 4.1. examines the pupils' sense of self as revealed during a series of one-to-one interviews with them and their parents. Data drawn from the same semi-structured interviews also forms the basis of section 4.2. This discusses the nature and quality of the parent-child relationships and the possible connection between anxious attachments experienced during early childhood and habitually quiet behaviour in school. This section also examines the pupils' experience of and response to separation and loss of significant attachment figures.

Whilst the first two sections are based on interviews with pupils and their parents the remainder of this analysis draws on data gathered during detailed observations of the pupils at work in their primary and secondary schools.

In section 4.3. classroom observations are used to describe

the nature of the pupils' quiet withdrawn behaviour. Section 4.3.a identifies the significant features of some lessons in which pupils were clearly **willing and able to participate**. Section 4.3.b describes the **different forms of withdrawal** exhibited by the pupils highlighted by the present study. However, in encouraging pupils to take a more active *role* in their own education it is important to remember that quiet behaviour is often a response to acute anxiety. The section concludes with a discussion of situations in which pupils have exhibited a **need to withdraw** (section 4.3.c). In addition to providing information about the special educational needs of individual pupils an analysis of the classroom observations also informed my own teaching approaches as discussed in sections 4.4. and 4.5.

In work which aims to empower quiet pupils to take a more active role in their own education the **social and emotional climate** of the classroom would appear to be of particular importance. Consequently, an important aim of this study is to devise and implement teaching strategies which would create a social and emotional climate conducive to active pupil participation. My work with quiet withdrawn pupils was carried out in two distinct but related stages.

During the first year of the project (phase one) I worked exclusively with quiet pupils in small **withdrawal groups** outside their mainstream classroom. A discussion of this work forms the basis of section 4.4. of this analysis. During the second year (phase two) of the study I developed the teaching

strategies piloted in phase one and applied them to a situation in which the quiet pupils were taught alongside their peers in a mainstream classroom. Section 4.5. offers a critical account of this **whole class teaching**.

The analysis as described above is complemented and supported by a selection of detailed illustrative case studies which forms the basis of part five of the thesis.

SECTION 4.1. : A DEVELOPING SENSE OF SELF

Section 4.1. is based on data gathered during one-to-one interviews with the pupils and their parents. It begins (section 4.1.a) with the pupils' accounts of their quiet behaviour, which they frequently refer to as "shyness". It then explores the extent to which such behaviour limits their social and educational experiences and leads to a denial of self. Section 4.1.b explores how, despite often feeling acute anxiety in school, the quiet pupils highlighted by this study are not necessarily disaffected by their experience of school. On the contrary, they talk, sometimes with enthusiasm, about the different lessons which they enjoy. However, this seeming interest in their education can mask the pupil's real lack of participation in learning situations. Section 4.1. concludes with the reflection that, despite describing themselves as quiet or shy, these pupils do not seem to regard their behaviour as a barrier to their future ambitions. Many of the pupils featured here have ambitious, and often unrealistic, career plans.

4.1.a) Quiet Behaviour and a Denial of Self

When asked if they would describe themselves as a "talkative person" four children said no and that they were either "shy" or that they "didn't talk a lot". They identify themselves as being more shy than talkative. These four children are those

who are described, in the context of this study, as "Excluding". All but one of the other children described themselves as sometimes talkative and sometimes shy.

Generally speaking pupils were likely to be talkative at home and with people that they knew well.

No, I'm not shy at home... 'cause I know people... I know all the people at home ... don't know all the people at school... (Mandy, 1st interview, line 295-297)

They tended to be shy when they were being watched by others and their shyness was particularly acute when they were asked to speak in front of the class or during assemblies. Their anxiety about talking in front of others is clearly a disadvantage in whole class discussions. (The value of small group work in empowering quiet children, one of the basic premises of this study, is examined in section 4.5.).

For all pupils, shyness was associated with a lack of confidence or anxiety. Angie acknowledged that whilst being shy was "normal" it was also extremely frightening, "you get scared out of your wits" (Angie, 1st interview, line 446). Moreover, because of the physical symptoms which they associated with shyness, such as blushing, giggling, looking away or fidgeting, pupils found it difficult to conceal their anxiety. Knowing that they were likely to blush or giggle often made them even more self-conscious.

The pupils were aware that quiet or shy behaviour could be a handicap in social circumstances:

'cause when you're shy, you're left out of things and you don't get... get to know... more people. (Mother) thinks I'm... ignorant but I'm not... I can't I'm shy to mix with those people... (Justina, 1st interview, line 185)

Thus pupils were aware that their anxiety limited their social lives and made them appear ignorant or stupid. They were angry at their parents' seeming lack of sympathy for their problem. The pupils were also aware that they had few strategies for dealing with difficult social situations and were frustrated with themselves for not being able to overcome their shyness. Consequently whilst the pupils wanted to change their behaviour they simply did not know how. It was as if they were locked into "extreme and rigid" modes of behaviour. As this section will demonstrate such behaviour could affect the pupils' perception of themselves leading to an impairment of self-esteem or in extreme cases "a complete suppression of the spontaneous individual self" (Horney, 1939, p 91).

Fortunately, as Justina's comment demonstrates, pupils do not always accept negative definitions of themselves. She resists the idea that she is "ignorant" preferring to think of herself as shy. Moreover, most pupils do experience situations, at home or with close trusted friends, in which they feel relatively confident. Pete described how not feeling shy was the time when he could "just feel myself" (1st interview, line 292), and for Justina (1st interview, line 205) the opposite of being shy was "Ready... to do anything", something which she experienced occasionally. In empowering quiet pupils to take a more active role in their learning it is important that teachers identify and develop situations in which pupils can

feel confident of their abilities to "do anything".

Whilst the pupils were unanimous in describing quiet or shy behaviour as socially limiting they had different, often contradictory, attitudes to talk in school. Anxiety about talking with, or in front of, others can prevent pupils from taking an active role in their learning. It can also make quiet pupils feel inadequate especially in comparison with their more confident peers.

I don't talk in class. I don't go out in front and talk in class 'cause too shy.
... I don't know how others feel... 'cause they might get used to it but I don't.

(Mandy, 1st interview, lines 259 & 267)

Mandy excludes herself from the public conversations of the classroom thus denying herself valuable learning experiences. Incidentally, so far as the pupils are concerned, the notion of talk as a performance "in front of others" is unique to their experience of school. In all other social situations their talk would be conversational. (The nature of classroom dialogue, already discussed in section 1.2., will be further developed through a discussion of small group teaching in section 4.5.).

Some pupils expressed frustration that not talking in class prevented them from learning. Justina is aware of the seeming contradiction in her attitude to talking in class. She tries to comply with the teacher's request for "quiet in class" but feels that prevents her from learning.

...but I'd still... um... want to... learn the questions and answers to... to work and that so I know how to do it...
 (Justina, 1st interview, line 151)

Observations of class lessons suggest that Justina rarely asked for the teacher's help preferring to struggle on alone or ask her peers. However, on one occasion when she did pluck up the courage to ask for his help she was sent back to her place. An act which made her extremely angry.

Having witnessed the incident I have some sympathy for the teacher. He had been looking at his watch for some time obviously anxious to find a break in the stream of pupils at his desk in order to announce a change of activity. However, I shared Justina's frustration that she was denied the help she felt she needed. I noted in my journal that loud, potentially aggressive pupils were less likely, because of their potential aggression, to be denied help in this way. For example, one such boy, Daniel, had come to the teacher's desk after the teacher had become aware of the time but he was not sent away. I was also conscious that Justina had been given no explanation as to why she was being sent away. Not only was this a clear example of how quiet pupils can be marginalised in the classroom, it also confirmed Justina's view that she is in some way an inadequate pupil.

Justina ... and he wouldn't help me... and when he does help me, I don't understand.
 I feel awful because... maybe he's thinking that I should - maybe I should understand nearly everything but I don't

R Do you ask him again?

Justina Sometimes.

R Does it help?

Justina Not really... I'm not, I'm not, I'm not... that clever at maths... I'm not trying to be top but I wish I could do a bit better...
 (Justina, 1st interview, lines 218-224)

The lack of communication between Justina and her teacher helps to confirm her image of herself as a weak pupil who has difficulty in understanding her work. Moreover, there is a suggestion that she has such a low opinion of herself that she feels she does not deserve his help. Yet both her course work and end-of-year exams place Justina firmly in the top half of her class for mathematics and English. If she is to realise her potential she needs to be encouraged to develop a stronger feeling of self-worth. The quality of pupil-teacher relationships is clearly an important aspect of that process.

As was discussed in section 2.7., which focused on the social and emotional climate of the classroom, teachers need to be aware of, and help to break down, the barriers which can exist between them and their quiet pupils. The anxiety which quiet pupils experience when talking with people they do not know well can be acute. Moreover, when the teacher gives the impression that talking in class is inappropriate, or worse naughty, quiet pupils are likely to "comply" to the request for silence. Rasheeda's lack of communication with her teacher implies a parallel lack of relationship. She does not talk to her teacher much

'Cause he has to work some work to do and I have some work to do and if I say like speak to him a lot, he says "just carry on with your work".
 (Rasheeda, 1st interview, line 211)

She seems unaware that both she and the teacher should be

engaged in the same task, her education. The way in which quiet pupils exclude themselves from learning relationships is also demonstrated by Diana's comment about what she sees as the teacher's role.

...when I'm stuck he has to help me...
 ...work and everything but most of the time he's... he's like talking hisself like doing things on the board and things so you can't really talk to him when he's trying to learn children.

(Diana, 1st interview, lines 140 & 142)

In this account she effectively precludes herself from any participation in whole class discussions for fear of disturbing the teacher. Moreover, she does not include herself in the group of children being taught. Her passivity is confirmed.

Several pupils compared themselves unfavourably with relatives or friends who seemed confident in unfamiliar company.

Like my cousin, she talks a lot...
 ...when she's at people's houses she doesn't know, she gets to know her very well... after half an hour she starts talking...

(Charlene, 1st interview, line 474-476)

This was clearly a skill to be envied. Whilst the pupils could easily identify situations in which they were quiet they could also identify the attributes of a "good talker".

When overcoming or trying to cope with shyness the pupils tried several strategies which included pretending people were not there, trying to get into conversation possibly by introducing a new subject, and trying to understand the other person's point of view.

...like if no one's talking to you right, you think to yourself how am I going to start a conversation but you think really that they're shy an' all, that's why they don't talk to you... (Diana, 1st interview, line 168)

On occasions pupils simply walked away from social situations in which they felt uncomfortable. However, whilst it may be an option to walk away from a socially embarrassing situation at home, this is rarely an option available to pupils in school where the teacher controls the classroom conversations.

Similarly, the fact that teachers dominate and control classroom talk can deprive quiet pupils of an opportunity to withdraw. Thus whilst a reluctance to speak can be a response to "basic anxiety" (Horney, 1945) or the need for "an inviolable privacy" (Guntrip, 1968), the teacher always has the power to ignore that need. In whole class discussions, for example, the teacher is at liberty to call upon any pupil irrespective of their desire to talk. The teacher's justification for that might be that pressurising them in this way is the only way quiet pupils can be "encouraged" to participate. However, observations of quiet pupils during whole class discussions suggest that knowing that they can be chosen to speak at any time adds to their anxiety. The fact that they are not in control and that they might be "shown up" in front of their peers can damage their already low self-esteem. Thus quiet pupils experience class discussions in a completely different way to their more confident peers.

For confident pupils whole class discussions are opportunities for them to voluntarily demonstrate their knowledge and power.

By comparison, quiet pupils are anxious that they might be forced to speak against their will. Two contrasting examples serve to illustrate the point.

Mandy, described in the context of this study as "excluding", rarely volunteered to answer the teacher's questions, and never asked a question of her own, during whole class discussions. Consequently, such discussions gave her little opportunity to "name her world". Invariably when she did participate it was at the insistence of her class teacher. On these occasions it was the teacher rather than Mandy who determined the time, content and form of her response. In the first of a series of interviews Mandy recalls how uncomfortable she feels when she is "picked on" to answer a question in spite of not having her hand up.

Horrible. I didn't like it.

'Cause I didn't know the answer...

... I just sat there. Sometimes I gave him an answer... but sometimes not.

(Mandy, 1st pupil interview, lines 289-293)

In this situation she can appease the teacher by offering an answer or she can attempt to satisfy her "need to withdraw" by refusing to speak. Observations of her obvious discomfort suggest that either response is unlikely to be easy or to enhance her self-esteem. This is such a negative experience that she can "remember" how often it has happened. In the following excerpt of the interview Mandy talks about "putting her hand up" to answer a question.

R Does the teacher ever ask you to give an answer when you haven't got your hand up?

Mandy Yeah, he asked me about five times

R Five time today?

Mandy No when I came in class... last year... he hasn't... he hasn't told me... this year... just last year.

R So between September and Christmas you were asked five times?

Mandy Yeah, about five times.

(Mandy, 1st interview, lines 280-287)

Unfortunately Mandy's account of classroom events are unsubstantiated. However, classroom observations confirm that Mandy rarely volunteers to answer questions in class; moreover, when pressed she answers in flat monosyllables or refuses to talk at all. Consequently her participation in class discussions is accompanied by negative feelings.

By comparison Dale, an extremely talkative boy not featured in this study, clearly enjoyed the opportunity to "show off" during whole class discussions. He invariably volunteered to answer the teacher's questions and was often chosen to speak. This may have been due, in part, to his tendency to call out his answer when other pupils were chosen to answer. During the classroom observations he was never chosen to answer when he did not have his hand up. Thus Dale had far more control over his participation in the discussion than Mandy was likely to experience. Moreover, Dale frequently asked the teacher questions during class discussions. On one notable occasion Dale asked a question, which led to a conversation with the teacher that lasted several minutes while the rest of the class listened passively.

Clearly Dale and Mandy can be seen to represent the opposite

ends of a continuum. However, Mandy's experiences demonstrate how whole class discussions deny quiet pupils the opportunity to take responsibility for their learning and "name their world". As will be discussed in section 4.5., one advantage of structured small group work is that quiet pupils do not have to compete with their more confident peers for the space to speak.

Having identified that control over their speech could well be an important factor for quiet pupils I learnt to tolerate long silences from the children allowing them the opportunity to initiate conversation. Whilst this approach of "waiting for the children to speak" is difficult, if not impossible, in whole class discussions it provided a breakthrough in my relationship with Vicky.

Vicky was the most withdrawn of all the pupils highlighted by the study. Her refusal to speak in school was so extreme that it bordered on "elective mutism". Like the teachers and pupils who worked with Vicky on a daily basis I began by compensating for her lack of talk with conversations or monologues of my own. However, observing how other people responded to her alerted me to the way in which this attempt at communication actually denied Vicky the need to talk. On one occasion, for example, Vicky took her book to the teacher to be marked. The teacher, aware that Vicky was unlikely to talk, framed her response as a number of rhetorical questions and Vicky returned to her seat having said nothing at all.

Clearly a different approach was needed. I discovered that Vicky was more likely to talk when I was prepared to be quiet and tolerate the inevitable long silences. Somehow the fact that I was not consciously trying to make her speak allowed her the freedom to speak for herself. This difference of approach could explain why Vicky talked freely at home. This experience certainly has serious implications for the education of all quiet pupils and especially those who might be termed "elective mutes".

So far, this section has discussed how the majority of the pupils felt that they were, to some extent or in some circumstances, quiet or shy. Moreover, it has demonstrated the way in which quiet pupils were able to describe, in some detail, the circumstances in which they were likely to be quiet, the ways in which they were disadvantaged by their behaviour and what it felt like to be shy.

In contrast, Rasheeda described herself as talkative but was unhappy to say that she was shy. As she then goes on to describe herself as a hard worker, offering a catalogue of domestic tasks which she performed regularly at home as evidence, it seems possible that she equated shyness with being lazy. In any event shyness had negative connotations and was denied. The way in which Rasheeda's domestic responsibilities may limit her educational ambitions and achievements is discussed in a following section. What is of interest here are the possible causes of Rasheeda's quiet behaviour in school.

As Rasheeda is a bilingual pupil whose first or home language is Urdu, it could be that her relative quietness in the classroom was related to an unfamiliarity with English or her fear of not being understood. In any event her remarks about the use of what she introduced as "Paki language" in school are of interest. Essentially she does not feel that it is appropriate to speak in her home language at school because other people do not understand and they laugh at her.

'Cause if I speak Urdu to them they start to laugh that you're speaking Urdu in school.
(Rasheeda' 1st interview, line 253)

"Urdu's good for speaking at home" not at school. However, she said that it was "fun" when a teacher was able to talk to her in her home language in the context of withdrawal groups. In this way her home language is neither recognised nor valued in school, and Rasheeda is denied the opportunity to respect and use Urdu as a means of learning. Moreover, she is prevented from bringing together the different and equally important aspects of her life leading to what might be thought of as a form of "double-think". Thus the lack of appropriate bilingual provision in school could be seen in terms of a total denial of Rasheeda's life experiences. The alienation which pupils feel when their life experiences are denied in school was discussed in section 2.7. which focused on aspects related to the social and emotional climate of the classroom.

4.1.b) Pupils' Experiences of School

The pupils' quiet or shy behaviour did not necessarily indicate a disaffection with school. In fact all the pupils highlighted by this study talked enthusiastically about subjects and teachers which they liked. Indeed Rasheeda went as far as to say that being at school was "better than being at home because there was more to do". Despite their seeming passivity pupils preferred "active lessons" in which they could get on and do things rather than sit and listen to the teacher. That some pupils expressed a keen interest in games, PE and dance, for example, suggests a desire to be actively involved and a willingness to co-operate with others. For other pupils their favourite lessons were associated with hobbies, such as art and music, which were pursued by parents or siblings, thus emphasising one possible advantage of strong home-school liaison.

In contrast, the pupils also seemed to like lessons - such as the mathematics scheme and English from books - in which they could work individually and at their own pace. One pupil connected the more formal approach which they associated with maths lessons to the fact that the teacher and other pupils were more likely to offer help during such lessons. Several pupils said that they liked streamed English lessons. This could be due to a number of factors. First, these lessons involved a class of older children so there was the opportunity to work with a different teacher and different pupils. Second, as the classes were streamed for ability

there was perhaps a greater opportunity to meet a specific child's needs. Third, for some groups, especially the bottom set, the activities included games and videos which the children thoroughly enjoyed.

As has already been suggested the lessons which pupils liked least were those in which they were expected to sit and listen to the teacher or to "do writing from the board". They also disliked work, especially in mathematics, which was too hard or repetitive. Perhaps one pupil spoke for the whole group when she said how much she hated "getting things wrong". Several pupils mentioned that "doing corrections" was hard and uninteresting.

Not surprisingly pupils were frustrated or angry when their individual skills or experiences were not valued by the teacher. For example Charlene, who regularly cooked Sunday dinner at home, was extremely critical of the way in which pupils were allowed to mess about "dipping their fingers into the mixture" during cookery lessons. Little wonder that pupils become disaffected when schools fail to address their specific needs.

However, whilst it is gratifying to think that these pupils find so much to enjoy in school, their account of these lessons gives no indication of their actual involvement in them. Observations of these quiet pupils at work in their ordinary lessons are a catalogue of passivity or non-participation. For example, on the day that I observed Pamela

in her new secondary school she had a morning of minimal participation. It began with a geography lesson in which she sat quietly by herself at the desk at the front of the class. She appeared willing to work whenever the teacher set written tasks to be done. However, during the question-and-answer sessions which formed the basis of much of the lesson she rarely put up her hand to answer and was in any event never chosen to speak. As she was sitting alone she did not speak once during the entire lesson. She never demonstrated her knowledge to the teacher nor did she discuss her work with any of her peers.

In this lesson Pamela appeared to be complying with the teacher's requests. Yet closer observation revealed that her actual participation was minimal. Isolated incidents of this kind are not worrying and may even represent a period of healthy reflection. However, in the case of the quiet children featured in this study, there is enough evidence to suggest that this behaviour is common or even habitual. This lack of participation denies the pupils an opportunity to take an active role in their learning. It confirms their opinion of themselves as individuals who either do not know the answers or who are too shy and timid to try. It is easy to see how this constant marginalisation reduces self-esteem and can lead to a denial of self. (An analysis of classroom observations which reveal a variety of forms of non-participation forms the basis of section 4.3.b)

Fortunately these pupils were sometimes taught by teachers who

saw that they had a responsibility to motivate all their pupils to taking an active role in their learning. As is discussed in section 4.3.a, one such teacher was Vicky's modern-language teacher who used his role as form tutor to devise a contract in which Vicky agreed to try to answer an increasing number of questions in class. In the lesson in which I observed this system working the teacher tried exceptionally hard to reward Vicky for attempting to answer even if the answer was incorrect. Whilst in one sense this represents basic "good practice", remembering to include quiet pupils does require a level of commitment and a subtlety of approach from the teacher.

Whilst the pupils were quick to say which lessons they liked or disliked in school they were often more reticent to say what they thought they were good at. Often their answers to this question included qualifying statements which suggested that they were reluctant to consider themselves "good" at anything. For example, "I think I am best at maths but I am not better than everyone else in the class" or "I am good at maths but I don't enjoy it". Given that the majority of the pupils in the study were of average or above average ability this suggests either false modesty or poor self-esteem. Given the nature of the pupils concerned it is tempting to think the latter.

Relationships in school between teachers and pupils and among peers dominated much of the interviews and were clearly of great importance to the pupils. The quality of these

relationships determined the pupils' perceptions of school and their role in it. However, as the quality of these relationships is discussed in section 4.4. and 4.5 it is inappropriate to discuss it here. Instead this section concludes with an examination of the pupils' perceptions of their future lives as revealed during the series of pupil interviews.

4.1.c) Future Ambitions

Choice of Career

Many of the pupils could say what they wanted "to do" when they left school. Surprisingly given that six of the children had parents or siblings currently out of work none of the children expressed any doubt that they would be able to find employment. Similarly, none of the pupils referred to their quiet or shy behaviour as a possible barrier to their career plans.

This optimistic view of employment was also evident in the careers which the pupils chose for themselves. Invariably pupils chose glamorous jobs, for example, doctor, vet, fireman, air hostess and skater. Frequently in making their choice pupils showed little regard for personal suitability or relevant experience. For example, Duncan an extremely small nervous boy wanted to become a fireman "to risk your life to

save others". Similarly, Charlene wanted to "work with horses" even though she had only ridden once in her life and on that inauspicious occasion she suffered concussion due to a nasty fall.

However, some pupils realised that their long-held ambitions might be unrealistic. For example Justina had always wanted to be a doctor,

I hope I can get there 'cause I've got to be clever to do that but I don't think I will... I'm not very clever at all. Maybe if I learned I might...

(Justina, 1st interview, line 105)

The degree of uncertainty about her abilities in academic subjects is shared by the other pupils in this study and is discussed at length in a subsequent section which deals with pupils' attitudes towards school. Both the girls that said they would like to be doctors said that they would settle for a job as a nurse, as this would also give them the opportunity to work in hospitals. This raises issues of gender stereotyping. Diana's father laughed at the idea that his daughter could be a doctor and assumed, for whatever reason, that nursing would be a more suitable career. When Diana described her friend's reaction to her ambition she showed herself to be extremely conscious of other people's attitudes. In some respects these girls were typical of the group in that they wanted to "help people".

By comparison two pupils chose more lowly, and potentially more achievable, occupations. The first was sure that she would be sent to Pakistan and get a job making clothes, the

other, with some justification considering her skill in doing her friend's hair, wanted to be a hairdresser. Unfortunately, the pupils' actual pattern of employment is outside the scope of this study.

Many pupils were conscious that their chosen career would involve some kind of further education or training once they left school. In the majority of cases when an individual said that they would like the opportunity to continue their education after school they were supported by their parents. Such parents wanted their children to take advantage of opportunities which were not, for whatever reason, available to them when they were younger. Many parents expressed frustration or downright anger at the inadequacy of their own education. In some cases this was seen as the fault of the school, others felt that opportunities were there but that they had not had the sense to make the most of them. Sadly, as was revealed in the interviews with their teachers, with regard to future educational achievements, there was often a discrepancy between pupil ambition and teacher expectation. Whilst the teacher's perceptions are based on a wealth of previous experience, and are therefore more likely to be accurate, one would not want teacher expectation to provide a limit to their eventual achievements.

Family Life

When asked to comment on the kind of family life they would have after they had left school the pupils seemed aware of the contradictions inherent in wanting independence and wanting the security of staying with their parents. Some pupils felt that they would want to take care of their parents perhaps even sharing a house with them.

However, there was no perceived conflict in wanting a career and a family. All but one of the pupils felt that they would get married and have children. They wanted children because they loved babies or as Pamela said to, "carry on the world". The girls who expressed a desire to have children suggested that they would want a job and some independence before settling down with a family.

I think about my job first... .. 'cause my sister's going... she says she's going to think about her... career and everything before she has kids and gets married. (Charlene, 1st interview, line 146)

This need for independence before having a family was most eloquently expressed by Pamela whose unmarried elder sister was "tied down" with her first child. Thus personal experience added weight and conviction to a pupil's views of the future. Similarly, Charlene was among a number of pupils who had first-hand experience of childminding their siblings and regarded children as a mixed blessing.

These observations touch on a theme which runs through much of this thesis, namely the extent to which pupils feel that they

are preparing for their future roles and to what extent these roles fulfil social stereo-typed assumptions. For example Susie thought that learning maths was important, not so much for the benefits she would gain but rather:

Because when you're older and... like your children bring homework home and say "can you help me with this 'cause I... don't understand it", you can tell them...
(Susie, 1st interview, line 118)

Perhaps in hoping to be able to help her own children she is offering a veiled criticism of her own parents who had little time to support her school work. Certainly, the pupils' comments about their future family lives reflected something of their early childhood experiences.

Underlying all these ambitions is these pupils' touching assumptions that they could achieve almost anything they set their minds to. Their talk of higher and further education, which is often echoed by their parents, implies a faith in the education they are receiving which I believe to be misguided. Whilst the pupils talk in glowing terms of many of the lessons they attend, observations suggest that their actual participation in the learning process is often minimal. When, for example, they have computer lessons in which they do not touch a keyboard, or French lessons in which they get full marks for written presentation but do not speak a single word of French:

They conform, and even play the system, but they do not allow the knowledge presented to them to make any deep impact upon their view of reality.

(Barnes, 1976, p 17)

Such pupils have to be encouraged to see that this meek

compliance is not synonymous with learning and that real learning involves a "dialogue" in which they have to take responsibility for "naming their world". Empowering pupils in this way requires that teachers understand why quiet pupils are reluctant to talk freely in school. A basic theme of this study is that much of the quiet behaviour witnessed in school has its origins in the child's difficulty in forming and sustaining relationships with others. As this difficulty is influenced by the child's early relationships with parents and significant others an examination of these relationships forms the basis of section 4.2.

SECTION 4.2. : RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARENTS AND
SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

Underlying the emphasis on childhood relationships is the implication that anxious attachment with, or sustained separation from, parents or significant others has a harmful effect on the development of the individual personality. In the context of this study it is further assumed that poor-quality relationships in childhood can lead to the development of "basic anxiety" (Horney 1945) and subsequent withdrawal from relationships. Thus this study suggests a direct connection between poor parent-child relationships and a reluctance to talk freely with teachers and pupils in school. As this section will demonstrate such a connection can be established for many, but not all, of the pupils highlighted by this study. However, even where there does appear to be a connection, care has to be taken in attributing a simple cause and effect.

As established in the review of the literature, all parent-child relationships are highly complex and fraught with seeming contradictions. In addition the features of such relationships can be simultaneously both universal and unique. This is nowhere more obvious than in the following account of specific parent-child relationships. Thus whilst the language of "object-relations" or "attachment theory" has its uses in describing, understanding and comparing different relationships it can mask the subtle aspects which make individual relationships unique. Thus, underpinning reference

to the "modes of behaviour" introduced in section 2.2. and the "types of anxious attachment" discussed in section 2.3. is an awareness that people and relationships do not fit into clearly defined categories. Consequently, the use of such terms has to be supported by a detailed account of the specific circumstances to which they are being applied.

Whilst recognising that attachment and separation are in reality two aspects of a healthy relationship, the nature of this seeming contradiction is more easily expressed if they are discussed under different sub-headings. Thus section one focuses on the nature of attachment specifically emphasising the different or, to use Bowlby's phrase, "deviant patterns" of attachment behaviour exhibited by individual pupils. Section two examines the wide range of separation and loss within relationships which the pupils have experienced and especially their unique responses to such events. This section concludes with a reflection on the fact that parental relationships cannot explain all incidents of quiet withdrawn behaviour in school and that for some children other factors appear to be more significant.

4.2.a) The Nature of Attachment

Central to this account of pupil's attachment behaviour with parents and significant others is the adaptation of Bowlby's theory developed by Barrett and Trevitt (1991). Thus specific

relationships are described by the extent to which they can be thought to represent secure attachment, overprotective love, confusion or rejection.

Secure Attachment

Of the pupils highlighted by this study the best examples of secure attachments are provided by Justina and Diana. In many respects their situations are similar yet their stories remain unique. They are both being brought up in one-parent families. Justina has always been cared for exclusively by her mother whilst Diana's father assumed sole child care of his two daughters when he and his wife split up. Although both girls describe this as a perfectly acceptable arrangement they are, at the same time, aware of the stigma which continues to surround one-parent families. For example, in one interview Justina explains her definition of a proper family.

... they've got a mum and a dad living together and they're married and they've got a few children and they live in a house. (Justina, 3rd interview, line 57)

According to her definition a one-parent family is not a "proper family".

... a non-proper family is just a dad with some children or a mum with some children, but a mum can be a dad as well but a dad can't really be a mum; some can but some can't cope and some can't do things what mums do but some mums can't do the things what dads do.
(Justina, 3rd interview, line 57)

Thus her definition of a proper family conforms to a social

stereotype which denies the actual lived experience of herself and her friend Diana. Justina was made aware of this seeming contradiction in the context of the interview when she admits that her mum was "like a dad to me as well". Diana also thinks of her father as being "like a mum and a dad" (Diana, 3rd interview, line 4). In this way the two girls confirm the positive notions of non-traditional families as introduced in the review of the literature.

Evidence collected during the semi-structured interviews and brief observations of parents and children together at home, supports the view that these warm, affectionate parent-child relationships are based on mutual love and respect. Both girls speak openly about their gratitude for those who have cared for them, often in difficult circumstances. For example, Justina describes her mother as the most important person in her life and is aware of the struggle which she faced in bringing up a daughter on her own. Although currently living in a relatively comfortable house Justina remembered how they had once lived in a small, poorly repaired flat.

... everything seemed to be crunched up together and there were all things wrong with it like broken windows and things where we - and she had to try and build it to make it like a home from little things...

(Justina, 3rd interview, line 1)

Thus these working class girls are made aware of, and to some extent share, the financial struggle which faces their parents especially during long periods of unemployment. Yet, as these families illustrate, financial hardship does not of itself

lead to impoverished relationships. Both girls have been provided with a secure and loving base from which to explore the world.

From this secure base these girls have developed a strong sense of self and also have learned, by example, how to care for others. Indeed both are extremely sensitive to the needs of others. The interviews are full of examples where the girls try to understand another person's point of view. A good illustration of their ability to empathise with the needs of others was provided by Diana when she talked about the difficulty of entering into conversation with relative strangers.

... like if no-one's talking to you right, you think to yourself how am I going to start a conversation but you think really they're shy an' all, that's why they don't talk to you... (Diana, 1st interview, line 168)

Implicit in this account is a basic assumption that "the other person" is as friendly and open as the girls themselves and that shyness rather than a lack of interest or open hostility is the only possible barrier to communication.

Whilst the girls have close relationships with their respective parents they also exhibit secondary attachments with other members of their family and friends. As will be discussed in a subsequent case study Diana has an exceptionally close, almost mothering, relationship with her younger sister Dawn. Similarly, Justina has a few near neighbours to whom she can turn for support in times of need.

... and my next door neighbour... ...I think she's most -
one of the most important persons in my life.

(Justina, 3rd interview, line 1)

Their attachment to their parents does not preclude close relationships with significant others. Indeed as was suggested earlier these girls had an extremely close friendship with each other which persisted throughout primary school and was only terminated when Justina's family moved from the city.

Moreover, even whilst enjoying close relationships the girls were aware of a need for independence. In the following quote Diana is ostensibly talking about her younger sister, yet there is a suggestion that she is aware that she too needs her independence.

I've got to tell her now she's got to do things herself, be a bit more independent 'cos I like do lots of things for her and er - I help her and things and I'm telling her to do things herself now she's getting older.

(Diana, 3rd interview, line 23)

Thus in the cases of Justina and Diana secure attachments linked with growing independence seem the ideal basis for academic learning in school. Yet despite being described, in the context of this study, as "ready to learn" both girls were extremely quiet and withdrawn in class. These interviews disclose how this seeming reluctance or inability to talk in class does not stem from poor attachment behaviour in early childhood. Instead the root cause might well be misguided ideas about the role of talk in learning arising from a notion that "good" pupils do not talk in class. Sections 4.4. and 4.5., which focuses on my work with quiet withdrawn pupils

carried out during this study, examines how such ideas might be dispelled allowing pupils like Justina and Diana to take a more active role in their learning.

Over-protective Love

Barrett and Trevitt (1991) describe "overprotection" as a relationship in which the parent is unable to allow the *infant* to explore independently with the result that the child has few opportunities to learn to survive separately.

As was discussed in the review of the literature, Duncan's relationship with his parents was an extreme case of overprotection. On starting middle school Duncan exhibited attachment behaviour which was inappropriate for his age. Whilst content when his mother was working in the classroom he would become extremely distressed, often reduced to tears, when it became time for her to leave. In addition he was often brought to school by his father, who would deliver messages about special events such as school trips, as if Duncan could not be trusted to cope on his own. In this way both mother and father could be seen to be contributing to Duncan's continued dependence.

However, his father was less tolerant of Duncan's lack of independence expressing concern that he still needed to be brought to school. Similarly, his mother was aware of the need for Duncan to establish his independence. In an

interview his mother recalls how Duncan's older half-brothers "could not do enough for him" when he was little.

They used to pass him things without him having to speak for them or anything, and we used to say you must ask him for what he wants otherwise he won't be able to talk.

(Duncan's mother, 1st interview, line 14)

Yet there is a contradiction between what the parents know to be in the child's best interests and the way they behave towards him. Their overprotectiveness could have its origins in the fact that Duncan was an extremely "sickly" baby who had difficulties with feeding. This suggests that "deviant attachment" such as overprotectiveness is a form of behaviour negotiated between parents and child, not something which parents simply inflict on their children.

Duncan's behaviour in school was anxious in the extreme and in the context of the study he was described as "afraid". He would go to great lengths to avoid contact with his peers who he perceived as a perpetual physical threat.

He's never been very good at mixing socially with children. As soon as he mixed with other children he sort of cut off. Very wary. I've noticed in a group he's hung back while they've all been round before he's actually got the confidence to join in.

(Duncan's mother, 1st interview, line 52)

This lack of confidence with peers, coupled with his acute difficulties with academic work, may well have contributed to his reluctance to talk freely in class discussions.

Observations of Duncan in class lessons suggest that he was regarded as something of an oddity by both pupils and teachers. Although he regarded his classmates as potential

threats they were, on the whole, surprisingly tolerant of his anxious behaviour. Indeed he developed a close friendship with Owen and Philip who would invariably support him both socially and academically.

Similarly, teachers tried hard to make allowances for Duncan's anxiety and slow academic progress. His class teacher was especially tolerant of the long, often irrelevant and always unstructured, monologues with which Duncan would desperately try to hold an adult's attention. However, on several occasions it became obvious that a desire to meet his specific needs could result in Duncan being denied age-appropriate experiences. On one occasion for example, the teacher sent him back to his seat whilst other boys were allowed to roam freely round the classroom. In my journal I noted that in containing his movement in the classroom the teacher was (in conventional terms) treating him more like a girl than a boy.

This touches on an important feature with regard to the way in which quiet or anxious individuals are regarded by society. Whilst girls who exhibit quiet behaviour in class are fulfilling a social stereotype, boys who exhibit similar behaviour are not. One consequence of this could be that quiet behaviour in boys is regarded as more problematic than would be the case if the pupil was a girl. Similarly, as discussed in the post-feminist accounts of parenting, attachment is frequently thought of as a feminine characteristic whilst separation is the masculine counterpart. Once again, in his close attachment to his parents Duncan is

seen to be exhibiting "female" characteristics. However, it has to be acknowledged that overprotective parenting such as that experienced by Duncan would be regarded as excessive and potentially harmful irrespective of the sex of the child.

Confusion

Three of the pupils highlighted by the study could be considered to have "confused" attachments with their parents. Susie and Roxana are both described as being "afraid" whilst Pete's behaviour is "excluding". Their differing response to similar life experiences confirms that there is no direct correlation between actual experience and modes of behaviour. Thus an individual's quiet or withdrawn behaviour is a unique response to specific events.

Barrett and Trevitt (1991) describe confused attachment as one in which neither parent nor child have discovered a shared, fixed point and they give the impression of spinning within an uncontained space. No contact seems possible and there is no apparent opportunity for the formation of any attachment since the parent's emotional availability is inconsistent.

For Susie her parents' "emotional availability" was so inconsistent that it often amounted to temporary separation. Therefore it is more appropriate to consider her relationship with her parents in the following section which focusses on pupils' experiences of separation.

By comparison with Susie's preoccupation with her parents, Pete said little about his parents during the series of interviews. He preferred to focus on his uncle with whom he was extremely close and who had died unexpectedly a few years previously. Pete's reaction to this loss is discussed at length in the following section. Thus both Susie and Pete chose to talk about their experience of relationships which were in some way problematic or unresolved. However, Pete's decision not to talk about his parents does not necessarily mean that their relationship was unproblematic. There is evidence to suggest that his relationship with his mother was best described as "confused attachment". Two examples which demonstrate the opposite extremes of their relationship will serve to illustrate the point. Having observed Pete with his mother, his form teacher observed that they seemed to have a special form of communication which excludes others.

When his mother was there it was as if we weren't there. They instantly got into this conversation and they didn't make any concessions to the fact that there were three or four people around...

(Pete's teacher, 1st interview, page 3)

However, in times of stress Pete's mother was capable of totally abdicating responsibility for her son's physical or psychological well being. In an interview Pete's mother recalled a family outing in which she and Pete had separated, on the understanding that they would meet up again at an appointed place in time for the return train home. Her wisdom in letting a nine year old boy explore a seaside resort on his own is questionable but is not as serious as subsequent

events. When Pete failed to turn up at the appointed time his mother, anxious that she was going to miss the last train, set off for the station and got on the train leaving Pete to fend for himself. Even in her anxiety she knew that Pete had no means of getting home alone. Eventually she was persuaded by other passengers on the train to go back for her son.

Whilst these two events are not sufficient in themselves to build up a total picture of the mother-child relationship they do indicate the possibility of a confused form of attachment. Moreover, in that the latter constitutes a total abdication of parental responsibility, it suggests an unacceptable degree of neglect.

Whilst Pete and Susie's relationships are characterised by some form of separation from attachment figures, Roxana had a continual, if "confused", attachment to her mother. As will be discussed in a subsequent case study Roxana's mother was herself an extremely anxious woman whose preoccupation with her own ill-health bordered on hypochondria. Not only did she perceive herself to be suffering from a number of mysterious and incurable medical problems, she also anticipated medical problems for Roxana.

Anxiety for her daughter's health led to several trips to the doctor's surgery over issues which turned out to have no medical basis. The most serious of these and one which has a direct influence on Roxana's education was during a spate of severe bullying by a particular boy in her class. Roxana's

mother recalled how Roxana became extremely distressed at the mere sight of the boy.

... getting right timid again. You know as if she was frightened to death of him...
 (Roxana's mother, 1st interview, line 107)

Typically her mother had previously assumed that the change in Roxana's behaviour was caused by a serious medical condition.

... in fact she's got a photo upstairs which she had took at that time when she was ill and the bones here are just sticking out of her face, she looked really ill. In fact I thought she had got leukemia because she was just losing weight terrible.
 (Roxana's mother, 1st interview, line 107)

It is an example of "confused attachment" that despite her anxiety, Roxana's mother was not close enough to Roxana to find out the truth about the bullying she was experiencing at school. She had to have the situation "diagnosed" during yet another visit to the doctor. Given her mother's obvious inability to cope with her seemingly endless and largely unfounded anxieties, it is little wonder that Roxana has a negative outlook on life and is often beset by overwhelming anxieties of her own. In this way there is a clear connection between Roxana's relationship with her mother and her anxious withdrawn behaviour in school.

In fact Roxana's description of her life was a catalogue of illness and accidents. Whilst individually these were of a minor nature it is significant that she seemed to perceive her life as being full of illness and disasters. In some cases it was clearly her reaction to an event which was problematic rather than the event itself. One such example was when she developed a nervous rash on the way back from holiday in

response to the fact that her plane had been delayed. She developed similar symptoms on the day she was invited to take part in the study and be interviewed for the first time. It was not clear to what extent the symptoms were connected to the request for an interview.

Illness or fear of illness also limits Roxana's social contacts. She is unable to visit her friend's house because she thinks that she might develop an allergy to her dog's fur. Similarly, concern about spreading some childhood disease prevented her from visiting a cousin - though it is not clear whether it is the cousin or Roxana herself who is carrying the disease.

Rejection

As the term suggests, Barrett and Trevitt (1991) define "rejection" as a situation in which parents are unable to tolerate children within their space. In such cases it is difficult for children to develop an idea of themselves as a valued individual, unless that is, they are able to develop a more positive interactions with alternative attachment figures.

However, in the context of this study "rejection" has to be regarded as a relative rather than an absolute term. For example, both Angie and Charlene can be thought of as experiencing some form of rejection from their mothers. They

both experience long periods of physical and psychological separation. Yet each continues to live, for most of the time, under their mother's roof. Similarly, whilst the mother-daughter attachments are weak there is enough of an attachment to sustain some form of relationship. As in both cases the girl's lack of attachment is accompanied by periods of actual separation it is appropriate to consider their relationships with their mothers in the following section which focusses on experiences of separation.

4.2.b) Separation and Loss Within Relationships

Central to Bowlby's Attachment Theory (1989b) is the notion that separation from parent or significant others in early childhood can be a major source of distress for a child. In the context of this study it can be seen that an individual's experience of separation can occur in a number of different ways. Moreover, individuals differ considerably in their response to separation both during the initial experience and in the way they are able and willing to discuss their feelings subsequently. As this report will demonstrate, an absence of protest behaviour at the time of separation does not necessarily indicate an absence of distress. By comparing the circumstances of children traumatised by separation with those who seem more able to cope with, or adjust to, changing circumstances, this report highlights some of the factors which may influence different patterns of behaviour.

During the course of this study it became known that eight of the twelve children had experienced some form of separation from, or loss of, a close member of the family.

In the majority of cases the pupil had lost contact with a parent due to separation or divorce. The details of the separation and the amount of contact or quality of relationship the child was able to sustain with the estranged parent differed considerably. Some children had unlimited access to both parents whilst others really only knew one natural parent. As will be discussed elsewhere in this section, parental separation could result in siblings living apart from each other and, in cases where the siblings had been close, this could accentuate the child's feelings of loss. The child's family situation could be further complicated by the arrival of step-parents and step-siblings.

For one girl, described in the context of this thesis as "at risk", her relationship with her mother might be described in terms of a physical presence but emotional separation. During the interviews, Charlene makes little reference to her mother. When asked, for example, to nominate "someone at home who could talk about your early childhood" she nominated an elder sister who appeared from Charlene's comments to have assumed some kind of parent role in the family. There is some unsubstantiated evidence that the mother was an alcoholic and prone to extremely erratic behaviour. Moreover, at least one child in this family had been placed on the education

authority's at-risk register.

Two other children talked about the premature death of close members of the family. One had experienced the death of a younger sister whilst the other had lost a much-loved uncle.

For two children their separation from a parent was more temporary, but also distressing. One girl was separated from her father whilst he served a lengthy prison sentence. The other girl spent much of her childhood with childminders whilst her mother attempted to build a career for herself. As will be discussed below, Angie associates her mother's return to work with her own loss of confidence.

Thus it can be seen that, in the context of this study, the term separation is used to describe emotional and physical separation from either parent which is of a permanent or temporary nature. It also includes the death of close members of the family. The underlying assumption in describing the children's experience of, and response to, separation is that this forms a basis for the individual's view of the world and of the relationships which they will subsequently enter into with others.

Initial response to separation or loss

According to accounts offered by pupils and their parents, individuals differed considerably in the way they responded to

separation from significant others with responses varying from acute distress to relatively calm acceptance.

At one extreme individuals showed a great deal of distress at the time of separation. For example, Susie's father offers a graphic, if terse, account of the way in which she demonstrated her distress when her mother left home.

Yes, she seemed right nervous. You'd just say summat to her and she'd jump, cringe back.

(Susie's father, 1st interview, line 300)

This suggests that during the early days of the separation Susie rejected her father's attempts to comfort or pacify her by physically moving away from him.

Susie's feelings of insecurity at this time were possibly aggravated by the fact that the break with her mother was protracted. Susie was, and to a lesser extent still is, passed from mother to father.

... about first six months she didn't know where she were. First she didn't want her and dumped her on me then she wanted her back, she were going off like that.

(Susie's father, 1st interview, line 291)

The terms in which her father discussed how she was moved from parent to parent must have left Susie in little doubt that there was a sense in which she was unwanted by either parent. One can only speculate on the anxieties generated in a young child by the experience of feeling unwanted, or at best tolerated, by the very people on whom she or he depends for survival. Feelings of insecurity were probably heightened by constant changes of address and school which are of themselves

unsettling.

Evidence acquired during this study would suggest that throughout childhood Susie clung to an idealised notion that she and her mother would be reunited in a loving relationship. Indeed towards the end of this study Susie chose once again to leave her father and go to live with her mother. Given the history of the mother-daughter relationship it seemed inevitable that Susie would not find the kind of love and acceptance which she craved. In the event Susie finally acknowledged that her mother was unable, or unwilling, to care for her and that she would be better off living with her father.

Like 'cause me mum will go out all day and when I come home from school she won't be in and I have to stay outside and I like have to stay outside for an hour. Then I'll have a little tea, little sandwich or something and then she'll go out again and I'll be in house on me own so and nearly all time there's someone in house when I'm wi' me dad. (Susie, 4th interview, page 1)

Unfortunately, the fact that Susie had kept alive the notion that her separation from her mother was only temporary prevented her from accepting love and care when it was offered by her father. Moreover, a refusal to accept the reality of her parents' separation, either initially or in the longer term, prevented Susie from being able to address and come to terms with her feelings of insecurity and hurt. Thus Susie's behaviour in school might be described as being motivated by a need for, but basic distrust of, relationships with adults and children.

Pamela exhibited similar distress on being separated from her father whilst he served a lengthy prison sentence. However, unlike Susie, Pamela became unusually clinging towards the remaining parent and would become extremely distressed whenever she realised that her mother was about to leave the house.

I couldn't, I wasn't allowed to go anywhere... ..Pamela would stand up at the front door and I wasn't allowed to open it if she knew I was going somewhere without her.
(Pamela's mother, 2nd interview, page 1)

Interestingly her mother had not connected the change in Pamela's behaviour with her father's enforced absence from the family. However, Pamela's mother felt that the period of separation had negatively affected Pamela's relationship with her father.

He had took himself away from her. So I think the closeness that they did have did drop quite a lot although it seems to come back now. But she did feel quite a lot of resentment towards him in the end cause he was away for quite a long while.
(Pamela's mother, 2nd interview, page 4)

Thus it can be seen that both Pamela and Susie were greatly distressed at being separated from parents in early childhood. This not only affected their relationships with their estranged parent but also influenced their relationships with those left to care for them. In addition I would argue that in so far as their strategies of "moving away" and "moving towards" others became habitual or rigid, this would in turn influence their future relationships.

A second group of children were described by their parents as well able to cope with separation from significant others.

However, evidence acquired in interviews with the children concerned would suggest that the lack of protest behaviour, which was initially interpreted as acceptance, may well have indicated a deep distress. One example will serve to illustrate the point. As has already been mentioned, Angie associated her mother's return to work with her own loss of confidence. By comparison, her mother's account of the events suggests that Angie was well able to cope with being left at nursery school.

...it was just a different environment from being at home with me that she knew and when I left her there it was fine... ..She used to be upset when I came to collect her in the evening spoiling something that she obviously got into... ..but she used to enjoy it.

(Angie's mother, 1st interview, line 46)

The distress that Angie showed on her mother's return was explained by her mother as a response to having to leave something that she was enjoying rather than to "mental anxiety or frustration". Clearly Angie and her mother offer conflicting accounts of the events. Given the guilt which mothers often feel in leaving the care of their children to others, Angie's mother may have had an ulterior motive in wanting her version to be true. The fact that the mother refers to the possible conflict between observable behaviour and "mental anxiety" suggests that even she is not totally convinced by her own version of events. Subsequent interviews with Angie confirm the view that an absence of protest behaviour does not necessarily equate with an absence of distress at separation from a parent or significant other.

In sharp contrast, other children do seem to have been

genuinely able to cope with parental separation. In the case of Diana and Justina, described in the context of this thesis as being "ready to learn", parents and children are unanimous in their assertions that for them parental separation had not been unduly traumatic. Before examining the factors which may have contributed to this different kind of response from individuals it is necessary to determine how far these assertions are supported by evidence.

In the first of two parent interviews Diana's father expressed the view that neither of his two daughters had been adversely affected by their parents' separation.

...it seems to work and they're alright, you know, they're quite happy. I don't think it's upset them that much actually.

(Diana's father, 1st interview, line 168)

He thought that this was due in part to the fact that they had unlimited access to their mother and that the home had become much calmer since he and his wife had stopped trying to live together.

I think they prefer it to when we were living together 'cause we were allus arguing, we couldn't have carried on you know...

(Diana's father, 1st interview, line 166)

The view that Diana had come to terms with her father's divorce was largely borne out by remarks made by Diana herself.

... we see my mum every weekend, so nowt to really worry about...

(Diana, 3rd interview, line 28)

The fact that both father and daughter talk about the divorce freely, between themselves and with others, suggests a degree

of coming to terms with the situation. This relative openness is a sharp contrast with Susie's perpetual denial of events and feelings.

Both Justina and her mother are similarly frank about the fact that they live as a one parent family and have little contact with Justina's father and his step-children. Indeed they both seem justifiably proud of their independence. However, as discussed earlier, despite her actual experience of a successful one-parent family Justina remains sensitive to the common stereotype of a "proper family".

Thus evidence collected during this study support the view that children differ considerably in their response to parental separation. At one extreme children are greatly traumatised by events and at the other children are relatively able to adjust to and accept changing circumstances. Consequently, it is appropriate to examine the factors which might influence the way in which individuals respond.

Of particular significance would seem to be the quality of the relationships which exist prior to separation both with the estranged parent and the remaining carer. In cases where individuals have suffered less trauma they have been able to sustain extremely close loving relationships with the remaining parent who was, or soon became, their "prime attachment figure" or carer. For example, both Diana and Justina expressed complete confidence in their remaining parent's ability to take care of them both physically and

emotionally. In these cases parent-child relationships are extremely close, warm and loving. For these children it was as if the separation has been from a "secondary attachment figure" who clearly does not have the same significance in their lives as the remaining parent.

By comparison, both Pamela and Susie experienced separation from the parent who, for whatever reason, represented their closest relationship prior to separation. Whilst Pamela seems to have been sustained by her relationship with her mother, Susie seems to have rejected support from her father and had no "secure base" on which she could depend. Similarly Angie, who spent a great deal of her early childhood with a series of childminders, may have felt rejected by her mother as she was passed from person to person. In all cases separation from their primary attachment figure may well have affected relationships with both the remaining and the estranged parent. Moreover, the perceived lack of a secure base may well have negatively affected these individuals' feelings of self worth and made them timid of entering into relationships with others. This could help to explain their seeming reluctance to talk freely with pupils and teachers in school.

Thus, close attachment to the remaining parent is one possible factor which might contribute to an individual's ability to cope with separation in early childhood. Another factor might well be related to the nature of the separation. Where the separation is unclear or protracted, as in the case of Susie who was still unsettled after a number of years, this is

likely to compound rather than alleviate distress. In cases where children appear to have suffered less trauma the conditions of their parents' separation have been clear almost from the outset. For example, both Diana and Justina seemed in no doubt as to their relationship with their estranged parent. In one case there was what amounted to unlimited access, in the other almost no contact at all. Although the circumstances were different, in both cases the individuals felt that they knew where they stood with regard to the estranged parent.

Incidentally, as both Diana's and Pamela's experiences demonstrate, this primary attachment figure and "the person who understands me best of all" can be the father, which underlies the possible importance of fathers in the lives of individual children, as discussed in the post-feminist account of parenting.

Also introduced in the post-feminist account of parenting is an awareness that the presence of step-parents and step-children may well be a contributory factor in the extent to which individuals are able to come to terms with parental separation. For both Angie and Susie, learning to accept the presence of a step-family was to some extent problematic. This was invariably related to the need to share their parents' time and affection with others. However, such jealousy is not restricted to step-families, all the children who lived with siblings expressed some feelings of jealousy towards others who seemed at times to have more than their

fair share of parental attention or material goods.

A fourth important factor which may influence an individual's behaviour is the degree to which they feel able and willing to discuss both the circumstances of the separation and the possibly conflicting feelings which were generated as a result. For example, Diana, who talked freely and at times philosophically about her parents' separation, may be regarded as being at the opposite extreme of a continuum to Susie and Angie. Whilst Susie was able to express her distress at the time of her parents' divorce, subsequent denial has prevented her from really coming to terms with the situation. By comparison, Angie's seemingly compliant behaviour at being separated from her mother may well have masked her true anger and distress.

I believe trained educational therapists or counsellors should be available in schools to help children to explore such unresolved issues. Related to this is the need to understand the difficulties which excessively quiet children have in expressing such feelings and in particular the strategies which such pupils adopt that might prevent them from being heard. These topics are covered in section 4.3.

Subsequent accounts of separation and loss

Accounts of pupil behaviour show a variety of responses to separation in early childhood. Several years later, the same

pupils differ considerably in the way in which they were willing and able to discuss these events during one-to-one semi-structured interviews. As might be expected with such personal revelations, knowledge of the pupils' experiences of separation and loss only emerged gradually as the study progressed. In the context of the first interview only four children made any reference to the subject and this tended to be done in a way which either obscured the significance of the remark or which prohibited further discussion. As this indicates the kind of difficulties which teachers may experience in listening to quiet pupils, it is appropriate to provide a brief account of these incidents.

One pupil was very direct and spoke frankly about the loss that she had experienced in her own family. Charlene's four month old sister had died some time previously. Moreover, a younger brother had been adopted by a friend of the family and was being brought up as a cousin.

Charlene ...um he is my proper brother but somebody else adopted him.

R I see. And so do you see him?

Charlene Yeah. He doesn't... he doesn't know about that um I'm his sister...

(Charlene, 1st interview, line 74-6)

She sounded almost wistful when she commented that unlike her, he was living in a relatively affluent household and had "everything he wants".

It is interesting that, although Charlene began with a frank account of her family life, she was unwilling to talk about

her family in a subsequent interview. It was as if she regretted that she had disclosed so much and was in some way on shaky ground. It is perhaps significant that Charlene's disclosure makes only a passing reference to her mother. Unsubstantiated evidence would suggest that Charlene's mother was an alcoholic with erratic and potentially violent mood swings. Consequently, whilst her mother was physically present in the family she may well have been frequently emotionally absent. These facts coupled with comments made by Charlene about her elder sister suggest that the sister had assumed a parenting role within the family.

Charlene's absence from school increased until finally it was realised that the family had in fact moved from the area without leaving a forwarding address. She was the only pupil for whom it was impossible to gain parental permission to make a home visit. Charlene is described in the context of this study as being "at risk".

In comparison with Charlene's direct approach the other three pupils who raised the subject of separation and loss in the first interview were much more speculative and reserved. Pete appeared quite resigned to the death of his uncle in the context of the first interview.

... he used to give me some money to go... ... to go and watch the football that I wanted to go and see.
(Pete, 1st interview, line 96-98)

It was only in the third interview that he began to talk about how important his uncle had been to him and how he still

mourns his death, regularly looking through old photographs of his uncle in the privacy of his bedroom.

Similarly, Angie's remark about her loss of confidence when her mother started work was said so quietly that it was not actually heard until the tape was being transcribed.

...then she had to... sometimes she had to go to work then I was a... then when I to the swimming baths again I was afraid to go in the water...

(Angie, 1st interview, line 8)

It was as if she was undecided whether to raise the subject of her potentially problematic relationship with her mother. Linked to their initial reluctance to discuss these - or indeed any - issues freely, both pupils are described in the context of this study as "withdrawn".

Susie mentioned her parents' separation during the first interview and then abruptly changed the subject. It took nearly three years for her to talk about her feelings towards her mother and step-families. Even then she would not acknowledge the existence of her step-siblings in conversation with other pupils.

Within the context of the interviews pupils found it necessary or desirable to acknowledge that they had experienced some form of separation or loss within their own families. However, the way in which some pupils introduced and discussed the subject suggests that they are still in the process of coming to terms with the events and their feelings. Such pupils clearly need time to discuss their feelings and may

well benefit from some form of counselling with a trusted adult. Without such support the issues remain unresolved and could well "get in the way" of positive learning relationships in school.

In many of the cases highlighted by the study an application of "attachment theory" offers an explanation of the quiet withdrawn behaviour observed in school. However, neither an explanation of anxious attachment nor inappropriate separation are sufficient to explain the quiet behaviour exhibited by Mandy or Vicky. In both these cases their relationships with their parents seem fine and unproblematic. Finding an explanation for their behaviour is particularly difficult as both are extremely withdrawn; in the context of this study, they are described as "excluding".

SECTION 4.3. : CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Section 4.3. is based on data collected during hours of observations of quiet pupils working in both their primary and secondary classrooms. An analysis of these observations reveals general trends in pupil behaviour. For example, during the course of the study I identified what I came to regard as **four types of withdrawal** exhibited by the quiet pupils. These are discussed in section 4.3.b under the headings **being invisible, refusing to participate, hesitation and an inappropriate focus.**

However, as well as identifying patterns in pupils' withdrawal behaviour, the analysis also reveals some contradictions. Whilst the pupils highlighted by the study tend to be quiet and withdrawn I observed a number of occasions in which they were clearly **willing and able to participate** in the social and academic life of the classroom. An examination of two of these lessons in section 4.3.a demonstrates the pupils' capacity for participation. It also suggests some of the underlying conditions which make this participation possible.

Given that this study is based on the premise that quiet withdrawn behaviour is detrimental to learning (and, as such, pupils who are habitually quiet in class may be considered to have special educational needs), work which is aimed at empowering quiet pupils to take a more active role in their own education will, by definition, try to reduce incidents of non-participation. However, an analysis of classroom

observations demonstrates that whilst habitually quiet behaviour is detrimental to learning, for some pupils at least, occasional withdrawal may be a valid response to overwhelming anxiety. Section 4.3.c examines three incidents in which pupils exhibited a need to withdraw and also explores the possible implications for classroom practice.

4.3.a) Willing and Able to Participate

Whilst all the pupils highlighted by the present study tended to be quiet and withdrawn during lessons, I observed a number of situations in which pupils appeared both willing and able to participate in the activities of the classroom. These incidents demonstrated the pupils' capacity for participation, an issue about which I was never in doubt. In addition, an analysis of the lessons in which pupils were seen to be active participants identifies some of the conditions which empower quiet pupils. This discussion focuses on two lessons which are in some ways representative of the successful lessons I observed.

Vicky's French lesson began with a long question and answer session led and directed by the teacher. Not surprisingly this "teacher-directed" talk followed the initiate, response, evaluate (IRE) pattern criticised by Courtney Cazden (1988). However, whilst acknowledging the limitations of this kind of "teacher-directed" talk (discussed earlier in this thesis,

section 1.2.b), in this particular lesson it seemed to be a useful vehicle for the pupils to learn new vocabulary. Moreover, I was surprised and impressed by the way in which the teacher was able to involve all the pupils in the activity.

In this lesson Vicky, who had exhibited extreme passivity during all other observations of her, offered to answer on several occasions and on all but one of these occasions she was chosen to answer. I felt that Vicky's willingness to participate was helped by the fact that the teacher was extremely supportive and handled partially correct answers well. He seemed to respond as favourably to effort as to results. Vicky's increased participation may also have been related to the fact that she had recently entered into a contract "to talk more" with the teacher who was also her form tutor. Perhaps a shared acknowledgement that not talking in class was a problem was an important first step in this process. Vicky certainly seemed to need to maintain control of her participation. It was noticeable that on the one occasion that the teacher asked Vicky to answer when she did not have her hand up, she refused by shaking her head and looking down at her desk.

Observations of other lessons in which small group work was used to great effect helped to convince me of the relative benefits of such strategies in empowering quiet pupils to take a more active role in their own education.

In what I regarded as an excellent music lesson the teacher provided the class with an appropriate level of security and challenge. The security came from an explicitly clear and consistent way of working. The pupils' response to his instructions suggested that they knew exactly what he expected from them and that this was accepted with reasonable grace. Moreover, the way in which the teacher organised the lesson emphasised what he clearly believed to be the importance of participation in cooperative activities. The lesson began and ended with circle games and during the main part of the lesson the pupils worked with friends in pairs. Having created a secure and predictable framework the challenge was for each pair to create a piece of music which they would play to the whole class.

It is appropriate to conclude this section with a list of some of the features which appeared to make these two lessons so successful in empowering quiet pupils to participate.

1. The teachers clearly understood the principles that underlie the value of talk for learning.
2. The teachers made their views clear to their pupils, both in the way they acted and in explaining their expectations of classroom talk.
3. The lessons provided pupils with an appropriate level of security and challenge.
4. The teachers were aware of the difficulties experienced by quiet pupils and were prepared to make allowances for this during the lesson.
5. The teachers showed a genuine interest in the progress of individual pupils.

These issues are developed further in discussions of my own work with quiet pupils in sections 4.4. and 4.5. of this

analysis. My understanding of ways to empower quiet pupils was also enhanced by an analysis of situations in which pupils were unable or unwilling to participate. A discussion of the types of withdrawal observed during the course of the study forms the basis of the following section.

4.3.b) Four Types of Withdrawal

During the study I came to know the pupils as individuals. As a consequence I began to appreciate that, in many ways, their quiet withdrawn behaviour was a unique response to a specific combination of circumstances. However, whilst the cause of the quiet behaviour was particular to the individual, the form which this behaviour took in the classroom followed a similar pattern. My detailed observations in a variety of classroom settings would suggest that for these pupils non-participation could take one of four basic forms depending on the individual and the situation.

In some situations pupils would have no direct contact with the teacher during a lesson. Often there was evidence to suggest that where the pupils sat or how they behaved made them invisible and minimised their contact with the teacher.

Alternatively, pupils would be invited to participate but would refuse to join in. Sometimes the refusal would be direct and possibly supported by a seemingly valid reason. On

other occasions the pupils would not acknowledge the request; they would remain quiet and avoid making eye contact with the teacher.

Whilst these two forms of non-participation were relatively easy to detect the remaining two presented more of a problem and required closer observation. In both of these situations the pupils appeared to be busy but closer analysis revealed that the pupils were not actively engaged in the task in hand.

In the third form of non-participation pupils exhibited hesitation and would remain on the periphery of an activity. They appeared busy but never really became engaged in the task. Sometimes the pupils seemed to be afraid of participating.

The final, and to my mind the most disturbing, form of non-participation was where pupils had an inappropriate focus. In these instances pupils would be actively involved in an irrelevant task. This concerned me because in the majority of instances the teacher was either unaware of what the pupil was doing or, worse, condoned the behaviour.

During the observations I came to associate different forms of non-participation with specific groups of children. For example the group described in the context of this study as "excluding" had little contact with their teacher and were unlikely to initiate a conversation. When they were asked a direct question these pupils would refuse to answer or else

they provided the minimum of information. In particular Vicky seemed especially able to become "invisible" in the classroom. By contrast, pupils described as "afraid" were more likely to hesitate on the periphery of activities. On occasions these pupils would attempt to join in with their peers but would then, for whatever reason, need to withdraw.

Whilst there were general trends in the ways in which groups of pupils behaved, individuals might, at different times and in different situations, exhibit a range of behaviour. For example, during the two days I spent shadowing Justina in her secondary school she exhibited all four forms of non-participation discussed here. In order to provide continuity the following discussion is based on the observations of Justina's non-participation. However, the analysis of these observations is supported with reference to the behaviour of other pupils.

The following discussion has two aims: first, to describe the non-participatory behaviour; second, to suggest what might have been done in that specific situation to empower the pupils concerned to participate. The issue as to how far the pupils' observable behaviour was deliberate, unconscious, learned or innate is unanswerable and to some extent irrelevant. During the course of this study my aim was to make quiet pupils aware of their behaviour and to encourage them to try alternative approaches. Ultimately I wanted the pupils to have a wide repertoire of "ways of being" from which they could choose a form of behaviour which they thought most

appropriate to specific situations.

Being Invisible

In 1988 James Pye used the phrase "invisible children" to describe pupils frequently overlooked by their teachers. In the context of this study I regarded pupils as being invisible when they had no direct contact with their teacher. Given that my sole reason for being present during lessons was to shadow specific pupils I was surprised that I should observe any instances in which these pupils were being ignored by their teacher. I had thought that my very presence would be sufficient to put these pupils "in the spotlight" during the lessons I observed. However, during the course of the study I witnessed a number of lessons in which there was no direct communication between pupil and teacher.

Isolated incidents of "being invisible" may not have a significant effect on a child's learning. In fact in some situations individuals may benefit from the experience of working independently and without close supervision. However, as Harry Guntrip (1968) emphasised, "becoming a person" requires that two seemingly contradictory aspects of personality are recognised and held in balance.

It is hard for individuals in our culture to realise that true independence is rooted in and only grows out of primary dependence. (Guntrip, 1968, p 268)

Thus a strong sense of separate identity develops through

feelings of connectedness with significant others. Thus when pupils are allowed to "become invisible" in the classroom they are being deprived of feelings of connectedness with teachers and other pupils. Moreover, the importance of getting practical support from their teachers was expressed by the pupils themselves. In an interview with Justina, she linked what she saw as her teacher's refusal to help with the fact that she found mathematics difficult. In the same interview she also talked passionately about her needs for her teacher's support.

...when I went to, for him to help he told me to go back and sit down... and that's why I got them all wrong...
...and that it weren't fair.

(Justina, 1st interview, line 214)

Yet despite this belief in the value of teacher support I observed a number of instances in which Justina was unwilling, or unable, to talk to the teacher about her work. The following account is one such occasion.

The incident occurred during a craft lesson in which groups of pupils worked independently on predetermined craft projects. Throughout the lesson and even when the teacher visited the table where she was working there was no obvious communication between Justina and the teacher. When discussing the project on which Justina was working the teacher spoke to, or was answered by, the other two girls on the table. During this time Justina stood slightly to one side, head bowed, totally still and totally silent. Although the teacher did not address her directly there were several instances in which Justina could have joined the conversation had she been

willing and able.

Observing this incident it seemed that both the teacher's behaviour and Justina's reticence contributed to the lack of communication between them. Had the teacher asked Justina a direct question it might have been easier for her to join in the discussion. As it was, Justina's seemingly more confident peers dominated the discussion about their work. As the conversation progressed it struck me that these two girls were claiming ownership of their project in a way which Justina never did. However, there was a sense in which Justina's exclusion from the discussion was self-inflicted. At no point did she attempt to join in the discussion. Moreover, her physical isolation from the group and her refusal to make eye contact seemed to discourage contact.

Thus Justina's "invisibility" in the classroom came about partly by the teacher's actions and partly because of her own inability or unwillingness to participate. Observing other quiet pupils in similar situations I speculated that their difficulties were related to limited social and conversational skills, poor self-esteem and a lack of assertion. These are among the issues discussed in relation to my own work with quiet pupils (section 4.4. and 4.5.).

In addition, my observations supported James Pye's (1989) assertion that where pupils sit and how they behave in the classroom contributes to a tendency to be ignored by the teacher. A discussion of the ways in which pupils use and

dominate space in the classroom (or fail to do so) concludes this account of "being invisible".

In many of the lessons I observed, the pupils remained seated throughout the lesson. However, when movement was allowed or considered appropriate it was interesting to note who dominated the physical space of the classroom. My observations suggest that quiet withdrawn pupils tend to occupy a smaller physical space than their more dominant peers. For example, in the primary school the class could be divided into three broad groups according to the degree to which they moved around the room and dominated the space. Although the teacher regularly told the class to work quietly at their desks, pupils varied considerably in the degree to which they carried out this instruction or the degree to which they were allowed to infringe the rule.

At one end of the extreme the girls highlighted by this study hardly ever got out of their place. When they did it was for a specific reason, for example to collect equipment or at the express request of the teacher. These pupils were unlikely to approach the teacher or initiate contact with him. As has been suggested throughout this thesis, habitual reluctance to talk with the teacher must inhibit learning.

By comparison, at the other end of the scale there were a small group of about half a dozen boys who constantly moved about the room chatting to their friends or disturbing those who were trying to work. These boys blatantly disregarded the

teacher's instructions to sit quietly and seemed to get up whenever they chose. These boys were rarely chastised by the teacher who occasionally tried, usually with some success, to coax them back to the task in hand. Watching this class it was clear that the girls were restricted to their own desks whilst the boys literally had the run of the room, which they seemed to dominate. When the activities extended beyond the classroom, for example when there was a computer set up outside in the corridor, the boys would wander in and out of the room at will. I understand from comments made by staff during an assembly that boys also dominated the playground.

Between these two extremes was a third group of pupils characterised by the two boys highlighted by the present study. These pupils appeared to want to be recognised as "one of the boys" and claim the rights and respect attributed to that group. However, whilst individual pupils aspired to join in with the dominant boys, other people's perceptions of them prevented them from doing so. An example drawn from the study will serve to illustrate the point.

The incident involves Duncan during his last year in primary school. During a lesson in which the class were asked to work quietly at their desks Duncan observed a group of pupils, especially Daniel and Dale, ignoring the teacher's instructions and wandering round the room chatting to friends on the pretext of borrowing crayons. After a while Duncan got out of his seat and walked over to a friend seemingly with the express wish to make arrangements for some activity taking

place after school that night. However, whilst the teacher seemed prepared to allow Daniel and Dale some leeway, the same was not true when Duncan tried to assert himself. In a tone which he did not use with the other boys the teacher barked out an instruction to "Go to your place" and Duncan easily chastised, scuttled back to his place which he did not leave again that lesson.

Believing that where pupils sat in the room was likely to affect the amount of contact they had with the teacher, I was interested to notice how many times the "quieter" girls sat round the edge of the room whilst the boys "dominated" the centre space. However, the reasons why pupils sat where they did was difficult to determine. It would be tempting, for example, to suggest that the boys chose to sit in the middle of the room in order to get the maximum attention from the teacher. However, I noticed on more than one occasion how girls entering the classroom first would "claim" their space near the walls of the room before the boys arrived. It was not so much that the quiet pupils do not claim their space in the classroom but rather that the space they claimed was likely to be small and at the margins of the room.

Clearly the use and domination of classroom space is a complex issue and I remain fascinated by the implicit social rules which determine peer hierarchies. In the context of this study the important issue appears to be the need for teachers to be aware of, and try to involve, those pupils who are potentially "invisible children".

A Refusal to Participate

In the context of this study a refusal to participate describes occasions in which pupils were invited to take part in a discussion or activity but they refused. In some cases the pupil would offer a reason for their refusal, in others they would simply hang their head and refuse to speak.

An incident in which Justina refused to participate happened at the start of an English lesson. The pupils were being reminded that their homework from the previous lesson was to prepare a short talk on a subject of their choice. When Justina was asked to give her talk she said that she could not because she had been off school during the previous lesson and was not aware that homework had been set. The teacher accepted this excuse and Justina sat through the rest of the lesson in total silence not even joining in with the discussion of other pupils' talks.

Given that Justina was quiet and shy she may have been relieved that the teacher did not press her to "perform" on this particular occasion. However, my observations of Justina, over time and in a number of situations, suggest that this refusal to participate is all too common. Earlier the same day Justina was not able to take part in a computer test because she had not finished the previous task.

Participation in classroom activities should be organised in such a way as to help to develop an individual's self-

confidence and feelings of being valued and belonging. As my work with quiet pupils demonstrates (section 4.5.), if talking in front of the class is considered too difficult for pupils like Justina there are several simple alternatives. First, pupils could work in small groups presenting their talks to a few trusted individuals. Second, pupils could work together on joint presentations thus relieving some of the pressure of working alone. Third, the pupils could be given, or better still draw up for themselves, a few simple rules or criteria by which their talk is to be assessed. In this way the teacher can explicitly acknowledge the difficulty of the task whilst at the same time breaking it down into manageable activities.

My experience of working with quiet pupils in primary school (section 4.4. and 4.5.) was sufficient to convince me that relatively quiet pupils can be encouraged to meet the challenge of oral work so long as they understand exactly what is being expected of them. Another important requirement is that they feel confident that their participation will be respected. Experience also suggests that these strategies are beneficial for all pupils not just those who tend to be quiet or withdrawn. In the English lesson I observed, the majority of the pupils delivered their talks but none of them did so particularly well. All the pupils seemed unduly nervous and ill-prepared.

Hesitation

In some lessons Justina did attempt to join in with class activities but her participation was minimal or hesitant. In my observations of Justina there are many examples of this kind of behaviour in which she seemed to be on the fringe of an activity. In craft for example Justina spent significantly more time watching her partners working than she did actively engaged in the task. Similarly, during a practical lesson Justina walked round the science lab. touching some of the equipment with the tips of her fingers but rarely carrying out the intended experiment. On both occasions she seemed reluctant to "get her hands dirty" by handling the equipment.

The consequence of this behaviour was that whilst several pupils completed all the tasks relatively quickly, Justina, who visited all the experiments, completed less than half and could only give a garbled account of what she had done. Thus it would seem that on this occasion at least her learning had been detrimentally affected by her inability or unwillingness to become involved in the lesson. Whilst other pupils could clearly cope with the lesson, I feel that Justina would have benefited from a more structured approach. Perhaps working with a partner around a predetermined circuit of activities would have helped to provide her with a clear focus.

On some occasions I could not understand why pupils were hesitant about joining in with an activity. However, during one maths lesson in which pupils were being assessed on their

ability to build three-dimensional shapes, the cause of Justina's hesitation is clear. Watching her check and double check her measurements, often rubbing out what appeared to be perfectly acceptable lines, her anxiety was evident. She was afraid. Justina's anxiety may not have been caused solely by the presence of a particularly strict, one might say aggressive, teacher. However, his brisk comment that "This should have been finished by now" and his concluding remark "If you have done three you have done well, if you have done two you have been trying, if you have done one I don't want to see you next week" (Teacher's Journal 28-6-91) must have contributed to her concern.

Whilst one might argue that such a "bullying" approach has little place in any classroom, such remarks may be particularly damaging to the (already low) self-esteem of some quiet pupils. Once again Justina's progress was severely hampered by her hesitation during the lesson. Whilst the majority of the pupils completed three or more models, Justina just managed to finish her first despite having "worked" solidly throughout the lesson.

An Inappropriate Focus

By comparison, in other lessons Justina appeared to be working "on task", fully participating in the activities of the classroom. However, closer inspection of what she was actually doing during those lessons suggested that she had an

inappropriate focus. On occasions this inappropriate focus was being encouraged, or at least condoned, by her teacher's comments.

The most obvious example of this occurred during a French lesson. Throughout the lesson, including during oral work, Justina was hard at work, writing in her exercise book. She had even taken the initiative of devising her own dictionary of "new words" in a separate book. Judging from the comments in her exercise book the teacher was highly delighted with her progress. On page after page she was complemented for the neat presentation of her written work. Perhaps encouraged by this praise Justina devoted a great deal of time and effort to making her work look good. She had even armed herself with a number of coloured pens, rubbers and paper whitener in an attempt to maintain this high standard.

Yet despite her diligent hard work I felt that Justina had missed the significant point of the lessons. During the lesson I observed, Justina did not speak a single word of French. Her one interaction with the teacher was conducted in English and revolved around issues related to the setting out of her work. He seemed oblivious to her lack of participation in the oral part of the lesson. When, out of sheer frustration, I asked Justina to read what she had just written she said, "I don't speak French because it confuses me" (Teacher's Journal 17-3-1992).

What I wondered did Justina expect to learn during the French

lesson. For me Justina's blatant refusal to learn a second language was the most obvious example of an educational experience failing to make an impression on an individual's view of the world. In my opinion, by allowing, or even encouraging, Justina to have such an inappropriate focus to her work, the French teacher was actively denying her the right to "name her world, to change it".

In other less extreme examples Justina's attention seemed to be focused on irrelevant, or at least less significant, aspects of the lesson. During a computer lesson for example, Justina and her partner spent several minutes choosing the background colour for their work. Over the same time scale many of their peers had become engrossed in the "problem-solving" activity. Similarly, Vicky spent the whole of a science lesson fetching materials for other pupils. In both of these lessons the pupils needed to be reminded of the main focus or aim of the lesson.

To summarise, my observations of quiet pupils at work in their ordinary classrooms suggest that non-participation can be described as fitting into one of four categories. In discussing these forms of behaviour I imply that an awareness of the way in which quiet withdrawn behaviour can be detrimental to learning enables teachers to consider ways of empowering their pupils.

However, in encouraging quiet pupils to take a more active role in their education it is important to consider the needs

of the individual pupils. During the course of the study it became clear that, for some pupils at least, withdrawal was a defence from overwhelming anxiety. In so far as quiet pupils experience emotional and behavioural difficulties, teachers have to take account of their special educational needs. One of the most important ways of doing this is to allow pupils the **emotional space** to withdraw when necessary.

The following section describes incidents in which pupils need to **withdraw** as a result of experiencing and trying to cope with their acute anxiety.

4.3.c) A Need to Withdraw

During my observations three pupils demonstrated their need for what I have called **emotional space** in the classroom. Interestingly these are the pupils who, in the context of the study, I have described as "afraid". The incidents in which the pupils demonstrate their anxiety are very different as are the pupils' individual responses to it. Yet in their own way, each of these pupils showed a need for someone to recognise and contain their fear. Perhaps it is significant that, in two incidents, those involving Roxana and Susie, the possible cause of their distress was clear whilst in Duncan's case I never found out what had triggered his anxiety.

As the following accounts will demonstrate, observing these

pupils at a time of acute anxiety made me realise just how debilitating their fear could be. It also convinced me of the need for teachers to treat the pupils' anxiety as real and respond sympathetically even if the underlying cause is not known. However, watching teachers cope with incidents of distress reminded me of the great, sometimes conflicting, pressures which teachers face. In some cases these pressures prevent teachers from responding to individuals' anxieties in the way they might prefer. There seems little opportunity in the average school day for teachers or pupils to "take time out" in order to discuss issues which are important to individual pupils. Ways in which I tried to meet the specific emotional needs of quiet withdrawn pupils is the focus of sections 4.4. and 4.5. of this analysis.

Roxana : A Pupil Afraid

As is discussed in an illustrative case study (section 5.3.a , anxiety of performing in front of a group of pupils from another class transformed what had been a confident and able musician into a quivering wallflower. In Roxana's case her need to withdraw from the activities of the classroom was as sudden as it was dramatic. The teacher was so busy orchestrating the activities of the rest of the class that he had no time to spend with Roxana beyond expressing his frustration that she should choose that particular moment to "act up". Having the time to observe Roxana closely I was convinced that this was neither an act nor a deliberate

attempt to sabotage the lesson. I feel that it is not too dramatic to say that Roxana was totally overcome by anxiety at the mere thought of the forthcoming performance. This was all the more surprising because, throughout the lesson, Roxana had demonstrated her significant talents on a number of musical instruments.

Duncan : Moving in Uncontained Space

Like Roxana, Duncan also underwent something of a character transformation. He sat quietly throughout a maths lesson working conscientiously and with some success on the tasks set by the teacher. Yet when he arrived at the science lesson which immediately followed it he was giddy, excited and hyperactive. As I noted at the time, the best description of his behaviour during the science lesson was of a pupil moving in an **uncontained space**. He appeared to have little or no control over his speech or his actions. His speech was loud and rambling. His movements were so uncontrolled as to present a real danger in the science laboratory surrounded as he was by Bunsen burners and other scientific equipment.

As with Roxana's anxiety the teacher was clearly aware of the problem but the pressures of simultaneously co-ordinating a number of practical experiments prevented him from having the time to talk with Duncan.

The fundamental difference between the incidents involving

Roxana and Duncan is that in the latter case I can offer no explanation for the dramatic change in behaviour. I had walked with Duncan from one lesson to the other and, as far as I am aware, nothing was said or done to make him anxious. As the science teacher was one of the teachers whom Duncan had nominated for me to interview I had assumed that this was a teacher who Duncan liked and therefore neither the teacher nor the lesson was likely to make him unduly anxious. I was left wondering if Duncan had simply become tired by his unusual exertions in the maths lesson and needed time and space to rest.

Susie : A Fundamental Misunderstanding

Whilst the previous two examples demonstrate dramatic changes of behaviour which were noticed by the teacher concerned, Susie's distress was far more low key. Indeed, so far as I could tell, it went completely unnoticed by the class teacher. Throughout the lesson Susie looked unusually miserable. More or less ignoring what was going on around her, all her attention seemed to be focused on a letter which she turned over and over in her hand. Wanting to know how things would develop I waited until the end of the lesson before asking what the problem was.

It turned out that having fallen and bumped her head during break time Susie had been sent to the member of staff responsible for first aid for a "bump form" to take home that

night. Unfortunately the person concerned had, as was the school's custom, addressed the envelope to the pupil's mother.

Susie knew that this was inappropriate as her mother had left home some years previously and Susie now lived with her father and step-mother. Yet to ask for the letter to be changed meant publicly acknowledging the situation. This was especially difficult for Susie as she had not become reconciled to the loss of her mother. In one-to-one interviews Susie spoke with some emotion of the time when her mother would return to the area, shower her with presents and suggest that they live together as the ultimate happy family. Clearly with this background it was easy to imagine how the letter would assume a major significance to Susie.

The immediate issue was easily resolved when a new envelope was found and appropriately addressed. Dealing with the deeper anxiety connected with the loss of her mother and the acceptance of a step-family would take much longer. My only regret was that I had not acted much sooner. If I had done so Susie would have been saved some anxiety and she would have had the opportunity to concentrate her energies on the lesson in hand.

Underlying all these incidents is the observation that pupils who "come undone" as the result of acute anxiety are not in a good position to cope with the challenge which school has to offer. It is because anxiety inhibits learning that teachers need to help pupils to recognise and work through the causes

of their distress. Incidents like those cited above demonstrate how offering pupils appropriate emotional support becomes an educational issue. It also suggest that some pupils with deep or prolonged anxiety may benefit from some form of counselling or therapy. This issue is discussed further in section 4.6. of this thesis.

SECTION 4.4. : TEACHING AND RESEARCHING WITHDRAWAL GROUPS

Alongside observing the quiet pupils at work in their ordinary classroom my aim was to devise and implement teaching strategies which would empower them to take a more active role in their education. Despite the fact that I was simultaneously combining the role of teacher and researcher, I regard this period as the most enjoyable of my teaching career. Teaching small groups of children is a rare privilege for any classroom teacher. My feelings of indulgence were enhanced by the fact that I was able to select the pupils that I wanted to work with. Added to this, I was teaching for only a few hours a week which gave me time to reflect on my practice and carry out the first set of interviews with both pupils and their parents. Perhaps because I came to know these pupils extremely well, I regarded them as a delightful group of individuals. Nevertheless, there were times when they were not the easiest group of people to work with. It took me time to appreciate the difficulties which quiet pupils experience in choosing and working with a partner. Similarly, appreciating the pupils' need for silence was a difficult lesson for me to learn.

Given the nature of my research, my teaching was geared to the specific needs of the pupils as I perceived them.

Consequently, there was no conflict between my teaching and research aims. Similarly, unlike my full-time colleagues, I was spared the anxieties and considerable work load which they associated with the implementation of the National Curriculum

and associated assessment procedures.

However, despite the pleasure I derived from teaching these pupils, there were times when things did not go as well as I would have liked. Safeguarding this privileged teaching time involved me in lengthy, sometimes acrimonious, negotiations with the class teacher who would have preferred not to have had his teaching disrupted. Similarly, whilst I was always able to find a spare classroom, I had no regular teaching base from which to work. Working in empty, often bleak, classrooms I longed for my own room which I could organise with wall displays and suitable furniture.

It is appropriate to begin this account of my teaching and research of the pupils in withdrawal groups by breaking down my general aim into specific objectives. However, it is important to note that the following section focuses exclusively on the **teaching aims** of the small group activities carried out with the selected pupils during phase one of the project. (For a discussion of the research aims see part three of this thesis.)

4.4.a) Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of my teaching was to empower habitually quiet pupils to take an active role in their education. However, in order to be successful I had to begin by identifying the

specific teaching and learning objectives embodied in this aim. A clear definition of specific objectives would enable me to devise appropriate teaching strategies. It would also provide the criteria by which I could determine the relative success of my teaching. Similarly, where I made the objectives explicit to the pupils, they would then have a basis for assessing their own achievements in developing communication skills.

Consequently I began the study with four distinct but related objectives.

First, I wanted the pupils to appreciate the importance of talk in learning. By establishing a series of lessons devoted to the development of communication skills I wanted pupils to have experience of both **learning about talk and learning through talk**.

Second, I wanted the pupils to participate in, and contribute to, small group discussions with their peers. In order for pupils to be willing and able to contribute in this way I aimed to create a learning situation which offered an appropriate balance of **security and challenge**. To achieve this I intended to consider both the teaching approaches used and the content of the discussions.

Third, I wanted the pupils to **make the learning their own**. By encouraging them to ask questions and introduce their own agendas I wanted pupils to "name their world". Supporting child-centred learning of this kind has clear implications for the role of the teacher who is required to act as facilitator and guide.

Finally, as quiet withdrawn behaviour is often related to poor self-esteem, my fourth objective was to encourage pupils to **feel good about themselves**. I hoped that the pupils would gain self-confidence both from their experience of success in the small group discussions and from being valued by their peers.

In addition to meeting these aims, my work with quiet

withdrawn pupils also met several of the objectives set out in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study for Speaking and Listening, Key Stage 2 (DES & WO, 1990). For example, during the twelve lessons in which the pupils were withdrawn from their mainstream classroom they had the opportunity to learn how to:

- * express and justify feelings, opinions and viewpoints with increasing sophistication;
- * discuss increasingly complex issues;
- * recount events and narrate stories;
- * ask increasingly precise or detailed questions;
- * respond to increasingly complex instructions and questions;
- * use and understand the use of role-play in teaching and learning, eg to explore a piece of literature;
- * reflect on their own effectiveness in the use of the spoken word. (DES & WO, 1990, pp 24-25)

During the first year of the project (phase one) I withdrew the selected pupils to work with them in small groups outside the mainstream classroom.

4.4.b) Rationale for Withdrawal

There were three reasons why I chose to withdraw pupils from their mainstream classroom and focus exclusively on them.

First, I wanted to devise and implement teaching strategies which would be specifically geared to meeting the needs of

habitually quiet pupils. Working in withdrawal groups which excluded loud, potentially aggressive pupils seemed an ideal way to meet those needs.

Second, I wanted to provide a secure environment in which the pupils would not have to compete with their more vocal peers. I hoped that small group work would provide a useful non-competitive environment for pupils to practice and develop their talking skills.

Third, I suspected that participating in small group discussions might, of itself, encourage pupils to contribute more freely than they would be willing and able to do in a whole class discussion. If this proved to be the case it would confirm that inappropriate teaching approaches contributed to much of the quiet withdrawn behaviour witnessed in schools.

However, whilst there were clear advantages to withdrawing pupils from their mainstream classroom I also had to consider the possible disadvantages to the pupils.

Primarily I had to consider the integration versus withdrawal debate which has dominated special education over recent years. Withdrawing pupils in the way I proposed runs counter to current trends to integrate pupils with special educational needs into mainstream schools and classrooms. I was concerned that the school might object to my withdrawing pupils on the grounds that it contravened their policy of integrating pupils

with special educational needs. I was ready to defend my decision by pointing out that the withdrawal was **short** (one hour a week), **temporary** (for twelve weeks) and with a **specific focus** (developing oral skills). However, in the event, perhaps because the school did not perceive these pupils to have special educational needs, this issue was not raised by either the class teacher or the headteacher.

However, despite the school's lack of concern, I was worried that the pupils might be stigmatised by my decision to include them in the small group activities. As the pupils were not being selected on academic ability I felt that this was less likely than might have been the case if the group was focusing on specific learning difficulties, eg basic literacy skills. Nevertheless, as a precaution I did not explain to the pupils why they had been chosen beyond the fact that I was interested in working with them. If the issue of their quiet withdrawn behaviour, or as they called it their shyness, was discussed this was only after the subject was raised by the pupils themselves.

Whilst the school did not resist the idea of withdrawal of pupils with special educational needs on ideological grounds, both the class teacher and the headteacher had their own reasons for favouring whole class teaching.

On several occasions the class teacher pointed out that withdrawing pupils on a regular basis disrupted his teaching. On the afternoons of the group work he had to organise lessons

for different groups of pupils. Thus whilst some pupils were absent from his lessons on either of the two afternoons, other pupils would be present for both. He was also concerned that involvement in the study meant that the pupils missed some lessons and might have difficulty in picking up the threads of ongoing topic work. Whilst I did consider shaping my teaching to tie in with the work completed by the whole class I quickly abandoned the idea. I felt that the selected pupils would benefit from a series of lessons aimed at meeting their specific special educational needs. In retrospect I wish that I had had sufficient confidence in what I was doing to persuade the teacher to adapt my work for the rest of the class. Working with the whole class during the second year of the project (phase two) I became convinced of the value of small group activities focusing on talk for all pupils (for further discussion see section 4.5.).

The headteacher's resistance to my working exclusively with withdrawal groups stemmed from a belief that such work was not regarded, either by herself or by the profession as a whole, as real teaching. For example, during a lunch time conversation she asked me how the study was developing. She was particularly interested in how it contributed to my professional development. I talked at length about the benefits, to both pupil and teacher, of being able to withdraw pupils to work in small groups. However, it was only when I mentioned my intention to develop this work in a whole class situation that she became really interested, "Ah" she said, "so that is the professional development". The implication

was that, whilst withdrawal groups were interesting, "real teaching" involved working with whole classes.

Clearly, as teaching pupils in groups of thirty or so is the norm for the majority of teachers, work which informs that teaching has to be adaptable to whole class teaching. In the second year of the study (phase two) I developed the teaching strategies I had implemented within the withdrawal group in order to ensure they were applicable to whole class teaching.

However, whilst I taught the selected pupils in withdrawal groups and as part of a whole class, it was in my opinion the former situation in which the pupils received the most appropriate support and made the most progress. As a consequence, whilst I understand current reservations about withdrawing pupils with special educational needs, I would maintain that such work can have tremendous benefits for the pupils. The criteria for appropriate withdrawal should be that the withdrawal is **short, temporary** and have a **specific focus**. I believe that my withdrawal of the quiet pupils from their mainstream classroom met all three criteria and was beneficial to the pupils involved.

As the pupils highlighted by the present study were unfamiliar with co-operative small group activities the withdrawal sessions began with **teacher-led discussions** (section 4.4.c). It was only as the work progressed and I when felt that the pupils had gained both expertise and confidence that I introduced the idea of **independent group work** (section 4.4.f).

4.4.c) Teacher-Led Discussions

In introducing the idea of small group discussions the initial problem was that the pupils involved were not familiar with this kind of approach. Although in their mainstream classroom the majority of the pupils sat together around tables in groups of four or six they tended to work individually. In this context truly cooperative tasks were rare. Moreover, talk in the mainstream classroom was strictly controlled by the class teacher. In one-to-one interviews, several of the pupils expressed a view that talking in class was naughty and not encouraged by the teacher. Indeed during my observation of the class, pupils were sometimes allowed to sit with their friends on the understanding that they would not talk to each other. However, invariably this instruction was neither meant nor applied literally. In such situations pupils would talk and so long as this was reasonably quiet and task-related they would not be chastised for doing so.

Given this background and the pupils' seeming inability or unwillingness to communicate freely with teachers and peers, it was important that the small group activities began with clear, easily attainable tasks. Similarly, I felt that I had a vital role to play in initiating discussion and providing a role model as to how such discussions might be sustained and developed. The following example will serve to illustrate the point.

An Illustrative Example

The second session began with the pupils being given a "diamond ranking" activity to complete independently. Each pupil was given nine pieces of card on each of which was written a situation in which they might talk to a specific group of people, eg. "in front of the whole school", "with friends" or "at home with my family". The task was to rank these statements in order of difficulty so that the situations in which the pupils found talking relatively easy would go at the top and the more difficult situations would go at the bottom. The purpose of placing the statements in a diamond shape (1, 2, 3, 2, 1,) was that the easiest and most difficult situations were clearly identified.

Once the pupils had ranked the statements the next task was for each pupil to share their answers with the rest of the group. This they did by reading out the statements which they had at the top and bottom of their personal diamond. At this point I stressed the importance of the pupils expressing their own point of view and that, as there were no right and wrong answers, we were not aiming to reach a consensus decision. As each pupil read out their two statements the rest of the group were encouraged to ask appropriate questions to find out more about how the individual felt in those situations. My role was to encourage the pupils to participate in the activity. I wanted them to take their turn in reading out their chosen statements and be prepared to ask questions of the other pupils. Here, as elsewhere in the study, I tried hard not to

direct the discussion nor to impose my own agenda beyond setting the initial task.

By structuring the discussion in this way I hoped to provide an environment in which all the pupils would be able to express an opinion about their experience of talking in a variety of situations. Indeed this proved to be the case. Whilst some pupils were significantly more reluctant than their peers, all the pupils were able to complete the task. In addition, all the pupils were able to expand on their original statements and answer the questions posed by their peers. Moreover, although some were significantly more vocal than others, all the pupils took turns in asking questions and seeking additional information.

In addition to providing a tightly structured and therefore relatively secure opportunity for discussion to develop, this activity also highlighted the fact that the group shared similar experiences and concerns. In my opinion this brought the group together and I believe that incidents like this may well have been the foundation of many of the friendships which developed between the pupils highlighted by the present study. Certainly, as the study developed, friendships grew between pupils who had previously seemed to be social isolates in the classroom.

The Importance of Talk for Learning

In aiming to establish the importance of talk for learning I wanted pupils to experience and appreciate the ways in which they could learn, and subsequently demonstrate their learning, through the medium of the spoken word. This was achieved primarily by devoting the whole of the small group activities to learning about talk and learning through talk. In the context of these activities, effective talk was seen as an end in itself. Thus in contrast to lessons I had observed in the mainstream classroom, talk was the primary focus of the activity and not a precursor to the "real" or main task of writing.

Learning about Talk

In some sessions, for example in the situation discussed above, aspects of talk were presented as the subject for discussion. In this example as elsewhere, asking relevant questions was presented as a useful strategy for stimulating and sustaining discussion. In retrospect however I could have done far more to alert pupils to the relative value of "open-ended" questions as compared with "closed" questions which prompt a single word, often yes or no, as an answer. In addition to experience of asking questions, pupils were encouraged to listen attentively to others in order to be able to develop discussion. During phase one of the study I also used excerpts from The Trouble with Donovan Croft by Bernard

Ashley (1977) to stimulate discussion of the possible relationship between unhappiness and a refusal to speak.

However, initially I experienced some difficulty in persuading pupils to talk to each other rather than using me as an intermediary. Invariably when pupils wanted to speak they began by trying to attract my attention. When it was their turn to speak they would direct their comments at me rather than at their peers. Gradually however, the pupils realised that what I wanted was for them to talk to each other and they began to take a more active role in the discussions.

Increasingly the pupils began to introduce their own topics which they subsequently discussed among themselves without my intervention. When this happened I felt that the quality of the communication changed and became more naturalistic. In contrast to the teacher directed discussions I had observed, the questions were asked as part of a genuine attempt to understand another person's point of view. As the pupils became more able and willing to talk with each other I began to introduce independent group activities (discussed in section 4.4.f) in which the pupils took increasing responsibility for their work.

Throughout my work I made extensive use of tape recorders to capture what were, by definition, transitory discussions. In addition to providing evidence for analysis, the recordings proved to be an invaluable teaching aid in allowing pupils to reflect on their own effectiveness in a variety of situations. This kind of pupil assessment was extended and developed

during my whole class teaching in phase two of the study.

Learning Through Talk

Whilst I was happy to devote some time to a discussion of talk I felt that there was a limit to what could be usefully achieved through this kind of work. If I wanted the pupils to appreciate the importance of learning through talk then I had to give them the opportunity to experience this first hand.

Given that many of the pupils highlighted by the study had difficulty in forming and sustaining relationships I decided that much of this early work would focus on the subject of relationships, primarily peer group relationships. Using excerpts from books like The Trouble with Donovan Croft the pupils were encouraged to discuss aspects of relationships as portrayed by others. I also encouraged the pupils to participate in role-play exercises in which they "became" the different characters and therefore experienced "first hand" something of how the characters might have felt.

In these, as in all activities, I encouraged pupils to personalise the discussion by relating it to their own experiences. I also tried to encourage the pupils to set their own agenda by allowing discussions or activities to be shaped by the pupils' own concerns. For example, when Diana expressed concern about what she saw as blatant racism in The Trouble with Donovan Croft I felt that it was appropriate to

set aside the proposed agenda in order to discuss the issue. Similarly, Vicky's definition of friendship became the foundation for subsequent discussion. Both these examples are discussed further under the heading **pupil participation**.

4.4.d) Pupil Participation

I was highly delighted with the level of pupil participation which I observed during the teacher-led discussions. Tape recordings of these discussions are evidence of this participation. All the pupils took part in the activities and made their own contribution to it. Unfortunately it is impossible and inappropriate to discuss each session in detail here. However, a series of brief examples will serve to illustrate the point. In choosing these examples I felt it appropriate to include pupils whose behaviour is described elsewhere as representing different "modes of behaviour".

Vicky : Excluding

One of the greatest and most pleasing aspects of this work was in observing Vicky play a full role in the discussions. As Vicky left the school towards the end of phase one of the study (and therefore did not take part in the whole class work in phase two) this was a rare opportunity to witness her voluntary participation in group discussions. What amounted

to a complete change in behaviour took place almost as soon as the small group sessions began. Session four began with the pupils taking part in role play situations when they acted out a number of scenes in which characters tried, with varying degrees of success, to make friends with their peers. In order to emphasise positive experiences, during the subsequent discussion pupils were asked to think of situations in which they had experienced acts of friendship. Without hesitation Vicky cited the example of how nurses had recently shown friendship to her sick grandfather. This unexpected contribution prompted interesting discussion of the nature of friendship and the different forms it might take. The outcome was far more interesting than a mere account of incidents in school which I had anticipated.

Obviously, a discussion of the factors which contributed to Vicky feeling able and willing to contribute in this way are, by definition, pure speculation. However, I can suggest two possible reasons why Vicky spoke out in this way. First, it could be that participation in the role play encouraged her to imagine situations beyond the "here and now" reality of the classroom. If this is the case then participation in the role play which encouraged pupils to imagine alternative scenarios may have helped Vicky to make the link between friendship as experienced in the role play and her grandfather's situation. She was attempting to "name her world" by making links between different aspects of her life.

However, an alternative interpretation could be that Vicky had

predicted that the discussion was likely to centre on school based relationships and had chosen to direct the discussion in a different way. As Vicky did not appear to have a close friend in the school she could have wanted to avoid what might have been an uncomfortable, if not painful, discussion. If this is the case then her contribution could be seen as an attempt to exert some control over her environment. This interpretation would support my view that her frequent refusal to speak was an indication of a need or desire for control. Certainly in this situation she had her wish. The discussion became a consideration of examples of friendship in the wider community with other pupils citing examples of acts of friendship shown by people outside school.

Whatever it was that prompted Vicky to talk about her grandfather in the way she did, I felt that it was important for her to have the experience of "naming her world" in her own terms. This example demonstrates the value of small group discussions in empowering quiet pupils. It is possible that, had the discussion taken place in a whole class situation, Vicky would have simply kept quiet, assuming, perhaps rightly, that it was unlikely she would be asked to participate.

However, in retrospect I wish that I had been more aware of the different possible interpretations of her action during the actual discussion. Had this have been the case I might have been able to discuss it with Vicky and thus gain insights into her need for control, as exhibited by her extreme withdrawal which bordered on "elective mutism".

Rasheeda : At Risk

Rasheeda's contribution to the discussions were never as dramatic nor as long as the example cited above. However, a close analysis of the discussions recorded during the small group sessions reveal many instances in which she played an active part in the proceedings. When pupils were asked to take turns in responding to a particular stimulus Rasheeda takes her turn along with the others. For example, in session two Rasheeda read out her views on which were the easiest and most difficult situations in which to talk. Moreover, there are numerous occasions where her voice is to be heard in the background as she supports an answer given by other pupils. As a consequence, whilst her contributions may be shorter and less frequent than those of some of her peers, she still talks far more during the small group activities than she did during the class lessons I observed.

Diana : Ready to Learn

Diana was so confident in the small group situation that she frequently drew analogies between the issues raised during discussions and her own lived experiences. For example, in session eight the focus was on Donovan's experience of fostering. Diana immediately related this to her friend's experiences in a similar situation.

I know a girl called Kelly once and she were adopted. And I don't think it were fair 'cos she had to go to different houses. And when she was in this house that I

knew her in the parents weren't treating her right, well foster parents they weren't treating her right... and her sister, well her foster sister, she were getting more attention than Kelly and when Kelly just got a bit of attention Joanne, her foster sister, got all jealous and they had to get rid of Kelly she had to go to a different house... ...And Kelly said that she felt all miserable and horrible and that she wanted to find her parents again. (Diana, Session 8,)

It is significant that in telling her story Diana is prepared to go beyond the actual facts of the case. She talks about how being rejected by yet another foster family made her friend miserable and long for a family of her own. Diana also expresses her own point of view. She does this directly with phrases such as "I don't think it were fair", and also in her implied criticism of Joanne's jealousy when Kelly "got just a bit of attention".

I felt that this expression of personal experience was useful to the whole group in that the other pupils could learn from Diana's experience in a way which would enhance their reading of the text. Moreover, Diana was providing an excellent role model for her peers.

It was later in the same session that Diana suggested that it was inappropriate for Donovan's foster family to consider the fact that Donovan was black might be a problem for a white family. Turning to her West Indian friend for support, Diana stated that black and white people were the same and should be treated as such. At the time I was aware that as these two incidents followed immediately one after the other it was possible that gaining confidence during the story telling might have encouraged Diana to take the risk of accusing the

teacher of using racist material. I was pleased that, rather than being defensive which would have effectively ended the discussion, I was confident enough to lead a discussion on the relative merits of the book.

Interestingly the two West Indian pupils present had little to say on the subject of racism during this original discussion. However, they were prepared to express their feelings in subsequent one-to-one discussions. As on numerous other occasions during the study, I appreciated the benefits of supporting my teaching with an opportunity to have "private conversations" with pupils. This luxury is not ordinarily available to class teachers but my experience would suggest that it should be.

Roxana : Afraid

Roxana was prepared to join in with small group discussions. However, her mannerisms and voice suggested that she found the experience more difficult than she was prepared to admit. During the early sessions Roxana often spoke very loudly and in a tone which suggested a presentation rather than a natural conversation. Moreover, when she became conscious of how she sounded she became even more self-conscious putting her hand over her mouth and giggling. At times like this I encouraged her to pause for a moment and collect her thoughts. However, rather than relaxing into a more natural conversational tone she would simply repeat the same "presentation". At the time

it seemed that her contribution was artificial and stilted, as if she had prepared what she wanted to say in advance.

As the sessions continued Roxana appeared increasingly more relaxed. Yet her tendency to rehearse her contribution prior to beginning to speak continued. For example, in a lesson with the whole class during phase two of the study Roxana gave her partner an interesting but rather garbled account of an incident which had happened to a neighbour. Later in the same lesson Roxana told her story again to a slightly different audience. On the second occasion she seemed better able to organise her thoughts and the second account was much clearer. On this occasion Roxana used the opportunity to practice telling her story to great effect. That pupils may need time to gather and arrange their thoughts has implications for the way talk is organised in the classroom. Whilst rehearsing a contribution to a discussion should not be either compulsory nor too tightly structured pupils may, on occasion, benefit from being able to tell their story in different ways and for different audiences. My experience suggests that pupils like Roxana, with poor self-confidence, benefit from being able to control the pace of talk-related activities in order to meet their individual and specific needs.

4.4.e) The Role of the Teacher

I had anticipated that choosing to work with quiet pupils in small withdrawal groups might influence the way they behaved. What I had not anticipated was that my involvement in the study would cause me to radically reassess my own teaching.

Throughout my teaching career I had observed teachers who had, for whatever reason, adopted a false "teacher persona" in the classroom. In more extreme cases these teachers would appear somehow less than human in their response to pupils and their learning. In the words of Harrison (1976) these teachers appeared to experience difficulty in bringing their "authentic loving selves" to their relationships with pupils. However, it was only on beginning work with the group of quiet pupils that I began to associate the phenomenon with my own teaching. Freed from the pressures of working with loud, potentially aggressive pupils I found myself relinquishing a "teacher persona" that I was unaware that I had ever adopted. Being privileged to work with a small group of children I increasingly found myself responding as myself rather than in the role of "a teacher". I was surprised to discover that there was a difference. It was then that I became aware of the stressful atmosphere in the staffroom which could not be ignored.

However, as I relaxed in my newly discovered "authentic loving self" I became less tolerant of situations in which individual teachers behaved in a way which showed a blatant

misunderstanding of the pupils' lived experiences.

Central to my experience during the study was a desire to understand the pupils' perceptions. For me the emphasis of the small group activities was in providing a space for pupils to explore their own points of view. Consequently the emphasis was on listening to the pupils rather than telling them what they needed to know. In a very real sense the agenda was theirs not mine. I tried to put this into practice in a number of different ways.

First, whilst I was responsible for introducing the topic or theme of each lesson I tried very hard to ensure that I led or chaired the discussion in such a way as to follow the pupils' agenda rather than my own. I tried to listen to what the pupils were saying and ask questions which arose from their contribution. Sadly this proved to be more difficult than I had anticipated. On some occasions an analysis of tape-recorded discussions reveals a slightly more hesitant or negative tone to my voice than I was aware of at the time. It seems that the tendency for teachers to evaluate their pupil's contribution was deeply ingrained. Possibly the worst example of my hesitation over accepting the pupils' contribution to the discussion occurred in session four when Vicky introduced the idea that the nurses who cared for her grandfather were demonstrating friendship. As the role play which preceded this discussion had focussed largely on situations which may occur in school I had assumed that the discussion would focus on school-based incidents. However, whilst I was clearly

hesitant at the time about accepting Vicky's suggestion, I am pleased to say that I had the presence of mind to allow the discussion to continue. Later in the discussion I made a far more positive comment about Vicky's original statement.

At the start of the study it was quite difficult to avoid asking leading questions and thus directing the discussion. Similarly, I had to make a conscious effort to stop myself from repeating and evaluating the pupils contribution to the discussion. However, I do feel that it became easier as the study progressed. Certainly close analysis of my own teaching, as well as lessons carried out by others, was a tremendous help.

In addition to changing the way I responded to the pupils' comments I also became increasingly tolerant of allowing fairly long pauses in the discussion. My work with quiet pupils convinced me that if I wanted them to talk freely to me and to their peers I had to allow them time to talk. Once a question had been asked either by myself or by one of the pupils I would wait for an answer. Again, watching other teachers and analysing my own teaching alerted me to how often teachers would ask a supplementary question rather than wait for an answer to the original question. My observations suggested that the need to keep the discussion moving all the time was a feature of whole class lessons and the pressure to keep the whole class interested. In the context of small group work, the discussion could take on a more relaxed and natural pace. The slower, perhaps more contemplative, pace of

the small group discussions may also have come about because of the nature of the questions being asked. Unlike in some whole class discussions, the questions grew out of a genuine desire to find out the answer. As these "real" questions were a genuine attempt to find the answer and not an exercise to "guess what is on the teacher's mind" it seemed appropriate to wait for an answer. Moreover, quiet pupils seemed to benefit from time for reflection. Unlike their more vocal peers the quiet pupils highlighted by the present study seemed unable or unwilling to produce instantaneous responses. Once again this illustrates the difficulties faced by quiet pupils during competitive whole class discussions.

This shift in attitude created a good basis to develop relationships between myself and the children as we exchanged views about a wide range of subjects. However, it also created some tensions between myself and individual members of staff. For example, the class teacher became extremely uneasy when some pupils and I shared a joke over my inability to draw. Similarly, my willingness to mediate between pupils and staff when I felt injustices had been committed, as with the incident over Susie's letter to her estranged mother, was unsettling for some members of staff.

The experience of working with quiet pupils in small withdrawal groups had a number of lasting effects. It was one of a number of factors which helped to create particularly close relationships between myself and the pupils involved. (Another significant factor would be my continuing

relationship with the pupils' families during a series of home visits. For further discussion see section 4.2.) These relationships continued outside the school setting as the pupils voluntarily maintained contact long after the study officially finished. Some pupils wrote to me, whilst others visited me either at the University or at home.

In addition, participation in the study changed the way I behaved in the classroom. During class teaching in phase two of this study and in subsequent supply teaching I became far more relaxed at being myself in the classroom. As a consequence of being my "authentic loving self" I feel that I became a significantly more understanding and efficient teacher.

4.4.f) Independent Group Work

I felt that it was important for me to begin the withdrawal sessions with me acting as chair and providing a role model during teacher-led discussions. However, if the pupils were to be successful in small group discussions which took place in the mainstream classroom, it was important for them to be able to work with their peers without a constant teacher presence. Consequently, independent group work was a natural progression.

Yet, despite the fact that the pupils had gone some way

towards overcoming their reluctance to join in with teacher-led discussions, the suggestion that they should participate in independent peer discussions immediately raised further problems. Pupils expressed initial reticence to the idea of working with their peers in this way. Having overcome the difficulties experienced by these pupils in "finding a partner" many of them then demonstrated alarming intolerance of others. Whilst these aspects of pupil behaviour created problems for me in trying to organise the activities, it also proved to me the validity of the study. Here, perhaps for the first time during the study, I had to address the pupils' inability to make and sustain relationships with others. During the teacher-led discussions pupils had been sustained, in part, by the presence of a teacher figure who would mediate in their disputes. A discussion of the teaching strategies which I found useful in overcoming these difficulties forms the basis of section 4.5. Consequently it is appropriate that this section concludes with a brief outline of the difficulties experienced by the pupils.

Initial Reticence

The suggestion that pupils should work in pairs or small groups met with some reluctance. At first Angie refused, saying that she worked better alone. When I pointed out that talking was a shared activity she grudgingly agreed to take part. Roxana was similarly reluctant to find a partner among the group she was working with. On numerous occasions she

suggested that she would work better with a pupil not included in the small group activities. As she named a different pupil on each occasion it seemed likely that this was a strategy designed to delay the process of having to find a partner. By contrast other pupils did not seem to have difficulty in finding a partner. Left to their own devices, Diana, Mandy and Justina always chose to sit and work together. Anxious that they should occasionally increase their circle of friends I sometimes encouraged, or directed, them to work with other people.

Once the groups were established for that specific lesson I would explain the task and leave them to work. As with the early teacher-led discussions the focus was on clear and easily attainable tasks. On each occasion the initial discussion would be followed by a teacher-led whole group discussion. Often in these plenary sessions we would reflect on both the **nature** and **content** of the previous discussions. Playing back excerpts of previous discussions allowed pupils to reflect on the quality of their contribution. Over the duration of the withdrawal groups we were also able to ascertain the features which contributed to an effective and interesting discussion. For example, in session seven Diana explained how elaboration of an original answer often prompted further discussion. The idea of **pupil analysis of talk** was developed during the whole class discussions which took place in phase two of the study (section 4.5.).

Intolerance of Others

On occasion pupils complained that their discussion had been unfairly dominated by particular pupils. For example, on one occasion Justina expressed the view that the previous discussion had been dominated by Angie. Although all the pupils had talked for similar amounts of time Justina felt that the group had been compelled to accept Angie's point of view throughout. The ways in which individuals gain, maintain and exhibit authority over others was a recurring theme throughout the study. A related theme, and one which fascinated pupils, was the ways in which individuals could assert themselves without causing open conflict.

Sometimes pupils were openly intolerant of their peers. For example, in session seven Angie and Justina appear anxious that Vicky should play her part in the discussion, in response to her reluctance to talk they pester her unmercifully.

Angie Friends make you feel special
 Justina I think it should go sometimes
 Angie Yeah, sometimes... ..its not always
 Justina What do you think Vicky?... ..Vicky come into
 the discussion then... ..What do you think?
 Angie Er...
 Justina Come on Vicky please
 Angie Come on
 Justina If you don't...
 Angie Count to... count to... count to ten 'cause
 that's the only way you can do it... you've got
 to... you can't... Mrs S___ Mrs Collins will get
 mad with you you know. If you don't... if you
 don't talk
 Justina Come on Vicky
 Vicky I don't know
 Justina Well think then we haven't got all day
 (Session 7)

Needless to say Vicky responds to this onslaught by saying very little indeed. Subsequent discussion suggests that whilst both Angie and Justina realised the futile and cruel nature of their behaviour they could not think of more positive ways of trying to encourage Vicky to participate. Fortunately, incidents of such blatant unkindness were rare. As the study progressed and pupils became used to working with their peers they became even fewer.

SECTION 4.5. : TEACHING AND RESEARCHING THE WHOLE CLASS

Having worked with quiet pupils in small withdrawal groups, the natural progression was to teach them alongside their mainstream peers in a whole class context. This would enable the quiet pupils to develop their confidence and social skills in a different, and in many ways, more challenging environment. In addition, it would provide me with the opportunity to prove that the teaching strategies that I developed in a small group context were appropriate for whole class teaching situations.

The following discussion represents a synthesis of a wealth of data gathered over thirty hours of class teaching. In order to assess the effectiveness of my teaching it is appropriate to begin by describing my aims in working with quiet pupils in a whole class context.

4.5.a) Aims and Objectives

I saw the opportunity to teach the quiet pupils in a whole class situation as a continuation and development of the work which I began with the withdrawal groups. My main aim was to create a learning environment in which quiet withdrawn pupils would be willing and able to play an active role in their own education. In a whole class context this would mean participating in the academic and social life of the

classroom. Knowing the class as I did, I predicted that achieving this aim would involve a change of behaviour for all pupils. I would be encouraging the quiet withdrawn pupils to play an active role in group discussions. I would also be encouraging the more vocal pupils to listen to, and respect, the views of their quieter peers. In approaching these two related aspects of the same problem I recognised that,

where pupils have difficulties in peer relationships which interfere with their learning, it is important not only to help them as individuals to develop their confidence and social skills, but also to work with the class as a whole in order to ensure that they do not become the subject of teasing, ridicule or rejection.
(Beveridge, 1993, p 96)

I was confident that participation in the withdrawal groups had helped individuals to develop their confidence and social skills. I wanted this development to continue through my work with quiet pupils in a whole class setting. At the same time I wanted to devise and implement teaching strategies which would ensure that the quiet pupils were accepted and respected by their more vocal peers and not made "the subject of teasing, ridicule or rejection".

Thus, in working with the whole class, I saw my main task as devising and implementing teaching strategies which would help to meet the specific needs of quiet withdrawn pupils. I had observed the potential limitations of teacher directed talk and the specific difficulties experienced by quiet withdrawn pupils during whole class discussions. Consequently, I decided to base my own teaching around small group activities. In teaching and researching quiet pupils in withdrawal groups

I had already proven the benefit of small group work in empowering these pupils to "name their world" (section 4.4.). Whole class teaching would provide me with the opportunity to develop this work whilst at the same time demonstrating the benefits of small group work for all pupils.

Working with quiet pupils in a whole class situation meant that there was less danger of them being identified and stigmatised by their peers. In addition, working with the whole class also created a situation in which quiet pupils could experience a wider range of talk situations as identified in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study for Speaking and Listening, Key Stage 2 (DES & WO 1990). Through whole class teaching the pupils would continue to meet the objectives set out in section 4.4.a of this thesis. In addition they would:

- * Discuss issues in small and large groups, taking account of the views of others, and negotiating a consensus;

- * Have the opportunity to work in groups of various size, both single sex and mixed where possible, with and without direct teacher supervision.

(DES & WO, 1990, p 25)

The specific strategies I adopted during my whole class teaching are simple and are therefore well within the scope of any class teacher who believes in the importance of talk for learning. These are discussed under the headings, talk partners, explicit strategies for talk, pupil assessment of talk and accepting the pupils' agenda.

4.5.b) Talk Partners

Having decided to base my teaching on small group activities the first task was to select the criteria for grouping pupils. Teaching the quiet pupils in withdrawal groups made me acutely aware of the anxieties which they sometimes experienced when they were asked to work with their peers. As a result I decided that, whilst there were merits to grouping pupils according to ability, the small group activities would be based on friendship groups as determined by the pupils themselves. As the quiet pupils had low self-esteem and/or difficulty in forming relationships, I believed that self-selected friendship groups would provide them with an appropriate source of security. In addition, having the same partner for a predetermined period removed potentially traumatic uncertainties of who the pupils would be working with.

As I feel that my subsequent success with the class began with the amazingly simple concept of talk partners it is appropriate to begin by describing the process by which these were established.

I began with the assumption that, whilst some pupils would deny the experience, fear of rejection by one's peers is a common if not universal human experience. Consequently, I began the process of establishing talk partners by appealing unashamedly to the pupils' finer feelings by asking them to imagine how they would feel if they were excluded by their

peers. I told the class a personal and, I felt, quite moving story about a girl I had known at school who was teased unmercifully by her peers. I admitted the ambivalence that I had felt in knowing the teasing was unfair but not having the courage to stand up to her tormentors. I also told how guilty and ashamed I had felt when she died prematurely a little after her sixteenth birthday. After this personal reflection I read the poem Tich Miller by Wendy Cope and asked the pupils to reflect on situations in which they had witnessed acts of cruelty to others. In order to lighten the mood I then read the humorous poem Picking Teams by Allen Ahlberg. Once again pupils were encouraged to identify links between the poem and their own lived experiences.

After this introduction I asked the pupils to nominate anonymously, by writing the names on a piece of paper, three pupils they felt they could work with for half a term. I stressed that as a class it was our responsibility to ensure that no one was left out of the process and that every one had a "talk partner". I said that once I had collected in the pieces of paper I would organise the class into groups of two or three. Once these groups were established they would remain in place for half a term when, in order to take into account changes in friendships, the process would be repeated. Interestingly, despite my fears that some pupils might be social isolates, all the pupils in the class had at least one talk partner. Thus the groups were genuinely self-selecting and needed no adjustment from me. Nevertheless, I welcomed the anonymity of this process which ensured that no pupil

faced the indignity of being left out or rejected by their peers.

Having pre-determined and self-selected talk partners helped to overcome many of the practical difficulties I had previously experienced in trying to organise pupils into groups. All the pupils began each of the lessons knowing that they had a partner and that they would not be teased, left out or rejected. In this way pupils like Angie who had previously shown reticence to the idea of working with their peers, accepted the idea of small group work.

The importance of talk partners was demonstrated when I tried alternative ways of working. For example, when I tried a strategy known as "jigsawing", in which individuals leave their "home group" to gather information from other groups, some pupils either refused to participate or became very distressed. Thus, whilst a variety of groupings may be appropriate for confident pupils familiar with small group work, I felt that these quiet withdrawn pupils needed the security of working with chosen friends. Similarly, pre-determined talk partners deprived the more vocal pupils of the opportunity to tease or bully their peers.

Initially the quiet pupils tended to chose partners from among the pupils they had worked with during the withdrawal groups. The fact that the pupils, some of whom had been regarded as social isolates, had a group of potential partners may help to justify their involvement in the withdrawal groups. However,

it was also pleasing to see that, as the study progressed, several of the quiet withdrawn pupils chose to work with an increasing number of pupils. Thus it seemed that the relationships initiated in the withdrawal groups appeared to form the basis of subsequent relationships.

In order to allow the pupils the opportunity to work with a wide range of people I occasionally put several groups of "talk partners" together. I explained to the pupils that I expected them to be able to cope with this variation on their usual way of working because they always had the support of their chosen partner. Most of the time this worked very well and pupils adapted easily to the idea of plenary sessions in which they would "report back" to a larger group of pupils. On the few occasions that I noticed pupils being marginalised or excluded I reminded everyone of the need to include everyone in their activity. When it seemed appropriate I talked with the class about verbal and physical strategies which were likely to include or exclude others. For example, on one occasion I showed the class a video tape of a group activity in which the way the pupils sat effectively excluded a pupil from participating. Following demonstrations such as this I invariably noted a marked improvement in the pupils' behaviour towards each other.

As the study progressed I became increasingly convinced that having regular "talk partners" offered quiet pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties a much needed degree of security which they would not necessarily experience if groups

were organised in other ways. This was borne out by observations of the difficulties which pupils appear to experience when they are asked to work with, or perform in front of, a randomly chosen group of peers.

4.5.c) Explicit Strategies for Talk

In order to add to the feelings of security engendered by having a regular chosen partner, the lessons followed a similar, and therefore highly predictable, pattern.

Introducing Circle Activities

Especially during the first term, the lessons began and ended with the whole class sitting in a large circle and participating in circle games or activities. The emphasis during this "circle time" was for each pupil to have the opportunity to speak whilst the remainder of the pupils exhibited respectful silence. For some games or activities the contribution expected from each pupil was short and followed a predetermined pattern. For example, in the "Itch Game" each pupil would repeat what their neighbour had said and add their own contribution, "This is ____ and she itches here, I am ____ and I itch here". In addition to the repeated refrain the pupils would include an appropriate comic action. On other occasions the pupils would be asked to express an

opinion on a chosen subject. For example, on one occasion pupils were asked to comment on a series of pictures displayed in the middle of the circle. Once again the emphasis was on every pupil having the opportunity to speak. At this point in the lesson no value judgements were made about the quality of a pupil's contribution. Frequently less confident pupils would simply repeat comments made by others.

During more informal discussions an object was passed around the circle to indicate the pupil's right to speak. Only the person holding the object was allowed to speak whilst others had to exhibit a respectful silence. Here the rules also applied to me. I sat in the circle and participated in the same way as the pupils.

These circle activities were good fun and generated a great deal of laughter. However, in addition to the sheer enjoyment, the circle activities also served a number of important functions.

First, they ensured that every pupil spoke to, and was heard by, the rest of the class. Moreover, as the activities were tightly structured, an individual's contribution was expected to be both brief and follow a predictable pattern. Having observed pupils sitting through whole lessons without speaking to either teacher or peers I felt that these kind of activities had an important role to play as ice-breakers. I believed that the difficulties which quiet pupils may experience in speaking in front of the whole class were likely

to increase as the lesson continued. The circle activities ensured that every pupil heard the sound of their own voice within the first few minutes of the lesson.

Second, in addition to providing an opportunity to talk, the circle activities also ensured that all pupils had some experience of listening, or at least remaining silent, whilst others spoke. Participation in circle games gave me an ideal opportunity to stress the role of active listening in good discussions. Not surprisingly, vocal pupils who were used to dominating talk in the classroom experienced some difficulty in remembering to keep quiet at the appropriate times.

Incidentally, the experience of "going round the circle" in order to hear everyone's point of view was used by the pupils to some effect when they felt that their discussion was in danger of drying up. Several feedback sessions in which the pupils reported back to a larger group began with the pupils employing this strategy. Whilst it has limited value as a genuine discussion, going round the circle to ask each person for their point of view often formed an important precursor to the real discussion which, in retrospect, could be seen to grow out of the initial statements.

Finally, I felt that participation in the circle activities was likely to foster a sense of belonging to, and being accepted by, the class as a community. During my observations of mainstream class lessons this was the only occasion in which the whole class worked co-operatively on equal terms.

During other whole class activities, such as preparing for a school assembly, the activity tended to be dominated by a small number of pupils.

Developing a Theme

At the end of the circle activities I would introduce the theme of the lesson. During the course of this work the pupils covered a wide range of issues which included; Myself, Families, Friends, Becoming Independent and Experiencing Change. The class teacher had asked that I "do some poetry"; in the event poetry was only one of a range of stimuli which I used. Especially during the early lessons I used packs of professionally-produced pictures to stimulate discussion around a number of themes such as "The Nature of the Family", "Breaking Down Gender Stereotypes" and "The Nature of Disability". I also introduced the class to role play activities which became extremely popular.

Experience of working with pupils during one-to-one interviews revealed just how many pupils were living with, or worse denying, unresolved issues such as death and divorce. In order to encourage pupils to talk about their personal experiences and attitudes I often began lessons with personal anecdotes of my own. For example, the discussion about disability which is examined in Roxana's case study (section 5.3.a) began with an account of the difficulties which my family had experienced in finding a place for my disabled

nephew in a mainstream school. I believed that the sharing of such personal stories like these would help to create a supportive environment in which pupils would be free to talk honestly about their own lives without fear of reprisals from others. So far as I am aware, I was totally successful in achieving this aim. During the course of the study the pupils discussed a wide variety of personal issues around the themes of family, friends and relationships. Yet in all cases the other pupils were sensitive and supportive. I know of no instance in which individuals used information gained during the lessons to tease or bully others.

Having introduced the theme for the lesson I would then set a specific task for the pupils to complete with their talk partners. As with the withdrawal groups, pupils tended to like tightly structured activities in which there was a clear and easily attainable task. However, as the study developed the pupils became less apprehensive about tackling more open-ended tasks. For example, towards the end of the study Roxana and her partner had tremendous fun inventing appropriate characters to read the poem they had been asked to discuss. Similarly, Diana, Angie and Mandy became quite "carried away" by their involvement in role play situations. Here, as elsewhere in the small group activities, pupils demonstrated their willingness and ability to "name their world" and make the learning their own.

Towards the end of the small group activities the class would be told if, and in what form, they would be asked to report

back to a larger group or the whole class. Depending on the nature of the task the feedback differed from lesson to lesson. If the task had been to participate in some form of role-play situation, then the pupils would be invited to "perform" for the rest of the class. By comparison an open-ended discussion would be followed by a summary of the main points. Whilst the majority of the feedback activities involved oral work, on occasion pupils were asked to produce written evidence of what they had discussed in the form of charts or posters. In order to meet the specific needs of quiet withdrawn pupils I would make it clear whether the feedback was compulsory, and therefore expected from everyone, or purely voluntary. In this way I hoped to give them maximum opportunity to prepare themselves appropriately for what was to follow.

Whilst I emphasised that I wanted as many pupils as possible to participate in the voluntary feedback I never pressurised reluctant pupils. I knew that, since many of the small group discussions were taped, I would have access to their work even if they chose not to present it to the whole group.

Whether the feedback was voluntary or compulsory I emphasised that the audience response should always be positive and supportive. Sometimes, and in order to encourage the less confident pupils, I limited the response to three positive statements and only one constructive criticism. Where necessary I provided the positive statements myself. Interestingly, as I often pointed out to the pupils, there was

never a shortage of pupils wanting to highlight the less successful aspect of other people's work. The fact that so many pupils were prepared to find fault with work done by their peers was justification enough for emphasising the need for positive feedback.

To conclude the lesson, the final circle activities would be either a summary of the main points of the lesson or, where that was inappropriate, games which emphasised the pleasure of working co-operatively.

In order to meet the specific needs of quiet pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties I was prepared to organise the lessons in a way which was both tightly structured and predictable. I felt this especially appropriate for this particular class which had little or no experience of independent small group work. As the pupils became more familiar with this approach and gained confidence in their own abilities, as well as those of their peers, it became less necessary to maintain such a rigid structure.

In organising the whole class lessons in this way I hoped that the security of a predictable approach would help to empower quiet pupils to face the challenge implied by an expectation that everyone would participate. Indeed I was delighted by the level of pupil participation I witnessed during the whole class lessons. However, I was always aware that in addition to the structure of the lessons the **content** of many of the discussions was a potential source of challenge for the

pupils. The way in which pupils were encouraged to set their own agenda for the small group activities is discussed in section 4.5.e. The following section examines the way in which pupils were encouraged to assess their contribution to small group activities.

4.5.d) Pupil Assessment of Talk

As part of the process of demonstrating the importance of talk for learning I introduced the pupils to the idea of them assessing their own contribution to group discussions. This was done in two ways.

First, I used episodes of talk recorded during previous lessons in order to demonstrate good practice. In this way pupils could be alerted to useful strategies such as asking appropriate questions and seeking clarification. In addition to providing good role models this activity also demonstrated that I did listen and take note of what was recorded during the lessons. It also gave me the opportunity to acknowledge good, thoughtful work. Here extensive use of tape recorders was invaluable both in analysing episodes of talk and in emphasising to the pupils the importance of talk for learning.

Second, I asked pupils to complete evaluation sheets in which they ranked different aspects of their contribution to small group discussions. This began with groups of pupils drawing

up a list of criteria which they thought were important for good or effective talk. By a process of elimination these criteria were reduced to eight statements.

How well did I try to include others?
How well did I listen to other people's ideas?
How well did I express my feelings?
How well did I share my feelings?
How well did I show respect for other people's ideas and feelings?
Did I ask questions?
Did I use an appropriate level of voice?
Did I disagree with other people without putting them down?

These statements were reproduced on "evaluation sheets" which asked pupils to rank each aspect of their contribution to specific lessons on a five-point scale. The evaluation concluded with the completion of the statement "My general impression of the week's lesson is ...". I felt that, especially in the early days of their use, these sheets served as a useful reminder of previous discussions about what constituted good or effective communication. However, over time, the exercise lost some of its impact and should have been replaced with a different approach.

As with other aspects of small group work, the quiet pupils who had taken part in the withdrawal groups had some prior knowledge of a process of self-assessment and were therefore at a slight advantage over their normally more vocal peers. The fact that quiet pupils benefited in this way helped to further justify their participation in the withdrawal groups.

4.5.e) Accepting the Pupils' Agenda

As with the withdrawal groups my aim in the whole class lessons was to encourage pupils to "name their world" by taking some responsibility for the content of the discussions. Thus, in all lessons, I tried hard not to set my own agenda beyond introducing the initial theme for discussion. However, in some instances it was possible to predict the essential nature of the pupils' talk. For example, in the first lesson in which the pupils were asked to use pictures cut from magazines to produce a "family collage" I would have been surprised, and a little disappointed, if all the pupils had produced an image of a stereotypical nuclear family of mother, father and two children. Work revolving around widening the definition of a family to include the pupils' lived experiences formed a basis for further work both within the lessons and during private conversations with individual pupils.

During the course of my teaching the class, I tried to encourage all pupils to introduce their own agenda and to interpret the increasingly open-ended tasks in their own way. Whilst I feel I was successful in achieving this end, what became clear was the variety of ways in which different groups of pupils would introduce their own themes. Whilst the more vocal pupils would not hesitate to speak their mind and direct the discussion, quiet withdrawn pupils would employ far more subtle means of "naming their world". I came to believe that appreciating the difference in approach and becoming sensitive

to the specific needs of quiet pupils was central to creating an environment in which all pupils had a voice in the classroom. A few examples, discussed under the headings confident pupils and quiet pupils, will serve to illustrate the point.

Confident Pupils

Darren was one of a group of boys in the class who appeared to show little hesitation about expressing his point of view. As a result, he was extremely vocal during discussions. During the course of my work with the class Darren made a number of personal, relevant, and therefore extremely welcome, contributions which helped to shape subsequent discussions. In fact the statement about "disagreeing with other people without putting them down" which was included on the pupil evaluation sheet (section 4.5.c) originated from one of his comments.

However, his direct approach was occasionally extremely disconcerting. For example, whilst using a picture as the stimulus for a story, Darren suddenly announced that his mother was extremely ill with cancer. I sought to empathise with him and offered what support I could in terms of time to talk with him about his mother's illness. Yet, despite my sympathy I could not help but notice that there was something challenging, if not threatening, about the way in which he disclosed his concern. It was almost as if he was

establishing barriers to exclude further communication.

As the above example demonstrates, allowing pupils to introduce their own agenda provided confident pupils with an opportunity for them to raise difficult issues. On occasions the pupils also forced me to re-examine my own preconceptions. The most dramatic example of this was when a group of boys introduced the theme of drug-abuse into a role play intended to examine attitudes to theft. In this role play, performed in front of the whole class, the boys demonstrated a disconcerting familiarity with the language and habits of drug-abuse. Subsequent discussions about drug-abuse in the area revealed to me something of the possible conflict between the expectations of the teacher and the lived experiences of the pupils.

Despite my concern that this subject had been raised in such a forceful way, I was prevented from developing the theme further by the head teacher. She explained that a discussion of drug-abuse was an integral aspect of the school's health education programme and would be covered by the class teacher later in the year. However, although I continued to visit the school on a weekly basis throughout the year, I saw no evidence of work on the subject of drug-abuse. I could only conclude that the head teacher did not want me, a researcher and visitor to the school, to include a discussion of teaching about drug-abuse in my work.

In both of the above examples the pupils concerned showed no

hesitation in voicing their concerns. However, neither Darren nor the pupils who introduced the subject of drug-abuse, received the quality of support they needed or deserved. This alerted me to the possible dangers of initiating "genuine" open-ended discussion in a school which was unable or unwilling to provide appropriate support. I felt that, at the very least, the pupils concerned about drug-abuse should have been provided with information to help them to understand what they saw and to empower them to make informed judgements about their own lives. In addition, I felt very strongly that Darren should have had access to some form of bereavement counselling or therapy to help him to face his mother's illness and possible death. The need for this kind of support in school, and ways in which it might be provided, are discussed in section 4.6. of this thesis.

Quiet Pupils

It is my experience that, whilst confident pupils show little hesitation about expressing their concerns, quiet pupils are far more reluctant to talk openly about their experiences. Even in the relative privacy of one-to-one interviews quiet pupils would only reveal their stories slowly and in gradual stages. Even then, some pupils would not publicly acknowledge the truth about their lives and families. Consequently, in order to provide quiet pupils with a voice in the classroom, I introduced some of the sorts of issues and themes which the pupils had talked about during one-to-one interviews but were

unlikely to raise in a whole class lesson. Thus, there was often a clear link between the lessons and issues raised during one-to-one interviews with selected pupils.

One such incident was when Mandy's account of her friend stealing money in school (Pupil, 3rd interview) led indirectly to a lesson in which pupils were invited to consider the range of options open to someone who suspected their friend of stealing. Whilst I never disclosed the original stimulus for the lesson, the ensuing discussion allowed Mandy the opportunity to discuss the issue and possible consequences with her friend. I do not think that the fact that a group of boys used the subsequent role play exercise as a vehicle for talking about drug-abuse, actually detracted from Mandy's opportunity to raise what was for her an issue of personal concern.

Similarly, Angie's comments about playing with her mother's things led me to initiate a series of lessons in which the class were invited to explore stereotypical mother or father roles. Using the poem One Parent Family by Moira Andrew I encouraged the pupils to consider how far they thought their parents fitted a stereotypical image of a parent. In the context of small group discussions, Angie was one of a group of pupils who was prepared to talk about the ways in which their parents differed from a stereotype. In introducing this topic in this way I felt that I had helped to acknowledge Angie's lived experience and give her a voice in the classroom.

Obviously in making links between the interviews and the subjects of subsequent lessons I took extreme care to ensure that I was not betraying confidences. I never used material which could be traced to specific pupils. Similarly, I ensured anonymity by using appropriate pictures, poems or anecdotes of my own to introduce the themes for discussion.

Perhaps because they felt respected both by me and by their peers, there were a number of situations in which quiet pupils were prepared to introduce subjects of their own. Possibly the most dramatic of these occurred when Roxana wanted to discuss the pupils' attitudes to abortion. Whilst this episode is discussed elsewhere in this thesis (section 5.3.) it is important to note that it was during this exchange that Susie introduced the subject of the death of her own sibling. It is possibly significant that her revelation was made at a time when background noise made it difficult for the other pupils to hear what she had said.

For me, working with quiet pupils in a whole class context demonstrated the importance of two related phenomena.

First, the need for teachers to provide quiet pupils with a voice in the classroom by introducing issues which are known to be of interest to pupils who are likely to experience difficulty in speaking for themselves.

Second, the value of implementing teaching strategies, such as structured small group talk and talk partners which are likely to empower quiet pupils to be able to speak for themselves.

In conclusion, working with quiet pupils in a whole class

setting proved to me the value of small group activities in providing all pupils with a voice in the classroom. Moreover, all the pupils who participated in the study gained first hand experience of telling "their story" to a willing and supportive audience. For pupils described in the context of this thesis as "ready to learn" such positive experiences may be sufficient to convince them of the value of talk for learning. However, for other pupils, for whom quietness in the classroom is associated with serious unresolved issues related to their poor self-concept or their difficulties in forming relationships with others, I feel that even "good enough" teaching is not sufficient. It is my belief that these pupils may benefit from additional support in the form of counselling or therapy.

SECTION 4.6. : ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR PUPILS

In this study I have demonstrated the importance of talk for learning and the necessity of pupils being able to "name their world". I have also identified, by examples drawn from my own teaching and through observations of other teachers, ways in which appropriate teaching strategies can empower quiet withdrawn pupils to play an active role in their own education. However, whilst my study is based on an appreciation of the importance of pupils having a voice in the classroom, I am also aware of the possible tensions which can be associated with genuine pupil-directed dialogue.

Participation in this study has helped to highlight the potential difficulties which may be experienced by teachers and pupils and suggest ways in which they might be overcome.

My experience suggests that the major difficulty, and also the major strength, of allowing pupils a voice in the classroom is that they are likely to raise important, personal and often contentious issues. For example, during the course of this study pupils have introduced a wide range of issues which has included bullying, child abuse, racism, drug-abuse, parental separation, terminal illness, death and abortion. Sometimes, as in the case with bullying, the issue has direct relevance to the pupils' experience of school. Other issues, such as abortion, have generated interesting debate. However, whilst I was happy that small group discussion was an appropriate way in which to handle some issues, I felt that other issues were either so serious or so contentious that they needed extremely

sensitive handling either as a class topic or on an individual basis.

In considering how to handle the more serious or contentious issues I feel it is appropriate to distinguish between those subjects which are of general concern and those which have direct consequences for individual pupils. Whilst in some cases the distinction may be artificial, this approach does help to identify what might well be the most appropriate way of handling the issues. Examples drawn from the present study will help to illustrate the point.

The way in which racism was perceived by the pupils and their parents is one of a number of contentious issues raised during the course of this study. During one-to-one interviews, both pupils and their parents spoke frankly about racism in the school and local community. These open exchanges revealed deep tensions both between the black and white communities and between the values of school and those of the wider community. Angie's parents spoke angrily of the racism which they experienced as members of the African-Caribbean community. They also spoke at some length about what they perceived to be institutional racism in the educational system. In their opinion their daughter's primary school was not going far enough in devising and implementing anti-racist or multicultural policies. By comparison Mandy's mother spoke with disgust of the fact that her daughter was expected to participate in multicultural activities such as Ed festivals.

Thus, one-to-one interviews revealed clear conflict between the views and expectations of different groups of parents. Moreover, whilst neither group was happy with the provision made by the school, none of the parents I spoke to felt willing or able to discuss their concerns with the staff of the school. Given the potential conflict between the values of home and school on the issue of racism it is little wonder that the school had difficulty in reducing the incidence of racist behaviour between pupils.

During my work with the pupils I tried hard to foster what I believed to be racially enlightened attitudes. However, I felt that real success in this area would only begin when the school adopted a whole school policy which included genuine dialogue with parents. One-to-one interviews and home visits similar to those carried out during the course of this study appear to be vital if parents, and indeed pupils, are to be able to talk frankly about their feelings. If such an approach were to be adopted then it would be important for the school to find ways of handling both the implied criticism and the need for some degree of negotiation between teachers and parents.

Whilst issues of racism have a direct effect on the lives of individuals, this is one issue which has to be addressed by the whole school community. By comparison, other issues raised during the course of this study need a much more personal focus. I feel that part of the process of allowing pupils to raise issues of concern is the need for teachers to

accept responsibility for offering the pupils support in beginning to address the difficulties raised. For example, whilst the decision that I should not address issues of drug-abuse was taken by the school, I feel responsible for the fact that no attempt was made to allow the pupils to explore what they had introduced as a real and important aspect of their lives.

Clearly the type and level of support which is appropriate will be unique to an individual pupil's situation and need. However, it may be appropriate to consider three basic levels of support.

At one level it may be sufficient that the pupil has had the opportunity to voice their concern. For example, during small group discussions Susie mentioned that her handicapped sibling had died shortly after birth. The fact that, despite having the opportunity, she never felt the need to mention this again suggests that either this brief reference was sufficient for her needs, or that she was not yet ready to discuss a potentially painful incident in her life. In either case support, beyond ensuring a sympathetic audience, would have been inappropriate.

A second level of support might be where individual pupils are given the opportunity to discuss issues in a one-to-one situation with the teacher or another appropriate person. My experience of work with quiet withdrawn pupils would suggest that these pupils benefit tremendously from private or small

group interactions. As my work has demonstrated, such pupils experience tremendous difficulties in talking freely in whole class situations. Consequently, they need to be provided with the opportunity to voice their concerns in more private, non-competitive situations. During the course of this study I found the semi-structured interviews with pupils invaluable, both in providing them with the opportunity to voice their concerns and in supporting them whilst they considered how they should proceed.

In carrying out these interviews I found knowledge and experience of Rogerian counselling techniques extremely useful in alerting me to the need to remain non-judgmental and non-directive. I feel that this approach of allowing pupils physical and temporal space in which to examine important issues is an important source of support for their emotional and social development. For quiet pupils it also provided an important forum for them to find their voice in the relative safety of a non-competitive environment.

Training teachers in counselling techniques may not be essential; after all, talking with pupils is an integral aspect of a teacher's role. However, as my observations suggest that teachers are more familiar with the experience of talking at, rather than listening to, pupils, I feel that such training would provide a useful theoretical and practical framework.

The biggest difficulty in implementing a counselling approach

in schools would be finding sufficient non-contact time in which to conduct one-to-one interviews. Having private and uninterrupted time seems to be essential if quiet pupils are to feel sufficiently supported to begin to address issues of serious concern. As my experience has demonstrated, getting to know quiet withdrawn pupils can require a great deal of patient listening.

The two forms of support discussed above can be provided by a class teacher without specific training or expertise.

However, for some of the issues raised by pupils, more specific specialist support may be needed. As an extreme example, individuals who have experienced either physical or sexual abuse may benefit from specially trained support. Similarly, individual situations may call for specific forms of counselling or therapy such as bereavement counselling or play therapy.

I feel strongly that all professionals who work closely with children should be trained to identify the signs of potential child-abuse or other forms of acute distress. If my colleagues or I had received such training we may have helped to prevent Heather from years of anguish and personal danger. Like general practitioners in the medical profession, teachers ought to be trained to identify those instances which are serious enough to need specific specialist support. My experience suggests that teachers can, and do, a great deal to offer pupils support. However, teachers also need to recognise those situations where their support is insufficient

or inappropriate. In this area I feel that quiet withdrawn pupils are especially vulnerable. Whilst it is relatively easy to identify the emotional and behavioural difficulties of loud, potentially aggressive pupils, the special educational needs of quiet withdrawn pupils can be easily overlooked.

My experience of working with quiet withdrawn pupils has helped to stress the need for teachers to be able to identify pupils who are experiencing, but possibly internalising, acute distress. In addition, my growing interest in the area of "educational therapy" has led me to explore the benefits to be gained from training teachers in counselling or therapeutic approaches. I was particularly interested to hear Heather suggest that some victims of child-abuse would appreciate being able to talk about their experiences with a known and trusted individual rather than having to face a complete stranger. If this is the case then appropriately trained teachers would be ideally placed and may be more supportive in some cases than unknown professionals brought into school specifically to deal with a "crisis" situation. Certainly, thought needs to be given to the quality of the liaison between professionals working with specific individuals. The practical and ideological implications of combining or linking the roles of teachers and counsellors is something I would like to explore further.