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Stuck on the sanction pathway: Why do some pupils struggle to adhere to school expectations? An action research project utilising pupil views in a secondary school.

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## **Declaration**

I, the author, confirm that this thesis is my own work. I am aware of the University's Guidance on the Use of Unfair Means ([www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/unfair-means](http://www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/unfair-means)). This work has not been previously presented for an award at this, or any other, university.

## **Abstract**

Recent recommendations for school leaders emphasise a directive approach to behaviour management, in which top down systems are subscribed to by the whole school community (DfE, 2017). Whilst clear and consistent boundaries are considered important by pupils and school staff, it is argued by some that systems which aim to treat all pupils the same are inequitable, because the needs of pupils are different (e.g. Emerson, 2016; Roffey, 2017).

This study aimed to find out why some students consistently remain on the sanction pathway, despite expectations, rewards and sanctions being made explicit. The participating school implemented a prescriptive behaviour policy, encompassing clear rules and expectations alongside a stepped response of rewards and sanctions. Views were gathered from four year eight students who had had consistent involvement with the sanction pathway. Student views were gathered through semi-structured interviews, within an action research framework. The overall aim of the study was to lead to positive change for students through planned, collaborative action.

Thematic Analysis was used, leading to three main themes and related sub-themes. Main findings illuminated that the following contributed to the students' school experience: understanding of expectations; difficult transitions from primary school; remaining in a negative cycle leading to frequent sanctions; and supportive factors. These findings led to collaborative action planning between the researcher and a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team. Actions planned included: developing positive relationships between students and staff; the use of non-confrontational language; developing staff understanding of why some students struggle to control responses; early identification of vulnerable students during transition from primary school; using the time spent in detention in a productive way; and supporting students to reintegrate in to school following exclusion.

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## Table of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full
AD	Assertive Discipline
AR	Action Research
BM	Behaviour Management
DECP	Division of Educational and Child Psychology
DfE	Department for Education
DoH	Department of Health
EP	Educational Psychologist
EPT	Educational Psychology Team
FSM	Free School Meals
RP	Restorative Practice
SEAL	Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning
SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SENDCo	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
TA	Teaching Assistant
TEP	Trainee Educational Psychologist
VP	Vice Principal

Table 1 Abbreviated terms in alphabetical order and their full meaning



# Chapter 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

This thesis explores pupil views of the behaviour management approach in a secondary school in the north of England. In collaboration with school staff, the study aims to identify ways in which behaviour policy can be adapted to encompass the needs of *all* pupils, including those who have consistently received sanctions for not adhering to school expectations. Reviewing and developing approaches to behaviour management in schools is likely to be of significant interest to Educational Psychologists (EPs), as their involvement is often requested in relation to pupils' disruptive behaviour (Hart, 2010). Throughout this thesis, the term 'Behaviour Management' (BM) refers to the multiple ways in which schools address challenging behaviour.

Whilst government guidance advocates for teachers to have the power to discipline pupils for misbehaviour (DfE, 2016) it also emphasises that any approach to managing behaviour must be paired with an individual, graduated response when the behaviour may result from unmet needs or vulnerabilities (DfE, 2018). By law, educational settings must make reasonable adjustments for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) (DfE and Department of Health [DoH], 2014). However, schools differ in the extent to which challenging behaviour is interpreted as SEND. The 'Forgotten Children Report' (House of Commons Education Committee, 2018) found that zero tolerance behaviour policies do not accommodate behaviours which arise from SEND due to their rigid structures. The report found evidence to suggest that there has been an increase in zero-tolerance behaviour policies in schools in recent years, and attribute the rise in school exclusions partly to this. (The term 'zero tolerance' will be explored in more depth in Chapter 2). The number of state maintained mainstream primary and secondary school fixed period and permanent exclusions increased in the period between the school years 2015/16 and 2016/17 (Department for Education [DfE] 2018a). Fixed-term exclusions continued to rise in the period

2016/17 to 2017/18 (DfE, 2019). Although permanent exclusions remained stable during this period, prior to this they had consistently risen since 2006/07. The Committee's report found that children and young people were being punished for minor indiscretions due to rigid, inflexible behaviour policies which did not account for individual needs and differences.

In a review of behaviour in schools, commissioned by the government, Tom Bennett found that schools perceived to be successful in managing behaviour had adopted a directive approach in which policies, cultures and systems were created by senior leaders and were maintained through consistent application by the whole school community (DfE, 2017). In response to the Education Committee's report, Bennett argued that such policies instil calm, ordered environments conducive to learning, by offering clear expectations, consistency and predictable consequences; the certainty of a sanction deters pupils from breaking the rules in the first place (Bennett, 2018).

It is rare to find a school which uses the term 'zero tolerance' in its behaviour policy and I did not find a definitive term for the type of policy which are the focus of this study. Titles of such policies vary and include 'Positive Discipline', 'Positive Behaviour', 'Climate for Learning' and 'Ready to Learn'. In order to explore what defines these, I carried out a brief analysis of discourse of four school behaviour policies, found on school websites (Appendix A). Of those analysed three included phrases such as 'non-negotiable', and 'follow rules first time, every time'. These also shared other key features, including: prescriptive expectations, rules and procedures; a stepped response of sanctions increasing in severity; and clearly defined rewards for desirable behaviour. A fourth policy was included in the analysis to identify features of an alternative approach. In contrast, this policy, entitled 'Relationships Policy', had an emphasis on restorative practice and promoting positive relationships.

Although not new, this rigorous approach to managing behaviour has been the subject of public discourse in recent years. The media has reported on the views of teachers, parents and MPs on

such strict, non-negotiable responses, and this reporting is predominantly negative. For example, schools adopting the approach are accused of not making reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND (Weale, 2018a March 20). It is perceived by some that in the UK the approach to managing behaviour in schools has not changed in the last 200 years and that a system based on punishments is cruel, adding to the pain and rejection experienced by some young people (Dix, 2017). The topic is passionately debated by professionals and zero tolerance behaviour policies are currently the subject of discussion amongst the committee of The Division for Educational and Child Psychologists (DECP) (personal email correspondence). In public forums, some argue that a punitive response to challenging behaviour ignores the cause, whilst others believe that disruptive pupils should be removed from classes to allow the majority of pupils to learn and teachers to teach (e.g. Cowley, 2017).

## **1.2 Personal motivation and positionality**

Whilst working with a group of five secondary school pupils (not in the school participating in this study), I was concerned by pupils being in isolation, having detentions most evenings after school and being given ‘negatives’ regularly. A group of boys had been identified by school staff to take part in a Therapeutic Story Writing group with me over ten weeks. It was thought they would benefit from the intervention as they had difficult home circumstances and were struggling to adhere to the expectations of school. Every week at least one of the boys would arrive at the group, at ten in the morning, already frustrated by an interaction with a teacher in which they had been reprimanded for being late, talking or having the wrong uniform/ equipment. It concerned me that these issues were being raised and sometimes punished, when actually, considering what I knew they were experiencing at home, they had done well to make it to school at all. One of the boys missed the group twice as he had been placed in isolation. There seemed to be a conflict of values; the boys had been selected for a therapeutic intervention due to Social, Emotional and Mental

Health (SEMH) needs and yet they were receiving punitive sanctions, seemingly without understanding from staff, in some cases missing the intervention that was intended to support them. These boys were very willing to open up to me and vent their frustrations. This led me to thinking that I could explore the views of pupils who were regularly on the receiving end of the ‘sanction pathway’, to learn from them and to highlight their experiences.

Further casework in other secondary schools suggested that such experiences were not unique. I had been asked to see a year eight pupil in another school who had regularly received warnings and detentions due to forgetting equipment and not arriving at lessons on time since he had started at the school in year seven. He sometimes failed to arrive at detention which would result in another, longer detention. The school Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCo) was concerned that this boy had some difficulties with organisation and yet the behaviour policy continued to be followed rigorously leading to what was probably a negative experience of school. Conversations with the SENDCo revealed that he had difficult home circumstances and I wondered where the motivation was in this boy’s life.

My experiences in secondary schools, and conversations with EPs and school staff working in other settings fuelled my interest in exploring this further. It seemed that a system intended to be fair and consistent for all, was not having the expected effect for a minority group of pupils, and in fact seemed to be unfair to those disadvantaged by personal circumstances. The idea of a sanction is to deter the pupil from repeating the undesirable behaviour, and yet the boys I had worked with continued to receive sanctions for the same type of ‘misdemeanours’. I wanted to know what I could learn from secondary school pupils and how their experiences could inform policy making to address the needs of *all*.

### **1.3 Social justice**

*“The goal of social justice is full and equal participation of people from all social identity groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs.”* (Bell, 2016, p2).

My research is driven by wanting to promote social justice, and Bell’s quote above summarises why ‘one size fits all’ policies do not achieve this. It is my view that if pupils are repeatedly being removed from lessons, they do not have full and equal participation in school life and are therefore marginalised. Research (e.g. Nutall & Doherty, 2014), explored further in the next chapter, suggests that systems which aim to treat all pupils the same disadvantage some pupils, as the needs and circumstances of pupils are different, i.e. not everyone has the same starting point.

Schulze, Winter, Woods and Tyldsley (2018) explored the role of EPs in promoting social justice through challenging the status quo and working collaboratively to bring about change for children and young people. They identified that school psychologists understand social justice as being about “advocacy, non-discriminatory practice and fairness” (Schulze et al., 2018, p.3). Li and Vazquez-Nuttall (2009) describe social justice as advocating for minority groups. My interest in this area of research is driven by these values; I aim to give voice to a minority group who I perceive as being marginalised and disadvantaged by policies and systems in place in schools. Participants in Schulze et al.’s study (2018) suggested that if EPs do not speak up or offer alternative ways of working when they perceive disadvantage, they are in fact complicit in those systems.

A further perception of social justice is that it should bring about action (Schulze et al., 2018); if discriminatory practice is highlighted, ethically steps should be taken to remove or change that practice. In Chapter 3 (Methodology) I talk about my wish to promote positive change and how I incorporated this into my research design.

## **1.4 Inclusion**

Typically, fixed period and permanent exclusions from school are the final steps in a sanction pathway. Statistics have shown that it is the most vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils that are at the highest risk of exclusion: those entitled to free school meals (FSM), those with SEND and those from certain ethnic groups (Gypsy Roma, Traveller of Irish Heritage, Black Caribbean and White and Black Caribbean). Higher rates of exclusion are seen in areas of high deprivation (DfE, 2019). An investigation by the Guardian (2018) discovered that 45 schools in England, the majority academies, had issued fixed-term exclusions to over 20% of its pupils in 2016-2017, compared to a national average of 4.6%. A spokesperson for one of the schools stated that pupils were excluded for a ‘poor choice of action or response to a reasonable request’ and referred to praise from Ofsted for improving the school since it became academised ‘at remarkable speed’ (Peraudin & McIntyre, 2018). This implies that the incentive to turn failing schools around quickly, can lead to reactive responses which result in many pupils being excluded from school. Internal exclusions, such as the use of isolation rooms, are not reported but also lead to pupils being secluded from their peers. My research is driven by valuing inclusion; that is, looking for ways that pupils can be supported within school systems, rather than removed from them. It is my opinion that education practitioners must seek alternative methods to managing behaviour rather than accept it as inevitable that some pupils must be excluded in order to achieve an ordered environment.

## **1.5 Preconceptions and values**

My experiences with young people in secondary schools, exposure to the media perception of ‘zero-tolerance’ approaches and discussions with colleagues had led me to form the following judgements:

- Rigorous behaviour policies with prescriptive rules and consequences for breaking them are inflexible and do not make allowances for individual needs;

- Such approaches may privilege some and disadvantage others, particularly those who have experienced adversity in their lives; those with SEND, those from low socio-economic backgrounds and those from certain ethnic groups;
- Approaches which involve sanctions as a result of undesirable behaviour may only be punitive, without providing students with opportunities for understanding what went wrong and how to learn more effective responses;
- Such approaches are authoritarian (Baumrind, 1970, in Scarlett et al, 2009) and are concerned with adults having control over children and young people, without valuing relationships based on respect and individuality.

My judgements were also influenced by my personal and professional values: social justice; giving voice to marginalised groups; not privileging certain views over others because of perceived status; respecting individuality; and respect for young people.

I was aware that approaching research holding on to these preconceived ideas and values could bias my findings and I wanted to remain open to what I may find. It was important to me to explore the views of the pupils who were on the receiving end of frequent sanctions because I wanted to know, from their point of view, what that was like; what hindered their ability to adhere to school expectations and what supported them. I believed that this perspective could be useful to schools aiming to ensure that their BM approach worked for all. I wanted to avoid looking for evidence to support my own preconceptions. The reason for exploring the views of the young people themselves was because I believed that they had insights which would inform and challenge my own and others' beliefs and practice.

Solbue (2011) presented her own experience of addressing preconceptions, both conscious and hidden (those which become evident during the research), whilst exploring the personal narratives

of participants. She highlighted the importance of remaining reflexive throughout the research process and engaging in dialogue which continues to challenge and extend existing thoughts, ideas and values. I addressed this in my own research by keeping a reflective diary, in which I documented reading, conversations, thoughts and ideas (my own and those of others) which were relevant to the research area. I aimed to keep myself open to the debate around how to manage behaviour by reading, listening and actively considering and contemplating various viewpoints. I am, however, aware that the viewpoints I am exposed to are limited by those I interact with the most. It is possible that within the EP world and the world of educators there are many who have similar values to me.

## **1.6 Aims of the research**

My initial research proposal led me to work with a school which shared my concern that a minority group of pupils did not respond in the expected way to the BM system, and that this group received a relatively large number of sanctions with few rewards. The overall aim of the research was to identify ways in which these pupils could be supported to have a more positive school experience.

The research aimed to address the following questions:

1. Why do some pupils struggle to adhere to the behavioural expectations of secondary school, within a highly structured behaviour management system?
2. What can we learn from the experiences of pupils who persistently receive sanctions in a secondary school with a highly structured behaviour management system?
3. How can pupils who struggle to adhere to expectations be supported to have a more positive experience of school?



## **1.7 Structure of this thesis**

In the following chapter I provide a critical review of literature which aims to evaluate the effectiveness of BM approaches including those based on a behaviourist model (sanctions and rewards), humanistic principles and systemic thinking.

In Chapter 3 I describe my methodology, including my ontological and epistemological position and how this influenced my choice of methods and research design; the recruitment process including details of the participating school; and the analysis process (Thematic Analysis). This chapter also details procedure, followed by ethical considerations and steps taken to address these.

In Chapter 4 I present the findings and analysis of the research, illustrated with extracts from the data.

This is followed by discussion of findings and analysis in Chapter 5, with links to existing theory and literature.

Chapter 6 includes further detailed discussion relating to the action research process, and concludes with the original contribution of this work, limitations of the study, and implications for further research.

## **Chapter 2 Critical Literature Review**

### **2.1 Structure of this literature review.**

I will begin by providing commentary on the context of BM in schools, including historical perspectives, the changing political landscape during recent decades and current media coverage.

As this research aims to understand why some pupils appear to fail within a prescriptive structure based on rewards and sanctions, I will examine the literature around approaches which are underpinned by behaviourist philosophy. I will follow this with arguments from researchers and theorists as to why this approach may not work for all children and young people. I will question whether pressure on schools has led to approaches which disadvantage certain pupils.

In an attempt to address what can be put in place to support vulnerable students, I will then explore BM approaches with roots in humanistic and systemic psychology.

### **2.2 Context**

#### **2.2.1 Historical perspectives of BM**

The debate around children and how best to manage their behaviour can be traced back as far as the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, when children were perhaps regarded as either innately wicked and in need of a heavy hand to control them, or as innocent but susceptible to temptation, requiring adults to teach them how to become moral citizens (Scarlett, Ponte, & Singh, 2009). At this time, the use of corporal punishment divided professionals and the public, and this debate continued until well in to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Until the 1980s corporal punishment was used as an acceptable method of controlling pupil behaviour in UK state schools (Walter, 2016). Discourse around this gradually changed, with terms such as ‘barbaric’ and ‘inhuman’ used in the public domain in relation to physically punishing children, leading to the eventual banning of corporal punishment in UK state

schools in 1986 (Education [No.2] Act 1986). However, corporal punishment in schools is still allowed in 69 countries in the world (Gershoff, 2017) indicating that values and beliefs are influenced by cultural factors.

Despite the banning of physical punishment in schools, the use and type of control exerted over children and young people remains a controversial topic. Baumrind (1970, in Scarlett et al, 2009) described three parenting styles, which have since been related to BM approaches in schools. At one end of the spectrum, authoritarian control demands obedience and respect for authority as a matter of status, rather than being earned. An authoritative style is demanding of pupils but controls their behaviour through positive encouragement and reasoning. At the other end of the spectrum is a permissive style which is focused on cultivating warm relationships, without making demands or trying to control. Such definitive categorisation of discipline styles perhaps simplifies a complex area in which approaches and styles are shifting, dynamic and contextualised. Elements of all three approaches are evident in classrooms today. I perceive that the style adopted is dependent on the values held about children and young people and their rights; beliefs about what constitutes ‘good’ behaviour; and the hierarchical status given to members of the school community.

From examining government policy and guidance, managing behaviour of young people in UK schools seems to have largely been influenced by a behaviourist model based on rewards and deterrents. The work of Skinner (1953) aimed to demonstrate how favourable behaviour in humans could be reinforced, and unfavourable behaviour could be discouraged through the use of positive and negative consequences. Others, more recently, have argued that extrinsic motivation only serves to reduce intrinsic motivators to do the right thing, and the focus becomes the reward, rather than value of the behaviour itself (Kohn, 1993). Despite this counter-argument, current thinking in schools continues to be dominated by systems based on defined goals, rewards and sanctions (Nash, Schlösser, & Scarr, 2016).

John Dewey, a key figure in progressive education, perceived that controlling children was not a right based on status, and that children would not need punitive discipline to behave well if lessons in school were stimulating and engaging (Dewey, 1922, in Garrison, Neubert, & Reich, 2012). In contrast, others perceived discipline as core to creating environments where uninterrupted teaching and learning could take place, so the focus was on systems and procedures for teachers to follow in response to behaviour, e.g. Assertive Discipline, Canter (1988).

To the current day, similar divisions exist and the debate around how behaviour in school is managed continues. In the following section, how those debates have been interpreted in the political field will be examined.

### **2.2.2 Political climate**

In response to pupil behaviour being identified as a concern for the teaching profession, an enquiry led by Lord Elton in 1989 was given the task of “securing the orderly atmosphere necessary in schools for effective teaching and learning to take place” (Department of Education and Science, 1989, p.11). Over 4000 teachers in UK schools, both primary and secondary, responded to a postal survey. The enquiry found that the biggest concern for teachers was low level disruption and minor offences which impacted on their ability to teach the whole class. The report acknowledged that home life could impact on the behaviour of pupils, but that schools played a fundamental role in addressing behaviour problems, through clear, consistent expectations and boundaries, promoting good behaviour and tackling bad behaviour.

With the introduction of the SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) resources produced by the Labour government in 2003, there was a shift from using teacher control to pupils having a role in managing their own behaviour. The resources emphasised teaching children about resolving conflict and understanding the points of view of others. Links were made between relationships, emotions and behaviour and their influence on each other (DfE, 2005). SEAL was intended to be

embedded in schools, providing a whole school approach underpinning effective learning and positive behaviour. Humphrey, Lendrum, & Wiglesworth (2010) found that measuring the impact of SEAL was problematic as the approach is intended to be implemented at multiple levels within a school community, becoming embedded in those systems over time. There was a tendency for school staff involved in implementing the intervention to reduce efforts and become demotivated due to the lack of immediate, obvious impact and the complex nature of using the resources with fidelity to the original intention. Although aspects of the SEAL curriculum are still used in schools, the resources were archived when a new UK government took office in May 2010.

The latest government guidelines on behaviour and discipline in schools have been partly informed by the findings of Charlie Taylor's 'checklist', which was devised from commonalities found between schools perceived to demonstrate outstanding practice in managing behaviour. Taylor (the Government's expert adviser on behaviour in schools at the time) identified common themes including the importance of clear expectations; following each stage of the behaviour policy with consistency and rigor; and the use of prescriptive sanctions and rewards. Schools identified as successful were also found to respond sensitively to pupils with SEND (DfE, 2011). Government policy has since incorporated these themes, stating that schools must legally have a behaviour policy which sets out clear expectations. Acceptable disciplinary sanctions are outlined, including verbal reprimands, detentions, the use of isolation booths and, in the most extreme circumstances, fixed-term or permanent exclusion (DfE, 2017).

Bennett (in DfE, 2017), in a review of behaviour in schools commissioned by the Government, makes recommendations based on the findings from schools with successful, effective behaviour systems (measured against Ofsted criteria). Bennett describes the recommendations as "authoritative but not definitive or exhaustive" (DfE, 2017, p11). It is acknowledged that the contextual factors of schools vary greatly, but Bennett sees the commonality between schools as being *children*, who exhibit outward behaviour which should be influenced by school leaders. Key

themes from the review include strong leadership, a highly consistent approach across a whole school and detailed expectations which are understood by all. Whilst there should be high expectations of *all* pupils, the review also highlights the importance of making reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND, and acknowledges that a rigid approach could be discriminatory (DfE, 2017). In adherence to the 2010 Equality Act, schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments which involves taking “*positive steps to ensure that disabled pupils can fully participate in the education provided by the school*” (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2015, p.3).

In 2018, the government produced a policy linking mental health and wellbeing and behaviour (DfE, 2018). This guidance alerts school staff to the fact that mental health problems may manifest in challenging behaviour and is linked to the previously discussed 2017 document (DfE, 2017). The guidelines state that behaviour should be managed through highly consistent consequence systems in a structured school environment with social norms and routines continually reinforced. Making links to the SEND Code of Practice (DfE and DoH, 2014) the policy states that this approach must be paired with an individual, graduated response when the behaviour may be a result of unmet needs or vulnerabilities (DfE, 2018). This shift is perhaps the result of research and greater understanding of the long lasting impact of trauma (e.g. Perry & Szalavitz, 2017) and Adverse Childhood Experiences (e.g. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019) on the development of children and young people. Whilst misbehaving was once perceived as a choice made by a child, there is now greater understanding that early trauma can lead to lack of control over impulses and immediate reactions to perceived threat (Rose, Gilbert, & Richards, 2016). This understanding implies that a BM system which does not make reasonable adjustments for vulnerable pupils may be disadvantaging them.

Despite this apparent recognition of the link between unmet needs and challenging behaviour, the continuing public discourse suggests that the tide has not yet universally changed, and there are

schools and settings which continue to punish children for actions which may be beyond their control (O'Brien, 2020). This is reflected in media headlines and public discourse, as discussed in the following section.

### **2.2.3 Media view**

In the media, rigorous, prescriptive policies are dubbed 'zero-tolerance' and are criticised for leading to children being punished for minor misdemeanours and excluded pupils being abandoned (Weale, 2018b July 25). There are reports of teachers describing the approach as 'child abuse' and punishing disadvantaged groups the most (Busby, 2018). 'No excuses' approaches which enforce a super-strict behaviour code are labelled 'barbaric', ignoring the real needs of certain pupils, leading to their removal and potential for long-term damage (Halliday, 2018).

Schools with an emphasis on discipline, order and control have attracted media attention, for example, The Michaela Community School in North London, which has been labelled 'Britain's Strictest school' (Adams, 2016). The head teacher of the school has defended the approach, explaining that such order is intended to remove social problems (Carr, 2018) and pupils at the school recently achieved GCSE grades more than twice the national average despite being in one of the most deprived areas of the country (Weale, 2019). However, some argue that such a high level of control reduces the ability of children and young people to think for themselves and problem solve (Duoblys, 2017).

Alternative approaches are reported, with one article describing a school that gives pupils unconditional positive regard, and rather than disciplining pupils responds with warmth in order to delve deeper in to the reasons for the behaviour the pupil is displaying (Halliday, 2018). Another reports on a school in which the most effective BM strategy is recognised as praise at every possible opportunity. In this school, academic results improved for three years in a row. The correlation between improved results and the introduction of new BM methods was noted (Mortimore, 2017).

In response to the media reporting of a school's behaviour policy which was deemed by parents to be too strict, five professionals in UK education and child development were asked by the reporting paper to comment on how effective learning should be promoted (Tickle, 2017). Views differed depending on individual values about what constitutes a positive learning environment. The various viewpoints included:

- Strict policies endorse coercive control and intimidation which can be psychologically damaging
- Prescriptive policies take away the unpredictable nature of BM and allow for learning to take place
- Structure is important but respect is earned through dialogue between pupils and teachers
- 'No excuses' policies lead to pupil frustration and disengagement
- Rewards and sanctions are extrinsic motivators which do not lead to intrinsic satisfaction.

(Tickle, 2017).

More recently, a new term has become the topic of debate, 'warm strict', which refers to an approach in which expectations are high and rules are applied and reinforced consistently, but within a climate of warmth and understanding. Some argue that this avoids the debate around either a zero tolerance approach or a restorative one, and marries the two in a way that is inclusive of all pupils (Lehain, 2019). However, public debate indicates that discourses around the 'warm-strict' tag are just as contentious as those around 'zero tolerance' (Roberts, 2019).

The varying views expressed in media publications highlight the complexity and controversy surrounding the issue of BM in schools and confirm my opinion that this is an important area of study if we are to gain greater understanding of how to meet the needs of all.



#### **2.2.4 A move towards rigid, ‘no excuses’ policies: A growing trend?**

Nutall and Doherty (2014) argue that the accountability of schools and external pressure to raise attainment levels, leads schools to enforce rigorous behaviour policies to achieve an ordered environment, neglecting the needs of the most vulnerable pupils. According to figures published in January 2018, seventy-two per cent of secondary schools in England had become academies (National Audit Office, 2018). It is perceived by some, including Roffey (2011), that this increase in academisation has contributed to more schools implementing these prescriptive, punctilious behaviour policies. Roffey describes how pupils who are perceived as consistently disruptive move quickly through pathways of sanctions which ultimately lead to exclusion. There is little motivation to find alternative ways to support these pupils rather than remove them from the system, in academies where senior leaders are primarily motivated by achieving rapid improvement (Roffey, 2011).

In my opinion, current government policy has led to a restricted view of what constitutes a ‘successful’ school in terms of management of behaviour and pupil achievement. Schools which are held up as examples of excellence in studies commissioned by the government represent a one-sided view, in which schools are regarded highly for being orderly and having good academic results (as measured by standardised tests). These values are constructed within a certain social and political context at a particular time and come to be regarded as the ‘norm’. Schools are measured against criteria which are derived from the values held by those in a position of power; it is therefore difficult for school leaders to deviate from this model and to deconstruct typically held values and culture. Those who buy in to this perspective are perhaps more driven to become school leaders and this in turn reinforces these dominant values. As an increasing number of schools are academised and become part of Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) within a political agenda of improving schools quickly, this is likely to lead to more conformity between schools and less individualisation of approaches and over-arching values.

Deakin and Kupchik (2016), in a study comparing BM in mainstream and alternative provisions, found that perceptions of behaviour influenced the approach adopted. The views of 15 school staff members across the UK and the US were gathered through interviews. In their varying roles, all participants were involved in the discipline and support of students. The study found that in mainstream schools pupils were perceived as being accountable for their poor behaviour and a punitive approach to disruptive behaviour was adopted. In contrast, staff in alternative provisions felt pupils were communicating emotional needs through their behaviour and favoured preventative systems, addressing the causes of behaviour and acknowledging the impact of vulnerabilities and needs of pupils. This perhaps suggests that staff in mainstream schools do not perceive it as their responsibility to cater for pupils with a high level of social and emotional needs, which could be indicative of the pressure for academic success which mainstream schools are under. Secondary schools in the UK are held accountable for the amount of progress pupils make from the end of primary school to the end of year 11; this progress score, published in performance tables, is compared to the national average and is the main indicator of a school's success used to inform parents and pupils (DfE, 2020).

### **2.3 Behaviourist philosophy: Modifying behaviour through positive and negative reinforcement.**

Any system involving the use of rewards and sanctions could be seen as having roots in behavioural psychology. Palardy (1988) describes this philosophy, when applied in schools, as behaviour modification; eliminating undesirable behaviour by rewarding pupils for behaving in a desirable way. The extrinsic reward can gradually fade as the pupil becomes conditioned and the internal satisfaction of behaving appropriately is sufficient. Sanctions are intended to provide a negative experience when undesirable behaviour is present, discouraging the pupil from repeating the offending action (Kohn, 1993, 2015).

Payne (2015) gathered the views of 1100 secondary school pupils, through the use of questionnaires, on their experience of schools' use of sanctions and rewards. Key findings from the study included that verbal warnings and positive feedback to parents were successful in encouraging pupils to behave well, but that being told off in front of the class was demotivating. The study concluded that human responses to rewards, incentives and punishments are complex and are intertwined with teacher relationships and the maturity of the pupil.

Although this study valued the pupils' opinions, the responses were limited to those given, and did not allow for open-ended, or more detailed answers. The pupils were not able to explain *why* they felt some rewards and sanctions were more/ less effective than others, and individual responses were not examined. The researchers acknowledged that the pupils' responses may have been inhibited by their concerns about anonymity – that pupils may have answered the questions to demonstrate how they felt they *should* respond to show good understanding of the schools' behaviour policy. The views were gathered from pupils in a school described as having an 'excellent reputation' for behaviour and strong leadership. It may be, therefore, that pupils would behave well even without the incentives of things like school trips. If parents choose this school for their children based on its reputation, there is likely to be an overall positive culture which in itself produces pupils who are motivated and therefore behave well and work hard. In this sense, the results are not generalisable to other schools that do not have such favourable conditions.

Swinson (2010) gathered views on a secondary schools' BM system which included the use of rewards and sanctions but was not highly structured and prescriptive. From a school with 1200 pupils overall and a high proportion on FSM, the study focused on year nine as this year group had been identified as a concern. Views from year nine teaching staff were gathered through consultation at a staff meeting and two questionnaires. Year nine pupils were able to share their views through two ratings scales. The researchers also carried out classroom observations. Although

parents were invited to share views through a postal questionnaire only a small number (12%) responded.

In Swinson's study, there was an overriding view held by pupils that the most effective way for teachers to manage classroom behaviour was by making the lessons informative and interesting. Positive feedback was identified as one of the most effective BM strategies, which was valued highly by pupils. Training for teachers as a result of the findings emphasised the idea that positive strategies are more effective when dealing with low-level disruptive behaviour than sanctions. The data was used to inform policy reform. One of the changes to the policy during the study was a systematic sanction process, although following the implementation of the new policy use of sanctions decreased. Swinson attributed this, and overall improvement in behaviour, to the increased focus on positive feedback to pupils. This research valued the opinions of pupils and found that incorporating their views in to school policy had a positive impact. The study highlights the importance of involving the senior management team and ensuring that any changes have the support of all staff if they are to be taken on board and implemented (Swinson, 2010).

### **2.3.1 Zero tolerance**

Although zero tolerance is possibly not a term generally used by UK schools to describe their behaviour policies (Roberts, 2019), the personal experiences of teachers in the UK suggest that implementing rigorous, prescriptive school behaviour policies can feel like a 'zero-tolerance' approach (e.g. Nasseem, 2019, Seith, 2019). A search of the literature using the term 'zero tolerance in schools' found research conducted mainly in America, where zero tolerance has been used as a form of discipline in schools since the late 80s in response to growing concerns of pupil violence (Skiba, 2014). The philosophy behind the approach is that severe punishment, such as extended or permanent exclusion, for even minor misdemeanours, sends the message that anything but conformity to the rules will not be tolerated (Skiba, 2014). Despite its growing use and popularity

across the US, the American Psychological Association found that zero tolerance policies have not led to an increased climate of safety and have not reduced anti-social behaviour in schools (Teasley, 2014). In fact, the approach has been found to have a harmful effect on outcomes for students, particularly those from minority groups and those with SEND (Teasley, 2014), indicating that such an inflexible approach disadvantages some young people. It is argued that the approach has not been successful because the responses of children to punishment are not as predictable as a behaviourist model assumes; young people may respond to punishment with anger, aggression or running away rather than changing their behaviour for the better (Skiba, 2014). Each of these actions would lead to a more severe penalty exacerbating the initial behaviour concern.

In the US there is a reportedly a change occurring, in which more preventative and restorative practices are being developed and implemented to respond to challenging behaviour in schools (Teasley, 2014). Deakin and Kupchik (2016) identify that although the UK has typically leant more towards restorative practice than the US since the 1990s, there are similarities between the two nations in terms of addressing BM practice. In both, there is recognition of the link between exclusion from school and involvement in the youth justice system and in response there has been a focus on reducing school exclusions (Deakin & Kupchik, 2016). Similar debates around a zero tolerance approach versus restorative practice are perhaps also currently happening in the UK.

### **2.3.2 Assertive Discipline**

Canter's 'Assertive Discipline' (AD) programme was originally published in 1976 and has been updated and revised more recently (Canter, 2010). Like the rigorous, prescriptive approaches which are the focus of this study, AD encompasses a systematic plan including rules, positive reinforcement and disciplinary consequences, with total consistency. Teachers following the approach should have high expectations of student behaviour, accepting nothing less than one hundred percent of students complying with the rules one hundred percent of the time. Teachers

should allow no excuses for disruptive behaviour and should pick up on what Canter describes as ‘the small stuff’, such as getting out of seats without permission, in order to create a climate in which students understand that poor behaviour will not be tolerated (Canter, 2010).

Literature evaluating the effectiveness of AD dates back to the 1990s and I am not aware of more recent research despite the most recently revised version of AD being published in 2010. Following the introduction of AD in the 1970s opinion has been divided, as the following two studies demonstrate.

Robinson and Maines (1994) made a number of criticisms of the approach based on the AD training materials and videos produced by Canter. They argued that there was a lack of a robust evidence base for the approach despite Canter’s claims that he had based his principles on extensive teacher observations. In addition, Robinson and Maines argued that the approach assumes that children understand the rules and choose to break them; there is a focus on the teacher’s needs rather than pupils’; AD is a quick fix which does not lead to pupils’ intrinsic motivation; it advocates for teacher control rather than reasoning; consequences are punitive and humiliate children; there is lack of flexibility for individual needs; and it demands that children change to suit teachers rather than teachers changing to more effectively engage pupils (Robinson & Maines, 1994).

In response to the above article, Swinson and Melling (1995) addressed Robinson and Maines’ concerns and reported empirical research which supported the use of AD. The research consisted of observations in nine classes across two primary schools in Liverpool prior to AD being implemented and six weeks later. Observers recorded length of on task behaviour, number of disruptive incidents and amount of teacher praise given to pupils. Swinson and Melling’s counter-arguments include: secondary school pupils appreciate teachers who take control of the class and do not allow disruptive behaviour; reducing disruption means that teachers feel more confident to deliver engaging lessons; teachers can choose to use warnings and sanctions that are confidential

and do not humiliate pupils; and positive feedback reinforces social skills and can help children to internalise new patterns of behaviour. The children in Swinson and Melling's study reportedly enjoyed being in classrooms with a positive climate as a result of AD being used consistently (Swinson & Melling, 1995). However, pupil and teacher views were gathered informally rather than being incorporated into the research design, so exactly how these views were gathered is not clear.

Canter's AD (Canter, 2010) includes a chapter on working with difficult students, therefore acknowledging that the consistency of the approach does not work for all pupils. Canter suggests a range of strategies for engaging hard to reach pupils, including making a concerted effort to gain their trust and build positive relationships, trying to find out if there are underlying reasons why they are finding it difficult to adhere to rules and developing behaviour plans with more meaningful consequences and incentives. It could be argued that these strategies should form the basis of a BM approach to begin with, rather than as an 'add on' for 'difficult' students.

Similarities can be recognised between AD and current practice in the UK, therefore the same arguments for and against this approach are relevant. It seems that allegiance or uneasiness with the approach are value driven and based on one's beliefs as to whether children should be controlled by adults through the threat of punishment, or whether adults should be responsive to the needs of children rather than following a set of procedures.

### **2.3.3 Does a behaviourist approach work for all?**

The approaches described and evaluated above share the underlying behaviourist principles that children learn how to behave well through positive reinforcement and the threat of sanction, but others theorise that this is not necessarily true for all children.

Englehart (2012) questions the theory that all children can learn the right way to behave through knowledge of rules and understanding of consequences. Englehart argues that although this may be

true for the majority of children because they are able to consider the consequences of their actions and care about them, there will always be children and young people who do not. These young people require something more intensive; an approach which aims to understand the causes of challenging behaviour and supports pupils to develop the skills they need to manage school expectations effectively (Englehart, 2012).

It is perceived by some that whilst a prescriptive approach to BM with a clear sanction pathway appears to work for the majority of students, it is actually their internal values and secure relationships with others which elicit conformity to social norms (Greene, 2008, in Oxley, 2016). Similarly, Deci and Ryan's research led to the understanding that most people are internally motivated and have a desire to learn. Socialisation and the ability to regulate behaviour are skills which are developed through experiencing competence, relatedness and autonomy. It is with these favourable conditions that individuals are able to internalise and integrate required social values (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This suggests that if social contexts have inhibited pupils' development of these key areas they may struggle to regulate behaviour. This indicates that schools should look for ways to increase sense of competence, relatedness and autonomy, rather than aim to control pupils through punishment. Kohn (1993, 2015) agrees that social skills and values are internalised when children are trusted and encouraged to think for themselves, rather than controlled through punitive responses.

Roffey (2011) suggests that when pupils have difficulty complying with expectations, they need opportunities and support to learn the behaviours required for positive participation in the class and school setting. Greene (2008, in Oxley, 2016) suggests that BM systems with an emphasis on sanctions as a deterrent do not work for the very pupils whose behaviour they are intended to address. It is likely that these pupils remain in a negative cycle because they lack the necessary skills to regulate their behaviour in response to the threat of a sanction. Hopkins (2011) agrees; behaviour which deviates from that which is expected by the school is an indication that the pupil



has unmet needs and requires more learning in this area. Hopkins believes that just as pupils should not be punished for academic errors, they should not be punished for behaviour mistakes. The threat of a sanction assumes that the young person can control their responses and behaviour in order to avoid the negative consequence. However, research has suggested that when young children have experienced trauma and other adverse early life experiences, this can lead to difficulties throughout childhood and into adolescence, such as disruptive behaviours, hyper vigilance and poor impulse control (Rose et al., 2016). This is likely to affect ability to respond in a controlled way to a warning or sanction which is perceived as unfair.

Nash et al. (2016) studied teacher perceptions of behaviour and found that the majority of respondents reported that they believe pupils to be 'mostly or totally in control of their own behaviour' and would therefore expect them to respond positively to a system of sanctions. Perceiving pupils to be in control of their own behaviour, and therefore responsible for their own actions links with Weiner's theory of attribution in which a person (in the case of schools, the teacher) casts a judgement over another person's (the pupil's) behaviour and this judgement affects the response to the behaviour (Weiner, 1985). In a classroom scenario, if a teacher perceives a pupil to be acting out of malice, or to be choosing to behave badly, the teacher's response is likely to be one of annoyance or even anger and the pupil is deemed to be deserving of a punishment.

Although the teachers in Nash et al.'s study (2016) perceived the pupils to be in control of their behaviour, the same teachers also acknowledged that many factors are related to disruptive behaviour, including social and emotional difficulties, a troubled home and feelings of shame or fear. The researchers interpret this as a lack of understanding of the impact of early life experiences and advocate for increased training in this area. They argue that collaborative problem-solving, compassionate human interaction and a nurturing environment are required to support the most vulnerable pupils, as opposed to reactive systems which work on the premise that those who disrupt the learning of others should be punished and if necessary removed (Nash et al., 2016).

The use of rewards and sanctions is not new, but it seems that at the current time in an attempt to raise standards more schools are adopting rigorous, systematic approaches with prescribed rewards and sanctions. Emerson (2016) argues that this approach is not equitable, although it may aim to treat all pupils the same, because the needs of pupils are different. Emerson believes that pupils with SEND have less control over their behaviour, and therefore will inevitably be punished for behaviour which is beyond their control. Because behaviour does not change as a result of sanctions, these pupils will be labelled as ‘persistently disruptive’. Emerson agrees that firm boundaries *are* important, but at the same time advocates for gaining a deeper understanding of the specific needs of individual pupils.

## **2.4 Alternative approaches to managing behaviour**

In order to gain understanding into how pupils who appear to struggle to adhere to school expectations can be supported, in this section I will review literature focusing on relational approaches which have psychological underpinnings in humanistic psychology. Humanistic perspectives stress the importance of the interaction between teacher and pupil (Hart, 2010) and are concerned with the Rogerian principles of empathy, genuineness and warmth, considered important in effective relationship building (Rogers, 1965). Included in this discussion is a section on restorative practice, which is part of an overall relational approach (Blood & Thorsborne, 2005). Relational approaches and restorative practice are relevant as these are frequently mentioned in current discourse as alternatives to behavioural approaches.

### **2.4.1 Positive relationships**

Many theorists and researchers agree that clear and consistent boundaries are important, but that these must be coupled with warmth, high-quality relationships and responsiveness to the needs of pupils (e.g. Emerson, 2014, Nash et al., 2016). Whilst a secure framework is protective for pupils

with chaotic home lives, it does not account for individual circumstances and may lead to some pupils disconnecting with the system (Roffey, 2011).

In a detailed case study of one primary school, Swann, Peacock, Hart and Drummond (2012) describe the importance of positive relationships in creating a climate for learning. Over two and a half years, data was gathered from the head teacher, six teachers and three children from each class and included semi-structured interviews, the head teacher's day-to-day journal and classroom observations. The study found that staff in this school invested time and effort into working *with* the children rather than against them, and by doing so shared understandings were reached between staff and pupils. Pupils displaying what could be seen as 'good behaviour' was a by-product of this approach, rather than the sole purpose. There were times in this school when pupil behaviour was challenging for the teachers, but there was not a perception that a 'quick fix' was needed. It was accepted that addressing the needs of these pupils would take time, effort and patience. The data gathered in this case study is rich and detailed, and includes first-hand accounts from the staff and pupils in the school. Following this different approach to school development, the school went from Ofsted rating 'special measures' to 'outstanding' suggesting that adult responses to pupil behaviour may have contributed to the positive external measures of success. The researchers acknowledge that the ethos of the school came from the vision of the head teacher which enabled the teachers to work in this way. The findings of this case study are specific to this school context, but they challenge the view that a rigid behaviourist approach is not the only way to invoke a successful learning environment.

The need for pastoral care policies alongside behaviour policies has been studied by Tucker (2013) with a focus on vulnerable pupils at risk of exclusion. This is a pertinent topic to explore, as the number of permanent school exclusions has continued to rise since 2013, according to data for the year 2016-2017. The trend is the same for fixed-term exclusions (DfE, 2018). Government guidelines stress that exclusion must be treated as a last resort in extreme circumstances, and yet the

figures continue to rise. Tucker's study identified, through semi-structured interviews with 49 year nine pupils across seven schools, that pastoral support systems are particularly important to young people with complex needs. Having different options available during times of difficulty, and an adult who was willing to spend time listening before passing judgement were highlighted by the young people as supportive (Tucker, 2013).

#### **2.4.2 Restorative practice**

Restorative practice (RP) is about helping children to develop conflict resolution and social skills, not punishing behaviour. It aims to manage conflict and tensions by repairing harm and building relationships (Short, Case, & McKenzie, 2018). McCluskey et al. (2008) evaluated the approach in a pilot study involving 18 schools, both primaries and secondaries. Quantitative and qualitative data was gathered from a range of staff and pupils. A restorative approach, aiming to build a positive ethos and calm climate through relationship building and restoring, was found to be more successful in primary schools than in secondary schools. However, positive change was identified in all schools in the pilot. The level of successful implementation was found to be dependent on readiness to change; clarity around the aims of the approach; and the existing culture and ethos in the school prior to the pilot study. Overall, the pupils and staff perceived the approach to have had a clear positive impact. This was reflected in observable changes, such as fewer incidents in the playground and a reduction in discipline referrals and exclusions. A challenge identified by staff was the difficulty of marrying a restorative approach with the existing BM policy, particularly when schools had a 'positive discipline' approach. (McCluskey et al., 2008).

Vaandering (2014) found that teachers attempting to instil restorative principles faced the challenge of introducing a new concept in institutions where obedience and conformity had previously been embedded. Vaandering acknowledges that fundamentally changing embedded school systems is difficult, and that although RP aims to offer an alternative to punitive approaches, actually the focus

continues to be on pupils changing their behaviour in order to conform; this is the taken-for-granted, culturally accepted default position of education which is difficult to shift (Vaandering, 2014).

Blood and Thorsborne (2005) also reflect on this point, concluding that the main goal of RP should be fostering quality relationships, not making children behave in a certain way. According to Hopkins (2011) RP should exist at three levels: ethos and underlying philosophy in which respect, openness, tolerance and inclusion are valued; skills of the facilitators, including non-judgemental listening and developing rapport; and processes, including bringing together those who have been affected by an event.

There is a danger that RP can be used merely as a reactive response to wrongdoing, whether through formal, arranged meetings or informally managing conflict around school (Blood & Thorsborne, 2005). Blood and Thorsborne stress the importance of RP being part of an overall relational approach in which relational practices are in place to prevent disruptive behaviour occurring in the first place. Drewery and Kecskemeti (2010) describe RP as ‘discipline meets care’ and suggest that teachers should adopt a ‘respectful curiosity’ for students and what is going on for them. The authors suggest ways of talking to a pupil that are less confrontational and reduce the chance of conflict occurring. Whilst there are misgivings about RP being tokenistic within BM approaches that do not encompass the overall philosophy, it may be that a shift in the way adults communicate with pupils could have a positive impact on pupil responses to the requests of adults and reduce the need for imposing sanctions.

### **2.4.3 Systemic psychology: More than the individual child?**

Regardless of approach to BM, young people are part of a wider system, in which individual, school, family, community and societal factors interact, and can impact on the behaviour of the pupil (Hart, 2010). Bronfenbrenner’s bio-ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 2006) identifies five interrelated systems of environment which are concerned with the relationships

between the child and the widening circles of people and systems around them. Rather than focusing on problems within the child when challenging behaviour occurs, systems theory is concerned with the system in which the child operates, and whether anything can change within the system to lead to positive outcomes for the child. This takes the blame away from the child and is counter to the argument that children make choices to do the wrong thing and therefore should be punished. In order for EPs to facilitate change at an organisational level in schools, Burden (1978) highlights the importance of working *with* school staff rather than *for* them; agreeing goals collaboratively as opposed to embarking on work with ready-made solutions.

Watkins and Wagner (2000, in Kelly, Marks, Woolfson, & Boyle, 2017) use systems thinking to notice patterns and sequences that occur over time at the individual, class and organisational level, making links between these systems and looking for solutions within the environment. This can be applied to an individual displaying challenging behaviour, looking for points in the sequence of events where the behaviour is reinforced, and altering the sequence by doing something different. This may be a staff member reacting in a different way, or altering a factor which pre-emptes the challenging behaviour to avoid it occurring.

Systemic thinking may provide an explanation for the recurrence of a pupil receiving sanctions, and has implications for an approach which involves those who work with the young person collaboratively problem solving and identifying possible solutions to disruptive behaviour. At the classroom level, taking the blame away from the child and focusing on altering teacher responses to disruptive behaviour could serve to interrupt a sequence of negative events.

## **2.5 Warmth and understanding or rigorous prescriptive structures: Does it have to be one or the other?**

Whilst current discourse in the media suggests that schools are adopting processes which focus on punishing children and young people (e.g. Weale, 2018 July 25, Busby, 2018, Halliday, 2018),

government policy states that schools should “consider whether continuing disruptive behaviour might be the result of unmet educational or other needs” (DfE, 2018, p7), alongside a policy of clear, consistent boundaries and rewards and sanctions. Perhaps this suggests that some schools have adopted a rigorous, structured approach but have taken the consistency too far, enforcing sanctions hastily without first considering other options, at the detriment to some pupils. The literature reviewed highlights an area of agreement between government guidelines and the various research. Studies which lean towards an emphasis on pastoral care, understanding behaviour and the importance of relationships, also highlight the importance of consistency and clear expectations, e.g. Emerson (2016), and in some studies it was the children and young people themselves who identified the importance of these factors, e.g. Sellman (2009) and Swinson (2010). It is likely that the recently fostered term ‘warm-strict’ refers to trying to get the balance right; having clear and consistent boundaries whilst accommodating and addressing individual needs with warmth, understanding and compassion.

It is evident from reviewing the literature that BM approaches can be interpreted differently depending on the cause that one wishes to support. For example, it could be argued that the highly structured, prescriptive policies under scrutiny are kind because they protect pupils and teachers and provide a safe, predictable environment (e.g. Bennett, 2016). Conversely, these systems can be described as unkind because they impose control and punish vulnerable pupils rather than supporting them (e.g. Emerson, 2016).

The varying perspectives in this area are not discrete, and the debate is more complex than deciding whether one sits in a behaviourist or a humanistic camp. Views are intertwined and there is a human element in any BM approach; that is, how the approach is interpreted and implemented is likely to be dependent on the individual teacher’s style and values. Schools who adopt a behaviourist approach to BM are unlikely to say that positive relationships between staff and pupils are not

important, and individual teachers within those schools may have excellent relationships with their pupils, treating them with warmth and respect.

## **2.6 Conclusion**

Review of literature in this area has illuminated that first-hand experiences of pupils who consistently receive sanctions within schools implementing a structured framework for BM have not yet been explored. These perspectives have the potential to contribute to our understanding of how systems can be developed to avoid the marginalisation of young people who appear to struggle to succeed within such inflexible structures. I aim for the current study to contribute to on-going psychological research around why punitive responses to discipline do not seem to be effective for some young people. The fact that discussions within the media, the political agenda and amongst professionals continue to ignite passionate and opposing views reaffirms my view that this is a worthy area for research. Specifically, the research aims to answer the following questions:

1. Why do some pupils struggle to adhere to the behavioural expectations of secondary school, within a highly structured behaviour management system?
2. What can we learn from the experiences of pupils who persistently receive sanctions in a secondary school with a highly structured behaviour management system?
3. How can pupils who struggle to adhere to expectations be supported to have a more positive experience of school?



## **Chapter 3 Methodology**

### **3. 1 Research design**

Data was gathered from four year eight student participants in a secondary school through semi-structured interviews. In order to gather in-depth, detailed, descriptive narratives from the participants, this research utilised qualitative enquiry as a means of data collection. As Patton (2002) acknowledges, the most important consideration when selecting an approach to research, is that the methods selected are appropriately matched to the research questions. It was important for participants to be able to use their own words and to focus on what was important to them; qualitative research allows for this. I was not striving for generalisable results which could make broad claims about members of society as a whole; rather, I aimed for authenticity and ‘thick descriptions’ from a small group of participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Morrow (2007) perceives qualitative research to be the most useful approach to understanding the meanings people make of their experiences, particularly marginalised groups.

I aimed to recruit a participating school which shared my concern for a minority group of pupils and were keen to find ways to adapt their approach to managing behaviour to encompass the needs of all. These considerations led to this research becoming a collaborative change project. I aimed to use my skills as a practitioner and researcher to work with the participating school to identify reasons for change that they could accept and would be of benefit to both the school and the students. The overarching research design sits within an action research (AR) framework, as AR aims to produce social reform in collaboration with the participants (Kagan, Burton, & Siddiquee, 2008).

AR and how my study sits within this framework will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter, followed by a discussion of the design and procedures used. This chapter concludes with an exploration of the ethical considerations encountered during the development of the research.

I will begin with a discussion of my ontology and epistemology, and how my understanding of how we know about the world, and how knowledge of the world is constructed, have influenced my decisions in conducting this work.

## **3.2 Ontology and epistemology**

### **3.2.1 Ontology**

A positivist view of the world argues that there is a reality to be discovered by an objective observer. The aim of AR is not to ever reach the ‘truth’ or a final answer. However, AR does assume that there is something which is experienced as a reality by those affected by it. These truths may be conflicting and partial (Coleman, 2015). The intention of AR is to make a difference and to be worthwhile; therefore there has to be a real purpose to this; a reality to make a difference to.

Carter and Little (2007) argue that in carrying out any type of research there is an assumption or acceptance that there is some degree of reality to the social concepts being studied. Morrow (2007) argues that if research attempts to redress a power imbalance, there is an acceptance that the power differential is experienced as ‘real’ by those oppressed by it.

I have adopted a moderated version of reality because I believe that there is a real impact of persistently receiving sanctions on young people, which is most closely aligned to critical realist ontology. Critical realism accepts that all beliefs are socially produced, but does not accept that all perspectives are equally valid with no rational grounds for preferring one judgement over another (Morton, 2006). The participants in this study all experience the reality of a BM approach which has been enforced by those in a position of power. My aim through this research was to make a positive

difference to the school experience of students who I perceived to be marginalised by the systems in place. Willig (1998) argues that although the world is constructed through social reality, human beings are capable of making judgements about what constructions and practices are oppressive and in need of challenging.

### **3.2.2 Epistemology**

Carter and Little (2007) suggest that more important than ontology in determining methodological decisions, is epistemology – how knowledge of the world is constructed. Social Constructionism challenges the view that knowledge is based upon objective, unbiased observation and argues that knowledge of the world is constructed through social interaction, particularly through language (Burr, 2003). In conducting this research I recognise my own contribution and acknowledge that the interaction between researcher and participant contributes to a collaborative construction of meaning (Lalvani, 2011). I adopt AR methodology based on constructionism and acknowledge that any knowledge of the world derived from my exploration is situated within the particular context at that time. AR is a collaborative and evolving process, in which action is co-constructed, reviewed and adapted depending on varying perspectives of those affected by the change. AR acknowledges the right of those involved to make sense of their own experience (Coleman, 2015).

I adopt a critical research approach (Given, 2008) in that I aim through my research to challenge dominant views and reframe people's thinking around why certain pupils do not adhere to schools' expectations. By doing this, alternative responses to pupil's actions can be considered by those in a position to make such changes. I acknowledge that in doing this I am accepting that there are groups and individuals in society who have more power than others. I am positioning myself as someone able to influence others and contribute to change but I hope that by listening to the voices of those marginalised by the current systems, they are also contributing to that change.

### 3.3 Action research

This case study utilises an action research (AR) framework (Lewin, 1951) to investigate practices and facilitate change around approaches to BM in a secondary school. AR aims to contribute to knowledge in both theory *and* practice, and is focused on empowerment and change (Zuber-Skerrit & Fletcher, 2007). It is a collaborative process, typically between participants and an external researcher (Kagan, Burton, & Siddiquee, 2008) which is adaptive to the characteristics of the local situation (Coghlan & Shani, 2014). As Zuber-Skerrit and Fletcher (2007) acknowledge, it is impossible to arrive at a single, true definition of AR, as the epistemological design used to gather data is dependent on the unique context of each study.

Despite the difficulty in defining AR, there are commonalities between studies. Kagan et al (2008) describe AR as an iterative process involving any number of *plan – act – evaluate- reflect* cycles, following identification of a problem. This simple description of the process allows for wide variations in AR studies situated in specific contexts. Kagan et al. acknowledge that an external researcher may begin involvement at any of the stages they describe. In this study, due to the scope of my research, involvement was time limited and centred mainly on the initial phases of AR. The table below illustrates the stages of AR (based on Kagan et al.’s definition, 2008) within the context of the participating school and my involvement in this. Emboldened text indicates my entry/ exit points, and stages of my involvement. Further details are provided in the text below the table.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Stage</i>	<i>Parties involved</i>
January 2019	→ Problem identification: a minority group of pupils fail to adhere to school expectations and do not respond in the expected way to BM systems.	*Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of secondary school <b>(Researcher also identified this as a problem in other secondary schools, prior to involvement in this specific setting, hence interest in this research area).</b>
February 2019	→ Plan ( <i>devised collaboratively and</i>	Devised collaboratively

	<i>involving others</i> ): bespoke programme of intervention planned for group of six year seven pupils.	between EP (not the researcher) and Vice Principal (VP) at EP led consultation. See Appendix B for details of action implemented at this stage, as described by the VP.
February- July 2019	→ <i>Act (carry out actions collaboratively and involving others)</i> : intervention programme implemented	School teaching and non-teaching staff led by VP
September-December 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Evaluation: continued monitoring of sanctions received through behaviour logs</li> <li>→ <b>Enhance knowledge and explore perspectives through information gathering: pupil interviews and analysis of behaviour logs.</b></li> <li>→ <b>Continued correspondence with VP to identify incidental change as a result of the research process (see Appendices T)</b></li> </ul>	SLT  <b>Researcher with students, supported by VP</b>
December-March 2020	→ <b>Interpretation and analysis of findings through initial coding to protect anonymisation of participants</b>	<b>Researcher</b>
April 2020	→ <b>Further collaborative interpretation and analysis of data themes</b>	<b>Researcher, VP</b>
May 2020	→ <b>Reflect (<i>jointly learn and understand and further plan, do, evaluate etc.</i>)</b>	<b>Researcher, VP</b>
May 2020	→ <b>Collaborative planning</b>	<b>Researcher, VP and others as appropriate<sup>1</sup></b>
May 2020 (ongoing)	→ Act – implement change	School staff/ students
June 2020	→ <b>Evaluate: questionnaire for VP to evaluate process and clarify next steps moving forward</b>	<b>VP and researcher</b>

Table 2: Stages of AR, including action implemented by the school, entry as researcher to the process and collaborative involvement leading to planning for further action.

<sup>1</sup> The collaborative stage of AR was compromised due to social distancing regulations in place and partial school closures as a result of COVID-19 pandemic at the time of research. This stage and others after it had originally been planned to involve a wider group. The participating school made the decision that this was not possible due to changing priorities.

\*The participating school was brought to my attention as the Vice Principal (VP) had sought support from the EPT for a group of students who were cause for concern. Therefore, the process of planning and implementing action had already begun prior to my involvement.

This school responded when I invited schools to take part in my research due to shared identification of a problem, which was then collaboratively defined as:

*'A minority group of pupils do not respond in the expected way to the BM approach. Sanctions do not appear to act as a deterrent to these students as they consistently remain on the sanction pathway'.*

I joined the process when the VP felt 'stuck'; although the changes implemented had had a positive effect and had reduced the number of sanctions received for the identified group of students, these changes were dependent on a high level of adult involvement that was not viewed as sustainable in the long term. In this respect, the evaluation stage had already begun as the VP had discussed the impact of changes with the SLT. My involvement began as a continuation of the evaluation stage, through exploration of the perspectives of the students who had been identified as cause for concern. A table displaying dates of my involvement and activity can be found in Appendix C.

During initial meetings with the VP, my entry and exit points were made clear (as per the table above). We discussed the intention for further cycles to be continued by the staff in the setting, supported if possible by the school's link EP, involving additional participants as appropriate. AR attempts to not only change a situation, but also to increase understanding of how change can be brought about (Kagan & Burton, 2000, in Kagan et al., 2008). The staff participants in this AR project may consider utilising the knowledge and experiences of different sub-groups of the school community when evaluating and planning future change, as a result of being involved in this study.

## **3.4 Procedure**

### **3.4.1 Recruitment of a school**

This research required participation from a secondary school in the north of England, from which staff and student participants would be identified. It was appropriate to base the study in one school as action planned would be specific to the individual context, with the view that findings may be transferable to other schools with similar approaches to BM. Potential participating schools were identified through the EP service. EPs informed me of any schools they were aware of where a prescriptive, whole school behaviour policy based on rules and pathways of sanctions and rewards was implemented. An invitation email was sent to all secondary schools in a Multi Academy Trust (MAT). The VP of one school responded with a keen interest in my research. This school had already been brought to my attention as the VP had previously requested support from the EPT due to concerns for a group of students who struggled to adhere to school expectations. Further information was provided during a face to face meeting and the VP agreed to the school's participation. An information sheet was provided for the setting (see Appendix D) which was then discussed and agreed with the SLT.

### **3.4.2 Details of the participating school**

The participating school is a mixed, smaller than average-sized secondary, with roughly 820 pupils on roll. The school is part of a MAT. The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average, and around four in ten pupils are eligible for FSM, above the national average. Most pupils are from minority ethnic groups (mainly of Pakistani heritage). The school received an overall rating of 'Outstanding' in 2017, following a rating of 'Requires improvement' in the previous inspection.

The MAT has overarching policies, with which the individual schools have 'aligned autonomy'.

The behaviour policy is interpreted by each school in the trust leading to a spectrum of rigidity of

approach. This school describes itself as being fair to those who need flexibility within the clear consistent boundaries of the overarching ethos of the MAT. The school strives for a climate where ‘teachers can teach and learners can learn’ and where ‘we do the right thing because it’s the right thing to do’. Through my involvement, the school hoped to further develop strategies to support vulnerable students within the current system, to reduce their involvement with the sanction pathway and increase engagement.

Through listening to the pupil views, analysing them and reporting back key themes to school staff, I aimed to work collaboratively with the school to plan action to work towards the goal of a more inclusive behaviour policy. Although any change is specific to this particular context, a wider aim of the research is to share the findings and practice as a result of them with other school practitioners in the hope that it may enlighten ways in which their own policies can evolve to support more pupils.

### **3.4.3 Recruitment of student participants**

Purposive sampling was used as participants were selected for the purpose of the study rather than as a representative sample of the general population of the school. Purposive sampling allows the researcher to select participants based on their perceived in-depth experience and understanding of the main area of study, utilising this information to learn as much as possible (Patton, 2002). I aimed to recruit four to six participants due to the nature of data collection and analysis since this was a small scale, qualitative research project exploring a broad range of experiences for a small number of people (Patton, 2002). This number of participants would be large enough to allow me to look for general themes across the data set, whilst being small enough to gather information-rich data to contribute to understanding of the phenomena (within the scope of doctoral thesis research).

One main sampling criterion was used: students who had been identified as cause for concern due to consistently remaining on the sanction pathway. In addition, it was requested that students invited



to participate be in year seven or eight as their experiences may illuminate issues surrounding transition from primary school and differences in BM at primary/ secondary school.

A group of six students had already been identified as cause for concern by the VP due to receiving a disproportionate amount of sanctions compared to their peers. Therefore, these students were invited to take part in the research in the first instance. Parental consent was sought before seeking consent from the students. The VP acted as gatekeeper to parents and was provided with information sheets and a suggested script for explaining the research to them (Appendix E). Parents of all six pupils agreed to me meeting with their children and I subsequently met individually with the students to explain the purpose of my research. Following this process, five of the young people signed consent and formed the student participant group. Students were provided with information sheets (Appendix F). One of the students decided at the time of interview that he no longer wished to take part, leading to a final participant group of four. Background information was gathered from the VP as illustrated in the table below. ‘Main type of sanctions received’ was identified through brief analysis of school behaviour logs. When signing consent, parents and students were asked to agree to background information held by the school to be shared with the main researcher, including SEND; eligibility for FSM; and records of sanctions. I did not ask for more personal information about home circumstances to be shared as I did not wish this to be a barrier to parents or students agreeing to take part in the research.

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Year group</b>	<b>**SEN</b>	<b>**FSM</b>	<b>Main type of sanctions received in Autumn term 2019</b>
A	8	Moderate learning difficulties	No	15 x after school detentions 3 x internal isolation (length not recorded) 1 day fixed-term exclusion
B	8	Moderate learning difficulties	No	22 x after school detentions 1 day internal isolation 1 day fixed-term exclusion
C	8	Moderate learning	No	6 x after school detentions

		difficulties		
D	8	Moderate learning difficulties	No	14 x after school detentions

Table 3: Research participant profiles

\*\*Exclusion data (DfE, 2018) identifies that in 2017 to 2018 fixed-term exclusion rates were higher for pupils with SEND (15.95% for pupils with an EHC plan and 15.10% of SEND support pupils, compared to 3.36% of pupils without SEND) and for pupils eligible for FSM (13.65% compared to 3.73% of pupils not eligible). As exclusion is typically the final step in a school’s sanction pathway (which is true of the participating school) I was interested as to whether the students who had been identified as cause for concern had any identified SEND and were eligible for FSM. Although nationally exclusion rates vary according to ethnicity, I have not included this category in the participant profiles as the ethnicity of the participating school’s student population as a whole is largely homogenous.

#### 3.4.4 Recruitment of staff participants

As this research was to lead to collaboratively agreed actions, it was a requirement that a group of staff were involved in the action planning stage. Zuber-Skerrit and Fletcher (2007) perceive ‘power-sharing’ as an important aspect of AR; the research should be participatory and include stakeholders and others who will be affected by the results of the research. Burden (1978), when working within school systems, recognised that change was more likely to occur if those who would need to implement the action towards the change were involved in the planning of it. In this research, decisions regarding the main stakeholders to be involved in the action planning stage were discussed with the VP, and potential participants were then invited to take part.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The collaborative stage of AR was compromised due to social distancing regulations in place and school closures as a result of COVID-19 pandemic at the time of research. It was intended that the action planning stage would involve a wider group. The participating school made the decision that this was not possible due to changing priorities and action planning took place between the researcher and VP.

## **3.5 Data collection**

### **3.5.1 Semi-structured interviews**

Semi-structured interviews, developed by the researcher, were used to elicit the views of the student participants (Appendix J). Rubin and Rubin (1995) describe interviewing as a means to encourage participants to talk about their experiences using their own language and concepts, on a topic determined by the interviewer. This perspective accurately meets the aims of this research, as in order to answer the research questions as fully as possible, it was important that the participants shared their experiences specifically in relation to BM in school.

In preparation for interviewing the young people, I referred to Braun and Clarke's guidance on qualitative research (2013) due to the authors' extensive experience in conducting qualitative interviews. Although Braun and Clarke emphasise that the guidance is not intended as a set of rules to follow and that interviewers should aim to develop their own style, it was useful to prompt me to consider aspects of developing and administering the interviews. Once an initial interview schedule had been developed, I referred to Foddy (1993) to consider finer details of constructing interview questions (Appendix G). During this process, the interview guide was shared with the VP and language used (e.g. 'school values and learning habits' rather than 'school rules') was adapted to suit the specific context of the research. This led to the development of the pilot interview guide (Appendix H).

### **3.5.2 Pilot interview**

The pilot study was used to explore the success of the interview in addressing the research questions, and to evaluate my own technique in eliciting the young person's experiences. The interview questions had been carefully planned and as a result the pilot interview elicited detailed views from the young person that contributed to answering the research questions. Slight alterations

were made to the interview schedule and these are documented in Appendix I (the final interview including amendments can be viewed in Appendix J). The amendments reflected rephrasing of questions and additional prompts that I had used in the actual pilot interview in response to the conversation that developed between me and the participant. My perceived success of this interview meant that I was able to use information gathered in the final data set.

### **3.5.3 Data management**

Interviews were audio recorded to allow an accurate record of the interviews, to enable me to be fully present in the interview and to be attentive and responsive to the young person. The audio recordings were transcribed within two days of each interview. I felt this was important in terms of reflecting on the interview and recalling the nuances of the interaction which may not have been obvious on the audio recording. Audio recordings were stored on encrypted software and were deleted following completion of analysis of data.

### **3.6 Data analysis**

Following secretarial transcription, Thematic Analysis (TA) (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was used to analyse the data, identifying themes and patterns. It was important that analysis led to themes across rather than within individual data items as the aim of the research was to lead to action which would benefit a group of pupils experiencing similar issues.

TA is an active process whereby the researcher identifies initial codes in the data, collates the codes into potential themes and then engages in on-going analysis and checking, relating back to the research questions. These are organized into a 'Thematic Map' which illustrates main themes and sub-themes. TA aims to go beyond the surface through reading, re-reading and ongoing refinement and checking of themes, to achieve an in-depth, rich, detailed analysis of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke have more recently emphasised the subjective and reflexive nature of TA;

subjectivity is perceived as a resource rather than as a threat to the reliability of findings. The researcher as being active in meaning-making is not denied and credibility is derived from the rigorous process involved in coding and recoding whilst immersing oneself in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Solbue (2011) points out that any interpretation of data is influenced by the prejudices and attitudes of the researcher. This is particularly true when positioning oneself as part of the process of constructing meaning with participants. I acknowledge that the research topic and the approach to gathering information are informed and influenced by my values and positionality; this is an unavoidable inevitability: all research is value driven, which is not a negative. We are driven to explore further the things that are important to us and which we perceive to be valuable to others.

### **3.6.1 Phases of analysis demonstrating rigour in research**

The following steps, based on Braun and Clarke (2006, 2019), were taken during the analysis of data in this research. This commentary demonstrates the rigorous process applied in an attempt to achieve confidence in the interpretation of data.

<b>Phase 1: Familiarisation with the data and transcription</b>
a) Initial reflections noted following each interview.
b) Listening to full audio recording of each interview on the same day, noting reflections about the interview, e.g. how relaxed the participant seemed, whether my questions had elicited responses related to the research questions, and any initial thoughts relating to answering research questions.
c) Listening again whilst transcribing within two days of the interview to enable recall of non-verbal interactions and relevant context. Audio recording slowed down and paused during transcription to allow for accurate, verbatim transcription. This includes long and short pauses, non-verbal utterances and additional researcher notes

to describe context perceived to be relevant. Dialect, mispronunciation and grammatical errors are maintained in an effort for the transcription to remain “*true to its original nature*” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p88).

- d) Listening back to audio recording whilst reading transcript to check accuracy of transcript and to further familiarise myself with depth and breadth of the content (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

**Phase 2: Generating initial codes**

- a) Listening to recording whilst reading hard copy of transcript, underlining anything of interest that relates to the research questions. I felt it was important to listen to the audio recording at this point as time had passed between transcribing and analysis. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that the interpretation of analysis takes place after this stage. However, I acknowledge that what I consider important and relevant is subjective and is my interpretation of the student’s perception. Meaning is constructed through interaction with me during the interview. Listening as well as reading means that those interpretations come from not just the hard text but the nuances and intonations of voice in the audio.

- b) Reading back through the each data item (the transcript from each interview) and recording extracts in a table (Appendix K) displaying the extract and what it was coded for. For each extract I made a decision as to where to ‘cut’ each extract, so as to include all perceived relevant surrounding context. For some extracts this meant including chunks of transcript including my own dialogue, as I may have been rewording the participant’s words to check my own understanding, followed by the agreement (or disagreement) or further elaboration from the participant. As described in Braun and Clarke’s reflections of Thematic Analysis (2019) I view the process as reflexive, acknowledging researcher subjectivity and valuing deep reflection on, and engagement with, the data. Codes are data-driven, and I have attempted to code anything that is potentially relevant in contributing to answering the research questions.

Both semantic and latent codes were recorded; i.e. explicit and implicit meaning

(Javadi & Zarea, 2016) as I have coded for surface text level meaning and also that which is implied by the spoken (and subsequently transcribed) words. This involves a level of interpretation on my part which has been acknowledged. For example, when Participant A could not accurately define the core values (explicit), I interpret this as the core values not being meaningful to the participant (implicit).

Javadi & Zarea (2016) warn researchers of the potential pitfall of allowing the researcher's prejudgements to influence the data analysis. I have endeavoured to be driven by the data, rather than by my own preconceptions or expectations of what I may find, but acknowledge that any interpretation of the data, e.g. perceiving a specific extract to be meaningful, or drawing implicit meaning from data can never be objective and is driven by one's own values and beliefs. Therefore I have been explicit about these in this research. In Braun and Clarke's words, I "*...do not treat people's talk of experience as a transparent window on their world*" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.95).

c) Rereading of extracts and codes to check against own interpretation.

### **Phase 3: Searching for themes**

a) Placing of each code and accompanying extract under headings. New headings are added as and when they become apparent. When codes/ extracts can be placed under the same heading this indicates that they are linked and may come under the same broad theme. This process is continued until all initial codes/ extracts have been placed under a heading. At this stage there are many headings (about 34) which begin to be grouped together. The 'grouping into themes' seems messy and overwhelming. There are hundreds of extracts and codes, but eventually the way that the themes link together leads to broader headings and fewer themes.

b) Initial candidate themes are presented in the Thematic Map (Appendix L). At this stage the themes link together in several ways and are not distinct categories. Main themes and subthemes are not fully clear. Although I have identified three main themes other themes feel as important. No data is abandoned at this stage as the significance will not be fully identified until the next phase, looking at extracts in detail (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This is part of the process of clarifying thought rather

than the end product. Although still overwhelming it is helpful to see that the many codes can be grouped together as themes. There are commonalities between the data sets and experiences/perspectives which can be grouped together within a theme.

- c) Revisiting the initial Thematic Map to further define themes and sub themes and the links between them. In order to make the thematic map less confusing, I look for subthemes which could become part of a larger theme, for example ‘School values’, ‘Learning habits’ and ‘Rules and boundaries’ are all part of the students’ experiences of ‘Doing the Right Thing’, so this now forms an overarching theme, encompassing the three previous themes identified. After moving themes around and encompassing themes within other themes, I am left with two themes which do not seem to fit within the larger themes: ‘Academic’ and ‘transition’. These are left on the map, as it is envisaged that in the next phase, when reading back through the extracts and codes, it will become clearer whether they relate to another theme. Although Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that there should be clear distinctions between the themes, this is difficult as they all seem to relate to each other and overlap in some way. By the end of this phase I have a collection of candidate themes, with data extracts and codes which apply to them.

#### **Phase 4: Reviewing themes**

- a) Returning to the coded data extracts to review the candidate themes. Taking each set of coded data extracts at a time, within a candidate theme, I decide whether these actually fit within this theme and whether the theme could collapse into a broader theme. As I have a lot of themes at this point, that all seem to link together in several ways, it is important to reduce the number of themes to produce something meaningful and coherent. This is difficult because everything at this point seems worthy of note. I wonder whether collapsing themes in to a wider theme dilutes the perceived importance of the data. Despite my concerns, I begin to put themes together and remove ‘minor’ themes, placing the data into other themes. I am reluctant at this point to discard any data extract as I do not want to discount the value of anything. I continue in this vein with several revisions of the candidate themes until I have a refined thematic map. During this stage I organise quotes from the data under each heading to help me in the reporting of analysis (Appendix M).



b) Return to the entire data set, reading each transcript and making notes under the headings from the provisional thematic map, considering whether the candidate themes accurately reflect the data set as a whole. I remind myself regularly of the research questions and ask myself whether the notes I am making under the headings contribute to answering the questions. If they do not I reconsider the importance of the theme and the relevance of the extracts applied to it; it may be that some data seemed interesting but is not relevant in addressing the research questions. During this stage there is continued refinement of the themes, resulting in themes merging in to one ('The importance of a good education' into 'motivation'), new theme headings being identified (the 'virtuous cycle' and the 'vicious cycle') and the connections between themes being revised. Whilst doing this I also consider the usefulness of the thematic map to my audience for dissemination/ action planning. How meaningful will this be to them and how will the identified themes inform action?

By the end of this stage I feel happy with the revised thematic map. I take heed of Braun and Clarke's advice to stop fine tuning when the coding frame fits the data well, as this stage could go on and on.

#### **Phase 5: Defining and naming themes**

a) Following Braun and Clarke's suggested stages of analysis, I realise that I have already begun this stage as I have made notes under each heading whilst reading back through the transcripts, and have begun to interpret the data rather than just paraphrase it. I can now begin the next step, writing a detailed analysis: identifying the 'story' that each theme tells and considering how this fits in to the overall 'story', relating to the research questions.

b) In this stage, Braun and Clarke suggest considering whether there are any sub themes within themes, but I have already done this during my refinement of themes. I am happy that there is not too much overlap between the themes, and that I can summarise each theme and sub theme in a couple of sentences.

#### **Phase 6: Producing the report**

- a) Reporting each theme, telling the complicated story of the data, selecting data extracts which illustrate the point being made. The findings are related to existing research and theory. During this stage, there is further refinement and renaming of themes as the reporting leads to clarity in my mind as to what is important about each theme and how this can be conveyed to the audience (for example ‘The Virtuous Cycle’ becomes ‘Supportive factors’ as this seems more relatable for the participating school). The reported analysis can be found in the following chapter, along with the final thematic map (Figure 1).

Table 3: Commentary of the phases of Thematic Analysis recorded as they occurred.

### **3.7 Ethical considerations**

This study was approved on ethics grounds following review on behalf of the University of Sheffield (Appendix N).

In designing and carrying out this research I have aimed to adhere to the British Psychological Society Code of Ethics and Conduct (BPS, 2018) which focusses on four primary ethical principles:

- Respect
- Competence
- Responsibility
- Integrity

#### **3.7.1 Respect**

##### *Human worth*

The premise of this research project was arrived at through unconditional positive regard and respect for all young people. I was driven by social justice and a sense that if something that works for the majority is at the expense of a minority, then it is not a fair system and should be challenged.

It was out of respect that I sought the views of the young people affected by the systems in place because I value what we can learn from them.

### *Power*

Wilkinson and Kitzinger (1996) refer to ‘representing the other’; that is, interviewing across difference. A partial aim of this research was to empower a marginalised group. The student participants in my research were a minority group in that they did not respond in the expected way to the BM approach, whereas the majority of students seemingly did. By interviewing any socially marginalised group of which they are not part, researchers represent ‘the other’ and whilst this can be problematic, Wilkinson and Kitzinger (1996) conclude that by *not* engaging in such research, marginalised voices are silenced and structures of power are reinforced.

In this research, I am another adult entering the lives of students who are affected daily by the systems which have been put in place by adults in a position of power. I acknowledge that there is an inevitable power differential between us, and address this through openness and transparency regarding my role. Throughout the research I reflected on my interactions with the young people. I believe that I have acted ethically in providing an outlet for their voices and in representing their views in the development of policy and practice which may affect them. I acknowledge that my position as a researcher has enabled me to do this.

### *Consent*

This research project involved seeking the consent of a participating school; student participants to be involved in interviews and staff participants to be involved in the action planning stage.

Transparency about the research project was fundamental in gaining consent for all three groups.

The VP, who was my link to the school throughout, acted on behalf of the school to agree consent to:

- Support the project and the practical implications of this in terms of recruiting participants and providing the necessary time and space.
- Take part in the discussion of results and potential action following the analysis of data.

(See staff consent letter, Appendix O)

The VP acted as gatekeeper to potential pupil participants as she was in a position to select young people who she perceived to be able to make an informed decision as to whether to take part in the research or not.

Parental consent was sought prior to meeting students. In line with GDPR regulations (Data Protection Act, 2018), the VP made initial contact with parents, providing brief information about the research project. Parents were asked at this point whether they would like to speak to me face-to-face or via telephone to ask questions and to discuss the research in more detail. All parents declined this offer. They were sent information sheets and consent forms to sign which were sent back to school. It was made clear that participation was dependent on the decision of the young person. Parents were informed that they could withdraw consent for their children to take part at any time during the research with no repercussions for them or their child.

Consent was gained from six parents (Appendix P). I then met with the students to explain the research to them. Information sheets were provided. I gave the students the option of having this read to them and invited them to ask any questions. I aimed for these introductory meetings to be relaxed and informal, whilst ensuring the students were provided with all necessary information. Four of the students said that they would like to take part in the research and subsequently signed consent (Appendix Q). Two students wished to have more time to think about it. For these students, I left the information sheets with the VP and explained that they could discuss the research further with her or with anyone they wished before arriving at a decision. Following a period of roughly two weeks, one of these students had made the decision not to take part. One expressed he would

like to meet with me again at which stage he said he had thought about it and would like to participate. One participant decided at the point of interview not to take part and was thanked for their time.

During the consent process, I reflected on the students' decision making and wondered whether their sense of autonomy had been hindered due to a school and societal culture in which young people are expected to be compliant with the demands of adults without question or negotiation. Perhaps it felt unusual for them to be given a choice? Did it feel like a choice or an expectation? During the process, two potential participants were able to say that they did not wish to take part in the research which indicated to me that participants perceived that they had a choice. I felt confident that those who agreed understood the purpose of the research and had a genuine interest in taking part. Consent was regarded as an ongoing process. Participants were informed and reminded that they had the right to withdraw from the research at any time if they wished with no negative consequences.

Staff participants were informed of the extent of the involvement and were asked to sign consent (see Appendix P).

### *Compassionate care*

Throughout the research process the well-being of both adult and student participants was of paramount importance to me. I was aware of the multiple and competing demands on the VP in a busy secondary school. We agreed a time frame that would suit us both in terms of meeting the requirements of my doctoral research without putting unrealistic demands on her time. Student participants were made aware of the pastoral support systems available to them should they feel they needed further support with any of the issues raised. It was not envisaged that the interviews would evoke distress but it was a possibility that the students would raise issues that were

uncomfortable for them. 'Stop' and 'pause' cards were available during the interviews and it was explained that the participants could use these at any time should they wish.

Literature on qualitative research stresses the importance of rapport building with participants, for example having a warm, friendly manner that puts people at ease (Braun & Clarke, 2013); being open and non-judgemental (Patton, 2002) and establishing a trusting relationship from the first encounter (Miller, 2010). As I planned to interview secondary school pupils who, due to the nature of the sampling criteria, may have had negative experiences of school and adults in school, this was an ongoing point of consideration for me.

Educational Psychologists frequently find themselves in challenging situations where building rapport with adults, children and young people is essential to the effectiveness of the EP's involvement (Beaver, 2011). I considered myself to be experienced in building rapport with a wide range of people through my work as a Trainee EP, and prior to this role as a teacher and Assistant EP. This is often in situations where involvement is limited to one off visits, and can be with young people who are difficult to engage. I value the Rogerian principles of warmth, genuineness and empathy (Rogers, 1965) along with a non-judgemental approach, and apply these to all interactions. This was also true within the context of the research project. I acknowledged that it may be difficult to build a trusting relationship with the young people in this study, especially as my time with them would be limited to two visits, but I did not perceive this as a challenge that could not be overcome.

Time was taken during my initial meetings with the individual students to introduce myself and to explain my role, welcoming and encouraging questions, with the aim of putting them at ease. When I returned for the interviews, I spent time prior to each interview chatting about general topics, being responsive and led by each young person. I showed them the dictaphone and explained how it worked, testing it with them to check I could hear their voices. This acted as a bit of an 'ice-breaker' and I felt that the students were relaxed in my company. Following the interview, I ensured

that the students were given the time they needed before returning to their lessons. The participants were asked about their experience once the dictaphone had been turned off and all four expressed that they had felt fine about sharing their experiences with me. Pastoral staff and the VP were aware of their involvement in the interviews and were able to check-in on them during the day to ensure they had settled back in to the regular school routines.

The participants were asked if they would like me to meet with me again during the latter stages of the research to inform them of any changes that were planned as a result of their participation in the research. Two of the participants agreed to this. Two of the participants were not sure so I assured them that the VP would give them this option again later in the year.<sup>3</sup>

### **3.7.2 Competence**

#### *Appropriate skills*

I regularly work with children and young people in my role as Trainee EP, and in my previous roles as primary school teacher and Assistant EP, and I have had an up to date (2019) enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. Throughout the research, I continually reflected on my ability and competence to interact in an effective, non-threatening, professional manner with the young people and adult participants in this study.

#### *Acknowledging limitations*

Knowledge and experience of others was utilised during the study, for example in recruiting participants and in considering the use of language in the interview questions. Action research as a methodology framework is respectful of and aims to utilise the skills and knowledge of *all* participants in a study. I acknowledge that my role in this in that of facilitator, bringing a particular

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<sup>3</sup> As I was unable to meet participants face to face due to social distancing as a result of COVID-19 pandemic, letters were sent to each participant outlining main findings, how these would be used in school, and thanking them for their involvement.

skill set in terms of carrying out research and eliciting the views of young people, but I do not assume the role of ‘expert’. In fact, AR challenges “outside expert knowledge which speaks about action without actually engaging in action” (Aragón & Castillo-Burguete, 2017, p.6).

#### *Matters of professional ethics and decision making*

I aimed throughout this research to remain reflective and to consider implications of decisions made. AR is an evolving process in which researchers aim to be critical and self-critical, continually evaluating and reflecting on decisions and practice (Zuber-Skerrit & Fletcher, 2007). Others participating in the research are also encouraged to be reflective, hence the cyclical nature of AR involving ongoing review and planning in response to this. At a personal level, I used a reflective diary throughout and regularly referred back to previous entries to avoid complacency. At an interactive level, I engaged in on-going discussion with participants regarding inadvertent changes in thinking or to practice as a result of taking part in the study.

### **3.7.3 Responsibility**

#### *Managing professional autonomy with regard to others*

I acknowledge the potential competing duties of fulfilling doctoral requirements and completing a research project for my own gain, and ensuring the safety and welfare of participants. It was important to me that this was a positive and useful experience for the participants. This in part contributed to my decision to engage in AR, rather than stopping at gathering knowledge. Gergen and Gergen (2017) perceive action researchers as politically engaged and highlight the importance of AR producing knowledge that is useful to people in their everyday lives.

When I originally embarked on this research journey, I wanted to understand the underlying reasons why some young people do not respond well to punitive approaches to discipline with a view to contributing to this discussion which continues to appear in the political agenda and media.



However, I was anxious that this could appear critical to members of school staff who have been instrumental in developing school policy. I acknowledge that school leaders are under pressure to raise standards and in this research project I wanted to work with school staff, rather than against them. I ensured that the Senior Leadership Team of the participating school had a full understanding of the purpose of my research. It was also important that they had an interest in improving outcomes for this group of students. Open and frank discussions were held with the VP early on in the research process to ensure that we were working collaboratively towards the same outcomes (see also ‘Honesty, openness and candour’ below for elaboration of this issue). See Appendix R for a script of information shared initially with the VP.

### *Confidentiality*

The student participants in this study were invited to take part because they had received a significant amount of sanctions in school. This made it particularly important for me to stress that information they shared with me would only be used to contribute to positive change. I had originally intended to use Narrative Inquiry to elicit in-depth stories from the young people regarding their experience of school, and to use The Listening Guide (Woodcock, 2016) to analyse individual data sets. However, responsibilities towards the young people led me to consider alternative methods of data collection and analysis. I was concerned that it was unethical for stories which could identify individual students and staff to be fed back to the participating staff team. Although I used principles of Narrative Inquiry in the semi-structured interviews, for example, attempting to give voice to suppressed minorities and facilitating greater understanding of their experiences, I became more interested in the general themes between data sets and this influenced my decision to use Thematic Analysis with a view towards encouraging positive transformation. In order to maintain confidentiality, only general themes between participants were shared with the staff team. Quotes to support themes were used to illustrate the theme during dissemination and were reported only if I did not think they could identify an individual. Participants were informed

during the initial information giving stage that data would be fed back to school staff, and that school staff were aware of who the participants were. It was made clear that every precaution would be taken to ensure that data could not be linked to individuals.

I hope that a culmination of the above considerations reassured both adult and student participants that partaking in the research was beneficial and worthwhile for them.

### *Safeguarding*

Participants were made aware that all issues were confidential except for safeguarding concerns.

Participants were informed prior to interviews that if I was concerned for their well-being that I was obliged to inform the school's designated safeguarding lead.

### **3.7.4 Integrity**

#### *Honesty, openness and candour*

I aimed to be transparent about the purpose of the research with staff and student participants.

However, I wondered whether schools would be open to my research, or would perceive that the findings may undermine their school policies. Senior members of staff may have been defensive about a rigorous, sanction/ reward based approach to BM which had become synonymous with phrases such as 'zero tolerance' in public discourse. I had developed an interest in this topic because I felt that vulnerable pupils were marginalised by such approaches, and yet I wanted to work with a school that employed this type of behaviour policy. To address this, I aimed to be thorough and balanced in my review of the literature in this area, and to present a proposal to schools that identified my concern and reasons for conducting the research, whilst at the same time making it clear that the research aimed to be supportive. A script used to invite participants can be viewed in Appendix S.

I had preconceived ideas about why pupils may find it difficult to adhere to school expectations, but these were put to one side as I engaged in the research process. Interviews and analysis were approached with genuine openness and curiosity about what I may find, rather than with a hypothesis to refute, and in this respect the research was inductive rather than deductive. However, my research questions assume a positional stance as they imply that for some students a prescriptive, structured approach leads to them receiving a relatively large number of sanctions. This assumption was based on the fact that participants had been identified as cause for concern due to high involvement with discipline processes, and therefore I perceived this as a valid assumption. I aimed to ensure that the wording of questions, whilst focused on the approach to BM, were open-ended and did not assume a response that would support any preconceived bias on my part.

## Chapter 4 Findings and Analysis

### 4.1 Introduction

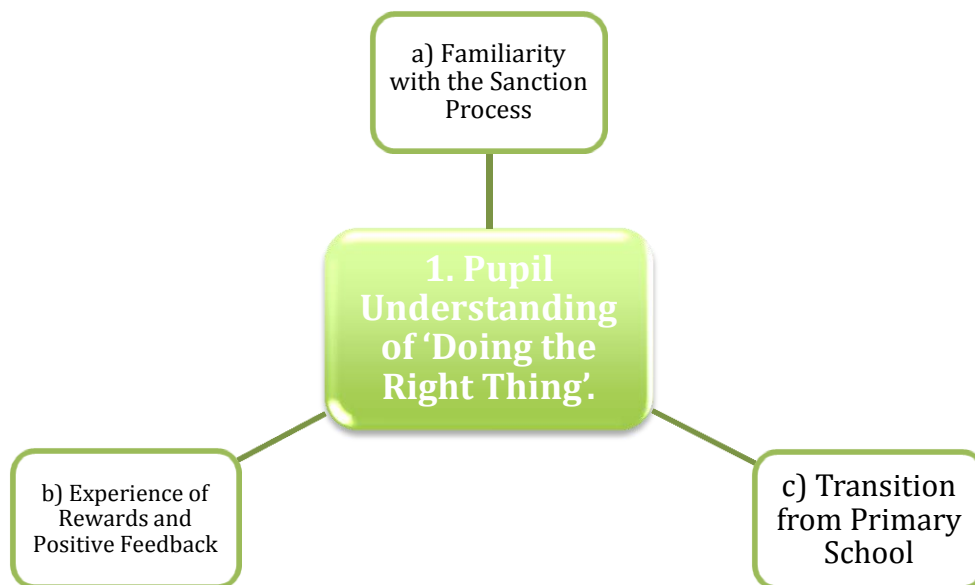
In this chapter, I aim to present the story told by the data, in relation to the research questions. The results should provide “a concise, coherent, logical, non-repetitive and interesting account of the story the data tell – within and across themes” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.93). My analysis is aligned with an interpretivist and transformative method, and I acknowledge that I am not merely ‘giving voice’ to the participants (Fine, 2002, in Braun & Clarke, 2006). The process of coding and selecting data extracts which are perceived to be important, and then attributing meaning to them, is an active process of interpretation on my part. As Braun and Clarke argue, themes do not ‘emerge’ from the data as part of a passive process but require the active role of the researcher (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Following the rigorous analysis process, three main themes with related sub-themes were defined, which are presented in Figure 1 below. Following this, findings and analysis which relate to each theme are described. Excerpts of anonymised raw data (identifiers removed) are included to illustrate themes and add validity to my interpretation. During Phase 4 of the analysis, data extracts which support a theme were collated under each theme and sub-theme heading (Appendix M). Full transcripts of interviews are not included in the appendices as I felt that this compromised anonymity of participants. Data extracts in Appendix M are numbered and are referenced within the analysis of data below to enable the reader to trace extracts back to the original data. Within the analysis, data extracts are attributed to either ‘all participants’ or to Participant A, B, C or D to add rigour and to provide clarity. This is referenced either before or after each data extract. Quotes from my discussions with the VP of the participating school (Appendix T) are also included to provide context, indicated by ‘VP’.

Within the analysis, references are made to literature in order to illustrate how findings relate to existing knowledge and theory. Thomas (2017) suggests that it is unnecessary to strictly differentiate between analysis and discussion as the two are intertwined, and analysing findings automatically leads to testing identified themes against own experience, reading and thoughts. Some new literature is introduced here as my exploration of the topic being studied was ongoing throughout the research.

In Chapters 5 and 6 the analysis will be discussed in more detail in relation to the research questions, with reference to the literature presented in Chapter 2.

## 4.2 Thematic map



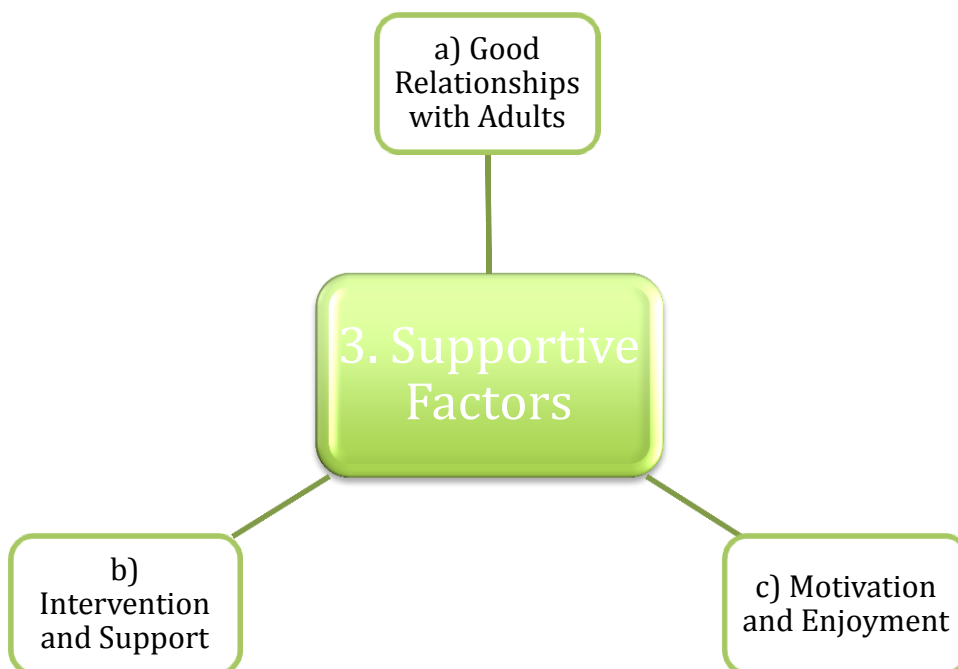
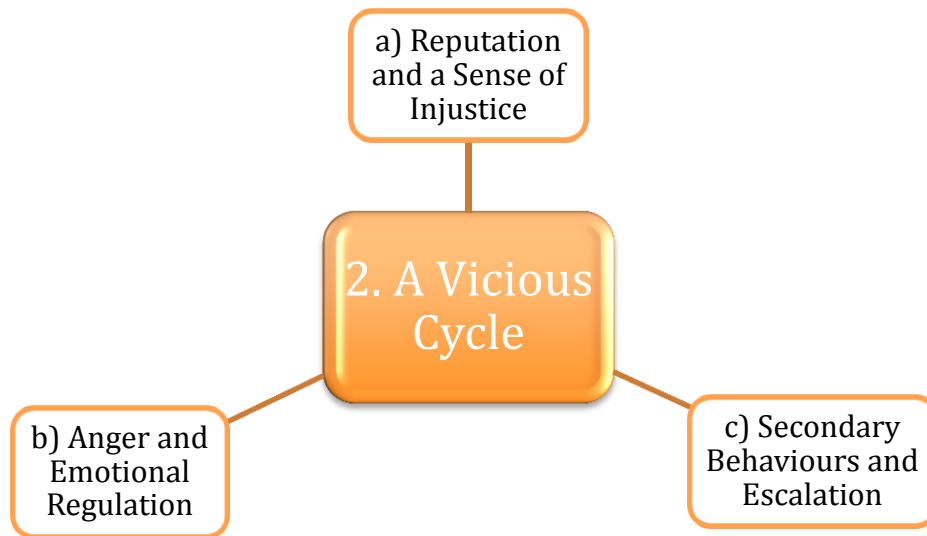


Figure 1: Final thematic map illustrating the main themes and related sub-themes which contribute to understanding why some pupils struggle to adhere to school expectations and how they can be supported in school.

## 4.3 Findings and analysis

### 4.3.1 Main theme 1: Student understanding of ‘doing the right thing’

A feature of rigorous, structured behaviour policies is high expectations of behaviour which are clearly defined and are understood by all pupils, in order that they can adhere to them with knowledge that there will be a consequence if they do not (DfE, 2016). A motto of the participating school is *“We do the right thing, because it’s the right thing to do”* (VP). Staff members refer to ‘100 percent’, for example *“100 percent of the class should be on task”* (VP). The school uses *“clear embedded vocabulary relating to the three core values”* (VP) and adherence to these is referred to by school staff when acknowledging that a student has demonstrated or shown a lack of a core value. Core values link to six ‘learning habits’ which provide a framework to embed the core values in daily practice and routines. These include handing in homework on time; on-task behaviour; attendance and punctuality; no answering back; perfect uniform and having the correct equipment.

When asking the participants about expectations of behaviour, I used language that they would be familiar with, referring to the core values and learning habits. This main theme relates to the students’ understanding of the expectations, how meaningful they are to them and whether they feel that following them is beneficial to them.

In the current study, all participants attributed ‘doing the right thing’ to the school’s portrayal of core values (diligence, integrity and civility) and recognised that these are behaviours which are noticed and rewarded in school. For example, Participant A explained that:

*“If you’ve been good in like, normally three core values that we got, if you like never give up, if you do full attention of your work and they give you a... positive”* (32).

All participants struggled to recall the core values and explain their meaning. When asked about these, initial responses included *“Integrity means...erm...I don’t know what that one means”* (1, A) and *“Diligence, civility and I don’t know the other one”* (13, C). When the participants did attempt to define the three values they used simple vocabulary such as *“...civility is like helping others”* (14, C); *“Integrity doing the right thing without a teacher asking you”* (8, B) and *“Diligence is when you show the right thing”* (11, D).

The participants provided real life examples to help illustrate the meaning of the core values, for example, *“...if someone hasn’t got their equipment, and you lend them a pen [...] then that shows civility”* (7, B). Participant A described civility as when *“...you help someone open the door”* (5).

Regardless of the philosophical underpinnings of an approach to BM, those making recommendations to educators talk about the importance of schools developing a recognisable climate, culture or ethos, which may include shared values and habits (Canter, 2010, DfE, 2017; Roffey, 2011). For some, this is a climate which is well-ordered and free from disruption, enabling teachers and students to work towards academic achievements (e.g. Canter, 2010, DfE, 2017). For others, the overall ethos is about fostering a culture where pupils are able to ask challenging questions, take risks, and be creative, sensitive, honest and fair (Roffey, 2011).

Roffey perceives the difference between approaches to be about the purpose of the culture or climate that is aimed for; she argues that for most school staff, the overall aim is student conformity to rules, rather than thinking about how pro-social skills and values are developed and instilled (Roffey, 2017). Kohn (1997) also questions who benefits from such values and argues that promoting values like ‘respect’ and ‘responsibility’ is often just a ruse for making children conform to the demands of adults. In the current study, the participants’ responses suggest that in order for the core values to be meaningful to them they need to be able to relate to them through links to real life experiences and simplified language. The participants may then begin to recognise examples of



these being demonstrated in their own lives, leading to recognising how they can benefit them personally and others in the school community.

Whilst most would agree that there should be high expectations of behaviour in schools, Roffey (2011) points out that the expectations should be appropriate to the ability of the student. Participant A related an incident in which he had told a teacher about another student provoking him, rather than getting in to a fight. When I asked him which of the core values he had shown, he replied “*integrity*” indicating that he felt he had been honest in this situation (6). This may not have been perceived by others as demonstrating honesty, but for the student in this example it felt like an achievement.

When recalling the learning habits, none of the participants referred to punctuality and attendance, uniform or equipment which are included in the school behaviour policy under ‘Learning Habits’. They focused more on classroom behaviours, probably because these are supported by visual representations at the front of each classroom. Three of the participants made reference to these visual supports, which seemed to aid recall of the habits to be demonstrated in class, for example Participant C described:

*“You have to have a massive board and they keep it in the room on the wall. And they got arrow and when they [the teachers] want to change it, they change it” (27, C).*

The visual representations of learning habits seemed to be helpful for the participants in terms of understanding expected classroom behaviours and the purpose of them, and yet they still struggled to conform and were most commonly reprimanded for off-task behaviour. The learning habits ‘*No answering back*’ and ‘*On-task behaviour*’ were referred to as the most difficult to adhere to. When asked what they mainly get in to trouble for at school the participants’ responses included, “*...for talking really or like looking back*” (34, A) and “*Off task...playing my equipment... laughing... being distracted*” (35, B).

It may be that within the lesson, referral back to visual prompts could be the reminder that these students need, rather than immediate sanction. Roffey (2011) suggests that some pupils require clear direction, good models and lots of practice and reminders before being reprimanded.

The participants in this study were confused when they perceived that the expectations were not consistent. Participant C expressed that the expectations were sometimes unclear:

*“Yeh, but the thing I don’t get is you’re not allowed to put your hand up. At school it says you’re not allowed to use it in school. And then, if you shout they say you should have put your hand up but you’re not allowed to do that”* (43, C).

Two participants referred to inconsistencies in teachers’ responses to behaviour, indicating confusion around expectations. Participant C commented that *“It’s always the same teacher that gives me detention”* (44) and *“Science I mostly get in trouble in”* (45). Participant B referred to varying degrees of strictness between teachers (46):

*“I just like stay focused in them lessons because the teachers are strict. Stricter. The lessons that I [...] do get in to trouble, they’re still strict teachers but they’re not as strict”* (46).

He perceived some strict teachers in a positive way; a certain type of strictness led to not getting in to trouble as much. Perhaps this indicates that these teachers were able to manage behaviour in an effective way without reliance on sanctions as a deterrent.

On the other hand, strictness was perceived by Participant C negatively, leading to getting into trouble and being sanctioned more often. He referred to the school as *“...too strict”* (47, 49) and stated *“I want to go to a normal school which is less stricter, which is gonna be more better”*(48).

Rules and high expectations were attributed to enabling everyone to learn which two participants perceived as important, explaining that *“They’re helpful for everyone”* (36, A), *“... you won’t miss*

*your learning or nothing*” (37, A) and *“They help people to concentrate and not be naughty”* (38, D).

Participant A commented that without the rules in place, *“It would all be chaos, yeh, it would be chaos”* (39).

Roffey (2011) identifies research in which pupils have indicated that they do not want to be in classrooms where there is a lot of disruption. She also highlights that being in control does not mean being ‘controlling’. Similarly, Ali (2018) points out that being ‘strict’ does not mean shouting at pupils, but having clear routines and procedures and an assertive tone of voice when needed. The participants in this study indicated that teachers are ‘strict’ in different ways; perhaps they are referring to teachers who are predictable and in control, as opposed to teachers who are authoritarian and over-reliant on imposing sanctions. On reflection, it would have been useful to explore these constructs of ‘strictness’ further, to contribute to understanding what it is about the approach of certain teachers that seems to be effective in engaging pupils.

#### **4.3.2 Sub-theme 1a: Familiarity with the sanction processes**

A sanction is a term used in school behaviour policies to describe a consequence which occurs when a pupil does not comply with the rules (DfE, 2016). In government guidance, the term ‘punishment’ is used in relation to discipline procedures which are put in place when a pupil’s behaviour falls below the expected standard; these should be proportionate and reasonable, taking into account individual circumstances including the pupil’s age and any SEND (DfE, 2016).

Bennett (in DfE, 2017) differentiates between consequences which are sanctions and aim to deter others and influence future behaviour, and those which form part of a supportive response, such as considering seating arrangements. Taylor (in DfE, 2011) advises that pupils should receive a sanction every time they behave badly, and that every stage of the behaviour policy must be followed consistently to avoid over-reacting to pupil behaviour, whilst also knowing how to

respond sensitively to pupils with special needs. It is possible that knowing how to implement this in practice is confusing for school staff.

In the participating school, I was interested in finding out whether students had a clear understanding of what was likely to happen if they did not do the right thing. I knew that the participants frequently received sanctions because that was why they had been asked to take part in the study. However, I wanted to know how they perceived their involvement with the discipline system and therefore asked them about what happens when a student does the wrong thing (general) and to tell me about a time when they had done the wrong thing (personal).

Each participant was able to describe the stepped response of the sanction pathway in detail (61-69). Their knowledge of this process is likely to be due to their regular involvement with the discipline processes. Participant A went as far as to explain the increasing length of detentions in relation to number of times they were noticed for 'answering back' (63), and Participant B knew that if a sanction was issued in the last lesson of the day this would be carried out the next day (65).

All participants recognised that the first step is a warning to change the behaviour and start doing the right thing. Despite this understanding of the purpose of a warning all participants talked about frequent detentions, e.g. *"I had a hundred and eight detentions last year"* (77, A); *"I still end up getting detention"* (C, 135).

Participant B spoke with frustration and a sense of inevitability, as if it felt to him like everything led to a detention:

*"If you're in quiet partners and you're talking loud... then you get detention... if you're late you get a detention; answering back, detention; not following the school rules, detention; talking in the corridors too loud, detention"* (76).

Three of the participants also referred to incidences of being in isolation (88-89) and Participant B talked about receiving a fixed-term exclusion (90, 91, B). This indicates that for these participants knowledge of the stepped response had not deterred them from moving further through the steps. Participant A described extended periods in isolation whilst in Year 7 stating that *“I was in isolation most of the time, I was only in school for like 20 days”* (83).

The recommendations around the use of sanctions in schools are based on the assumption that knowledge of the consequences that will occur as a result of unacceptable behaviour will deter pupils from doing the wrong thing; however, despite being able to describe the sanction process in detail, the participants continued to persistently receiving warnings and detentions. They recounted experiences of hour or two hour long detentions, and extended periods spent in isolation, yet these arguably severe sanctions did not have the desired effect of deterring the disruptive behaviour.

The participants’ experiences suggest that sometimes sanctions are given readily and other options may not have been considered by the teacher, which could have avoided reaching the sanction stage altogether.

#### **4.3.3 Sub-theme 1b: Experience of rewards and positive feedback**

The type of behaviour policies which are the focus of this study are often entitled ‘Positive Discipline’ or ‘Positive Behaviour’ due to the emphasis on reinforcing desired behaviour through positive consequences. The participating school has planned rewards for developing good learning habits and demonstrating the core values. This sub-theme describes students’ familiarity with and experience of the reward system and contributes to understanding whether rewards and positive feedback are motivating factors for the participants.

All students found it difficult to recall a time that they had been recognised for doing the right thing. They didn’t easily recall times that they had followed the learning habits or had demonstrated a core

value and had been recognised for this. Unlike when they described the sanction pathway, students were less confident in describing what happens when you do the right thing and their descriptions were vaguer (95-121). However, Participant A recognised that students would know they were doing the right thing because *“The teacher would always keep reminding them”*(95) and also referred to longer term effects of doing the right thing, such as *“they would get good grades in the test”* (95).

Participant B commented that a teacher would notice those doing the right thing because *“they will look around the class to see if anybody’s messing about”* (101) indicating that he perceived teachers to be alert to misbehaviour and that recognising good behaviour was an less intentional consequence of this.

With further prompting, all participants referred to extrinsic rewards such as trips or pizza in school (113-118), but they did not talk about their own personal experience of this. Participants B and D told me that these rewards were only for students who had received no detentions during that cycle (116; 118). If rewards are no longer an incentive for a student because they have already lost the chance by receiving a detention this is likely to be demotivating. Participant A spoke positively about an initiative recently introduced in which the students had been consulted about what the reward at the end of each cycle should be, indicating that this involvement in decision making may be a motivating factor in the future (113).

It has been argued that extrinsic rewards decrease motivation because once the reward is removed so is the incentive and intrinsic motivation has not been instilled (Kohn, 1993, 2015). However, Roffey (2011) argues that although acknowledgement of specific achievement and effort is more meaningful than tangible rewards, if privileges lead to increased personal wellbeing this becomes the intrinsic motivator. The participants in this study did not describe the sense of belonging that going on a school trip can bring as they had not experienced this reward. It may be that the lack of

these types of shared, positive experiences has led to extrinsic rewards not being meaningful or motivating to the participants.

Although personal experiences of rewards seemed to be rare for the participants, two of them expressed pride when they had felt a sense of achievement, whether this was through acknowledgement, *“The teacher know I do good in my lesson”* (126, A) or extrinsic reward *“We got these five pound or ten pound vouchers [whilst part of a behaviour intervention group]. I get them for my family”* (130, B). Similarly, Participant B spoke enthusiastically about a time when he felt that he was doing the right thing and had less involvement with the sanction pathway, exclaiming that *“Like I feel happy! No detentions for a month!”* (106) (This was during his involvement in an intervention group supporting students to adhere to school expectations). All participants were able to tell me that when a student does the right thing they might be rewarded with ‘positives’ and feedback to parents, through a phone call or card home (102-118). Participant D spoke enthusiastically about this, stating that *“You wanna get a positive card home [...] everyone wants to get it”* (104). These experiences indicate that when positive feedback is received, it is meaningful and enjoyable for the students.

Participant A was not sure what the ‘positives’ he had received were for when asked and replied *“Well yeh that’s in my other class for being good, for doing my work, or civility, I don’t know...”* (123) indicating that the purpose of the reward to reinforce positive behaviour had not been achieved in this case. Whilst the participants expressed that they enjoyed the positive attention, it is important that recognition is specific if it is to reinforce desired behaviour. It has been identified that more important than an extrinsic reward is acknowledgement of specific achievement (Roffey, 2011). It may be that for the participants in this study, letting them know specifically what they had done well may have motivated them to repeat the behaviour in the future.

#### **4.3.4 Sub-theme 1c: Transition from primary school**

Two of the participants compared their secondary school experience to primary school. When talking about the primary context, Participant C referred to himself as *“kind of good”* (54) implying that that is not how he sees himself now. He referred to primary school as a time when things were *“completely easier and different”* (53) and Participant B described how *“people were getting on with each other and it were just better, like, nice”* (52) indicating a sense of belonging to a co-operative group. This participant could also recall his primary school values and suggested that these would be useful in helping him to do the right thing.

Having to *“move around lessons”* (52, B) at secondary school was referred to negatively, indicating that this responsibility can put pressure on some students and is a big jump from primary school when most lessons are in the same classroom with the same teacher. In secondary school, *“Everything different... it’s more stricter, you got more routines and everything”* (56, C), again suggesting that the increased responsibility and high expectations can feel like a big step when moving from year six to year seven.

Participant C also talked about difficulty adjusting to secondary school, describing it as *“...hard like, the rules and everything”* (60) and reporting that *“I keep on getting in to trouble at this school”* (58).

#### **4.3.5 Main theme 2: A vicious cycle**

A ‘vicious cycle’ is defined as “a problem or difficult situation that has the effect of creating new problems which then cause the original problem or situation to occur again” whereas a ‘virtuous cycle’ means that “once one good thing starts happening, other good things happen, which cause the first thing to continue happening” (as defined by the Collins English Dictionary, 2020). White (1984) used the theory of vicious and virtuous cycles to explain how a problem had manifested in a



family, and worked towards a solution through interrupting the vicious cycle and introducing a virtuous one.

During the analysis of data in this research, the students' responses suggested that in terms of their behaviour they are often in what appears to be a vicious cycle which has started with a small event (or minor breach of the rules) and has avalanched to more serious consequences through a process of events, thereby reinforcing the cycle.

I have named and described two vicious cycles which I have developed from the analysis of data, 'Vicious cycle: Wider school context', and 'Vicious cycle: Incidental context'.

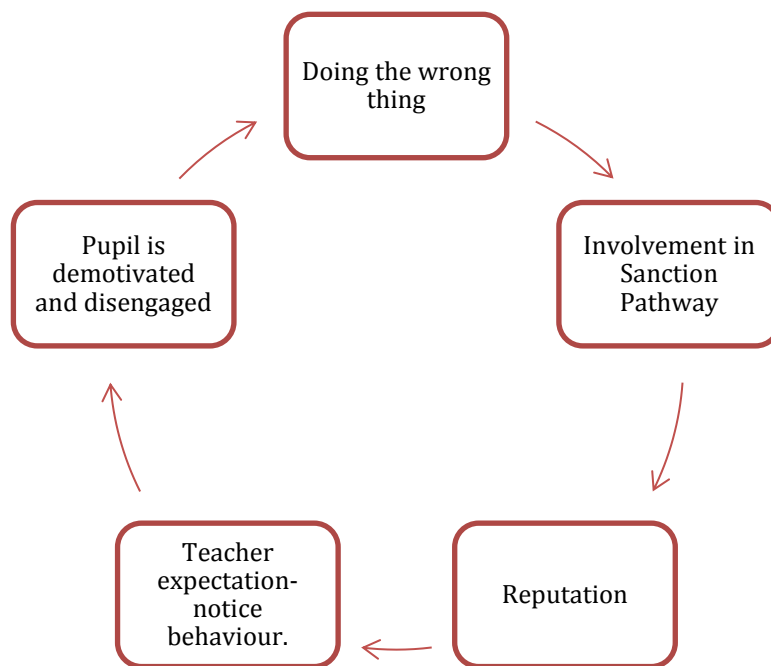


Figure 2: Vicious cycle: Wider school context.

Figure 2 illustrates the pattern which has been reinforced in school over time. To their own admission the participants have engaged in behaviour which is deemed unacceptable at school: “*I used to mess about loads*” (C, 131); “*Off task... Playing with my equipment*” (35, B); “*Last year I was messing about so much*” (A, 132).

I have theorised that visible involvement in the sanction pathway leads to the student gaining a reputation; they become known as someone who messes about and is in trouble a lot. This leads to teachers being more likely to notice and pick up on minor indiscretions. The student feels ‘picked on’ and becomes demotivated and disengaged, leading to more incidents of not displaying the expected behaviour, e.g. being off task, and the cycle continues.

Within this wider cycle at a school level, is a vicious cycle which occurs at the time an incident, which I have named the ‘Incidental context’. This occurs as a result of the student perceiving that the teacher notices and picks up on every little thing, leading to them feeling that they are being treated unfairly, affecting their response to the warning or sanction being issued. This is illustrated in Figure 3 below.

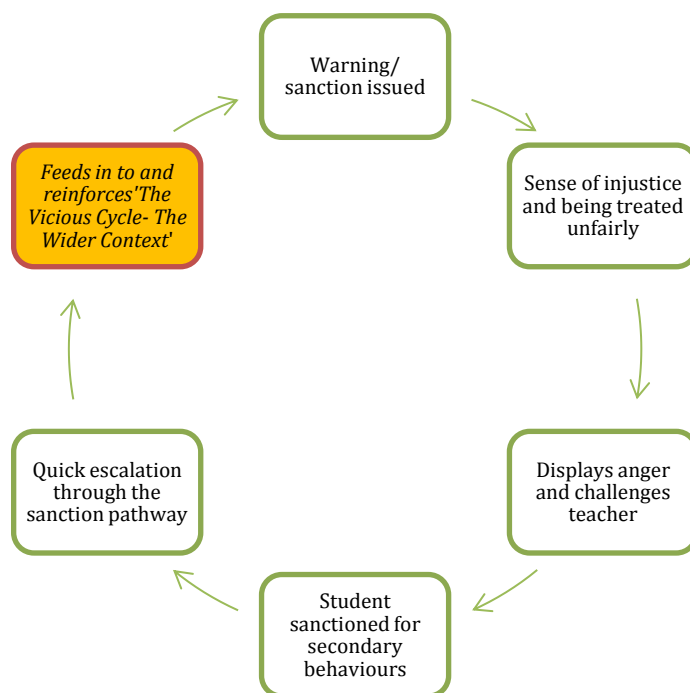


Figure 3: Vicious cycle: Incidental context.

The initial behaviour, e.g. off-task behaviour, has resulted in the student being issued with a more severe sanction for secondary behaviours, e.g. answering back, arguing or becoming aggressive.

This feeds in to the ‘Vicious cycle: Wider context’ as the student’s involvement with the discipline

processes, and therefore their reputation, is reinforced. The wider cycle continues with more frequent incidental occurrences.

Sub themes from the vicious cycles will now be explored in more detail with reference to the data.

#### **4.3.6 Sub-theme 2a: Reputation and a sense of injustice**

‘Reputation’ and a ‘sense of injustice’ were previously identified as two separate sub-themes, but the two are intrinsically linked, as it is the participant’s perceived feeling that they have a reputation that leads to feelings of injustice and unfairness.

Two of the participants talked about teachers suspecting them when an incident had occurred as a result of sometimes doing the wrong thing; *“Because last year I was messing about so much, sometimes they think it’s me”* (133, A). Participant C expressed frustration at this:

*“And do you know everything, er, happen like in school, summat bad happens in school, teachers suspect me ... She came in to our form ... and she was looking at, keep on looking at me”* (131); *“In Year 7 I used to mess about loads but now the teachers suspect me”* (132).

This participant also expressed a sense that his reputation preceded him despite the teacher not knowing him so it was difficult to make a good impression:

*“Sometimes the teacher she always suspect, [...] I didn’t even have her for year 7 but she always suspects me”* (134).

His comments suggest that he perceives the reputation that he has gained as a result of doing the wrong thing as difficult to ‘shake off’, despite efforts to demonstrate behaviour to the contrary, explaining that *“...sometimes I try hard. I still end up getting detention”* (135) and *“I just try hard. When I don’t try hard I don’t get a detention, I try hard I get a detention”* (136).

These comments, of being judged on reputation rather than actual behaviour, had tones of resignation and a sense of the student's efforts being pointless or not good enough.

All participants described getting the blame for things that were not their fault, likely as a result of teachers being more alert to them doing the wrong thing due to prior experience and the reputation that had been gained (138-148). For example, "*It wasn't even me sometimes and they give me a detention*" (138, A). The sense of resignation mentioned previously was again evident in comments such as "*Sometimes they just blame it on me*" (139, A), indicating that the participants feel that not much thought is put in to deciding who is at fault; the 'usual suspects' are the most likely culprits.

Three of the participants described sanctions being issued as a result an incident which the student perceived as accidental rather than intentional wrong doing (140-142), for example:

*"...my pen went on the floor and I had to go round get my pen, and the teacher said "Put your pens up" and she said "Five four three two one", and when she got to one my pen wasn't up and I got detention for it and I didn't get no planner warning"* (141, D).

Often the participants attributed blame to another student, whether intentional, "*he started it and I got done for it*" (146, D), or as a result of an accident:

*"...by accident [another student] drop my pencil case on the floor and she [teacher] came and she goes "Why is your pencil case on the floor?" and I go "I don't know why" and she gave me detention"* (140, C).

Participant C spoke of an incident which he perceived as being due to a personal medical issue but was interpreted by the teacher as off task behaviour, despite him trying to talk to her about the problem:

*"I spoke to her in the lesson but she still wouldn't believe me [...]. She says "Oh no you were off task" and everything and she gave me a detention"* (148).

The accumulation of these incidents; getting blamed for something accidental, someone else's actions or something out of their own control, seems to lead to overall feelings of frustration, resignation and despondency, which is evident in the resentment which resounds in one participant's question to me:

*“Do you know when we haven't done nothing, why do we still get detention for it when it's not our fault?”*(149, D).

Research has suggested that from a young age pupils can gain a reputation for being 'naughty' (MacLure, Jones, Holmes, & McRae, 2012). The research, conducted in the reception classes of four schools, gathered qualitative data using interviews with teachers, video footage, field notes and observations over several weeks. The study found that from a young age, pupils who do not live up to role of the well-behaved pupil, are admonished publicly by teachers and used as an example of how not to do things in school. Negative talk about children was found to circulate in staff rooms, contributing to their reputation and leading to pupils finding it hard to be viewed in a different way. This could lead to pupils having low self-worth, because they do not receive their teacher's approval and find it increasingly difficult to do so (MacLure et al., 2012). Whilst MacLure et al.'s study focused on reception aged children, the findings may be relevant to the participants in the current study, who had recently started secondary school and had encountered new expectations of behaviour. It may be that during this transition period of negotiating different ways of interacting with adults and having greater responsibility, these students had found themselves frequently on the receiving end of sanctions, contributing to a reputation being gained early in their secondary education.

#### 4.3.7 Sub-theme 2b: Anger and emotional regulation

Three of the participants made specific references to ‘anger’, often in relation to being sanctioned for wrong-doing, and all made references to incidents which indicated feelings of anger or lack of control (150-165). This sub-theme links closely to the last and is a stage of the ‘vicious cycle’.

The initial planner warning was cited by Participant A as a trigger for feelings of anger. The action of taking the planner, intended as a warning to the student to start doing the right thing, usually to refocus and show on-task behaviour, did not always have the desired response:

*“If I get a planner warning... I get really angry”* (150). He described how *“I don’t let them take my planner sometimes, [...] I just hold it”* (163). This response suggests feelings of anger, and that the student feels the warning is unjust or unnecessary. It could also indicate possessiveness over the planner and a sense that taking this personal possession is somehow invasive to the student.

Feelings of anger were attributed to the sense of injustice described in the previous sub-theme. Participant A described feeling *“much more madder”* (162) when he had received a planner warning for something which he did not perceive to be his fault.

Sometimes the anger was directed at others for specific incidents, *“Basically this guy call me puff and then I get angry”* (159, D) but sometimes the cause of the anger was not as concrete, *“I do get angry with some people, they just like annoy me”* (157, C).

The participants’ responses indicated that they do not have the skills needed to regulate their emotions and to manage their feelings of anger in a more effective or socially acceptable way.

When asked if he is able to control his anger, Participant D answered *“No. I just, I just get more angry”* (152, D). When describing anger felt towards another student, Participant C described how *“I just shout at him”* (158). Comments such as *“I couldn’t explain why I did it”* (165, B) indicate lack of control or understanding over emotional responses.

#### 4.3.8 Sub-theme 2c: Secondary behaviours and escalation

In the vicious cycle students become angry following perceived injustice and this leads to being sanctioned for secondary behaviours, in addition to the original breach of the rules. Participants related times that their anger had led to escalation through the sanction process, for example:

*“I just get angry and I straight away said what did I do, what did I do? And I kept answering back and I don’t do my work, and then she gives me on call and then I get really angry, so when I go back to my lessons I just keep getting detentions”* (169, A).

In this instance, the student’s anger dominated his response to perceived injustice leading to more severe sanctions. For two participants, sanctions for ‘answering back’ followed a warning for being off-task due to the student’s protestation:

*“Then I get angry so I answer back and then it just... on call or detention”* (167, A).

*“They say “You’re arguing back, you’re arguing back” They end up putting you on call”* (178, D).

This is indicative that the participants do not feel listened to; that their attempts to defend themselves against perceived injustice are not viewed as important or justified by the teacher, which is likely to lead to feelings of frustration and resentment on the part of the student. Participant C explained that *“If you want to speak you have to speak at the end of the lesson and I go speak to them at the end of the lesson and they still give me detention”*. (176). Participant A wanted to be able to *“...in your mind just try to not say nothing, just keep it more quiet and don’t say anything”* (172).

His comments also indicate feelings of things spiralling out of control:

*“Last year I got really angry so I just keep getting detentions, when I got one answering back detention, I just kept getting loads of detentions”* (168).

As described in the previous sub-theme, the physical act of the teacher taking away the planner was provocative and led to a defensive response from Participant A (holding on to the planner). It is likely this would be perceived by the teacher as defiant, therefore escalating the problem. Perhaps it is this point at which the cycle can be punctuated; instead of issuing a warning which is perceived as confrontational and accusatory, a reminder may be effective enough.

When asked why the warning does not serve to stop the offending behaviour, Participant B answered *"I'm weird, that's why"* (175) indicating recognition that his response is not typical of all students, particularly those who seem able to do the right thing and do not receive as many sanctions. For Participant A, a little bit of take-up time led to him being able to consider and regulate his response to the initial warning: *"Sometimes I give it, sometimes I don't. After like a minute I think about it and then I just give it to them"* (179). This suggests that rewording a request, acknowledging positive behaviour of others or pausing and allowing take up time before immediately responding to the unwanted behaviour may avoid the need for a sanction.

In 'Vicious cycle: Incidental context', illustrated in Figure 3, issuing sanctions for secondary behaviours reinforces the feedback loop, leading to further evidence for the students being perceived as 'always in trouble' and strengthening their reputations. This is useful for the participating school when considering how the cycle can be punctuated, therefore weakening the chain of events. Whilst a structured sanction pathway is useful because it avoids teachers making heat of the moment decisions, if adults make a point of avoiding issuing sanctions as far as possible, this could in turn lead to less reason to issue sanctions during future incidents. As Dix argues, it is when tolerance fades that sanctions increase (Dix, 2017), and this is what may happen when teachers become over-reliant on the sanction process.



### **4.3.9 Main theme 3: Supportive factors**

Although not as dominant in the data excerpts of the participants, there were references to supportive factors in school across the data set. These instances had led to exceptions; times when the anger, perceived injustice and escalation of behaviour had not been as evident and positivity had been experienced. This main theme is an over-arching heading for the three sub-themes illustrated below.

#### **4.3.10 Sub-theme 3a: Good relationships with adults**

Participant A talked about a lesson in which he did not get in trouble as much, and attributed this to the teacher considering his individual needs. The teacher had made the decision for the student to sit by themselves in the lesson to avoid being distracted by others. The participant interpreted this as the teacher being supportive, rather than as a punishment. He described how *“the teacher know I do good in my lesson, and if I sit with someone then I get distracted and I keep talking”* (180). This decision had been framed in a positive way by the teacher and it had been discussed with the student which is likely to have contributed to him respecting this decision. It had clearly made him feel good about himself and he talked about enjoying this lesson.

Involving pupils in decision making has been shown to lead to increased pupil motivation and engagement, and improved relationships between students and staff (Sellman, 2009). Sellman identifies that although teachers often feel uneasy about relinquishing control by empowering pupils, when pupils are given such opportunities they repay adults with trust (Sellman, 2009). The example provided by the participant in the current research involved a decision made at an individual level (the student was involved in deciding on seating arrangements in the classroom) rather than at a policy level. It may be that in the participating school, for individual students who find it difficult to adhere to school expectations, a lesson can be learnt from this experience. Other teachers may seek to engage students who appear to struggle to adhere to classroom expectations by

asking them what would help and support them in the classroom. This has the potential to lead to increased trust between student and teacher.

Within the data set, there were references to teachers that the participants trusted. Participant A talked about how he had told an adult in school about another student annoying him, *“I got angry and I was gonna have a fight with him but I told that teacher”* (181). By telling the teacher he felt that he had avoided getting into a fight and he felt pleased with himself for having done this. It was evident that the relationship he had with this adult had enabled him to talk to her rather than take matters in to his own hands.

Participant B recalled a time that he had been in trouble for an incident which was perceived as threatening to a member of staff. The student seemed regretful when talking about the incident and when asked about how the adults had responded in this instance he replied *“They were disappointed in me”* (183). This indicates that he recognised the harm that had been caused to others and the regret perhaps suggests that he did not want to fracture the relationship with the adult involved.

Participant B spoke of a relationship with an adult in school which seemed to have been important to him. Since his move to year eight he had not had as much involvement with this adult and his comments indicated that he missed this. He appealed to me during the interview to try to restore this relationship: *“And can you tell [name of teacher] that if I need... help with anything or something like that”* (182).

Participant C expressed appreciation of the way that the adults in school deal with more serious behaviour incidences: *“It’s good and like [...] they know like who’s done [...] summat bad, they find out quickly and everything”* (185).

#### 4.3.11 Sub-theme 3b: Intervention and support

Participant C described the best thing about school to be “*the interventions they put for you and everything*” (190) and “*...like if you’re bad they help you like with er, they bring people in like you [referring to me, the researcher] and like they give you interventions and things*” (191) (It is unfortunate that he interpreted this support as a response to being ‘bad’ although he did view the intervention itself positively).

The participants had been part of an intervention group which will be referred to as ‘Going for Goals’ to protect the anonymity of the school. This bespoke intervention had been developed by the VP in collaboration with the EPT at a ‘drop in’ consultation and was identified by the participants as having been useful in supporting them to adhere to school expectations and to receive fewer sanctions. Participant B spoke very fondly of this group, explaining that “*She [adult] put me in this Going for Goals, which helped me, and then I used to behave in my lessons and stuff*” (186).

However, he expressed regret at the group having come to an end:

“*But then it all changed in January after the holidays because then I started messing about and stuff. [...] I don’t know what happened to me*” (187). (When asked if he thought this was because of the group coming to an end, the participant replied “*Yeh*”).

This indicates a need for the intervention to be continued for longer or for support to be gradually removed. Consideration may be given as to whether the adult responsible for leading the intervention could maintain consistency by continuing to be available to the students once the intensity of the intervention has reduced. The adult leading the intervention was a member of the SLT and perhaps the intervention would be more sustainable if responsibility was delegated to pastoral staff. This may require adaptation of current staff structures, but preventative rather than reactive use of pastoral staff may prove to be more efficient in the long term.

Part of the 'Going for Goals' intervention was having a report card for teachers to record the student's engagement in each lesson. Whilst one participant referred to this as helpful, Participant B felt that being 'on report' had negative connotations and suggested *"tell her to do Going for Goals again but not with the reports"* (192); *"It just look bad on me that I have a report and stuff. Or [...] she could [...] write Going for Goals on it"* (193).

Participant C talked about a homework club he had attended in Year 7. He reportedly found this helpful and commented *"I want to still go to that [...] cause at home I keep on forgetting and sometimes I can't be bothered, where at school you can do it, 'cause you're at school"* (197; 198).

There was perhaps a perception from staff that after year seven students who had struggled were able to continue with less support. However, the responses of the participants suggested that once the support had stopped they reverted back to previous behaviours and increased sanctions. The students may not have been able to communicate this effectively, instead showing resentment to staff members who had been involved in the interventions once they had stopped.

When asked what would be helpful in trying to do the right thing at school, Participant C suggested 'time out' and told me *"Some of my friends have time out pass and like sometimes when you don't feel like you're okay in that lesson you can just go to... you just go to library or isolation for ten minutes"* (200).

As well as the structured interventions, Participant C referred to having a chance to talk when things had gone wrong and how this was sometimes helpful. He described how on the way to isolation following an incident *"...you get to talk about it"* (202) and whilst in isolation *"...you have to write a statement"* (204). He explained that staff *"...just want to know what happened"* (204) and when asked if it would be helpful to think about what they could have done differently the participant replied *"Yeh"*.

The participants' responses indicate that the interventions they had received in addition to or as an alternative to the existing BM framework had been helpful for them, and they made suggestions as to things that potentially could help them in the future. The participating school may consider whether existing practice can be extended or adapted to provide more long term support. They may also reflect on whether the processes in place within the current behaviour policy allow time for the student to reflect on incidents and to restore and repair relationships with those who were involved.

#### **4.3.12 Sub-theme 3c: Motivation and enjoyment**

When asked what they liked most about school participants replied *"We've got good lessons and everything"* (210, C) and *"The teachers, the way they teach us"* (209, D). Participant A talked about enjoyment of certain lessons for example *"science because you get to, like, do experiments"* (207, A) and *"history, it tells you about the past"* (209, A). Two of the participants expressed a sense of pride when they had done well in a subject and this had been reflected in their grades or scores on a test (211, D; 212, A). The participants identified these lessons, which they enjoyed and did well in, as lessons in which they were less likely to get in to trouble.

In contrast, Participant B who had previously referred to school and lessons as a "struggle", cited lessons being *"hard"* (215, B) as a reason for being distracted. He also expressed:

*"I don't like school because it just boring because... all they just have to do, first of all to me, in my opinion, it waste your time from your family for eight hours. All you have to do is sit in a chair for one hour, listen to a teacher, do work, there's no point in doing it"* (213).

Participant A was able to talk about the incentive of doing well at school and explained that *"If I get good grades I can get a good job"* (216). Participant B had also learnt messages about the importance of education:

*“The best thing about school is having an education because other people in the world don’t get an education. They don’t get to learn, that’s why, and plus you need a job in life. Because if you don’t get a job in life, when you grow up, [...] you’ll be poor and you’ll be homeless on the streets”* (217).

However, he referred again to his struggles with education, adding:

*“Miss but I can’t get an education because it’s just too hard, the work is too hard, GCSE’s are really hard, they’re really hard, and if I fail, I have to go college, redo them, and if I still fail I don’t know what I’m gonna do”* (218)

These experiences highlight the need for students to experience success, in order for them to gain increased confidence in their ability to achieve; leading to them feeling motivated and engaged in their learning.

## **Chapter 5 Discussion of Results**

### **5.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the findings from the current study are synthesised with the literature presented in Chapter 2, making connections with existing theory, explanation and knowledge. Due to the inductive nature of this study, further exploration of literature (in addition to that presented in Chapter 2) was sometimes necessary in direct response to themes which were identified during analysis.

To recap, the data analysis aimed to address the following research questions:

1. Why do some pupils struggle to adhere to the behavioural expectations of secondary school, within a highly structured BM system?
2. What can we learn from the experiences of pupils who persistently receive sanctions in a secondary school with a highly structured BM system?
3. How can pupils who struggle to adhere to expectations be supported to have a more positive experience of school?

### **5.2 What can we learn from the experiences of the young people in this study?**

Current government guidance on BM in schools advocates for consistent, prescriptive systems with clear expectations understood by all alongside the use of rewards and sanctions (DfE, 2016). My research has not focused on whether or not this approach works for the majority of pupils; this type of approach is adopted in many schools which report good standards of behaviour and academic results, for example, the schools which contributed to both Charlie Taylor's (DfE, 2011) and Tom Bennett's (DfE, 2017) research identifying common factors found in successful schools. The school participating in this research was graded by Ofsted as 'Outstanding' in all areas in 2017. The focus

of the current research has been on my perception that this approach does not appear to be successful for a *minority* of pupils. The literature review illuminated theory and research which supported this initial view with variance in the reasons attributed to this. The themes will now be discussed in relation to these perspectives.

### **5.2.1 Student knowledge and understanding of expectations and consequences**

The findings support Englehart's view that knowledge of the rules and expectations is not enough for some pupils (Englehart, 2012). Main Theme 1 describes the participants' limited understanding of the school's core values. With effort, the participants were able to name these but struggled to explain how to demonstrate them. This suggests that they have not yet developed the necessary social and behavioural skills to adhere to expectations, which affirms Englehart's view that some pupils need regular reminders of appropriate behaviour. The visual representations of the learning habits appeared to be useful to participants as they were able to recall the expected classroom behaviours which were illustrated by these. Englehart highlights that alongside reminders, support structures and additional intervention are sometimes necessary. The current research affirms this view, as despite the visual reminders being referred to as helpful, the participants continued to find it difficult to remain on task in class.

Despite their limited understanding, clear boundaries were cited by the participants as important. They referred to some kinds of 'strictness' in a positive way and understood the reasons for having rules and expectations in place. Similarly, the pupils in Swinson and Melling's research reported appreciation of teachers who take control of the class (Swinson & Melling, 1995).

The participants had all been identified as having moderate learning difficulties, and therefore it is possible that their language development and understanding of vocabulary is lower than average for students of the same age. Hopkins (2011) argues that just as teaching academic subjects is differentiated for pupils, teaching social skills and appropriate interactions should also be tailored to



the needs of students. The participants' limited understanding of how to demonstrate school expectations legitimises Hopkins' view and contributes to understanding why they struggled at times. It is important to consider whether students have had the appropriate skills modelled to them, and whether they have regular opportunities to demonstrate the values and be acknowledged for doing so. For some students, what they have learnt outside of school may conflict with what is acceptable in school, so they may need more intensive modelling and reinforcing of socially appropriate behaviour than other students (Englehart, 2012, Roffey, 2011). This could include simplifying the language, relating the values to the students' experiences and pointing out real-life, relatable examples.

The participants were selected because of their persistent involvement in the sanction pathway, and yet they were able to describe in detail what would happen if they did not adhere to the rules, as described in sub-theme 1a. In this respect knowledge of the sanctions did not act as a deterrent to doing the wrong thing. This is supportive of Greene's view that the threat of a sanction is not effective for the very pupils whose behaviour sanctions are intended to address (Green, 2008, in Oxley 2016). Maag, a professor of Special Education, argues that typically, more teacher attention is given to students for inappropriate behaviour, leading to the inadvertent effect of reinforcing the undesired behaviour (Maag, 2001). This view is consistent with the findings of the current study, in which participants recounted more experience of receiving sanctions than positive reinforcement, which implies that the sanctions are not working as if they were the frequency of them would decrease. In Swinson's study, described in Chapter 2, it was not the systematic sanction process which was attributed to the improvement in pupil behaviour; rather it was teachers' conscious, increased use of positive feedback (Swinson, 2010).

In the literature review, consistency was identified as an important factor of successful schools (DfE, 2017) but views on what this means differ. In the government review of behaviour in schools, consistency is described as a school's ethos, vision and strategies being consistent with one another,

and being consistently demonstrated and reinforced; exceptions should only occur in exceptional circumstances (DfE, 2017). In Swinson and Melling's study (1995) pupils reported that consistency was important to them as they wanted teacher responses to be predictable. This is also true of the participants in the current study. At times their frustration came from being confused by the teacher's response or the expectations being inconsistent across different teachers. However, for Emerson, rigid views on consistency and following a step of procedures risks failing to recognise and understand the nuances of each unique situation (Emerson, 2016). The findings of the current study suggest that lack of consideration for individual needs at times led to participants feeling unfairly treated, corroborating Emerson's view. The purpose of following a consistent, stepped approach is to be fair and yet the participating students did not always feel fairly treated. Whilst predictable teacher responses appeared to be important to the participants, these should be underpinned by kindness, understanding, and respect for individual needs, rather than following a rigid set of procedures.

### **5.2.2 Ability to control responses**

A system based on the use of rewards and sanctions assumes that people will be motivated by rewards and deterred by sanctions, and also that they have the ability to control their responses in order to receive or avoid a consequence. However, for the participants in this study this did not seem to be the case which affirms Skiba's view that children's responses are not predictable (Skiba, 2014). Reflecting Skiba's experience, the participants in the current study often reacted with anger when a warning or sanction was issued, rather than changing their behaviour for the better (sub-theme 2b). Skiba describes how the initial behaviour being reprimanded is exacerbated, leading to a more severe penalty (Skiba, 2014). Again, the current study upholds this view, as participants reported quick escalation through the sanction pathway (sub-theme 2c).

The responses of the participants' conflict with Canter's view that increased involvement in the sanction pathway is due to the sanction having become meaningless to the student (Canter, 2010). This may well be true for some young people. However, the current data analysis suggests that the participants felt frustration and anger when they received sanctions at each stage of the process, as opposed to lack of caring about the consequences. These findings are more closely aligned with the views of Emerson (2016) that some pupils fail to respond in the expected way to the threat of sanction and the promise of reward because they are less able to manage, regulate and control their emotions and behaviour. Emerson relates this particularly to pupils with SEND, which is endorsed by the current study in which all four participants were on the SEND register as they had been identified as having moderate learning difficulties.

None of the participants in this study had been identified as having SEMH needs (as indicated by the school's SEND register) and information was not sought during the research about home circumstances as this may have been perceived as intrusive. The participants did not during the interviews say anything which indicated that they had experienced adverse life events. In this respect, the results of the current study do not suggest that trauma and adverse early life experiences had led to the participants' lack of control over responses as has been identified for some young people (Perry and Szalavitz, 2017; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019; and Rose et al., 2016 ). However, the participants did refer to feelings of anger, frustration and lack of control over their responses when a warning or sanction was issued. There is perhaps a danger that school staff may assume that only those children and young people with identified SEMH needs require a different approach or reasonable adjustments to support them. The SEND Code of Practice states that there must be an individual, graduated response when behaviour may be a result of unmet needs (DfE & DoH, 2014). The participants' experiences suggest that perhaps it is more helpful to assume a position of respectful curiosity rather than confronting a young person with what may be perceived as hostility towards them (Taransaud, 2011). Emerson (2016) refers to being guided by

the principle that the young person is doing the best that they can in the particular circumstances at that time.

There are links to be made with Nash et al.'s study of teacher perceptions of behaviour. The study, described in Chapter 2, found that when teachers perceived pupils to be in control of their behaviour, they were more likely to issue a punishment (Nash et al., 2016). Although teacher perceptions were not explored in the current study, the responses of the pupils indicate that the teachers persevered with issuing sanctions when the young person attempted to express their frustration or explain their own version of events. This suggests that the views of some teachers in the participating school reflect the findings of Nash et al; that the student was making a conscious choice to do the wrong thing and was therefore deserving of a punishment.

### **5.2.3 Transition to secondary school**

The results of the current study support Roffey's view that whilst many students cope well in primary school, difficulties may become more apparent on transition to secondary school due to different expectations, the structure of the school day, the level of personal organisation required and the lack of security which is characteristic of primary schools. In addition, conflict between adolescents and adults is likely during a stage in adolescents' development when they are forming their own identity and do not like to be told what to do, therefore challenging authority more often (Roffey, 2011). Roffey suggests that by acknowledging this, focusing on the strengths of young people and supporting them rather than aiming for them to conform to rules can be a more rewarding experience for the adults that work with them.

Rice et al (2020) identified that transition from primary to secondary school is particularly difficult for a significant minority of pupils and can lead to lower grades, poor attendance and increased anxiety. The effects of a difficult transition can be long term, impacting on mental health and well-being, and attainment after the school years. They conducted a study (School Transition and

Adjustment Research Study (STARS) aiming to identify factors that contribute to successful transition to secondary school, whilst also highlighting factors that can increase the risk of difficulty. The study followed 2000 pupils in the UK through their transition, and sought the views of pupils, parents and teachers (primary and secondary) through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, during the summer term of year six and in the autumn and summer terms of year seven. A successful transition was linked to academic and behavioural engagement, and feeling a sense of belonging to school (Rice et al, 2020).

The above study found that there was no one group of children that were more vulnerable to a difficult transition. However, certain characteristics were found to be indicators of how transition was experienced, including self-control. It is possible that the participants in the current study had difficulties managing the higher expectations and more rigid BM systems of secondary school due to lack of self-control, resulting in increased involvement in disciplinary processes soon after transition.

### **5.3 How can pupils who struggle to adhere to expectations be supported in schools?**

The findings presented in Main Theme 3 and the related sub-themes (relationships, intervention, and motivation and enjoyment) are indicative of factors which the participants perceived as helpful in supporting them to have a more positive experience of school. These moments can be recognised as ‘exceptions’ which can lead practitioners to possible solution pathways. Noticing exceptions to a problem is a key principle of solution-oriented practice (Harker, Dean, & Monsen, 2017) and I am guided by this principle in considering the ways in which the participants in this research could be supported within current systems. It has remained important to me throughout this research that the findings lead to positive change, and I perceived that this was more likely if possible solutions were acceptable to the participating school. Drawing on existing practice is perhaps more achievable in

terms of realistic small steps of change, or is at least a good place to start before considering any more radical transformation.

### **5.3.1 Punctuating the vicious cycle and entering a virtuous cycle**

Considering exceptions to the problem, and drawing on existing practice, leads me back to discussion of Systemic Psychology in Chapter 2, in particular, the use of systems thinking (Watkins & Wagner, 2000). Watkins and Wagner advocate for looking for solutions in the environment to problems which appear to persist over time. By noticing repetitive patterns, practitioners may identify factors in systems which appear to exacerbate the problem. By recognising these, punctuation points in a negative cycle can be identified which have the potential to break the cycle and avoid the same problematic behaviours reoccurring. This was certainly acknowledged during the analysis of data in the current study as discussed in Main theme 2: Vicious cycle. The identification of a negative cycle referred to by the participants led to consideration of how supportive factors could have the potential to punctuate the cycle. This leads to discussion of Main theme 3: Supportive Factors, and the 3 related sub-themes.

### **5.3.2 Relationships**

As discussed in the literature review, Tucker (2013) identified the importance of pastoral support systems for vulnerable pupils, including those at risk of exclusion. For these pupils, having an adult available to talk to during the day was perceived as supportive in enabling them to manage the school day effectively. The responses of the participants in the current study indicate that trusting relationships with key adults are important to them. When it was perceived by one participant that a valued relationship was no longer available to him, he expressed disappointment. The importance of a key adult has been identified in work with children who have experienced trauma and have attachment difficulties (e.g. Bomber, 2007). Although the participants in this study had not been officially identified as having emotional needs, their responses indicate that the principles of a 'key

person' approach may be beneficial. Building a relationship with an adult who is able to invest time and effort into getting to know the young person, and having systems in place which allow them to be available could potentially enable the student to feel more settled in school.

The participants in the current study expressed a desire to rebuild relationships with staff when these had been fractured. Studies in to restorative practice, discussed in the literature review, identify the difficulty of aligning the seemingly contrasting approaches of restorative practice and 'positive discipline' (a term used to describe the type of approach adopted by the participating school) (McCluskey et al., 2008). I knew from my discussions with the VP (Appendix U) that any change implemented as a result of the research would need to be aligned with the overall ethos of the MAT and therefore I did not view it as realistic to envisage that the school would replace current systems with an entirely new approach. As the school is already perceived as successful in terms of managing behaviour and academic achievement (as recognised by latest Ofsted rating and most recent academic results) there was not an incentive on the part of the SLT of the school to overhaul existing structures for the sake of a minority group of pupils. Any acceptable change would need to work within and alongside existing systems.

Vaandering (2014) and Blood and Thorsborne (2005) identify the limitations of implementing restorative approaches within systems where the overall aim is conformity to rules, rather than fostering quality relationships. I acknowledge that this is an issue faced in the current study and wonder if recommending restorative conversations following incidents of conflict may be perceived as paying 'lip-service' to a truly restorative approach. On the other hand, I view it as possible that introducing restorative conversations between adults and students can lead to more positive experiences. If the aim of such conversations is to repair and restore harm done, and help the student and adult to consider what could have been done differently this may lead to increased feelings of respect and trust for all involved.

### 5.3.3 Support and intervention

Various research and theory discussed in the literature review identifies the importance of acknowledging the individual needs of pupils. The results of the current study affirm those of Tucker (2013) in which pupils expressed through interviews that having different options available to them, rather than a systematic following of procedure, was important in contributing to a positive experience of school. As identified in sub-theme 3b, the participants in the current study referred positively to the additional support that had been in place for them.

Others agree that whatever the type of approach implemented in a school, this should be integrated with an individual response (Emerson, 2014, Nash et al. 2016, Roffey 2011). Although Canter's Assertive Discipline (Canter, 2010) very much endorses a prescriptive, consistent, systematic approach to managing behaviour, he too acknowledges that for some pupils the wider system will not be effective. Canter describes a personalised approach for pupils whose behaviour continues to challenge, including an individual behaviour plan, focusing on key behaviours to improve and identification of pupil specific motivating incentives. Swann et al. (2012) studied a school with a very different approach to Canter, or to the types of prescriptive approaches which are the focus of this study. In the case study referred to, the focus was on fostering positive relationships, and yet the researchers and staff at the school acknowledged that even within what could be considered a more nurturing atmosphere, some pupils required something which went above and beyond the normal response.

An individual approach alongside a whole school behaviour policy is not new or radical; it is what is advised in government policy (DfE, 2018). It may be that school staff are confused as to how to address individual needs within a system intended to be consistent for all. When is it appropriate to exercise flexibility or bending of the rules? It would be useful in future research to explore the views of school staff in relation to this. This could contribute to understanding how approaches to



BM can be supportive for teachers who experience the nuances of the classroom and student behaviour in day to day practice.

#### **5.3.4 Motivation and enjoyment**

The responses of participants reflect the findings of Swinson (2010) in which pupils reported that the most effective way for teachers to manage classroom behaviour was through making lessons interesting and informative.

In the current study, the cause and effect is not clear: do the participants enjoy lessons more because they are interested and engaged, and therefore get in to trouble less; or do the teachers of these lessons avoid giving out sanctions through fostering other positive BM strategies, and therefore students enjoy the lessons and feel more motivated and engaged? Whichever is true, the overall impact is that students break out of the vicious cycle in these particular lessons and enter a virtuous cycle in which they, and the teacher, do not have the overriding expectation that they will do the wrong thing.

Theories of motivation identify achievement as a motivating factor, which is corroborated by the current study in which participants talked with enthusiasm about lessons in which their achievements had been recognised. Maslow's hierarchy of needs describes how, after physiological needs, safety and security and love and belonging, people require self-esteem, which is attained partly through achievement, in order to feel motivated to strive for more (Maslow, 1943). Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory identifies 'competence', along with autonomy and relatedness, as one of three innate psychological needs, which when met lead to enhanced self-motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The participants in this study identified lessons in which they had experienced success as enjoyable. They also got in to trouble less in these lessons. On the other hand, lessons which participants found difficult were described as boring and pointless. Therefore, it is important for the participating school to consider how students are able to experience success and should optimise

opportunities to make this possible, particularly for students for whom lessons can be a struggle. As well as ensuring work is appropriately pitched and differentiated, it is also important to identify the students' strengths which may not be in the typically recognised academic subjects.

## Chapter 6 Further Discussion: The Action Research Process

### 6.1 Planning future action with the participating school

Following analysis of data, a summary of findings was shared with the VP of the participating school (Appendix U). My conversations with the VP prior to this had indicated that she would be happy for me to make recommendations as a result of my analysis of data to act as a starting point for collaborative action planning. I developed the document ‘Levels of Pupil Engagement’ (Appendix V) in response to the analysis and this was shared with the VP<sup>4</sup>. It was suggested that this document could be developed with school staff to be used alongside the school’s existing behaviour policy in an endeavour to ensure steps at each stage would be taken to engage *all* pupils. Potential areas for development were identified in collaboration with the VP, before considering which members of the school community this would involve. This meeting began with a recap of the shared concern which had led to the development of this research project, the research questions and the overall aim of the study. Prior to this meeting, the VP had shared initial findings with the SLT of the school and areas of potential focus had been discussed. These were explored and developed further during the action planning meeting. Action provisionally agreed (prior to being presented to the SLT) focused on the following areas:

- Developing positive relationships between students and staff
- Developing staff use of non-confrontational language
- Developing staff understanding of moderate learning difficulties and the impact of this on adherence to expectations/ control over responses
- Transition from primary school and early identification of vulnerable students
- Decreasing accumulative detentions and using the time spent in detention in a productive way.

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<sup>4</sup> The action planning stage was compromised due to social distancing regulations in place as a national response to Covid-19 pandemic at the time of research. Action planning continued remotely via video conferencing and email correspondence. However, altered SLT priorities had implications in terms of devoting staff time to this project.

- Supporting students to reintegrate in to school following exclusion.

During the meeting, each point was discussed and initial ideas were generated as to how these would be related in to practice. In addition, it was agreed that the document ‘Levels of Pupil Engagement’ would be further developed in collaboration with the SLT, school SENDCo and the SEMH Champion (a new role recently introduced). These actions were recorded in a table, along with the aim of the action, who it would involve, how impact would be measured and time frames of implementation and evaluation (Appendix W).

Letters were sent to each participant to inform them of the main findings of the study and to give them an indication as to how their views would be used by school staff to inform future action (Appendix X).<sup>5</sup>

Following the action planning meeting, post-interview questions were sent to the VP to gain further insights in to the success of the research and to gather her views as to how the findings of the research and tools developed as a result may be used for future development (Appendix Y). As Burden (1978) reflects, school change projects have the potential to lose momentum once the main study has ended. By asking the VP to reflect on her experience, I hoped to stimulate further interest and motivation to develop progress gained. I did not perceive this to be the end of my involvement, although in order to complete doctoral studies I was not able to include any further developments in this thesis. The nature of AR is ongoing and cyclical, and there had been an understanding from the start of the project that school staff and other members of the school community would continue implementation of action, evaluation and adaptations. I hope that there will be further developments as a result of this work. A project entitled ‘Nurturing Secondary Schools’ is planned within the EPT in which I am an employee for the next academic year. I hope that the results of this study will be

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<sup>5</sup> It was not possible to meet participants face to face at this time due to social distancing as a result of COVID-19 pandemic and I did not want to wait indefinitely for a time that this would be possible.

useful in the development of this project and that it may include collaboration with the participating school.

## **6.2 Evaluation of the action research process**

AR has been defined as the discussion of problems; active participation from those who will be involved in the implementation of action; and monitoring of the consequences (Lewin, 1946 in Adleman, 1993). In this respect, the current research project has gone some way to achieving these aims. Due to the time frame of the research, implementation, monitoring and evaluation will be ongoing.

This project focused on the initial stages of AR: information gathering, interpretation and analysis of findings, reflection, and collaborative planning (based on Kagan et al.'s definition, 2008). In this project, I was an external researcher, attempting to engage the school in a collaborative study. At times this felt difficult, as the VP, my main link with the school, was happy to leave to me to 'do my research' due to her own competing duties in a demanding role. I ensured that we were able to meet several times to share progress in order that her involvement was ongoing but I wondered on occasions whether she was fully invested in the project, or perhaps felt anxious about the potential outcomes. By the end of the project and our final action planning meeting, I was reassured that the overall aims of the project continued to be important to her and the action planned reflected this.

In addition, it was important from the beginning of the research that the head teacher was supportive of the project aims in order for the findings to lead to meaningful change. Burden (1978) highlights the importance of those who will be responsible for implementing change being involved in the processes leading to it. The VP assured me that the SLT were on board with the research. However, I was unable to meet with the head teacher or wider SLT during the project and I attributed this to the hierarchical structure of the staff team and how tasks were delegated. The VP was responsible for the pastoral support of year eight pupils and therefore it was not perceived by

wider SLT that their direct involvement was necessary. Whilst the current research project did not involve the whole SLT, my link with the school was a member of this team and acted as a representative for them. Burden (1978) warns that misunderstandings can occur when one member of a team is responsible for communicating plans to a higher status consumer, e.g. a head teacher, which was the case in the current study. It was frustrating to not be directly involved in the conversations which happened between the VP and the SLT regarding action planned, but this scenario was a compromise which I felt I had no choice but to adhere to in order to maintain a relationship with the school.

At times during the project it felt that potential change was compromised by the overarching values and ethos of the MAT. However, this was balanced with being given the opportunity to work with a school which employed the type of behaviour policy central to this research. The SLT of the participating school were open to my research design which involved eliciting pupil views, despite the potential of this to reveal perspectives which could be critical of the systems and structures in place. I felt privileged to be able to interview young people who, in normal circumstances, may not have been given an outlet for their views. So, although change as a result of this research may not be described as radical, the study illuminated issues which in future may be given more consideration by school staff than they otherwise would have been. As Burden points out, “...without revolution, change is inevitably slow process that is best brought about by negotiation” (Burden, 1978, p. 113).

Zuber-Skerrit and Fletcher (2007) describe AR as a process in which participants are increasingly involved in posing questions, gathering data, and collaborative action planning. In the current research, the problem had been identified by the staff participant and the researcher, rather than the student participants. I acknowledge that the problem had not been brought to the forefront by the minority group who I perceived to be affected by the problem; however, I do not feel that this is contradictory to the principles of AR as my aim was to empower the voices of the students. Lewin

(1946, in Adleman, 1993) describes AR as being concerned with raising the self-esteem of minority groups to help them move towards equality and I perceive that this was a major element of this research. I regarded the students to be open and enthusiastic participants, keen to share their views with me.

AR aims to encourage reflection from the participants (Bradbury & Reason, 2001). The VP had been interested in hearing student voice from the start, which was why she had been an advocate for my research being carried out in the school. Over the course of the project she reported that the process was useful in reflecting on what was considered important to the school and students. Change had already begun prior to my involvement, which the VP shared with me during our ongoing conversations (Appendix T); e.g. the school had made a decision to invest in improving the quality of provision for vulnerable students within the school rather than moving students to other schools in the MAT, which had previously been a strategy for managing students as they moved further up the sanction pathway towards exclusion. However, the VP fed back to me that the research process had been useful in refining action planned and documenting this in a systematic way. She also reported that involvement in the project had been valuable in gaining student voice to give backing to change which she had previously perceived as important, such as encouraging a more nurturing response from staff members and understanding the importance of individual needs. She felt that staff would be more willing to engage in continued professional development which had been led by student voice than they would have been if they perceived that decisions were made by SLT in isolation.

Despite my concerns at times that the research project was not prioritised by the VP, on reflection I acknowledge that she was in fact a main agent of change, not just in the progress made through this study, but in terms of the shifting values of the school in general. Whilst the VP remained professional at all times and supported the overall culture and values of the MAT, she had also challenged the severity of sanctions (such as two hour long detentions) and had initiated

conversations with SLT around the problematic nature of exclusion; she had expressed concern that during fixed-term exclusions some pupils were at risk of engaging in anti-social activity during their time away from school which could pose a threat to their successful reintegration. The fact that she challenged main assumptions of a behaviourist approach to BM (i.e. that continued disruptive behaviour should be responded to with increasingly severe consequences in order to deter this behaviour) led me to understand that she valued inclusion of *all* pupils and recognised the problematic nature of an approach which did not appear to be working for a particular group of pupils. From my initial conversations with the VP at the start of the project I perceived that her personal values reflected the main aims of the research (driven by my own personal values) linked to social justice, inclusion and empowering minority voices. This was a fundamental factor in enabling me to carry out the research in the school albeit with some compromises, particularly not being able to involve a wider group of staff in the project.

The aim of the research had been to lead to positive change for students who struggled to adhere to school expectations and who experienced a high number of sanctions. The action planned (Appendix W) aims to ensure a more positive experience for all students at different stages, including staff development, transition from primary school and additional support for students. Bradbury and Reason (2001) highlight that change as a result of AR is intended to be achieved over time with enduring consequence. This research project has led to developments towards such lasting change which I perceive as successful.

#### **6.4 Original contribution**

Understanding how students can be supported within highly structured systems of BM is of central importance as more schools are adopting prescriptive, structured processes in response to government guidance and in an attempt to improve school behaviour. As school exclusions continue to rise according to official statistics, it is increasingly important to understand how exclusion can



be avoided. Despite this, little is known currently about pupil experiences of such rigorous systems. Whilst research has been conducted to gather pupil views about the use of rewards and sanctions, this is not necessarily in schools with highly prescriptive and structured BM policies. Research to date has focused on the views of all pupils, rather than on a minority group. Whilst many have theorised about why some pupils seem to be disadvantaged by BM systems, there has not been empirical research that I am aware of which focuses on the perspectives of students who persistently receive sanctions. In this respect, the current research makes a distinctive contribution to this field of knowledge.

The current study alerts practitioners to the possibility that there are various reasons why a young person may display challenging behaviour; these may not always have been identified by school monitoring arrangements. The participants in this study were not known to have experienced trauma or adverse life experiences and did not have identified SEMH needs, yet their experiences indicated that behaviour which may have been perceived by staff as defiant or disruptive was not always a conscious choice on the part of the student.

## **6.5 Implications for EP practice**

The current research highlights ways in which EPs can work with school staff to facilitate organisational change. Although this project was initiated as part of doctoral research, the principles can be applied to the EP role in day-to-day practice. When a concern is brought by a member of school staff to the EP, the piece of work may begin with eliciting the values of those involved, establishing why the concern is a problem and what would have to happen for it to be less of a problem. If time is spent at the start of EP's work with school staff gaining understanding as to what it is the school hope to gain through EP involvement, it is more likely that the work will lead to agreeable outcomes for those who have brought the concern.

School staff may look to EPs for solutions, and perceive them as being in an ‘expert’ position to recommend intervention. However, if this is the case I perceive it as important for the EP to redefine their role with school staff, by placing the emphasis on working collaboratively; utilising the expertise of all those who have knowledge of the situation as a result of being directly involved with it, for example senior leaders, SENDCos, teachers and support staff. By doing this, school staff are likely to experience ownership over changes and will be invested in ensuring their ongoing implementation.

EPs are in a position to challenge dominant discourses and in fact this is necessary if the EP perceives that practice or views are detrimental to children and young people. For example, pupils may be sanctioned because they are seen as making a choice to disrupt the class. By reframing people’s perspectives and introducing them to alternatives, (e.g. the child is not making a choice to behave in the wrong way as they do not have the skills to regulate their responses) positive change may be brought about as the perspective holder responds differently to the situation. In this respect, the EP is not telling the practitioner that they are doing something wrong and criticising their practice, but are helping them to understand the situation differently. By approaching EP work with schools in a respectful rather than critical manner, school staff may be more accepting of change as a result of EP involvement.

The current study also has implications for EPs being involved in supporting schools to utilise pupil voice as a vehicle for positive change. The perspectives of children and young people can be advantageous in supporting and justifying change, as the current research demonstrates. The EP may support schools in deciding on appropriate methods of data collection which can be used by school staff, therefore utilising the role of school staff who have already formed trusting relationships with pupils.

## **6.6 Implications for future research**

It is envisaged that the participating school will continue to develop and reflect upon their approach to BM, with a view to ensure that no pupils are disadvantaged by school systems. The school have expressed that they plan to explore the perspectives of others in the school community, e.g. teachers, other pupils, support staff and parents, on the success of the BM system. As previously mentioned, there is potential for me to continue to be involved in exploration and developments in this area through project work within the EPT. I have also been invited to contribute to the DECP position paper on zero tolerance behaviour policies due to the topic of my research. This work is currently in development.

When carrying out this research, I focused on the views of a minority group of pupils. This led me to think about teachers' values and whether these were compromised by or reflected in the school's BM processes. I wondered whether they felt supported or restricted by having prescribed steps to follow. As more schools become part of academy trusts, this may impact on the autonomy that teachers experience in their professional practice, as cultures, values and policy are consistent across several schools. Although beyond the scope of this study, this would be a valuable area for future research, particularly in relation to managing pupil behaviour. As the SEND Code of Practice (2014) states, reasonable adjustments must be made for pupils with SEND and government guidance advocates for sensitivity to individual pupils' needs, alongside clear, consistent systems of rules, rewards and sanctions. It would be useful to find out how plausible this feels to teachers in practice, and how easy it is to draw the line between those pupils with identified SEND and those without.

## **6.7 Limitations**

The current research focused on the views of four student participants within one school, therefore the results are specific to this unique context and these students; results are not generalisable to the

wider population. The decision was made that in-depth, semi-structured interviews with a small group of pupils would gain deeper insights than would be possible with a larger group of participants. Zuber-Skerrit and Fletcher (2007) identify a feature of the quality of AR being ‘authenticity’, exploring the views of a small group of knowledgeable and motivated participants, as opposed to aiming for validity and reliability through neutrality and objectivity. Although not generalisable, I perceive that the results are transferable and provide other schools and contexts with a starting point for how their own systems may be developed. The insights gained and changes made as a result of the research may also be helpful for supporting other students within the participating school. The findings offer possible solutions to schools who find that their BM system does not appear to work for all, without suggesting that radical overhaul of systems is the answer. By working with a school which employs a rigorous, systematic approach to BM I have attempted to demonstrate avenues of exploration which are acceptable and realistic for schools to consider. It is my view that small steps of change are preferable to recommendations being perceived as too drastic to be implemented. Taking this approach was particularly pertinent in a school which is part of a MAT as potential change is restricted by overarching policies.

## **6.8 Conclusion**

In this research I have explored possible reasons why some pupils persistently receive sanctions and appear to struggle to adhere to the expectations within secondary school BM systems. By learning from first-hand accounts, I have aimed to contribute to our understanding of how pupils can be supported within highly structured systems of BM. The findings support theory that some pupils are disadvantaged by systems which focus on prescriptive rewards and sanctions, as pupil responses to such systems are not predictable. The research highlights the importance of looking at how systems may have a detrimental effect on pupil experience, as opposed to focusing on problems within the child. The findings illuminated the students’ perceptions of being trapped in a vicious cycle, in which reputation was gained early in their secondary education, leading to perceived injustice and

unfair treatment, which exacerbated responses to being sanctioned for wrongdoing. By identifying supportive factors school staff can aim to increase the occurrence of these, therefore punctuating the vicious cycle and enabling students to enter a virtuous cycle.

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## Appendices

**Appendix A: Behaviour policy comparison table.**

<i>Theme</i>	1	2	3	4- Contrasting policy.
<i>Title</i>	Positive Behaviour	Positive Discipline	Positive Behaviour	-Relationships Policy
<i>Philosophy</i>	Behaviourist	Behaviourist	Behaviourist	-Restorative -Promotes relationships
<i>System/ Structure</i>	Clear expectations Clearly established procedures	Recognised framework Agreed framework Operate within a framework	Framework BM infrastructure	clear systems and structures to support staff in knowing their students well
<i>Rules/ Clarity</i>	5 Classroom PRIDE rules (Purpose, Respect, Integrity, Determination, Excellence) ... rules that we expect all members of the academy to follow ...very clear classroom rules	Classroom rules 'Around the Academy' rules	Classroom rules 'Around the Academy' rules	High expectations. Core values rather than exhaustive list of dos and don'ts.
<i>Consistency</i>	All staff are consistent	Consistent commitment from all staff	Apply the policy fairly and consistently Apply sanctions ... consistently	A consistent approach- including across neighbouring primary schools
<i>Fairness</i>	... fair to the students		Apply sanctions ... fairly	All staff ensure policy is applied fairly
<i>Reward</i>	Positive reinforcement procedures Praise Reward Honorific prizes Verbal recognition	Praise, recognition and rewards Credits	Effective rewards system	Celebrate achievements in school and the wider community.
<i>Sanctions</i>	Appropriate consequences Sanctions	Sanctions Consequences	Sanctions Verbal reminder	Restorative chat Impromptu conference

	Verbal warning Detention Internal exclusion External exclusion  Use of student planner	Verbal warning Negative comment Movement Isolation Fixed term/ permanent exclusion  Use of student planner	Formal warning Formal sanction Departmental removal system Seclusion Internal exclusion Fixed term exclusion Disciplinary panel Permanent exclusion	Circle or classroom conference Formal restorative meeting Formal conference or parenting conference The Support Centre – ‘Time-out’ for serious incidents  All staff trained in restorative approach.  Advocates against punitive responses.
<b>Steps to follow</b>	P1- P5	Phases Worked through in a logical manner	Numbered steps	Continuum of responses
<b>Silence</b>	Stand in silence at the end of a lesson	Showing respect through standing in silence at the end of the lesson		
<b>Negative behaviour</b>	Unacceptable behaviour Misbehaviour	Misdemeanour Misbehaviour Performances deemed to be unsatisfactory	Failure to abide by the Expectations	When Things Go Wrong
<b>Student responsibility</b>	... accepting responsibility for their own actions ... when a student chooses to break a rule ... opportunity to choose to make the right decisions	Student self-monitoring Opportunity for students to reflect upon their own performance	Sense of self-discipline Acceptance of responsibility for their own actions	With rights comes responsibility. Taking responsibility for our actions. Taking responsibility for themselves and caring for others. Taking responsibility for putting things right.
<b>Aims linking to the environment</b>	Ordered environment	A better environment	A calm, positive environment	Make a large school personal. Well-structured and calm start to the day Sense of group cohesion Maintain correct climate

				for learning.
<b><i>Non-negotiable</i></b>	... follow instructions first time, every time	Identified sanction not open to negotiation or debate Do as you are told by staff, first time, every time	Respond instantly to staff instructions; first time every time	No mention.
<b><i>Flexibility</i></b>	<i>Does not describe flexibility but 'additional support'; Behavioural Support Plan, Pastoral Support Plans put in place for pupils who do 'do not respond to all other interventions.</i>	...individual sense. Key area of flexibility Neither Draconian nor rigid. Consistency and flexibility should operate in a harmonious and complementary manner.	Tailors provision for individual students carefully	Know students well. Identify possible conflict. Have contingency plans in place. Appropriate and relevant information on students' backgrounds shared.
<b><i>Expectations of staff</i></b>	To consistently follow the policy.	Staff who 'opt out'... prepared to face the consequences...admonishment from senior member of staff	To apply policy fairly and consistently and contribute to its monitoring and evaluation.	To promote high quality relationships. To re-build relationships.
<b><i>High expectations of the system</i></b>	The great majority of the students go about their everyday activities without breaking the rules.	...must not be allowed to fail	Recognise and actively follow positive discipline.	To understand and practice restorative skills and approaches



## **Appendix B: Action previously implemented as described by VP.**

### **Conversation with Vice Principal of participating school 09/09/19**

*What has been in place so far to support these pupils?*

Discussion at EP drop-in consultation regarding this group of pupils, led to bespoke intervention planned with Senior EP, including the following:

- Personalised learner passport with targets constructed with the YP and carried around school.
- Focus on positive, rewarding all positive behaviour.
- 'Going for Goals'
  - Meeting twice daily with VP
  - Tracker around office wall with regular challenges to achieve
  - Led to weekly reward
- Equipment checker – visual cues stuck on inside of locker and checked daily with VP.
- Homework club one day after school (this was compulsory for a limited period of time; one student still comes out of choice)
- Use of SEMH resources to support learning skills, e.g. being organised.
- Weekly feedback to parents and meetings with parents twice each cycle.
- 12 weeks intensive support involving parent; support gradually reduced with transferring of relationship from VP to other staff.
- 1 hour weekly group session
- 10 mins per week with SEMH Champion (staff member responsible for behaviour support).

Support has gradually reduced to 10 mins per week with VP.

Number of sanctions fell whilst support was in place but have increased since gradual withdrawal of support. Level of support not sustainable over time. Looking for more systemic, manageable processes.

Pastoral support available:

- School counsellor
- Social worker
- Vice principal

## Appendix C: Table of dates of involvement and activity

Date	Activity
May 2019	Email contact with potential schools
3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2019	Initial meeting with VP: research explained, information sheets provided and consent sought as staff participant
June to July 2019	Consent sought from parents of potential participants
9 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	Meeting with VP and school link EP re previous intervention, planning research and who may be involved in collaborative planning stage
20 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	Meeting individually with students to explain research, provide information sheets and gain consent.
14 <sup>th</sup> October 2019	Pilot interview with student participant Meeting with VP: tour of school
18 <sup>th</sup> November 2019	Student interview 2 Student interview 3 Meeting with VP- ongoing conversations and reflections
20 <sup>th</sup> November 2019	Student interview 4
20 <sup>th</sup> January 2020	Meeting with VP- ongoing conversations and reflections
December 2019 to March 2020	Transcription and analysis of data
15 <sup>th</sup> May 2020	Action planning meeting with VP (remotely via video call)

## **Appendix D: Information sheet for participating school.**

**3<sup>rd</sup> June 2019**

### **Research Title: Secondary school pupils' experiences of behaviour management.**

Your school is being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide whether or not this is appropriate for your school, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not this is appropriate for your school. Thank you for reading this.

#### **What is the purpose of the research?**

My name is Elisabeth Sheppard and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist currently working for the Educational Psychology Service in the Local Authority, whilst completing doctoral studies at Sheffield University.

My research aims to explore the views of students who remain on the sanction pathway in schools which have adopted a clear, consistent behaviour policy based on specified expectations of behaviour, and a stepped response of sanctions and rewards.

#### **Why has the school been approached?**

Your school has been invited to participate as you have expressed concern about a group of pupils who struggle to adhere to the school's behaviour expectations, and you are interested in exploring ways that these pupils could be supported. It is up to you, along with other relevant members of school staff (e.g. SENDCo, Senior Leadership Team) to decide whether or not this is appropriate for your school.

#### **What will be involved?**

With your support I am hoping to interview 4-6 pupils who have been identified as cause for concern, to elicit detailed descriptions of their time in school; what helps them and what hinders them to conform to school rules and to respond positively to praise and reward. I would like to identify, through their experiences, ways the school can support them effectively and improve outcomes for them. Interviews would take place on school grounds at an agreed time, and would last about an hour and a half. Your support will be required in recruitment of participants, correspondence with parents and organisation of time and space.

I propose that once data has been gathered and analysed, I will disseminate the results to a group of school staff, including members of the Senior Leadership Team, in the form of an executive summary. The analysis will look at common themes between the participants. Through discussion I aim to identify practice which could be incorporated into the school's behaviour management system. This would be through a problem solving method known as 'gap analysis' in which we explore together where the school is now in terms of managing the needs of these pupils and where you would like to be. We will then look at factors which can be put in place to achieve the goal, and factors which impede reaching the goal, before agreeing on realistic aims and actions.

Consent will be sought from staff to take part in the discussion/ action planning part of the research. These members of staff will also be provided with this information sheet. Staff may withdraw their

consent at any time up to and during the action planning stage. They will not have to give a reason and there will be no negative consequences.

Parents and pupils will have been informed of my research intentions before agreeing to take part, and pupils will have consented to analysis of the data being shared with you.

**What are the potential risks and benefits of taking part?**

I do not envisage any potential risks to the school and staff taking part in the research.

My aim is that the information provided by students will lead to positive change for the school and students, adapting current systems to support all.

Many thanks for taking the time to read this. All participating staff will receive an information sheet and consent form to sign, which they may keep a copy of.

Kind regards,

Elisabeth Sheppard (Trainee Educational Psychologist).

*The following pages include information which ensures that my research is GDPR compliant. Student participants and their parents will also receive this information.*

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

All the information that I collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential and will only be accessible to me. You will not be able to be identified in any reports or publications unless you have given your explicit consent for this. If you agree to me sharing the information you provide with other researchers (e.g. by making it available in a data archive) then your personal details will not be included unless you explicitly request this.

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

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

### **What will happen to the data collected, and the results of the research project?**

Student interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. Audio recordings will be deleted after transcription. Only I (the main researcher) will listen to the recordings. In transcriptions pseudonyms will be used instead of names of students and members of staff. A generic term will be used rather than the real name of the school.

Data will be stored securely for the duration of the research project. All data will be destroyed immediately after completion of the project. All identifiable personal data (e.g. your consent form) will be destroyed as soon as possible once it is clear that this will not affect the research purpose.

The results from the research will be the basis of my university thesis (a written report). This will not contain the names of any pupils or the school.

### **Who is organising and funding the research?**

I am planning and conducting the research myself under the guidance of the University of Sheffield. There is no funding attached to this research project.

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

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

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

This project has been ethically approved via the University of Sheffield's Ethics Review Procedure, as administered by the Education department.

### **What if something goes wrong and I wish to complain about the research?**

Participants should contact me if they wish to complain about any aspect of the research, including their treatment during the research or something that happened as a result of participation. Student participants may wish to inform a member of staff or their parents who should contact me.

If participants feel that their complaint has not been handled to their satisfaction then they should contact Anthony Williams, Programme Director, Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology, who will then escalate the complaint through the appropriate channels.

Tel: 0114 222 8119

[anthony.williams@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:anthony.williams@sheffield.ac.uk)

If the complaint relates to how the participants' personal data has been handled, information about how to raise a complaint can be found in the University's Privacy Notice:

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general>.

### **Contact for further information**

Main researcher: Elisabeth Sheppard

Tel: 01274 439707

[ELSheppard2@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:ELSheppard2@sheffield.ac.uk)

Research Supervisor: Victoria Lewis

Tel: 0114 222 8129

[v.lewis@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:v.lewis@sheffield.ac.uk)

### **Suggested script for use when contacting parents of potential participants:**

*"A Trainee Educational psychologist has offered us an exciting opportunity to take part in a research project. The research aims to explore the school's behaviour policy and look at ways that it can be adapted to support all pupils. The research involves interviewing pupils. If this is something that you and your child would be interested in, with your permission the trainee will contact you via telephone to give you more details, or I can arrange for you to meet with them at school."*

## **Appendix E: Participant information sheet- parents**

6<sup>th</sup> June 2019

### **Research Title: Secondary school pupils' experiences of behaviour management.**

Your child is being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide whether or not you would like them to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

#### **What is the purpose of the research?**

My name is Elisabeth Sheppard and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist currently working for the Educational Psychology Service in the Local Authority, whilst completing doctoral studies at Sheffield University.

I have proposed research for my doctorate thesis, which explores the views of pupils who remain on the sanction pathway in schools which have adopted a clear, consistent behaviour policy based on specified expectations of behaviour, and a stepped response of sanctions and rewards.

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

School staff have identified that your child sometimes struggles to adhere to school expectations of behaviour, and their views are considered valuable in developing ways that the school behaviour policy can be adapted to meet the needs of all pupils.

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

Participation in this study is totally voluntary and your child is under no obligation to take part. If you agree to their participation, your child will then be given information about the research and will be asked if they would like to take part. They may withdraw from the research at any time prior to or during the interview, without giving a reason and without any negative consequences. They may also decide after the interview that they do not wish for their data to be included, in which case they should inform me within one week of the interview taking place.

#### **What will happen if my child takes part?**

If you and your child agree to take part, they will take part in an individual interview with me on school premises. This will last about an hour and a half in total.

After I've carried out all the interviews, I'll share the results with the school SENDCo and members of the senior leadership team, so that they can think about ways to support pupils. I'll only share general themes, rather than information from individual interviews and I won't use names. The intention is that the information gathered will only be used in positive ways. The only time I will share something that an individual has told me, is if they say something which makes me think they might be unsafe. In this instance, I would follow the schools safeguarding procedures.

The results from the research will be the basis of my university thesis (a written report). This will not contain the names of any pupils, staff or the school. If you would like to find out about the outcomes of the study please ask me and it will be arranged.

**What are the potential risks and benefits of taking part?**

I am experienced in working with young people in my day to day work, and do not envisage that the interviews will cause any discomfort. However, I will be alert to any feelings of distress and will respond in a reassuring way, pausing or stopping the interview if I perceive it to be necessary. Participants will be able to pause or stop the interview at any time and I will make this clear to them. Participants will be able to access the school's pastoral support system following the interview if they wish.

My aim is that the information gathered will be used to make positive changes to the school's behaviour management system, to benefit your child and other students.

Many thanks for taking the time to read this. You can keep this information sheet and a signed consent form.

Kind regards,

Elisabeth Sheppard (Trainee Educational Psychologist).

*The following pages include information which ensures that my research is GDPR compliant.*



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

All the information that collected about your child during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential and will only be accessible to me. Your child will not be able to be identified in any reports or publications unless they have given explicit consent for this. If you/ your child agrees to me sharing the information they provide with other researchers (e.g. by making it available in a data archive) then their personal details will not be included unless your child explicitly request this.

### **What is the legal basis for processing my/ my child's personal data?**

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

### **What will happen to the data collected, and the results of the research project?**

I'll record the interviews on a voice recorder, and afterwards I'll listen to them and type them up. Once I've typed up the interviews I'll delete the recording and no one else will listen to them. When I type them up, I won't use your child's name or anyone else's. I will use pseudonyms (not real names).

Data will be stored securely for the duration of the research project. All data will be destroyed immediately after completion of the project. All identifiable personal data (e.g. consent forms) will be destroyed as soon as possible once it is clear that this will not affect the research purpose.

### **Who is organising and funding the research?**

I am planning and conducting the research myself under the guidance of the University of Sheffield. There is no funding attached to this research project.

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

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

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

This project has been ethically approved via the University of Sheffield's Ethics Review Procedure, as administered by the Education department.

### **What if something goes wrong and I wish to complain about the research?**

You/ your child should contact me if you/ they wish to complain about any aspect of the research, including your/ their treatment during the research or something that happened as a result of your child's participation. If you/ your child do not wish to contact me directly you can inform a member of school staff who will contact me.

If you/ your child feel that the complaint has not been handled to your/ their satisfaction then you should contact Anthony Williams, Programme Director, Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology, who will then escalate the complaint through the appropriate channels.

Tel: 0114 222 8119

[anthony.williams@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:anthony.williams@sheffield.ac.uk)

If the complaint relates to how the participants' personal data has been handled, information about how to raise a complaint can be found in the University's Privacy Notice:  
<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general>.

**Contact for further information**

Main researcher: Elisabeth Sheppard  
Tel: 01274 439707  
[ELSheppard2@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:ELSheppard2@sheffield.ac.uk)

Research Supervisor: Victoria Lewis  
Tel: 0114 222 8129  
[v.lewis@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:v.lewis@sheffield.ac.uk)

## **Appendix F: Participant information sheet- students**

20/09/19

### **Research Title: Secondary school pupils' experiences of behaviour management.**

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide whether or not to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

### **What is the purpose of the research?**

My name is Elisabeth Sheppard and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist. Educational psychologists support schools to help pupils who are finding something at school difficult. As part of my training, I have to carry out research into an area that interests me and that I think would be useful. I'm interested in pupil views of how behaviour is managed in schools.

### **Why have been invited to take part?**

You are being invited to take part in the research project because the school SENDCo has recognised that you sometimes struggle to follow school expectations of behaviour, and we think your views will be valuable in developing ways that the school behaviour policy can be adapted.

### **Do I have to take part?**

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep (and be asked to sign a consent form). You can still withdraw at any time up to or during the interview. If you wish to withdraw from the research, please let your parents or a member of school staff know and they will contact me. If you decide after the interview that you do not wish for your information to be used, then let your parents or school staff know within a week of the interview taking place and they will inform me. You do not have to give a reason and there will be no negative consequences.

### **What will happen if I agree to take part?**

If you agree, you'll take part in an interview which will last up to an hour and a half. This will take place at school at an agreed time. The interview will be audio recorded.

After I've carried out all my interviews, I'll do the analysis, which means I will look at the things that you've told me, to identify things that are important. I might find things that are similar in your interview and those of the other participants. So that school staff can think about ways that they might support you and other pupils, I'll share the things that I've found with them, but I won't use your name or anyone else's. They will know which pupils I've interviewed, but they won't know who said what, and you definitely can't get in to trouble for anything that you've said. The information will only be used in a positive way.

The interviews will be confidential. That means I won't share anything that you've told me and link it back to you. The only time I would do this is if something you told me made me think that you were unsafe. I would then have to tell the safeguarding lead at your school.

The results from the research will be the basis of my university thesis (a written report). This will not contain the names of any pupils or the school. If you would like to find out about the outcomes of the study please ask me and it will be arranged.

**What are the potential risks and benefits of taking part?**

I hope that this will be a positive experience for you, but there is a chance that talking about your experiences at school will be uncomfortable or upsetting. We can stop or pause the interview at any time. You can decide what information you want to share with me. I will make sure that there is a member of pastoral staff available to talk to you after the interview if you wish.

My aim is that the information you and other students give me will be used to make positive changes to the school's behaviour management system, to benefit you and other students.

Many thanks for taking the time to read this. You can keep this information sheet and a signed consent form.

Kind regards,

Elisabeth Sheppard (Trainee Educational Psychologist).

*The following pages include information which ensures that my research is GDPR compliant: an adult will talk through this with you.*

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

All the information that I collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential and will only be accessible to me. You will not be able to be identified in any reports or publications unless you have given your explicit consent for this. If you agree to me sharing the information you provide with other researchers (e.g. by making it available in a data archive) then your personal details will not be included unless you explicitly request this.

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

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

### **What will happen to the data collected, and the results of the research project?**

I'll record the interviews on a voice recorder, and afterwards I'll listen to them and type them up. Once I've typed up the interviews I'll delete the recording and no one else will listen to them. When I type them up, I won't use your name or anyone else's. I will use pseudonyms (not real names). You can choose your own pseudonym if you wish.

Data will be stored securely for the duration of the research project. All data will be destroyed immediately after completion of the project. All identifiable personal data (e.g. your consent form) will be destroyed as soon as possible once it is clear that this will not affect the research purpose.

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

### **Who is organising and funding the research?**

I am planning and conducting the research myself under the guidance of the University of Sheffield. There is no funding attached to this research project.

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

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

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

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### **What if something goes wrong and I wish to complain about the research?**

You should contact me if you wish to complain about any aspect of the research, including your treatment during the research or something that happened as a result of your participation. If you do not wish to contact me directly inform your parents or a member of school staff who will contact me.

If you feel that your complaint has not been handled to your satisfaction then you or the adult you have informed should contact Anthony Williams, Programme Director, Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology, who will then escalate the complaint through the appropriate channels.

Tel: 0114 222 8119

[anthony.williams@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:anthony.williams@sheffield.ac.uk)

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Main researcher: Elisabeth Sheppard

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Research Supervisor: Victoria Lewis

Tel: 0114 222 8129

[v.lewis@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:v.lewis@sheffield.ac.uk)

## Appendix G: Planning the interview schedule

<i>Question</i>	<i>Considerations based on Braun and Clarke p81, 'Designing and piloting the interview guide'.</i>	<i>Considerations based on Foddy (1993)</i>
<p>Tell me about what school is like for you at the moment?</p> <p><i>Prompts: What makes it (for example) good?</i></p> <p><i>Give me an example of a good thing that's happened?</i></p> <p><i>What's happened to make it bad?</i></p> <p><i>Why is it okay?</i></p>	<p>Opening question: before beginning audio recording, I plan to chat informally with the YP to find out about them, build rapport and establish a comfortable atmosphere. Therefore the opening question is not intended for the YP to tell me about them. Rather it is to find out about their experience of school, which is relevant to the research questions.</p>	<p>p. 33 Advises explicitly writing down the purpose of each question, to ensure it is relevant and relates to the research questions; I have done this shown in italics.</p> <p><i>To gain insight into their overall experience of school. I know that the students regularly receive sanctions and I so I wonder whether this leads to negative feeling overall. I don't want to lead the students to think that I'm trying to get them to say that it's bad because they get so many sanctions which is why I don't directly refer to this and acknowledge that their answer may not be related to the number of sanctions received. It is also an opener to give them an opportunity to talk generally about their experience of school.</i></p>
<p>What do you know about the school values, routines and learning habits?</p> <p><i>This school have the motto 'We do the right thing because it's the right thing to do'. I wondered what the students' understanding of this was. Do they know how to demonstrate doing the right thing, and do they know why doing the right thing is important? Does having clear rules help students to do the right thing?</i></p>	<p>These 3 questions are intended to be less probing, sensitive and direct than later questions. These are also more general, relating to school policy rather than individual experience. Braun and Clarke describe this as 'funneling' questions; moving from the general to the specific.</p>	<p><i>To check knowledge of systems that are of interest in this study and to clarify if necessary.</i></p> <p>p.33 Important that participants have required information and are able to access this.</p> <p>I will have a copy of the school behaviour policy to refer to if necessary.</p> <p>p.36 Cues to stimulate respondent recall: use of terms the pupils will be familiar with in school.</p> <p>Have the words 'Values' 'Routines' and 'Learning habits' on cards- cue cards provide reminders and prompts.</p>
<p>What happens when a student is 'doing the right thing' and following school rules?</p>		<p><i>To check knowledge of systems.</i></p>
<p>What happens when a student doesn't</p>		<p><i>To check knowledge of systems.</i></p>

follow the school rules and values?		Omitted word 'should' as felt this led to ambiguity- participants may interpret this as what do they think should happen, rather than what should happen according to the school's behaviour policy. I feel that adding this would make the question too lengthy and complex (response to Foddy to 'keep it simple' p.36).
Tell me about a time when you were rewarded for doing something well in this school?	These two questions relate to personal experience. The YP have been fully informed of the purpose of the study, and therefore have been prepared to discuss more sensitive issues. They will understand that they have been asked to be involved in the study because they have experienced receiving sanctions, and that the purpose of the study to address this, and hopefully reduce the number of sanctions they receive. They are intentionally open-ended to elicit detailed narratives of their experience.	<i>To find out their first hand experiences of BM. What is pertinent to them? Do they perceive that they ever receive praise/ reward? What is this like?</i>  'In this school' to ensure clarity; the research is about the students' experiences within the current system. Important to make every effort towards the respondent understanding the question as it is intended and not assuming that they will make what the interviewer sees as an obvious assumption (p.38).
Tell me about a time when you didn't do the right thing in school?  <i>Probing: What happened? What did the teacher do?</i>	The intention of these questions is that they will elicit the pupils' experiences of school, whilst focusing on what happens when they do or do not adhere to school rules.	<i>To elicit responses about being on receiving end of sanctions. What does this feel like?</i> Omitted 'made a mistake' because this could be ambiguous- mistake in work? It does not add to the question so is unnecessary wording p.39.
What do you think about the way this was dealt with? <i>Probing: What do you think was 'okay'/'good'/'unfair' about it? Is that what you expect to happen when you've done something wrong? Is it made clear that that would be the next step when you've broken a school rule? (relating back to school's behaviour policy).</i>		<i>Valuing their opinion of whether it worked/ was fair/ the effect it had on them/ reasons why they did/ did not think it was effective.</i>
What do you think is good about the school's values, rules and learning habits? Do they help you and other students?	These two questions aim to link to the action planning stage of the research, as the views of the pupils on how behaviour would be successfully managed are valued.	<i>Purpose- solution focused- the participants have been identified because they struggle to adhere to school rules, but are there times when they are helpful?</i>



Can you think of anything that you would change to be more helpful to students who find it difficult to stick to the rules?		<i>Interested in their views to contribute to action planning stage. (Avoided hypothetical question, e.g. 'If there was a new child at your school...?' as these are found to be unhelpful and difficult to answer, p.33 + 51.</i>
Is there anything else that you've thought of, based on what we've been talking about linked to school, that you would like to tell me?	'Clean-up question' to enable the YP to tell me about anything else they see as relevant.	<i>To check they've had the chance to say everything they want to on the topic.</i>
And to finish, I'd really like to know what you think is the best thing about this school?	Braun and Clarke suggest the previous type of question should be closing, but I have added the following question to end the interview on a positive note before they return to classes, although the answer may not be directly relevant to the research question.	<i>To end positively.</i>
Would you like me to meet with you again to let you know about the results of my study?		<i>To ensure they have this opportunity should they wish.</i>
I'd like to remind you that if you would like to talk to anyone about these things further, you can access support from...		<i>To ensure vulnerable pupils are supported should they require it.</i>
Do you have any questions for me?	Different to the 'clean-up' question as that was related to the interview question- this question is intended for more practical questions about the process itself.	



## Appendix H: Pilot interview guide

Questions to be trialled in the pilot study:

- Tell me about what school is like for you at the moment?

*Prompts: What makes it good? Give me an example of a good thing that's happened? What's happened to make it bad?*

- What do you know about school values, routines and learning habits?
- What happens when a student is 'doing the right thing' and following school rules?
- What happens when a student doesn't follow the school rules and values?
- Tell me about a time when you were rewarded for doing something well in this school?
- Tell me about a time when you didn't do the right thing in school?

*Probing: What happened? What did the teacher do?*

- What do you think about the way this was dealt with?

*Probing: What do you think was 'okay'/'good'/'unfair' about it? Is that what you expect to happen when you've done something wrong?' Is it made clear that that would be the next step when you've broken a school rule?*

- What do you think is good about the school's values, rules and learning habits?
- How do they help you and other students?
- Has anything helped you to stick to the school values, rules and learning habits?
- Can you think of anything that you would change to be more helpful to students who find it difficult to stick to the rules?
- Is there anything else that you've thought of, based on what we've been talking about linked to school, that you would like to tell me?
- And to finish, I'd really like to know what you think is the best thing about this school?
- Would you like me to meet with you again to let you know about the results of my study?
- I'd like to remind you that if you would like to talk to anyone about these things further, you can access support from Miss L.
- Do you have any questions for me?

## Appendix I: Interview guide amendments

- Tell me about what school is like for you at the moment?

*Prompts: What makes it good? Give me an example of a good thing that's happened? What's happened to make it bad?*

- What do you know about school values and learning habits?
- Do you know what the expectations of behaviour are? **Added this following pilot because P1 was able to tell me about the values and learning habits but had to prompt him to find out what this actually meant to him in terms of knowing how to do the right thing.**
- What happens when a student is 'doing the right thing' and following school rules?  
*Prompt – How are they rewarded? **To be really explicit about what I mean.***
- What happens when a student doesn't follow the school rules and values?
- Do you feel that you are able to follow the school values and learning habits? **Added following pilot as writing up transcript I wondered whether I could have found out more about what actually prevented the student from adhering to school expectations, so included a more direct question.**

*Prompt: which expectations are harder to stick to than others for you?*

- Tell me about a time when you were rewarded for doing something well in this school?
- Do you feel that the things you do well are noticed? **Added following pilot because the student struggled to think of a time that they had been rewarded. I wondered whether this was because he couldn't think of a time that he had done the right thing, or whether he felt like his efforts to do the right thing were unnoticed.**
- Tell me about a time when you didn't do the right thing in school?

*Probing: What happened? What did the teacher do?*

- What do you think about the way ~~this was dealt with~~ the teacher reacted? **Changed wording following pilot as student asked me what I meant.**

*Probing: What do you think was 'okay'/'good'/'unfair' about it? Is that what you expect to happen when you've done something wrong?' Is it made clear that that would be the next step when you've broken a school rule?*

- What do you think is good about the school's values and learning habits?
- How do they help you and other students?
- Has anything helped you to stick to the school values and learning habits? **Added following pilot because student did not mention the intervention that has already been put in place to support this group of students.**
- Has anything changed since you started this school to support you? **(Follow on from previous question)**
- Can you think of anything that would help you and other students to receive fewer sanctions? **Reworded because maybe the student feels it's the expectations that are the problem; the previous wording assumed that they support they needed was to adhere to the rules which already exist.**

- Is there anything else ~~that you've thought of, based on what we've been talking about linked to school,~~ that you would like to tell me **about how behaviour is managed in this school? Pilot interview indicated this question is structurally too complicated so needed to simplify**
- And to finish, I'd really like to know what you think is the best thing about this school?
- Would you like me to meet with you again to let you know about the results of my study?
- I'd like to remind you that if you would like to talk to anyone about these things further, you can access support from Miss L.
- Do you have any questions for me?

## Appendix J: Amended interview guide

- Tell me about what school is like for you at the moment?

*Prompts: What makes it good? Give me an example of a good thing that's happened? What's happened to make it bad?*

- What do you know about school values and learning habits?
- Do you know what the expectations of behaviour are?
- What happens when a student is 'doing the right thing' and following school rules?  
*Prompt – How are they rewarded?*

- What happens when a student doesn't follow the school rules and values?
- Do you feel that you are able to follow the school values and learning habits?

*Prompt: which expectations are harder to stick to than others for you?*

- Tell me about a time when you were rewarded for doing something well in this school?
- Do you feel that the things you do well are noticed?
- Tell me about a time when you didn't do the right thing in school?

*Probing: What happened? What did the teacher do?*

- What do you think about the way the teacher reacted?

*Probing: What do you think was 'okay'/'good'/'unfair' about it? Is that what you expect to happen when you've done something wrong?' Is it made clear that that would be the next step when you've broken a school rule?*

- What do you think is good about the school's values and learning habits?
- How do they help you and other students?
- Has anything helped you to stick to the school values and learning habits?
- Has anything changed since you started this school to support you?
- Can you think of anything that would help you and other students to receive fewer sanctions?
- Is there anything else that you would like to tell me about how behaviour is managed in this school?
- And to finish, I'd really like to know what you think is the best thing about this school?
- Would you like me to meet with you again to let you know about the results of my study?
- I'd like to remind you that if you would like to talk to anyone about these things further, you can access support from VP.
- Do you have any questions for me?

## Appendix K: Initial coding of interview transcripts.

Data Extract	Code
<p>Interviewer: ...tell me about what school is like for you at the moment?</p> <p>Participant: ...sometimes good ...sometimes it isn't ...last year messing about some of the teachers on call me ... they give me a detention.</p>	<p>Mixed opinion of school.</p> <p>Negative opinion of school relates to sanctions.</p>
<p>Some of the lessons are good... sometimes I like the lesson like geography... co-ordinations.</p> <p>...Sometimes science... because you get to do experiments</p> <p>Yeh, so I like history, it tells you about the past... Because look how we live now and we didn't know how they lived...</p>	<p>Positive experience based on specific subject.</p> <p>Enjoyment of subjects/ lessons.</p>
<p>I had a hundred and eight detentions last year.</p>	<p>High number of detentions. Easily recalled.</p>
<p>I did loads of detentions.</p>	<p>High number of detentions.</p> <p>Past tense (last year)</p>
<p>Interviewer: ...is it better this year would you say?</p> <p>Participant: Yeh.</p> <p>Interviewer: Yeh?</p> <p>Participant: Not always, sometimes.</p>	<p>Sense of things improving slightly in Year 8, but not all the time.</p>
<p>... I only had two this year (<i>detentions</i>). Last year I had like 20.</p> <p>(<i>This year</i>) ... at first I still got loads. I still got 18.</p> <p>Last year... I kept on getting detentions.</p>	<p>Compares to last year, sees things as better this year.</p> <p>Recognises improvement by lesser detentions (although is different with number already stated, indicates he's not sure about this).</p>
<p>(<i>Last year</i>) I was in isolation most of the time. I was only in school for ... 20 days.</p>	<p>Isolation recalled.</p> <p>Length/ frequency of isolation.</p> <p>Not part of school/ segregation.</p> <p>Impact on sense of belonging.</p> <p>Melancholic tone.</p>
<p>...core values... Civility, diligence, integrity</p> <p>... Civility means be kind at all times, diligence means keep working hard and integrity means... erm... I don't know what that one means.</p> <p>Participant: Because on most of the days ... we do line-up and the teachers, different teacher every day, comes and they talk about civility, diligence or integrity.</p> <p>Interviewer: So they help you to remember them?</p> <p>Participant: Yeh.</p> <p>Participant: Civility. 'We are professional in everything we do. We are... And we are respectful and cour-te-hous' (<i>reading from the prompt</i>). What does, how do you say that?</p>	<p>Recalls core values (individual words)</p> <p>Simple definitions.</p> <p>Not sure of meaning of integrity.</p> <p>Understand purpose of daily talks- to understand meaning of values and to remember them (but cannot confidently say what they mean).</p> <p>Not fully familiar with values. Are they meaningful?</p> <p>(Later on gives examples of how to show</p>

	them – real life examples are useful in understanding.)
...one of the learning habits, no answering back. I had loads of them last year.	Recollection of learning habits. Answering back – frequently sanctioned for. Recognises this is something he is in trouble for often.
Participant: ...another one is stay on task  Participant: The third one is... I don't know any more. Interviewer: Do you know how many there are? Participant: Yeh, five or four.	Not fully able to recall learning habits.
<i>(How he knows what the learning habits are)</i> ...in our classroom and, they've got it on, in the rooms, you can look at them, and we've got a board, so if our teacher wants to put independent silence study then we don't talk, just do the work she would turn it to there and if she wants you in quiet partners she put it there, she just turn it on that. And then we can talk but if we have to be that quiet that no-one else can hear us.  One's respect for the whole class, that means track the speaker, whoever's talking...  And the last one is polite table groups, that means talk on the table.	Pictorial representation of learning habits is useful. Able to recall them and knows what they mean. Good recollection supported by visual.
Interviewer: What happens when a student is doing the right thing and following the school rules? Participant: They get the work done.  ... they get good grades  ... they would get good grades in the test	Sees 'getting the work done' as doing the right thing. 'They' referring to others – does not include himself in this? Getting good grades – doing the right thing. Knows what doing the right thing looks like – getting on with work – and that this leads to success. Equates good behaviour (or well behaved students) with getting good academic grades.
<i>(How would people know they were doing the right thing?)</i> The teacher would always keep reminding them  ... They would know that they've been good and less detentions.  ... the teacher might keep reminding them that they're doing good things.	People who do the right thing get recognition from teacher. 'Them' referring to others; this happens to other people. Less detentions than him – doesn't identify with being 'good'.  He hears others being told that they are doing good things.
...they might give them a positive.	Reward – positives.
A positive is if you've been good in like, normally 3 core	Recognised for demonstrating 3 core



values ... if you like never give up, if you do full attention of your work and they give you a... positive. Or if you're civility and you help someone open the door that's like a positive, and if you do integrity like tell the truth that's like a positive.	values. Shows understanding of what these mean; how to show them.
I've got, um, 200 and something positives.	Experience of getting positives.
(Positives) It goes in our planner and it goes in our... like it shows us if you go on my name on the computer on SIMS.	Positives recorded in planner Positives recorded against name. A record that can be seen by others.
Participant: This we started, what shall we do if you get loads of points, we don't know yet. Interviewer: Oh ok so have the students been asked about that? Participant: Yeh, we don't know what we're thinking. Interviewer: Ahh, so do the students get to help to make that decision? Participant: Yeh.	Students beginning to be consulted in decisions around rewards. 'We' 'We're' : unlike above includes himself in this consultation process; feels a part of it.
Interviewer: So what was the reward last year? Participant: We never got a reward last year because we never did it. ...Yeh we started this year.	Does not recall a reward, and attributes this to the new systems, but goes on to say that there were 3 reward trips last year. Feeling hopeful? More included in new system?
Interviewer: Ok, so that's a new thing getting positives and getting points and then that leads up to rewards. So if a students was doing the right thing... Participant: You get a reward. Interviewer: And showing core values... Participant: You get a reward. Interviewer: You get a reward. Participant: You go on a reward trip.	Rewards. Rewards are given for demonstrating core values and 'doing the right thing'.
Participant: They will get a planner warning, and then if you keep messing about you get a detention and then if you keep messing about you just get on call	Clear sanction pathway.
... because you don't want to disturb other people's learning, they want to get 'em a good education.	Understands purpose of sanctions (being removed from lessons) is to not disturb learning of others. Being able to learn without being disturbed leads to good education.
If they keep messing about they go to different class or they might go to isolation. And if they keep messing about in isolation the might stay there for the whole lesson. And on call you get two hours and if they mess about in other lesson, they go to isolation again.  ...it's half an hour for a detention, but if you more, if like I have 10 answering back detentions I get two hours, if I get 5 answering back detentions it's an hour, and if it's like one it's half an hour 'til I go to 5 and then 10.	Sanction pathway. Starts off referring to 'they' as above.  Changes to talking about 'I'; relates to this, identifies with this experience. Specific when talking about sanction pathway (less so talking about rewards).

<p>...if you get a planner warning nowt happens they just take your planner and then if you mess about one more, you got one chance basically and then you get detention.  Interviewer: Okay so the warning in your planner that's like a chance?  Participant: That's like your first chance, and if you do anything again that's an instant detention.</p>	<p>Understand there is a warning – nothing happens if it stops at the warning (as in no further sanction).   Understands that carrying on with the undesirable behaviour leads to a tangible sanction.</p>
<p>After isolation you go back to class.   ... Yeh, but you got two hours (<i>after school detention</i>)</p>	<p>Return to class as normal following isolation.  Sanction doesn't end at that point – having been in isolation means there's a two hour detention.</p>
<p>...the on call takes you and she talks to you about what happened and that and then they take you, they take you to isolation or they might think oh you got one more chance and they might take you back in the class.</p>	<p>Possibility of another chance on way to isolation.  Talk about incident takes place during walk from class to isolation.  One more chance is dependent on this response.  Chance to talk about what happened.  Refers to 'on call' and 'isolation' as familiar terms even though they are specific to this context; has become part of discourse in school.</p>
<p>You have to copy your knowledge navigator out.</p>	<p>Task in isolation.</p>
<p>Interviewer: And somebody talks to you as well about what's happened?  Participant: No.</p>	<p>No chance to reflect on event in isolation.</p>
<p>Interviewer: ...tell me about a time when you got rewarded for doing the right thing?  Participant: Like what?</p>	<p>Doesn't immediately know what this means; not as familiar with this.</p>
<p>Interviewer: What can you think of from last year and this year that made you know that you'd been doing the right thing?  Participant: I don't know, basically this boy, he started swearing at me and (<i>inaudible</i>) I got angry and I was gonna have a fight with him but I told that teacher.</p>	<p>Difficult to recall a time did the right thing.  Version of doing the right thing is not getting in to a fight, when this could have happened.  Can recognise that he controlled his response in this situation.</p>
<p>Participant: I was about to have a fight with him but he went home.  Interviewer: Ok, so you...  Participant: Then I told the teacher.  Interviewer: And which of those values do you think you were showing when you did that?  Participant: Integrity.  Interviewer: Uh-huh, because you told the truth?  Participant: And civility because, er, no-one gets hurt or anything.   ...I told the teacher... and then... I didn't have a fight.   Interviewer: And was Miss L pleased with you for not having a fight?</p>	<p>Controlled response.  Telling teacher – doing the right thing.  Relates to core values  Perceives doing the right thing as not responding in the way he might be used to in what could be seen as a negative situation.  His opportunity to talk about doing something well/ doing the right thing is linked to a negative situation; not an outright positive one.  Lack of experience of feedback for general positive behaviour to draw upon.  Familiar narratives to him.</p>

Participant: Yeh because if ( <i>inaudible</i> ) I would have punched him.	
Interviewer: Okay. So... and... did you get a reward for doing the right thing? Participant: No. Interviewer: Did you get a positive? Participant: No he just got in trouble, he got in trouble. Interviewer: But did you get a positive for doing the right thing? Participant: No. Interviewer: Okay. So you felt like you'd done the right thing, and Miss L told you that you'd done the right thing? Participant: Yeh.	Not outwardly rewarded for the behaviour which he perceives as 'doing the right thing'.  Feedback/ acknowledgement from member of SLT was important.
( <i>What were your positives for?</i> ) ... that's in my other class for being good, for doing my work, or civility, I don't know...	Links positives to core values, but with not clear understanding of why.
Interviewer: ... was there a time when you felt like you got an actual reward like a trip or... something that made you know that you had done the right thing? Participant: No.	Not experienced whole school rewards.
...if I get a planner warning ... I get really angry so I just answer the teacher back.  ...And then I get angry so I answer back and then it just...  ... I got really angry	Anger Answering back Anger response to warning (not expected response to warning). Lack of control over response.
Interviewer: Why might you get the planner warning in the first place? Participant: For talking or... for talking really or like looking back or... that's it, for talking and looking back.	Main misdemeanors: talking, looking back (minor).
...last year I got really angry so I just keep getting detentions, when I got one answering back detention, I just kept getting loads of detentions.	Anger Quick escalation Answering back – leads to more detentions Negative cycle.
...just kept getting detentions	Sense of it getting out of control; snowballing. As if he lost control of it, it got out of hand. Difficult to get back from.
...loads of detentions	Detentions; so many
Interviewer: So when you get that first warning in your planner, what, what goes through your mind when you've got the warning? Participant: I dunno, I just get angry and I straight away said what did I do, what did I do? And I kept answering back and I don't do my work, and then they she gives me on call and then I get really angry, so when I go back to my lessons I just keep getting detentions.	'Straight away' – immediate response Answering back Escalation One sanction quickly leads to another; work through sanction pathway quickly; difficult to get back from this. Anger remains when return to lessons so remains in the negative cycle. Leads to other undesirable behaviour –

	not doing work.
<p>...just get angry</p> <p>...sometimes I just get angry.</p> <p>Interviewer: Yeh. And do you find it hard to not get angry?</p> <p>Participant: Yeh.</p> <p>... Yeh, I got angry</p>	<p>Controlling anger is difficult; just happens.</p> <p>Difficult to remain calm and accept warning, therefore warning not effective.</p>
<p>Interviewer: Yeh. And do you ever get a warning in your planner and you think 'oo I better...'</p> <p>Participant: Sometimes yeh because I don't want to get detention.</p>	<p>Understands that by not responding with anger will avoid detention/ escalation of sanctions.</p>
<p>... off task... like I don't do good thing.</p>	<p>Recognising undesirable behaviour. Uses school contextual language – 'off task'; familiar with this term.</p>
<p>... they just take your planner (<i>planner warning</i>)</p> <p>I don't let them take my planner sometimes, I don't let them take my planner... I just hold it.</p> <p>... I hold on to it and then sometimes I give it, sometimes I don't. After like a minute I think about it and then I just give it to them.</p>	<p>Possession.</p> <p>Not wanting to let go of possession. Perceives this as more crucial that it is perhaps intended as a warning; planner is symbolic of more than just a warning to pupil.</p> <p>Defiance, could be perceived as aggressive and confrontational by staff.</p>
<p>...After a minute I think about it</p>	<p>Time to respond in the desired way. May not be instantaneous.</p>
<p>Most of the time they be fairly</p>	<p>Sanctions are fair</p>
<p>but sometimes they just blame it on, er, me and I get a detention for it. Because last year I was messing about so much, sometimes they think it's me.</p> <p>It wasn't even me sometimes and they give me a detention.</p> <p>Not fair. I got a detention for no reason.</p>	<p>Sense of injustice; being wrongly blamed</p> <p>Reputation leads to teachers having an expectation of a student's behaviour</p>
<p>Yeh I said it to them and it gets more worsen and say you're answering back.</p>	<p>Trying to explain makes situation worse. Answering back</p> <p>Making things worse/ escalating situation.</p>
<p>You could get a chance after the lesson. (<i>to speak to the teacher when perceive to have been wrongly accused</i>)</p>	<p>Chance to speak to teacher following incident.</p>
<p>Interviewer: Yeh. So sometimes it feels unfair because you feel like you're getting blamed for something that wasn't you fault?</p> <p>Participant: Yeh.</p> <p>Interviewer: And when you try and say that you just get in more trouble?</p> <p>Participant: Yeh.</p>	<p>Sense of injustice; can't explain because get in more trouble.</p> <p>Acceptance that sometimes it's fair and have done something wrong.</p>

Interviewer: Yeh. Participant: Only sometime, most of the time it's me.	
Interviewer: Yeh. And would it make a difference to how you respond then? Because if you thought it was unfair because it wasn't really you would you get more mad? Participant: Yeh, much more madder.	Anger displayed is dependent on whether think sanction is unfair or fair; based on sense of justice or injustice.
Participant: ... the learning habits, like if you don't have them the learning habits your classes, they gonna keep talking, they aren't gonna do the work, but if you have the learning habits you can stop them from doing it, like if you tell them not to talk it's gonna be quiet.  ... And if you tell them to talk quietly they be quiet like if they see the learning mood.	Understand reasons for learning habits. Need boundaries. Need rules to be clear and enforced  Visual prompt is useful; a reminder. Learning mood.
It would all be chaos... yeh... it would be chaos. ( <i>without the learning habits</i> )	Without rules, expectations and boundaries, students would take advantage (or wouldn't know how to behave?)
And they help ... then you won't miss your learning or nothing ( <i>Learning habits</i> )	Importance of learning Boundaries and clear expectations mean that students don't miss leaning. Understands purpose of having expectations of behaviour.
They're helpful for everyone. ( <i>Learning habits</i> )	Learning habits/ expectations of behaviour are for everyone. Learning habits – helpful.
That helps everyone because diligence you just gotta keep getting on checking and it says never give up. And civility is be kind to everyone and just...  And integrity it mean do the right thing.	Simplistic understanding of core values. Core values are helpful Help everyone Recognises the purpose of core values; familiar with context specific discourse.
Yeh coz they like loads of rules, like just, don't talk, coz in the class you're not gonna talk really...	Few, clear rules more helpful than a lot of rules. Some things are a given, like not talking in class
... if you don't talk it's better because if someone else is talking you won't be able to hear the person talk. And if you keep on talking you're just gonna distract other people's learning, coz they won't be able to hear.	Importance of not distracting learning of others. Respectful behaviour (not talking over others)
Interviewer: What do you think then, can you think of anything that would help you to not get in to trouble as much? Participant: I dunno like, erm... in your mind just try to not say nothing, just keep it more quiet and don't say anything.	Desires internal control, rather than external forces to make do the right thing. Wants to be able to do this instinctively.
Interviewer: That's fine, that's brilliant. And to finish I'd	School pride

<p>really like to know what you think is the best thing about this school?</p> <p>Participant: Is that they've got er, strict pol-, er, strict routine, and they good grades, and they get good like, and they're third best school in <i>(name of town)</i> I think it is.</p>	<p>Strict teachers are a good thing. Importance of getting good grades.</p>
<p>If I get good grades I can get a good job.</p>	<p>Understand importance of good education.</p>
<p>I'm gonna choose history because I did good in Year 7, like I got 50 out of 100, so that would have been like a 5.</p>	<p>Enjoys feeling success. Pride Self-esteem</p>
<p>Participant: Coz I like it but I sit by myself yeh, I like sitting by myself. Interviewer: Would you get in to trouble in history ever for talking or being off task? Participant: No coz I sit by myself.</p> <p>... geography I do good but I sit next to people so I talk, and erm, science, science too because I just keep talking and that, I keep getting all the detentions.</p>	<p>Removal from distractions. Wants to be able to remain on task. Distractions contribute to off task behaviour.</p> <p>Lack of control/ unable to ignore distractions (involvement in peer behaviour?)</p>
<p>Interviewer: ... what was the decision for you to sit on your own, did the teacher decide that, or did you? Participant: Teacher, coz the teacher know I do good in my lesson, and if I sit with someone then I get distracted and I keep talking.</p>	<p>Teacher being attuned to student Teacher has confidence in student Teacher respects student Student respects teacher's decision (based on relationship with teacher?)</p>
<p>Interviewer: So maybe, you know when I asked you that question what would be helpful for you? Maybe it would be helpful if somebody had a chat with you and said "What helps you do the right thing in class?" and you might say, oh it's helpful when I can sit on my own, so that you can be part of making those decisions. Do you think that would be useful? Participant: Yeh.</p>	<p>Involvement in decisions. Being respected Autonomy Teacher showing an interest. Teacher having faith/ trust in student Being treated maturely.</p>
<p>Data Extract</p>	<p>Code</p>
<p>Interviewer: James, tell me about what school is like at the moment? Participant: School is like... sometimes it can be a bit hard and struggle with.</p>	<p>Struggle at school</p>
<p>Interviewer: Oh sometimes you struggle. And why, what do you struggle with? Participant: Erm... learning, the lessons, the room conditions. <i>(Pause)</i> Interviewer: Umm. What do you mean by 'the room conditions'? Participant: Like <i>(Pause)</i> how the room looks and stuff.</p>	<p>Struggle with learning Struggle with the lessons Learning environment: something about it is difficult.</p>
<p>So... civility is...erm... doing the right thing and basically, er like, if someone hasn't got their equipment, and you lend them a pen, a pen or summat, then that</p>	<p>Understanding core values through real life situations. Recollection of core values.</p>

shows civility.	
Integrity doing the right thing without a teacher asking you... and I forgot what diligence.	Core values confusion/ misunderstanding. Knowledge of core values has gaps.
You can get positives for it sometimes  ...you get rewarded like, by like positives, or the teacher like.  ...given a positive like they log it on the systems.	Linking demonstrating core values to reward system.  Knowledge of positive recognition  Positives logged- record kept
... independent silent study is when you work on your own, and no talking... so it's like you're focused on your own work. Quiet partners is... so, you and your partner, the one that sits next to you, like when the teacher puts it on, er... the cursor to, er, quiet partners it means that only you and the person next to have to talk in quiet partners, like whisper.	Visual representation of learning habits is helpful. Recollection of learning habits.
...you're focused on your own work	Links learning habits to learning behaviour. Focusing on work is positive behaviour.
Interviewer: Do you know what's expected of you in school? Participant: (Sounds a bit unsure) Yeh.	Not full understanding of school expectations.
Interviewer: You know what behaviour is expected? And how do you know that? Participant: Because teachers tell me that be good and stuff and my mum tells me in the morning to be good and don't get no detentions.	External factors in doing the right thing. Teachers' role in pupils understanding of doing the right thing. Simplistic understanding of expectations.
...my mum tells me in the morning to be good and don't get no detentions.	Role of family/ parents Home and school working together Home – extrinsic factor
Interviewer: Yeh? Okay. What happens when a student is doing the right thing and following the school rules? Participant: Erm... (Pause) Ah... ah... I can't explain it. Interviewer: Okay. Do... do they get rewarded? Participant: I don't think.	Lack of familiarity with reward systems. Feedback for doing the right thing – how do students know? Instilling values intrinsically – is it because this is hard to explain?
...She keep track so every cycle she gonna take us to like, so this cycle so she gonna take us to [name of theatre] and basically anyone with no negatives, zero negatives or lots of positives and no detentions will get to go.	Positives lead to extrinsic rewards.  Rewarded if no negatives/ no detentions in a cycle.
First, he'll get his planner warning, which is a warning so you can learn from it, but if he still does it or she, erm.. they... he, he will get a detention, then the teacher, um, the teacher writes it in his planner so then he knows, then he knows then his mum can see it. Erm... er ... And then teacher logs it on after the lesson or in the lesson, and then if he still carries on he'll get 'on call' and then whoever's on call, whoever a teacher that is on call will come and pick up the student and turn him in, er, turn	Familiarity with/ knowledge of sanction pathway.  School specific language: on call, isolation.

him? No, not turn him, um, put him in to isolation, er, for two hours after school.	'Turn him in' – language linked to criminal activity?
... which is a warning so you can learn from it	Understands purpose of warning
... then his mum can see it	Links with home. Significance of parent knowing wrongdoing. Home – extrinsic motivator
But if erm, if the student gets a detention – ( <i>corrects himself</i> ) isolation in fifth period then his two hours will be the next day.	Sanctions continue next day.
Interviewer: I see. Okay. And you can tell me about a time when you did the right thing? Participant: ( <i>Pause</i> ) Yeh.	Difficult to recall doing the right thing.
Er... basically er... Miss L, erm... she put me in this Little League, which helped me, and then I used to behave in my lessons and stuff,  ... and then, yeh  Interviewer: ... So is it because Little League stopped? Participant: Uh huh.	Little League Belonging Helpful intervention Led to behaving well (pupil perception) Past tense – helped at the time of intervention End of intervention – indicates things changed but doesn't want to go in to detail. Change in behaviour linked to end of intervention
Participant: Yeh. We got these five pound or ten pound vouchers. Interviewer: Okay. And was that, did that feel good? Participant: Yeh.	Extrinsic motivators. Feels good to be rewarded.
... I get them for my family	Importance of pleasing family Motivated by family
Yeh, but then it all changed in January after the holidays because then I started messing about and stuff.	Recognises change in behaviour. Reduced support – revert back to old behaviour
No Miss it didn't stop, I just got out of it, it was because I been very good.	Intervention = improved behaviour = remove intervention = revert back to old behaviour. Good behaviour then perceived by student as not a good thing? Led to the removal of helpful support.
I don't know what happened to me.  I don't know why but I was off it.	Doesn't perceive behaviour has a choice – something happened <i>to</i> him. Confused by own behaviour. Doesn't accept responsibility.
Erm... at the end of the April holidays, yeh, er basically I... I don't know why but erm, I was off it then and basically what I did, I drew a knife on a whiteboard and then Mr, Miss L, took the whiteboard to Mr R, the head of the school, and then Mr R he shouted at me and then I got ten days exclusion.	Serious incident Seen as threatening  = significant consequence



Ten days exclusion I missed four weeks off school	Long exclusion Missed education Removed from school system (effect on belonging).
Interviewer: ... And could you explain why you did that? Participant: No I couldn't explain.	Lack of control Lack of understanding own behaviour Instinctive behaviour, not calculated
They were... they were disappointed in me.	Sense of regret. Understands behaviour affects how adults think of him. Suggests the adults expect more/ thought he was capable of more/ incident was out of character.
I was kept in isolation for no reason and stuff, just because, just because, just because, by accident, the water, it fell from the... you know when you... you know the water fountains? You know when you pull the water by accident? I don't know why but water got, er, went on the floor and then I had to get a tissue and then... I dried it and stuff and then I went off and then Miss L shouts at me or summat, and then she says you're in isolation now and stuff, and then I had two hours after school.	Sense of injustice Sanctioned for an accident  Led to feelings of anger, leading to more serious incident (drawing knife) Punishing staff member  Feeling of betrayal towards trusted member of staff?
Interviewer: What about drawing the knife on the board? Do you think that you deserved then to be excluded for that time? Participant: Yeh. Interviewer: Yeh. So you knew that that was the wrong thing to do? Participant: (Nods)	Accepting responsibility. Acknowledges wrong doing.
Interviewer: After you came back to school, did it help you to do the right thing? Participant: Ah... Interviewer: Or is it still a struggle? Participant: Struggle.	Punitive response doesn't have desired effect. Struggles to adhere to expectations.
Interviewer: Did it make you think about your behaviour any more? Participant: No.	Lack of link between sanction and subsequently thinking about behaviour/ trying to do the right thing. Punitive response doesn't have desired effect.
Interviewer: Do you think there's anything good about the school values and the learning habits? Participant: Not exactly. Interviewer: No... Why do you say "Not exactly"? Participant: Because the school values... they kind of don't help me and stuff.	School values and learning habits – not helpful
Interviewer: What would help you? Participant: My primary school values.	Comparison with Primary School. Things were easier at primary school. Simpler, easier to understand values? Continuation of same values would be helpful?

	Confusing to learn new set of values?
... in primary school we didn't have to move to lessons around,  ...you have to move around	Comparison with primary school. Didn't have to move around in primary school. Less expectations. Less responsibility/ independence/ organisation.
and people that er, get erm... were getting on each other and it were just better, like, nice.	Felt like people got on at primary school (implies doesn't feel like people get on at high school).
(At high school) you just get detentions	Feels like detentions are a constant thing/ pattern/regular occurrence
...there's more hours	Long day
Participant: I just can't walk properly, I just can't walk fast. Interviewer: I see. And would you get in to trouble for that? Participant: Yeh, 'cause if you, then if the bell goes and you're still walking around you get a detention for late detention.	Own ability hinders adherence to rules/ expectations Sense of injustice – detention for things out of own control
I haven't explained it ( <i>struggles</i> ) to a teacher	Lack of opportunity to talk about things he finds hard Feels no point explaining to teacher
... school's small	Enabling factor – size of school
Interviewer: ... What's been the hardest rule to follow? Participant: Umm... Diligence.	Working hard is difficult.
...Because the thing is, I don't like school because it just boring because...	School is boring
... all they just have to do, first of all to me, in my opinion, it waste your time from your family for eight hours. ... All you have to do is sit in a chair for one hour, listen to a teacher, do work, there's no point in doing it.	Waste of time Away from family Importance of family
Interviewer: ...And what would be the main thing then that you would get in to trouble for? Participant: Um... Off task Interviewer: Off task... And what would you be doing instead of being on task? Participant: ...Playing my... equipment.	Difficulty remaining on task. Distracted
(when get warning) ...Er... I would sometimes I will still do it and then get a detention and sometimes I just stop.	Not always able to take warning in expected way. Escalation; warning leads to detention quickly
When I carry on, I get in to on call then, and then I ( <i>inaudible</i> ), but when I stop, I just like behave again.	Escalation
... sometimes I just stop. ...when I stop, I just like behave again.	Recognises accepting warning leads to nothing/ prevents further escalation. Can do it sometimes/ different circumstances?
...I'm weird that's why	Feels different to others Can't explain why does not adhere to

	<p>expectations Puts it down to self</p>
<p>... she doesn't even talk to me as much, just because I don't talk to her</p> <p>Interviewer: I'm sure you could go and talk to her. Participant: Nah.</p>	<p>Rejection? Relationship with staff – important to sustain Importance of relationship perceived differently by student and staff member. Important to build relationship with more than one staff member</p>
<p>Interviewer: Do you think that adults notice when people are doing the right thing? Participant: <i>(Pause)</i> Yeh, I do. Interviewer: How would you know that they've noticed? Participant: Because, the teachers, well obviously they will look around the class to see if anybody's messing about.</p>	<p>Teachers looking for negatives rather than positives.</p>
<p>This is the thing, this is the detentions, they really get no, no warning, no planner warning. If you're in quiet partners and you're talking loud, if you're not in quiet partners, then you get detention. If you too (inaudible) then you get one hour, if you're late you get a detention; answering back, detention; not following the school rules, detention; talking in the corridors too loud, detention. They're all the rules that are with no warnings.</p>	<p>Sanction without warning Inconsistent (sometimes get warning) High frequency of detention. Feeling that everything leads to detention. Ease of getting a detention. Inevitability. Lots of rules to follow High expectations.</p>
<p>Interviewer: Does it help when you get a warning? Participant: Uhhh, er... no. Interviewer: No? So it wouldn't help if you had a warning first anyway? Participant: <i>(Shakes head)</i>.</p>	<p>Warnings don't help.</p>
<p>The best thing about school is... having an education because other people in the world don't get an education.</p>	<p>Recognises he is fortunate in a way. Knows he should feel fortunate/ grateful. Maybe conflict between how he knows/ has been told he should feel, and what it actually feels like?</p>
<p>They don't get to learn, that's why, and plus you need a job in life. Because if you don't get a job in life, when you grow up, because when you grow up, you'll be poor and you'll be homeless on the streets.</p>	<p>Knows message of why education is important Fear/ anxiety? Sense of doom Extreme version of events – message he's had drummed in to him/ heard many times?</p>
<p>...Miss but I can't get an education because it's just too hard, the work is too hard, GCSE's are really hard, they're really hard, and if I fail, I have to go college, redo them, and if I still fail I don't know what I'm gonna do.</p>	<p>Difficulty with academic aspect of school Pressure Sense of doom. Vision of his own path. Academic focus High academic expectations</p>
<p>Interviewer: What would be the main reason then, for you being off task in a lesson? Participant: Laughing,</p>	<p>Easily distracted Difficulty remaining on task Wants to have fun</p>

(Pause) Being distracted (Pause) And playing with my equipment.	
Interviewer: ... Why might you be easily distracted? Is it in certain lessons, more than other lessons? Participant: Yeh. Interviewer: And is that because you don't like those lessons as much or because those lessons are harder? Participant: Hard.	Inconsistency across lessons Difficulty with academic aspect Difficulty leads to off task behaviour
In some lessons I don't get in to trouble.	Inconsistency across lessons
Participant: ...I just like stay focused in them lessons because the teachers are strict. Stricter. Interviewer: Ahh. So stricter teachers, actually, can help you do the right thing? Participant: Yeh but no, there's some that are... the ones, the lessons that I don't get in to, that I do get in to trouble, they're still strict teachers but there not as strict.	Boundaries are important Something difficult to explain about why some teachers being strict is helpful and some teachers being strict is not helpful: pupil perception of being 'strict' – is it do with the teacher being in control? Respect for certain teachers.
Interviewer: Okay. And do you enjoy those lessons more, when you don't get in to trouble? Participant: Yeh.	Enjoy because don't get in to trouble, or don't get in to trouble because enjoy?
... And the thing that I like, if me and my mum, if we make a deal that... at the start of the term don't get no detentions 'til the end of the term, I'll get a treat, and then if I do, then that's good for me.	Parental involvement Incentive
... make a deal...	Pupil involved in decision making/ goals.
...Like I feel happy. No detentions for a month.	Good feeling when not involved with sanction pathway. Motivating.
... And can you tell Miss L that if I need... help with anything or something like	Valued relationship with staff. Feels can't talk to staff member now that support been reduced. Someone to talk to. Needs help with aspects of school.
... do Little League again	Valued intervention.
... but not with the reports. ... It just look bad on me that I have a report and stuff. ... Then my mum'll think, like you been misbehaving or summat.	Negative connotations of report. Importance of family Perceptions of others are important. Seen as being someone who misbehaves.
... ( <i>changes as a result of research</i> ) But I don't think it's gonna happen.	Lack of trust. Inevitability. Resignation
( <i>School learning habits</i> ) ...Er you have independent silent study, then... and quiet partners more than, respect for the whole class, and...er... what is it? You know like, give you like, like sometimes you might forget like homework and everything, yeh, but still they have to give you detention and everything.	Confused version of learning habits. Immediate response to relate to detentions. Forgetting homework.

... You have to have a massive board and they keep in it in the room on the wall. And they got arrow and when they want to change it, they change it.	Visual representation – helpful.
<i>(School values)</i> Diligence, civility and I don't know the other one. ...Like, good work? ... And civility is like helping others and integrity is... I don't know. Integrity...	Not clear on school values.
Yeh, like in Year 7 I used to mess about loads but now the teachers suspect me that, like if someone talks in the class they suspect me and everything... so then I get in to trouble, sometimes it's not my fault. Sometimes it's other people's fault but they suspect me.	Sense of injustice. Reputation. Teacher's perception. Narrative around certain pupils.
... They get positives ... It's like a thing, and then you have like... you get like treats, so at the end of a cycle your form, and if you've got loads of positives in your form you get like, like, you order pizza at the end of the cycle or something like that. Going on residential trips or fiend trips or whatever.	Positive rewards. Extrinsic motivators.
<i>(Talking about students doing the right thing)</i> They always... They remind the teacher of homework and they're all like, listening and everything.	'They' - talking about others, not self. Doesn't identify with 'doing the right thing'. Students who 'do the right thing' are on side with teachers. Listening = doing the right thing.
Interviewer: And what happens when a student doesn't follow the school values? Participant: You get planner warning first, then you get detention, then if you carry on you get 'on call' and that means you get sent to isolation for that lesson. You get two hour detention and if you keep on carrying on next day you get isolation for the whole day and if you're carrying on you get placement at a different school.	Coherently describes sanction pathway. Familiar with this process/ knowledgeable. Dominant experience of school.
They just take your planner. ...they just say "Planner warning, give me your planner". And take your planner.	Planner warning Taking planner from student.
Interviewer: Do you feel that you're able to follow the school values and the learning habits? Participant: I dunno, sometimes I forget.	Forgets rules.
... Sometimes I get carried away and everything.	Lack of control
Interviewer: So which sort of expectations would be harder to follow? Participant: Shouting out and everything. Answering back.	Difficult to not shout out in class. Shouting out Answering back
But I'm alright with answering back now. I don't get that that much. Just, like, shouting out and everything.	Recognises improvement in behaviour
Interviewer: So when you say 'shouting out' would that	Inconsistency of rules.

<p>be to answer a question that the teacher's asked or...</p> <p>Participant: Yeh without putting my hand up.</p> <p>Interviewer: So you have to try and remember to put your hand up?</p> <p>Participant: Yeh.</p> <p>Interviewer: So is the hardest part for you remembering at the time?</p> <p>Participant: Yeh, but the thing I don't get is you're not allowed to put your hand up. At school it says you're not allowed to use it in school.</p>	<p>Confusion about rules.</p>
<p>I only had one fight in Year 7.</p>	<p>Fighting – not regular occurrence. Perceives as a good thing – 'only one'.</p>
<p>I do get angry with some people, they just like annoy me, like one kid in science he's always like, Miss says if I don't have my green pen in the next lesson I'll get detention, and I didn't have it for my next lesson, yeh, and the teacher forgot and this one kid reminded her, said "Oh miss you have to give him detention", and he always does it Miss.</p>	<p>Anger Feels victimised Teachers and students together against him.</p>
<p>Interviewer: And when you feel angry like that, do you know how to manage your anger?</p> <p>Participant: No, I just shout at him, and then Miss gave me... gives me a planner warning.</p>	<p>Lack of control. Managing anger Planner warning.</p>
<p>Interviewer: ...So do you ever get a chance to talk about what it was that made you angry?</p> <p>Participant: I come to the end of the lesson, Miss. The teacher said go to the end of the lesson. I speak to them but then they still don't listen.</p>	<p>Chance to talk Managing anger Frustration</p>
<p>...She says "Oh you're answering back again, I'm gonna give you answering back detention" then I listen.</p>	<p>Escalation Answering back Chance to talk Frustration</p>
<p>...Before cause I've got a dryness in my eyes I was itching my eyes in school and then miss gave me a detention for that and I spoke to her in the lesson but she still wouldn't believe me I've got a dryness in my eyes. She says "Oh no you were off task" and everything and she gave me a detention.</p>	<p>Feeling misunderstood. No excuses Frustration Off task Personal issue affecting ability to comply. Detention Chance to talk</p>
<p>...it's always the same teacher that always gives me detention.</p>	<p>Inconsistency Relationships with staff</p>
<p>last week one our teacher, one person, he, I never knew (inaudible) he by accident, he's threw my pencil case because he like he's going to the toilet and by accident drop my pencil case on the floor and she came and she goes "Why is your pencil case on the floor?" and I go "I don't know why" and she gave me detention. And I spoke to her after the... after school and she said "No, I saw you</p>	<p>Sense of injustice No chance to explain Feeling victimised No excuses</p>

<p>should of, you should picked your pencil case up instead of leaving it on the floor.”</p>	
<p>Interviewer: And you said before that because you used to get into trouble a bit, now people suspect you? Participant: Yeh. Interviewer: So do you think that because they think you already get in to trouble they just immediately think that’s another, negative or whatever? Participant: <i>(Nods)</i> Interviewer: Yeh? So you feel like you’re stuck in a situation where it’s hard to get out of that? Participant: Yeh. Interviewer: And even, but you feel like you’re doing better and you’re not - Participant: Yeh. Interviewer: - doing the wrong thing as much but that people have already sort of... made their mind up? Participant: Yeh.</p>	<p>Reputation Escalation Immediate teacher response Stuck in a negative cycle</p>
<p>Interviewer: ... Can you think of a time when you were rewarded for doing something well in school? Participant: I dunno. <i>(Pause)</i> I dunno.</p>	<p>Difficult to recall positives. Lack of familiarity with positive reward systems. More familiar with sanction pathway.</p>
<p>I’ve got some positives</p>	<p>Positive feedback</p>
<p>Or like sometimes I try hard. I still end up getting detention.  I just try like, I just try hard. When I don’t try hard I don’t get a detention, I try hard I get a detention.</p>	<p>Sense of effort not being recognised. Not good enough. When try hard feel like still do the wrong thing.</p>
<p>Interviewer: Hmm. And do people explain to you why, what they think you did wrong? Participant: No, just give you detention, and then, if you want to speak you have to speak at the end of the lesson and I go speak to them at the end of the lesson and they still give me detention.</p>	<p>Chance to talk Reflection Punitive response rather than reflection Frustration Not being listened to. Talking makes no difference</p>
<p>On the way <i>(to isolation)</i> you get to talk about it but they don’t do nothing you just talk about it.</p>	<p>Not being listened to. Chance to talk Talking makes no difference</p>
<p>Yeh you have to copy and write navigator which is like, I don’t know why you have to do that. Basically you’re not learning any work you just copy your knowledge navigator in isolation.</p>	<p>Wasted learning. Holding activity Doesn’t understand point.</p>
<p>...someone brought a vape in to school and it were one of my friends and he, he, er, he brought it in to school and he don’t want it. He gave it to me and I were gonna throw it. One other person he wanted it so I gave it to him and then, someone snitched and then we got in trouble and we got sent to isolation. I... I should have told the teacher but I didn’t.</p>	<p>More serious offence Belonging to a group Friendships Doing the right thing Going against the group – conflict ‘someone snitched’ – blame Responsibility for actions</p>

<p>Interviewer: Do you think that it was fair?  Participant: Yeh, er kind of.  Interviewer: Yeh. Do you think that you deserved that time to go to isolation, or..?  Participant: Yeh, I do.</p>	<p>Accepting responsibility for serious incidents  Right from wrong – clearer when more serious incident.</p>
<p>...you had to write a statement, write what happened on paper and we had to give it to her.</p>	<p>Reflection  Chance to explain  Honesty  Accepting responsibility</p>
<p>...I got in less trouble, they got a placement in another school for one day.   ...I, did less. Everybody using it and everything, brought in to school, and I just had it for like 10 minutes then I gave it to someone else.</p>	<p>Being listened to.  Being believed.  Perceived staff to act fairly.  Acknowledging own role.  Part of group.  Doing the right thing...  ... but not snitching on friends</p>
<p>And do you know everything, er, happen like in school, summat bad happens in school, teachers suspect me and I'm with them and everything. Like someone brought, I think someone brought fireworks in to school and teachers suspected me. She came in to our form and she says "If I see anybody with fireworks" and she was looking at, keep on looking at me.</p>	<p>Reputation of group.  Associated with certain people  Reputation  Suspect  Feeling victimised  Frustration</p>
<p>I want to go to like a normal school, but this school it's too strict.   I keep on getting in to trouble at this school. I want to go to a normal school which is less stricter, which is gonna be more better. And my parents want me to stay at this school.   I like this school yeh but it's too strict.   it's hard like, the rules and everything. It's different from other schools.</p>	<p>Strictness  High expectations  Sense that other schools are different, better, more fun, less rules.  Get in to trouble more because more rules.  Parental expectation/ parents perception of strict school = good school.</p>
<p>It's good and like they... they...they know like who's done, who's done summat bad, they find out quickly and everything</p>	<p>Staff are in control.  Address situations quickly  Reactive staff.</p>
<p>...and everything they help you, where like, like if you're bad they help you like with er, they bring people in like you, and like they give you interventions and things.</p>	<p>Perception of self (and those who misbehave) as 'bad'.  Pupils given help with behaviour  External professionals brought in to help.  Interventions to support</p>
<p>...I had, what's it called, it was Miss L or summat, it was about a report or summat and then if you, if you get good like, ones in your report for, for things, cycle, you get like a ten pound voucher or summat.</p>	<p>Intervention to support  Report to support  Rewarded for doing well/ improving  Extrinsic reward.</p>



<p>Interviewer: And did you find that that was helpful having...? Participant: Yeh, little bit, yeh but then it's stopped now.</p>	<p>Intervention helpful at the time. Intervention short term.</p>
<p>I had interventions like compulsory homework club and at the start of year 7 ... After school on Tuesday and Thursday.</p> <p>-I want to still go to that cause I got homework detention today in English.</p> <p>... at home I keep on forgetting and sometimes I can't be bothered, where at school you can do it, 'cause you're at school.</p>	<p>Homework: Compulsory homework club- helpful Sort term intervention Difficulty doing homework out of school. Value interventions Understand interventions are helpful</p> <p>Lack of intrinsic motivation Needs external motivation</p>
<p>... I want to have a time out pass ...some of my friends have time out pass and like sometimes when you don't feel like you're okay in that lesson you can just go to... you just go to library or isolation for ten minutes.</p> <p>Interviewer: And could it be just when you feel a bit upset? Participant: Yeh. Interviewer: Or when you feel a bit angry? Participant: Yeh.</p>	<p>Time out – somewhere quiet Not feeling okay/ upset/ angry</p>
<p>Interviewer: ...it was helpful that time when you got to write down what had happened, was it? Participant: That was alright. You have to do that all the time when you get in trouble and you go isolation you have to write a statement.</p> <p>...only for like if you got done for fighting or like, like, swearing at a teacher or something like that.</p> <p>...if they don't believe you, you have to write it again.</p>	<p>Writing statement – criminal language</p> <p>Chance to explain what happened through writing – for more serious incidents.</p>
<p>Interviewer: ...And do they want to feel like you are... sorry, do you think? Participant: No, they just do it, they want to know what happened.</p> <p>Interviewer: What about... Would it be helpful if as well as writing it down, somebody helped you to think about what you could have done differently? Participant: Yeh. Interviewer: Do you ever get to do that? Participant: No.</p>	<p>To get to the bottom of what happened, not for reflection.</p> <p>Would be helpful to think about how things could have been different.</p>
<p>Interviewer: No, so you don't really talk about... how you could have reacted differently in that situation or...?</p>	<p>Sometimes opportunity to reflect/ learn from what happened.</p>

<p>Interviewer: Yeh you do. Like sometimes the teacher comes to speak to you outside isolation.  Interviewer: Yeh. And is that helpful to do that?  Participant: Yeh.</p>	<p>Helpful to do this.</p>
<p>Primary school completely easier and different.    At primary school I was kind of good.    <i>(At high school)</i> Everything different. Like you got, like it's more stricter, you got more routines and everything.</p>	<p>Primary school – contrast. More favourable.  Less rules/routines to remember/ follow.</p>
<p>The best thing about school... is <i>(pause)</i> like... the interventions they put for you and everything. Like... lessons and everything. We've got good lessons and everything.</p>	<p>Value interventions    Good lessons</p>
<p>Interviewer: Are there particular lessons where you would get in less trouble than other lessons?  Participant: Yeh, there is. Science I mostly get in trouble in.</p>	<p>Inconsistency between staff/ lessons</p>
<p>Sometimes the teacher she always suspect, that teacher she always suspects me –    ...I didn't even have her for year 7 but she always suspects me.</p>	<p>Reputation  Being a suspect  Inconsistency between staff/ different treatment and level of respect  Not a justified suspicion  Teacher hasn't taken time to get to know/ build relationship</p>
<p>Interviewer: What makes it good? <i>(school)</i>  Participant: We get extra support.    ... The teachers  ...The way they teach us</p>	<p>Values support.  Recognises support.  'We' refers to a group of students with something in common.</p>
<p><i>(school values and learning habits)</i>  You have to follow the rules and that.  ... There's, er, integrity, diligence, civility, and... and there's rules that you can't, you can't chew gums in class, that you can't... you have to put your hand up before you say summat, <i>(inaudible)</i> planner warning, detention, depends.</p>	<p>School specific language.  Some familiarity with expectations.  Reference to sanctions – relates to values and leaning habits.</p>
<p>Interviewer: Uh huh. And do you know what integrity, civility and diligence mean?  Participant: Yeh.  Interviewer: What do they mean?  Participant: I can't remember  Interviewer: Is it hard to remember?  Participant: Yeh.</p>	<p>Words without meaning.</p>
<p>I think diligence is when you show the right thing that...  ...And diligence is when you, there's no one watching but you still do the right thing, like... that's the only thing I</p>	<p>Limited understanding of school values.</p>

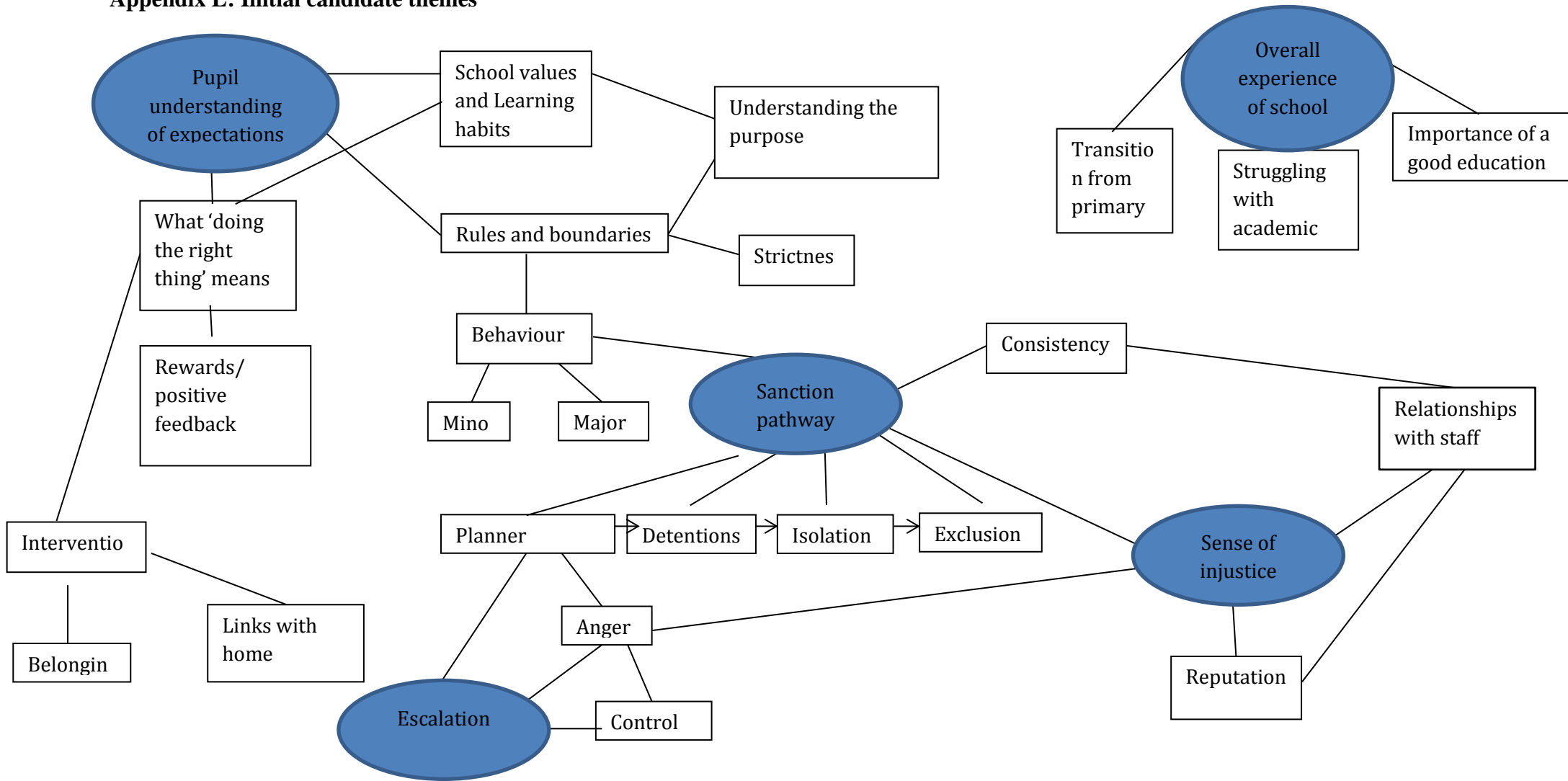
can remember.	
<i>(School learning habits)</i> ...There's independent silent study, quiet partner, respect for the whole class. ...Because it says on the board at the front at the front. ...With an arrow pointing.	Learning habits. School specific language Visuals support understanding
... You get a positive or they get an achievement. ... That you've achieved something good. ... Their goals or the work or their behaviour.	Positive feedback/ rewards 'Doing the right thing' linked to goals, work and behaviour Achievement
If you get no detentions at then the cycle you like go to places like [theatre] or whatever or if you have attendance 100 per cent for the whole year you have a like attendance trip or like... basically if you do something good you get achievements they take you somewhere like last year they took us to what do you call it, that zoo?	Extrinsic rewards. Trips out of school, experiences No detentions = reward (difficult to achieve for some students?)  Implies has experienced rewards.
I got the attendance one.	Good attendance
Then they go iso or get excluded depends.  <i>(Following planner warning)</i> ... Then a detention, if you carry on, go on call. ...and they take you to different class or to iso.	Sanction pathway Recognition of one step leading to another if behaviour doesn't change.
...I came in the top 17 for [online app] maths. ...So basically, you gotta do your maths, you have to go home, you have to complete your homework on it.  ...Top 17 out of all [MAT] schools.	Sense of achievement Involvement in academic side of school Pride in achievements
... They give you a positive card to take home or ... they write a good note in you planner. Interviewer: And has that happened to you – Participant: Oh and then they give you a positive. Interviewer: Okay. And you have had a positive card to take home? Participant: Yeh. Interviewer: And did you like that? Participant: <i>(nods)</i> .	Links with home Experience of rewards/positive feedback Good feeling
Interviewer: Can you tell me about a time when you didn't do the right thing? Participant: <i>(pause)</i> Once, it was ages ago... ...Basically this guy call me puff and then and I got angry.	Recalls more serious incident. Anger Retaliation
I got in iso and my parents came in  ...And my parents came in.	Consequences Isolation Links with home Parental involvement
<i>(Response of adults)</i>	Effect on others

They got angry	Perceived them to be angry with him
Unfair. Because he started it. ...but it's not my fault. ... he started it and I got done for it.	Sense of injustice. Not being listened to/ understood. Frustration.
Miss B came and that, then she called that other person, I think he's PC [name of police officer]. ...And then he was talking to me and said you should not do it next time. If someone's ( <i>inaudible</i> ) to you, you ignore them and go past them.	Community Police involvement Reflection on actions encouraged Learning from experience; how to respond differently next time.
Interviewer: Was it helpful to talk to them about what had happened? Participant: Yeh but it's not my fault.	Chance to talk – helpful
Interviewer: And do you feel like they listened to you when you told them that? Participant: No. They just put me in iso	Not being listened to. Immediate response – isolation. Misunderstood; adults not taking time to understand.
Interviewer: What do you think is good about the school values and learning habits? Participant: That they help people to concentrate and not be naughty.	Values and learning habits are helpful. Clear expectations are useful. Boundaries. Help to remain focused and on task (for others too?)
...Sometimes you can be on report. ...Only once I was on report. ... You have to be good and if you fail it you go to head of year. You fail you go to, what's it called ( <i>pause</i> ) it's that... I forgot what it's called. ( <i>pause</i> )... SLT ... You go to SLT report and you fail that and you be excluded.	Experience of being on report. Stepped response. Be good or fail.  Exclusion.
Interviewer: ...Have you ever been excluded? Participant: Yeh. ...for the fight. Interviewer: ...How long did you get excluded for? Participant: A day.	Experience of fixed term exclusion
Interviewer: ...did you have like a meeting before you came back to school or anything? Participant: Yeh.	Return to school meeting following exclusion.
Interviewer: ... do you think it was helpful being excluded for a day? Did it help you to do the right thing after that? Participant: I learned from my mistakes. Interviewer: You learnt from your mistakes. Participant: Yeh.	Learning from mistakes. Purpose of exclusion – to learn from mistakes.
Interviewer: ... do you feel like a lot of times you get planner warnings and detentions and...? Participant: Yeh.	Frequency of warnings/ detentions. Perceived to be a lot.

<p>Interviewer: You think that you get a lot of them? Participant: Yeh.</p>	
<p>Interviewer: Does anything in school help you to get less? Participant: No. Interviewer: Any interventions or anything? Participant: Unless I'm on report.</p>	<p>Report leads to less sanctions. Perceived to be helpful.</p>
<p>Interviewer: ... can you think of anything else that would help you to get in to trouble less? Participant: I suppose a report card. And positives. Maybe if I be good and don't get detention I get a positive card home. Interviewer: Okay, so that would help you, motivate you to do the right thing more? Participant: Yeh.</p>	<p>Report – helpful. Positives Being good = not getting detention Values links with home; feedback to parents.</p>
<p>Like, you do something wrong, you just like get punished like. It depends what it is like. Say this, you stole summat then you end up putting you in iso and calling your parents, call them in, because obviously it's a bad thing.</p>	<p>Do the wrong thing = punishment Punishment dependent on incident. Stealing – obviously bad. Isolation – 'putting in' – being 'done to'.</p>
<p>Participant: Yeh. But like if you've done something good like you've helped a teacher or you've got a positive, they ring your parents and tell them you've done well in school. Interviewer: And does that help you to do well the next time? Participant: Yeh. You wanna get a positive card home. Interviewer: Is that something you really want to get? Participant: Yeh everyone wants to get it.</p>	<p>Helping teacher = the right thing. Values links with home; sharing positive feedback with parents. Positive cards home are valued by all.</p>
<p>Interviewer: Do you think at your school it's... everything's working well in terms of helping students to do the right thing and do well at school? Participant: Yeh.</p>	<p>Positive about school. Help for students.</p>
<p>Sometimes you get detention for no reason, like if your pen just fell on the floor and you go round just to get the pen, you get a detention for it.</p>	
<p>Interviewer: What about particular lessons? Are some lessons better than others? (<i>In terms of managing behaviour</i>) Participant: Yeh.  Interviewer: And would that be more some teachers than other teachers? (<i>Giving detentions</i>) Participant: Yeh</p>	<p>Inconsistency between lessons/ teachers.</p>
<p>Yeh like once, it was ages ago, this was in Year 7. Basically my pen went on the floor and I had to go round get my pen, and the teacher said "Put your pens up" and she said "Five four three two one", and when she got to</p>	<p>Sense of injustice. Quick teacher response. No excuses. Lack of understanding.</p>

one my pen wasn't up and I got detention for it and...	
...I didn't get no planner warning.	Sanction without warning. Not following behaviour policy.
I got angry	Anger Managing emotions. Frustration Response to feeling hard done by.
Interviewer: Do you know, when you feel angry do you know how to calm yourself down? Participant: No. I just, I just get more angry.	Being angry leads to more anger. Escalation. Inability to manage emotions.
Do you know when we haven't done nothing, why do we still get detention for it when it's not our fault?	Doesn't perceive to have done anything wrong. Lack of student understanding sanction. Detentions given without explanation.
Someone calls you from behind asking your name and you ignore them, they're asking you again, I just look back and then you get detention when it's other person, not your fault.	Immediate teacher response, to behaviour seen. No excuses.
They say "You're arguing back, you're arguing back" They end up putting you on call.	Escalation through sanction pathway. Not being heard/ listened to.
Angry, because it's not my fault. He should get detention not me, he called me.	Anger. Sense of injustice. Being treated unfairly compared to other students. Feeling victimised. Lack of understanding.

**Appendix L: Initial candidate themes**



## Appendix M: Supporting quotes

...	Pause
[...]	Text that is not included
<i>(Text in italics)</i>	Clarification based on question asked/ interviewer comment.

### P = Participant

Main Theme 1: Pupil understanding of 'doing the right thing'		
<i>Understanding of the core values</i>		
No.		P
1	Civility means be kind at all times, diligence means keep working hard and integrity means...erm...I don't know what that one means.	A
2	We do line-up and the teacher comes [...] and they talk about civility, diligence or integrity <i>(to help remember them)</i> .	A
3	Means 'do the right thing and stay true our mortal principles' <i>(reading from the prompt – made an error, mortal instead of 'moral')</i> .	A
4	Civility. 'We are professional in everything we do. We are... And we are respectful and cour-te-hous' <i>(reading from the prompt)</i> . What does, how do you say that?	A
5	<i>(Showing the core values)</i> Never give up [...] do full attention of your work [...] if you're civility and you help someone open the door [...] do integrity like tell the truth.	A
6	I about to have a fight with him...Then I told the teacher. <i>(Core value being shown)</i> Integrity. And civility because, er, no-one gets hurt or anything.	A
7	Civility is...erm... doing the right thing and basically, er like, if someone hasn't got their equipment, and you lend them a pen [...] then that shows civility.	B
8	Integrity doing the right thing without a teacher asking you.	B
9	I forgot what diligence.	B
10	<i>(What do the core values mean?)</i> I can't remember.	C
11	I think diligence is when you show the right thing.	D
12	And diligence is when you, there's no one watching but you still do the right thing, like... that's the only thing I can remember.	D
13	Diligence, civility and I don't know the other one.	C
14	And civility is like helping others and integrity is... I don't know. Integrity...	C
15	[...] diligence you just gotta keep getting on checking and it says never give up. And civility is be kind to everyone [...]	A
16	Integrity it mean do the right thing.	A
<i>Understanding of the learning habits</i>		
17	You have to be the learning habits.	A
18	One of the learning habits, no answering back.	A
19	And another one is stay on task.	A
20	The third one is... I don't know any more.	A
21	Because in our classroom and, they've got it on, in the rooms, you can look at them, and we've got a board, so if our teacher wants to put independent silence study then we don't talk, just do the work she would turn it to there	A



	and if she wants you in quiet partners she put it there, she just turn it on that. And then we can talk but if we have to be that quiet that no-one else can hear us.	
22	One's respect for the whole class, that means track the speaker, whoever's talking...	A
23	And the last one is polite table groups, that means talk on the table.	A
24	Independent silent study is when you work on your own, and no talking [...] you're focused on your own work. [...] Quiet partners it means that only you and the person next to have to talk in quiet partners, like whisper.	B
25	There's independent silent study, quiet partner, respect for the whole class.	D
26	<i>(How do you know which learning habit is the right one?)</i> Because it says on the board at the front...with an arrow pointing.	D
27	You have to have a massive board and they keep in it in the room on the wall. And they got arrow and when they <i>(the teachers)</i> want to change it, they change it.	C
28	Independent silent study [...] quiet partners [...], respect for the whole class.	C
29	Quiet partners and independent silent study.	C
<i>Doing the right thing</i>		
30	<i>(When a student is doing the right thing)</i> They get the work done.	A
31	They get good grades.	A
32	A positive is if you've been good in like, normally 3 core values that we got, if you like never give up, if you do full attention of your work and they give you a... a... positive. Or if you're civility and you help someone open the door that's like a positive, and if you do integrity like tell the truth that's like a positive.	A
<i>School rules</i>		
33	There's rules that you can't chew gum in class [...] you have to put your hand up before you say summat.	D
34	For talking really or like looking back	A
35	Off task...playing my equipment... laughing... being distracted	B
<i>Purpose of expectations of core values, learning habits and rules</i>		
36	They're helpful for everyone.	A
37	You won't miss your learning or nothing.	A
38	They help people to concentrate and not be naughty.	D
39	It would all be chaos, yeh, it would be chaos.	A
40	Because the learning habits, like if you don't have them the learning habits your classes, they gonna keep talking, they aren't gonna do the work, but if you have the learning habits you can stop them from doing it, like if you tell them not to talk it's gonna be quiet.	A
41	And if you tell them to talk quietly they be quiet like if they see the learning mood.	A
42	If you don't talk it's better because if someone else is talking you won't be able to hear the person talk. And if you keep on talking you're just gonna distract other people's learning, coz they won't be able to hear.	A
<i>Clarity</i>		
43	But the thing I don't get is you're not allowed to put your hand up. At	C

	school it says you're not allowed to use it in school [...] And then, if you shout they say you should have put your hand up but you're not allowed to do that.	
<i>Difference in teacher responses</i>		
44	It's always the same teacher that gives me detention.	C
45	Science I mostly get in trouble in.	C
46	I just like stay focused in them lessons because the teachers are strict. Stricter. The lessons that I [...] do get in to trouble, they're still strict teachers but they're not as strict.	B
<i>Strictness</i>		
47	I want to go to like a normal school, but this school it's too strict.	C
48	Like, it's like, I keep on getting in to trouble at this school. I want to go to a normal school which is less stricter, which is gonna be more better.	C
49	I like this school yeh but it's too strict.	C
50	It's hard like, the rules and everything.	C
<b>Sub-theme 1a: Transition from primary school</b>		
<i>Primary school:</i>		
51	<i>(What would help you to do the right thing?)</i> My primary school values.	B
52	We didn't have to move around lessons [...] people were getting on with each other and it were just better, like, nice.	B
53	Primary school completely easier and different.	C
54	At primary school I was kind of good.	C
<i>At high school</i>		
55	You just get detentions. You have to move around... There's more hours.	B
56	Everything different. Like you got, like it's more stricter, you got more routines and everything.	C
<i>Difficulty adjusting</i>		
57	I want to go to like a normal school, but this school it's too strict.	C
58	Like, it's like, I keep on getting in to trouble at this school. I want to go to a normal school which is less stricter, which is gonna be more better.	C
59	I like this school yeh but it's too strict.	C
60	It's hard like, the rules and everything.	C
<b>Sub-theme 1b: Familiarity with sanction processes</b>		
<i>Knowledge of the sanction process</i>		
61	They will get a planner warning, and then if you keep messing about you get a detention and then if you keep messing about you just get on call [...]	A
62	If they keep messing about they go to different class or they might go to isolation. And if they keep messing about in isolation the might stay there for the whole lesson. And on call you get two hours and if they mess about in other lesson, they go to isolation again.	A
63	It's half an hour for a detention, but if you more, if like I have 10 answering back detentions I get two hours, if I get 5 answering back detentions it's an hour, and if it's like one it's half an hour 'til I go to 5 and then 10.	A
64	First, he'll get his planner warning, which is a warning so you can learn from it, but if he still does it [...] he will get a detention, then the teacher [...] writes it in his planner so then he knows [...] then his mum can see it. And then teacher logs it on after the lesson or in the lesson, and then if he still carries on he'll get 'on call' and then whoever's on call, [...] will come	B

	and pick up the student and [...] put him in to isolation, er, for two hours after school.	
65	But if [...] the student gets a [...] isolation in fifth period then his two hours will be the next day.	B
66	You get planner warning first, then you get detention, then if you carry on you get 'on call' and that means you get sent to isolation for that lesson. You get two hour detention and if you keep on carrying on next day you get isolation for the whole day and if you're carrying on you get placement at a different school.	C
67	They go to iso or get excluded, depends.	D
68	<i>(After planning warning)</i> Then a detention, if you carry on, go on call.	D
69	They take you to a different class or to iso.	D
<i>Planner warning</i>		
70	First, he'll get his planner warning, which is a warning so you can learn from it.	B
71	I didn't get no planner warning	D
72	If you get a planner warning nowt happens they just take your planner and then if you mess about one more, you got one chance basically and then you get detention.	A
73	That's like your first chance, and if you do anything again that's an instant detention.	A
74	They just take your planner.	A
75	They just say "Planner warning, give me your planner". And take your planner.	C
<i>Detentions</i>		
76	If you're in quiet partners and you're talking loud... then you get detention... if you're late you get a detention; answering back, detention; not following the school rules, detention; talking in the corridors too loud, detention.	B
77	I had a hundred and eight detentions last year.	A
78	I did loads of detentions <i>(in Year 7)</i> .	A
79	At first I still got loads. I still got 18 <i>(in the first term of Year 8)</i> .	A
80	<i>(Is it better this year?)</i> Not always, sometimes.	A
81	<i>(Detention as a deterrent)</i> Sometimes yeh because I don't want to get detention	A
<i>On call</i>		
82	The on call picks you, the on call takes you and she talks to you about what happened and that and then they take you, they take you to isolation or they might think oh you got one more chance and they might take you back in the class.	A
<i>Isolation</i>		
83	I was in isolation most of the time. I was only in school for like 20 days.	A
84	After isolation you go back to class	A
85	You have to copy your knowledge navigator out.	A
86	Yeh you have to copy and write navigator which is like, I don't know why you have to do that. Basically you're not learning any work you just copy your knowledge navigator in isolation.	C

87	You have to do that all the time when you get in trouble and you go isolation you have to write a statement [...] if you got done for fighting or like, like, swearing at a teacher or something like that [...] and if they don't believe you you have to do it again. [...] They just want to know what happened.	C
88	Sometimes the teacher comes to speak to you outside isolation (which is helpful).	C
89	They just put me in iso.	D
<i>Exclusion</i>		
90	[...] they got a placement in another school for one day.	C
91	I got ten days exclusion (following incident perceived to be threatening)	B
92	I missed four weeks off school.	B
<i>Sanction as punishment</i>		
93	Like, you do something wrong, you just like get punished like. It depends what it is like. Say this, you stole summat then you end up putting you in iso and calling your parents, call them in, because obviously it's a bad thing.	D
<i>Inconsistency</i>		
94	I got a detention for it and I didn't get no planner warning.	D
<b>Sub-theme 1c: Experience of rewards and feedback</b>		
<i>Positive feedback</i>		
95	The teacher would always keep reminding them and they would get good grades in the test.	A
96	They would know they've been good.	A
97	The teacher might keep reminding them they've done good things.	A
98	They get an achievement [...] you've achieved something good [...] Their goals or the work or their behaviour	D
99	I came in the top 17 for [online app] maths.	D
100	I told the teacher and then what happened and I didn't have a fight (feedback is internal, didn't result in a fight so feels sense of achievement).	A
101	(How will the teachers know who's doing the right thing?) [...] they will look around the class to see if anybody's messing about.	B
<i>Feedback home</i>		
102	They give you a positive card to take home or... they write a good note in your planner.	D
103	[...] they ring your parents and tell them you've done well in school.	D
104	You wanna get a positive card home [...] everyone wants to get it.	D
<i>Lack of sanction</i>		
105	Less detentions	A
106	Like I feel happy. No detentions for a month!	B
<i>Positives</i>		
107	They might give them a positive	A
108	A positive is if you've been good in like, normally 3 core values that we got, if you like never give up, if you do full attention of your work and they give you a... a... positive. Or if you're civility and you help someone open the door that's like a positive, and if you do integrity like tell the truth that's like a positive.	A
109	It goes in our planner and it goes in our... like it shows us if you go on my	A

	name on the computer on SIMS.	
110	Get rewarded like, by positives, or the teacher like. [...] Given a positive like they log it on the system (participant indicates liked it when this happened to him).	B
111	Oh and then they give you a positive.	D
112	[...] if you've done something good like you've helped a teacher or you've got a positive	D
<i>Extrinsic rewards</i>		
113	This we started, what shall we do if you get loads of points, we don't know yet. (Participant explaining that students have been consulted in this process but is ongoing).	A
114	(What happens when you do the right thing or show core values) You get a reward.	A
115	(Head of year) She keep track so every cycle she gonna take us to like, so this cycle she gonna take us to [name of theatre].	B
116	Anyone with no negatives, zero negatives or lots of positives and no detentions will get to go.	B
117	You get like treats, so at the end of a cycle your form, and if you've got loads of positives in your form you get like, like, you order pizza at the end of the cycle or something like that [...] Going on residential trips or field trips or whatever.	C
118	If you get no detentions at then the cycle you like go to places like [theatre] or whatever or if you have attendance 100 per cent for the whole year you have a like attendance trip or like... basically if you do something good you get achievements they take you somewhere like last year they took us to what do you call it, that zoo? (Participant did not go on this trip).	D
<i>Uncertainty about what happens when do the right thing</i>		
119	I can't explain it.	B
120	(Do they get rewarded?) I don't think.	B
121	Nah, you just, they just see how many positives you got, you don't need to think... (unable to say whether there is a goal to work towards).	C
<i>Personal experience</i>		
122	I've got 200 hundred and something. I've got 21 so that means I've got 201, 210.	A
123	[...] for being good, for doing my work, or civility, I don't know.	A
124	(When asked if ever reward for doing the right thing) No.	
125	(When asked if could recall a time was rewarded for doing something well in school) I dunno... I dunno.	C
126	The teacher know I do good in my lesson (in a lesson gets in less trouble in).	A
127	Not enough rewards.	C
128	I got the attendance one.	D
129	They just told me, I din't get no reward for it. (After feeling sense of achievement).	D
<i>Sense of pride</i>		
130	We got these five pound or ten pound vouchers (whilst part of a behaviour intervention group). I get them for my family.	B
<b>Main Theme 2: A Vicious Cycle.</b>		

<b>Sub-theme 2a Reputation and a Sense of Injustice</b>		
<i>Being suspected</i>		
131	And do you know everything, er, happen like in school, summat bad happens in school, teachers suspect me ... She came in to our form ... and she was looking at, keep on looking at me.	C
132	In Year 7 I used to mess about loads but now the teachers suspect me that, like if someone talks in the class they suspect me and everything... so then I get in to trouble, sometimes it's not my fault. Sometimes it's other people's fault but they suspect me.	C
133	Because last year I was messing about so much, sometimes they think it's me.	A
134	Sometimes the teacher she always suspect, that teacher she always suspects me..., I didn't even have her for year 7 but she always suspects me.	C
<i>Hard to break out of</i>		
135	Or like sometimes I try hard. I still end up getting detention.	C
136	I just try hard. When I don't try hard I don't get a detention, I try hard I get a detention.	C
137	I keep on getting in to trouble at this school.	C
<i>Blame</i>		
138	It wasn't even me sometimes and they give me a detention.	A
139	Sometimes they just blame it on me.	A
140	[...] last week [...] he (another student) by accident, he's threw my pencil case because he like he's going to the toilet and by accident drop my pencil case on the floor and she (teacher) came and she goes "Why is your pencil case on the floor?" and I go "I don't know why" and she gave me detention. And I spoke to her [...] after school and she said "No, I saw you should of, you should of picked your pencil case up instead of leaving it on the floor."	C
141	Yeh like once, it was ages ago, this was in Year 7. Basically my pen went on the floor and I had to go round get my pen, and the teacher said "Put your pens up" and she said "Five four three two one", and when she got to one my pen wasn't up and I got detention for it and I didn't get no planner warning.	D
142	I was kept in isolation for no reason and stuff, just because, just because, just because, by accident [...] ( <i>Referring to a specific incident</i> ).	B
143	Do you know when we haven't done nothing, why do we still get detention for it when it's not our fault?	D
144	Someone calls you from behind asking your name and you ignore them, they're asking you again, I just look back and then you get detention when it's other person, not your fault.	D
145	Yeh but it's not my fault.	D
146	[...] he started it and I got done for it.	D
147	Sometimes you get detention for no reason, like if your pen just fell on the floor and you go round just to get the pen, you get a detention for it.	D
148	Angry, because it's not my fault. He should get detention not me, he called me.	D
<i>Lack of understanding</i>		
149	Before cause ( <i>specific incident</i> ) in school and then miss gave me a	C

	detention for that and I spoke to her in the lesson but she still wouldn't believe me I've got ( <i>identifier</i> ). She says "Oh no you were off task" and everything and she gave me a detention.	
<b>Sub-theme 2b: Anger and Emotional Regulation:</b>		
<i>Reference to anger</i>		
150	If I get a planner warning... I get really angry so I just answer the teacher back.	A
151	[...] sometimes I just get angry.	A
152	[...]and then I get really angry..." (When you feel angry do you know how to calm yourself down?) No. I just, I just get more angry.	D
153	And then I get angry so I answer back [...]	A
154	But last year I got really angry so I just keep getting detentions. Do you ever stop what you were doing when you get a warning?) Sometimes and sometimes I just get angry.	A
155	(Do you find it hard to not get angry?) Yeh.	A
156	Yeh I got angry.	A
157	I do get angry with some people, they just like annoy me.	C
158	(When you feel angry do you know how to manage your anger?) No I just shout at him (another student).	C
159	Basically this guy call me puff and then I get angry.	D
160	(How does that make you feel?) Angry, because it's not my fault.	D
161	(What would stop you speaking to the teacher at the end of the lesson?) Just because you get mad at the time, maybe.	A
162	(If you thought it was unfair because it wasn't really you would you get more mad?) Yeh, much more madder.	A
<i>Indications of anger/lack of control</i>		
163	I don't let them take my planner sometimes, I don't let them take my planner [...] I just hold it.	A
164	I only had one fight in Year 7.	C
165	No I couldn't explain why I did it.	B
<b>Sub-theme 2c: Secondary Behaviours and Escalation</b>		
166	If I get a planner warning I get [...] really angry so I just answer the teacher back.	A
167	Then I get angry so I answer back and then it just... on call or detention.	A
168	Last year I got really angry so I just keep getting detentions, when I got one answering back detention, I just kept getting loads of detentions.	A
169	I just get angry and I straight away said what did I do, what did I do? And I kept answering back and I don't do my work, and then they she gives me on call and then I get really angry, so when I go back to my lessons I just keep getting detentions.	A
170	I don't let them take my planner sometimes, I don't let them take my planner.	A
171	(When perceive unfairness can you speak to the teacher?) I said it to them and it gets more worsen and say you're answering back.	A
172	(What participant would like to be able to do to avoid escalation) In your mind just try to not say nothing, just keep it more quiet and don't say anything.	A
173	I would sometimes I will still do it and then get a detention and sometimes	B

	I just stop.	
174	When I carry on, I get in to on call then, and then I ( <i>inaudible</i> ), but when I stop, I just like behave again.	B
175	(Why do you think you're not able to stop when you've had a warning?) I'm weird, that's why.	B
176	[...] just give you detention, and then, if you want to speak you have to speak at the end of the lesson and I go speak to them at the end of the lesson and they still give me detention.	C
177	I keep on getting into trouble at this school.	C
178	They say "You're arguing back, you're arguing back" They end up putting you on call.	D
179	(When planner warning has been issued) Sometimes I give it, sometimes I don't. After like a minute I think about it and then I just give it to them.	A
<b>Main Theme 3: Supportive Factors</b>		
<b>Sub-theme 3a: Good Relationships with Adults</b>		
180	(When teacher made the decision for participant to sit by himself in lesson) the teacher know I do good in my lesson, and if I sit with someone then I get distracted and I keep talking.	A
181	I got angry and I was gonna have a fight with him but I told that teacher.	A
182	And can you tell [name of teacher] that if I need... help with anything or something like that.	B
183	They were disappointed in me (recalling incident which he seemed regretful for).	B
184	She doesn't even talk to me as much, just because I don't talk to her (about an adult in school, indicating that this relationship had been important).	B
185	It's good and like [...] they know like who's done [...] summat bad, they find out quickly and everything.	C
<b>Sub-theme 3b: Intervention and Support</b>		
<i>Intervention group</i>		
186	She ( <i>adult</i> ) put me in this Going for Goals, which helped me, and then I used to behave in my lessons and stuff, and then, yeh.	B
187	( <i>when intervention had stopped</i> ) But then it all changed in January after the holidays because then I started messing about and stuff. [...] I don't know what happened to me. ( <i>Was it because the group had finished?</i> ) Yeh.	B
188	I just got out of it ( <i>the intervention</i> ), it was because I been very good.	B
189	( <i>Asked if intervention group was helpful</i> ) Yeh, little bit, yeh but then it's stopped now.	C
190	( <i>What's the best thing about school?</i> ) The interventions they put for you and everything.	C
191	They bring people in like you, and like they give you interventions and things.	C
<i>Report card</i>		
192	Yeh, Going for Goals. But tell her to do Going for Goals again but not with the reports.	B
193	It just look bad on me that I have a report and stuff. Or she could put me, she could say 'Going for Goals Report' on it, she could write Going for Goals	B



	on it.	
194	<i>(What would help you to get in to trouble less?)</i> I suppose a report card.	D
195	Only once I was on report. You have to be good and if you fail it [...] You go to SLT and you fail that and you be excluded.	D
<i>Homework club</i>		
196	I had interventions like compulsory homework club.	C
197	I want to still go to that cause I got homework detention today in English.	C
198	<i>(homework club)</i> cause at home I keep on forgetting and sometimes I can't be bothered, where at school you can do it, 'cause you're at school.	C
<i>Time out</i>		
199	I want to have a time out pass.	C
200	Some of my friends have time out pass and like sometimes when you don't feel like you're okay in that lesson you can just go to... you just go to library or isolation for ten minutes.	C
<i>Supportive adults</i>		
201	<i>(What is school like?)</i> Good. We get extra support.	D
<i>Chance to reflect</i>		
202	On the way <i>(to isolation)</i> you get to talk about it.	C
203	Sometimes the teacher comes to speak to you outside isolation. <i>(Is that helpful?)</i> Yeh.	C
204	In isolation you have to write a statement. [...] And if they don't believe you, have to write it again. [...] They just want to know what happened. <i>(Would it be helpful to think about what you could have done differently?)</i> Yeh.	C
<b>Sub-theme 3c: Motivation and Enjoyment</b>		
<i>Enjoyment of lessons</i>		
205	Some of the lessons are good and like, sometimes I like the lesson like geography.	A
206	<i>(What do you like about it?)</i> I don't know I just like it. I like when you have to do like, co-ordinations.	A
207	Sometimes science <i>(is alright)</i> because you get to, like, do experiments.	A
208	Yeh, so I like history, it tells you about the past. Because look how we live now and we didn't know how they lived, and they...	A
209	<i>(What makes school good?)</i> The teachers, the way they teach us.	D
210	We've got good lessons and everything.	C
<i>Pride</i>		
211	I came in the top 17 for [online app] maths [...].Top 17 out of all [MAT] schools.	D
212	I'm gonna choose history because I did good in Year 7, like I got 50 out of 100, so that would have been like a 5.	A
<i>But it's not always enjoyable</i>		
213	I don't like school because it just boring because... all they just have to do, first of all to me, in my opinion, it waste your time from your family for eight hours. All you have to do is sit in a chair for one hour, listen to a teacher, do work, there's no point in doing it.	B
<i>And sometimes difficult</i>		
214	Struggle <i>(with)</i> learning, the lessons, the room conditions [...] how the room looks and stuff.	B

215	<i>(Why might you be easily distracted in those lessons?) Hard (the lessons).</i>	B
<i>The future</i>		
216	If I get good grades I can get a good job.	A
217	The best thing about school is... having an education because other people in the world don't get an education. They don't get to learn, that's why, and plus you need a job in life. Because if you don't get a job in life, when you grow up, because when you grow up, you'll be poor and you'll be homeless on the streets.	B
<i>But this is hard to achieve</i>		
218	Miss but I can't get an education because it's just too hard, the work is too hard, GCSE's are really hard, they're really hard, and if I fail, I have to go college, redo them, and if I still fail I don't know what I'm gonna do.	B

## Appendix N: Ethics approval letter



Downloaded: 02/06/2019  
Approved: 20/05/2019

Ellisabeth Sheppard  
Registration number: 170109921  
School of Education  
Programme: DEdCPsy

Dear Elisabeth

**PROJECT TITLE:** Non-negotiable rules and pathways of sanctions and rewards: the experiences of pupils in a secondary school.

**APPLICATION:** Reference Number 025553

On behalf of the University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on 20/05/2019 the above-named project was **approved** on ethics grounds, on the basis that you will adhere to the following documentation that you submitted for ethics review:

- University research ethics application form 025553 (dated 16/05/2019).
- Participant information sheet 1060200 version 3 (16/05/2019).
- Participant information sheet 1060201 version 2 (15/05/2019).
- Participant information sheet 1060193 version 2 (15/05/2019).
- Participant consent form 1060196 version 2 (15/05/2019).
- Participant consent form 1060194 version 2 (15/05/2019).
- Participant consent form 1060195 version 2 (15/05/2019).

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

Yours sincerely

David Hyatt  
Ethics Administrator  
School of Education

**Appendix O: Staff consent letter**

**Secondary school pupils' experiences of BM.**

**Consent Form (school staff)**

<i>Please tick the appropriate boxes</i>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Taking Part in the Project</b>		
I have read and understood the project information sheet dated 03/06/2019 and the project has been fully explained to me. (If you will answer No to this question please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to take part in the project. I understand that taking part in the project will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supporting the research project and the practical implications of this, in terms of recruiting participants and providing the necessary time and space to the researcher and participants.</li> <li>• taking part in the discussion of results and potential action following the analysis of pupil interviews.</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that taking part is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time. No reasons will be required for withdrawing from the study there will be no adverse consequences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>How the information will be used during and after the project</b>		
I understand that during the dissemination of results, any discussion and action agreed will be recorded in written form. Any information as a result of this that includes names of staff members will be kept by the school and will belong to them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand my personal details such as name, phone number, address and email address etc. will not be revealed to people outside the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand and agree that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs. I understand that I will not be named in these outputs unless I specifically request this.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>So that the information you provide can be used legally by the researcher</b>		
I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials generated as part of this project to The University of Sheffield.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name:

Signature

Date

Position held:

Name of Researcher:

Signature

Date

**Project contact details for further information:**

Researcher: Elisabeth Sheppard      Email: [ELSheppard2@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:ELSheppard2@sheffield.ac.uk)

Research Supervisor: Victoria Lewis      Email: [v.lewis@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:v.lewis@sheffield.ac.uk)

Save 2 copies of the consent form: 1 paper copy for the participant, 1 copy for the research data file

**Appendix P: Parent consent letter**

**Secondary school pupils' experiences of BM.**

**Consent Form (parent)**

<i>Please tick the appropriate boxes</i>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Taking Part in the Project</b>		
I have read and understood the project information sheet dated 06/06/2019 and the project has been fully explained to me. (If you will answer No to this question please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree that my son/ daughter can take part in the project if they wish. I understand that if my son/ daughter agrees to take part in the project this will involve participating in an interview at school with the researcher. My son/ daughter will be asked questions about their experiences of school and how behaviour is managed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree for background information held by the school about my son/ daughter to be shared with the main researcher, e.g. Special Educational Needs; eligibility for Free School Meals; records of sanctions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that taking part is voluntary and that I can request for my son/ daughter to withdraw from the study at any time. My son/ daughter may withdraw from the study at any time if they wish. No reasons will be required for withdrawing from the study there will be no adverse consequences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>How information will be used during and after the project</b>		
I understand that personal details such as name, phone number, address and email address etc. will not be revealed to people outside the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand and agree that my son/daughter's words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs. I understand that my son/daughter will not be named in these outputs unless they specifically request this.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>So that the information provided can be used legally by the researcher</b>		
I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials generated as part of this project to The University of Sheffield.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name:

Signature

Date

Parent of:

Name of Researcher:

Signature

Date

**Project contact details for further information:**

Researcher: Elisabeth Sheppard      Email: [ELSheppard2@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:ELSheppard2@sheffield.ac.uk)

Research Supervisor: Victoria Lewis      Email: [v.lewis@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:v.lewis@sheffield.ac.uk)

**Appendix Q: Student consent letter**

**Secondary school pupils' experiences of BM.**

**Consent Form (young person)**

<i>Please tick the appropriate boxes</i>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Taking Part in the Project</b>		
I have read and understood the project information sheet dated 20/09/19 the project has been fully explained to me. (If you will answer No to this question please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to take part in the project. I understand that taking part in the project will include participating in an interview at school with the researcher. I will be asked questions about my experiences of school and how behaviour is managed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree for background information held by the school about me to be shared with the main researcher, e.g. Special Educational Needs; eligibility for Free School Meals; records of sanctions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time. I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part and there will be no adverse consequences if I choose to withdraw.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>How my information will be used during and after the project</b>		
I understand my personal details such as name, phone number, address and email address etc. will not be revealed to people outside the project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand and agree that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs. I understand that I will not be named in these outputs unless I specifically request this.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>So that the information you provide can be used legally by the researcher</b>		
I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials generated as part of this project to The University of Sheffield.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of participant [printed]

Signature

Date

Name of Researcher [printed]

Signature

Date

**Project contact details for further information:**



Researcher: Elisabeth Sheppard      Email: [ELSheppard2@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:ELSheppard2@sheffield.ac.uk)

Research Supervisor: Victoria Lewis      Email: [v.lewis@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:v.lewis@sheffield.ac.uk)

Save 2 copies of the consent form: 1 paper copy for the participant, 1 copy for the research data file

## **Appendix R: Script for meeting VP**

You have been invited to take part in this research as this school has been identified as a secondary which employs a structured behavioural management system involving a clear set of rules and expectations and a stepped response of rewards and sanctions.

I am interested in what we can learn from the experiences of students who consistently remain on the sanction pathway with few rewards. I know that you have sought support from the EPT previously due to concerns about a group of students who remain on the sanction pathway despite staff consistently following the BM process. I share your concern that the approach to managing behaviour does not seem to be working for this group of students and would like to explore what might be done differently by learning from student experiences.

I would like this to be a collaborative project. With your support I am hoping to interview 4-6 pupils who have been identified as cause for concern, to elicit detailed descriptions of their time in school; what helps them and what hinders them to conform to school rules and to respond positively to praise and reward. I would like to identify, through their experiences, ways the school can support them effectively and improve outcomes for them.

Once data has been gathered and analysed, I would like to share the results with a group of school staff, including members of the Senior Leadership Team. The analysis will look at common themes between the participants. Through discussion I aim to identify practice which could be incorporated into the school's BM system. We will explore together where the school is now in terms of managing the needs of these pupils and where you would like to be. We will then look at factors which can be put in place to achieve the goal, and factors which impede reaching the goal, before agreeing on realistic aims and actions.

I'd like to maintain regular contact with you throughout the data gathering stage to keep up to date with any changes that occur during the research project, as a result of my involvement or otherwise.

Thank you for considering participation in this research project.

## **Appendix S: Script for meeting students**

I'm carrying out research in to BM approaches in schools. I'd like to find out whether anything could be done differently to make sure that all pupils are supported and can get the most out of school. The staff at your school are also interested in this. They want to make sure that all students get the support that they need so that they are able to enjoy coming to school and learning. The staff are really interested in your views because you've had some support with this already and you might be able to tell me what has worked well and what other ideas you have for how you and other students could be supported to manage the expectations of school.

I'll be speaking to a few students in school individually, and then will meet with a group of staff to discuss what I've found out. I won't feedback any names of students or teachers, and because I'll be speaking to a few students, I won't feedback exactly what individuals tell me – I will group all the information together and will look for common themes (things that students told me that were similar). We're all really interested in your honest opinions and you can't get in to trouble for anything that you've told me. It's really important to school staff that students get a chance to have their say in a safe way. After this meeting I can meet with you again to tell you how your information was used, if you would like me to.

The information sheets give a bit more detail about how I'll carry out the research so if you're interested in taking part in this exciting study I'll go through them with you.

## Appendix T: Continued correspondence with VP throughout research process

### Conversation with Vice Principal on 18/11/19

*Have there been any changes since we last met, in either school processes or the way that you/ others perceive the situation?*

Support for the students has altered based on individual. 1 student in particular has settled well in Year 8 whereas for one student behaviour has escalated in severity. This student now has a personalised approach involving a key worker; restorative strategies; Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and psychotherapist. Student experiencing anger and frustration and felt that no-one was listening. Needed consistency. There have been notable improvements with new strategies in place.

- VP concerned that using the whole school system students are getting through the escalation process too quickly.
- Personalised Development Plan put in place involving meetings with parents and pupil.
- More in place PRIOR to considering placement in other schools (the MAT place students temporarily in other schools in the MAT).
- External provision budget used within school rather than to pay for students to go to alternative provisions. VP feels that morally and ethically this sits more comfortably. Does not feel the standard of alternative provisions is good enough and feels a sense of responsibility for the students. Want to be a more inclusive setting – looking at what they can do within rather than removing students who do not comply.
- Curriculum changes: provision to support students with SEN currently takes place in smaller class. This support is to be provided within mainstream classes, with additional small group interventions.

*Do you feel that your values have been instrumental in these changes occurring?* I asked this question as the VP took up this role 18months ago and there has been a shift in perceptions in this time.

- VP feels that these values are shared amongst the SLT and that the changes have been collaborative. These changes have taken place over last 18 months, whereas before more likely to use managed moves and alternative provisions; students working their way through the behaviour system quickly.

### Meeting with VP 20/01/20

1. Has anything changed since we last met? In terms of approaches to BM; perceptions of behaviour; behaviour of 4 student participants?

No changes due to consistent approach being embedded.

2. What, do you think, has been the catalyst of this change?

N/A

3. For the benefit of accurately representing the school (anonymously) what words and phrases would be used to describe the BM approach?  
E.g. Clear, consistent, fair, rigid, prescriptive, directive, disciplinarian, authoritarian, no excuses, zero tolerance, 'first time, every time', flexible, positive behaviour.

Clear; consistent; reasonable adjustment; SLT responsive and able to intervene and remove sanction if deemed inappropriate; **clear embedded vocabulary related to 3 core values** – diligence, integrity and diligence; noticing inappropriate behaviour relates to values, e.g. lack of...; labelling inappropriate behaviour displayed to make clear to student; refer to **'100 per cent'** e.g. **"100 per cent of the class should be on task"**; 'Warm strict'; encourage relationships; positive behaviour for learning; "Environment where learners can learn and teachers can teach"; **"We do the right thing because it's the right thing to do"**.

4. Is this the same for all schools in the trust?

How do overarching policies dictate schools within the trust?

Do schools within the trust have freedom to develop own policies, or are there certain values and principles that all adhere to? What are these?

All schools share the same learning habits and way of reinforcing these through visuals.

Individual core values developed within each school.

BP is interpreted differently by each school – a 'spectrum' of rigidity of approach. This school is in the middle. Others at the extreme end embed phrases such as 'First time, every time' and 'No excuses' but this school would not associate with those phrases. Aim to ensure approach is fair to those who need flexibility, but within the clear consistent boundaries which are within the overarching ethos of the MAT. Aim to be a calm, quiet, inclusive learning environment. Described as 'Aligned autonomy' (aligned with the trust policies).

5. What are the policies that are relevant to my research? Behaviour policy, and trust Positive Behaviour Policy? Yes

6. Clarification of shared problem/ concern:

*'A minority group of pupils do not respond in the expected way to the BM approach. Sanctions do not appear to act as a deterrent to these students as they consistently remain on the sanction pathway'. Agreed.*

(The notes from the consultation at EHH would be useful if they are available?) VP will see if these are available but she has already described changes made as a result of this interaction with EPT.

7. Does this concern apply to other students in school? How many roughly? More of a problem in certain year groups? More of a problem for certain teachers/ lessons than others?

Yes it does. More students are a concern in Year 8; this year group has 30% SEN compared to around 11% in other year groups.

The extent of the concern for each student is variable for different lessons and teachers but this is not generalised to all students; there are not patterns which suggest more of an issue for certain students, it is more to do with particular student/ teacher relationships.

8. What does the school hope to achieve from my involvement?

Further development of strategies to support vulnerable students within current systems, to reduce their involvement with the sanction pathway and increase engagement.

9. Who is on board with any changes to BM approach?

The concern is shared by SLT. Budget previously used for Alternative Provisions has been spent internally to support students within school.

10. What is the hierarchical structure of the school and trust?

SLT: Principal, Senior VP, 3 x VP, Assistant VP x 2; each linked to a Year group and support pastoral care.

Inclusion team: Head of SEN, SENDCo, Behaviour support, VP in charge of behaviour and pastoral team.

11. How are changes to policy agreed?

Those which are aligned with values of the trust are agreed within school by SLT.  
Anything which is radical would be taken to executive leaders of the trust.

12. Action planning meeting – who will be involved? Agree date/ length of time. Who will invite others? Talk about structure of this stage.

Present initially to SLT and others involved as necessary; link EP involved to support agreed changes.

13. What will happen after this stage?

Present to SLT; send analysis to VP prior to this?

14. Data for the whole school: no. FSM, SEN, ethnicity, no. on roll. Exclusion data over last ?? years? VP to ask and send.

15. Would VP take part in exit interview before my involvement ends, about the research process, its value and what will continue as a result? Yes.

## **Appendix U: Brief analysis of data for dissemination to school, April 2020**

Data was collected as part of a research project carried out by Elisabeth Sheppard, Trainee Educational Psychologist, in collaboration with the Senior Vice Principal, to explore the views of students who consistently have involvement with the school sanction processes. The aim of the research is to consider ways in which the school BM approach can meet the needs of all pupils.

Four Year 8 student participants took part in individual semi-structured interviews with the main researcher to elicit their views on their experience of school and engagement with the reward and sanction processes. Interviews took place between September 2019 and January 2020. Participants had been selected due to being identified by school staff as having received a significant number of sanctions. All four participants consented to take part in the research.

Data was analysed by the main researcher using a step-by-step process called Thematic Analysis. This led to the development of three main themes, each with three sub-themes. These are discussed in detail, alongside data extracts, in the main researcher's thesis and can be requested if required.

Below is a Thematic Map presenting the main and sub-themes, followed by a brief description of each theme. It is intended that the main researcher will work collaboratively with school staff and other appropriate professionals to identify action points based on the analysis of data, which will then be implemented and evaluated within the school's own systems, supported by the Educational Psychology Team if this is requested.

*(Thematic Map was inserted here in original document)*

### **Main theme 1: Student understanding of 'doing the right thing'**

#### **Main points:**

- Visual representations and real life examples make values and learning habits easier to understand
- Students understand the reasons why values and learning habits are important.
- Consistency across lessons and teachers is important

#### **Sub-theme 1a: Transition from Primary School**

#### **Main points:**

- Positive sense of well-being referred to in primary setting.
- Sense of belonging and feeling of positive relationships at primary school.
- More rules and responsibility in secondary school are difficult to adjust to.

#### **Sub-theme 1b: Familiarity with the Sanction Processes**

#### **Main points:**

- Students are familiar with and knowledgeable of sanction pathway.



- Involvement at each stage of the sanction process indicates not acting as intended deterrent

### Main Theme 2: A Vicious Cycle

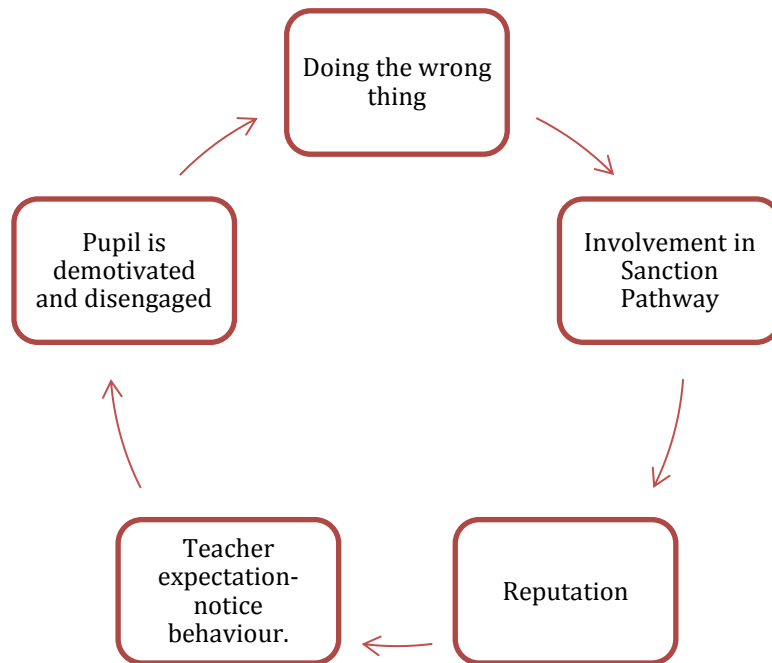


Figure 2: Vicious Cycle: The Wider School Context.

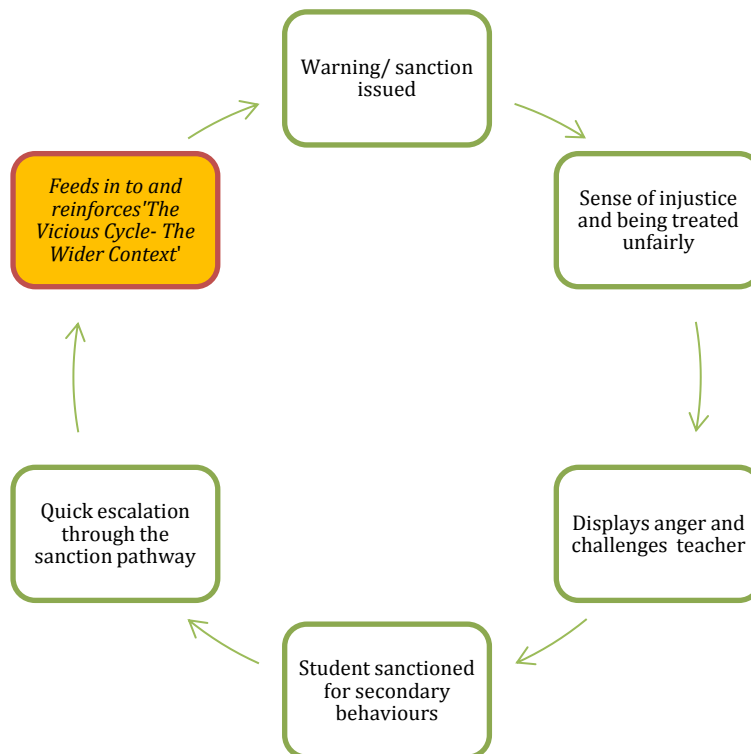


Figure 3: Vicious Cycle: Incidental Context.

### **Sub-theme 2a: Reputation and a Sense of Injustice**

#### **Main points:**

- Participants have gained a reputation due to incidents of doing the wrong thing.
- Participants feel they are treated unfairly as a result of being stuck with a reputation.

### **Sub-theme 2b: Anger and Emotional Regulation**

#### **Main points:**

- Participants report frequent feelings and expressions of anger.
- Participants' responses suggest lack of emotional regulation skills.

### **Sub-theme 2c: Secondary Behaviours and Escalation**

#### **Main points:**

- Students' responses to initial sanction/ warning lead to being sanctioned for secondary behaviours.

### **Main Theme 3: Supportive factors**

#### **Main points:**

- Supportive factors lead to exceptions to getting in to trouble and being sanctioned, as described in three sub-themes below.

#### **Sub-theme 3a: Good relationships with adults**

#### **Main points:**

- Mutually respectful relationships occur when adults consult with students and involve them in decision making which affects them.
- Trusting relationships with adults are regarded highly by students and can contribute to learning and instilling social values.

#### **Sub-theme 3b: Intervention and Support**

#### **Main points:**

- Additional support is perceived as helpful to students in helping them to adhere to school rules and therefore receive fewer sanctions.
- Time out to regulate emotions and to have reflective conversations would be helpful.

### **Sub-theme 3c: Motivation and Enjoyment**

#### **Main points:**

- Success and sense of achievement leads to increased engagement and motivation, and therefore less frequent sanctions for disruptive behaviour.

*Compiled by Elisabeth Sheppard, Trainee Educational Psychologist, Sheffield University, as part of research project with the school.*

## Appendix V: Levels of Pupil Engagement/ Supporting Vulnerable Pupils

### Early Identification

- Transition from primary school- close links with primary schools
- Monitor closely students in detention/ isolation and reasons

### Prevention

- Value student/ adult relationships
- Mutually respectful language used around school
- Foster sense of belonging- consider roles of responsibility/ extra-curricular activities/ identify areas of engagement and interest and nurture these.
- Pastoral support available with clear accessibility for students
- Staff development/ CPD in relevant areas
- Ensure understanding of expectations through real-life examples/ simplified language/ visual supports.
- Focus on positive reinforcement of appropriate behaviour, through verbal recognition.
- Avoid over-reliance on sanctions
- Share appropriate information regarding students with relevant staff

### Intervention and Support

- Bespoke/ small group intervention following early identification of difficulty
- Key adult available
- Explicit teaching of emotional regulation strategies

### Classroom Level Engagement and Response

- Meet and greet students to foster belonging and respect, and to identify potential difficulties early in the lesson.
- Embedded routines at start of lesson - 5 minute low-stakes, 'settling and calming' activity
- Use of supportive, rather than confrontational, language
- Recognition of appropriate behaviour, through naming observed behaviour, prior to issuing sanctions.
- 'Punctuating the vicious cycle' - consider at all stages how student can move in to a 'virtuous cycle'.

### Repair and Restore

- Detention/ isolation as opportunity for reflective and restorative conversations, rather than punitive response
- Consider where relationships with adults have been harmed and how to repair to avoid expectation on part of students and adult (*"I always get in trouble in that lesson"*, *"He always messes about in my lesson"*).
- Proactive package to support reintegration back in to school following exclusion.

*Compiled by Elisabeth Sheppard, Trainee Educational Psychologist, Sheffield University, as part of research project with the school.*

## **Appendix W: Action planning meeting- overview**

Recap:

Agreed concern:

'A minority group of pupils do not respond in the expected way to the BM approach. Sanctions do not appear to act as a deterrent to these students as they consistently remain on the sanction pathway'.

Research questions:

1. Why do some pupils struggle to adhere to the behavioural expectations of secondary school, within a highly structured behaviour management system?
2. What can we learn from the experiences of pupils who persistently receive sanctions in a secondary school with a highly structured behaviour management system?
3. How can pupils who struggle to adhere to expectations be supported to have a more positive experience of school?

Overall aim:

To lead to a more positive school experience for students who struggle within structured behaviour systems.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Aim</b>	<b>Who will this involve?</b>	<b>How will this be monitored and measured?</b>	<b>What is the time frame (when will this be implemented and reviewed)?</b>
Staff development: positive relationships/ reframing perceptions/ using non-confrontational language/ recognising and acknowledging positives and therefore avoiding over-reliance on issuing sanctions. Staff training using role play in real-life scenarios.	Improved relationships between students and staff members. Fewer incidents of behaviour escalation and issuing sanctions for secondary behaviours.	Training for all staff during Friday morning CPD SENDCO – co-ordinator. Involvement from external agencies e.g. EPT, Autism team. Friday morning CPD	SLT informal learning walks, evidence in culture/ ethos of school. Decrease in serious behaviour incidents for high tariff students as documented in behaviour logs. Staff voice/ Student voice/ Parent voice	Immediately and over the course of the year with regular review.
Staff development: Understanding the implications of moderate learning difficulties and how this can impact on expressive and receptive communication, and therefore understanding of expectations and ability to control responses. Staff training to include language difficulties, simplifying language, repeating instructions, allowing take-up time.	Ensuring students are as engaged as they can be in lessons. Increased staff empathy around student difficulties. Fewer incidents of behaviour escalation and issuing sanctions for secondary behaviours.	Training for all staff during Friday morning CPD Senior Vice Principal- co-ordinator. Involvement from external agencies as appropriate, e.g. EPT, specialist teachers	SLT informal learning walks, evidence in culture/ ethos of school. Decrease in serious behaviour incidents for high tariff students as documented in behaviour logs. Staff voice/ Student voice/ Parent voice	Immediately and over the course of the year with regular review.
Identification of *vulnerable children prior to transition from Year 6 using a range of data available, leading to development of trusting relationship between	Proactive intervention, providing students with a secure relationship, and an adult to act as advocate for them, supporting	Recently appointed SEMH champion (SEN team) Specialist training from SEMH team.	Take-up of individuals accessing support. Number of incidents recorded for identified students.	Summer term 2020 through remote meetings.

<p>identified vulnerable students and key-person to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Be available to students for support during the school day.</li> <li>-Act as an advocate for the student when incidents have occurred</li> <li>-Facilitate bespoke interventions to support adherence to Learning Habits.</li> </ul>	<p>relationship building with other staff members. Students feel supported and respected.</p>		<p>Students and staff voice on value of relationships and pastoral support.</p>	
<p>Proactive decreasing of accumulative detentions by identifying students who are consistently in 2 hourly evening detentions.</p> <p>Utilise this time as a supportive rather than punitive tool, e.g. supporting students with work and facilitating restorative conversations. Ensure consistency across staff members running detentions.</p> <p>Provide alternative: e.g. homework club to avoid students using detention as a means to get support.</p>	<p>To ensure that students are receiving the support they require in a positive forum.</p> <p>Number of students consistently receiving 2 hour long detentions decreases.</p>	<p>SLT/ SEMH Champion.</p>	<p>Records kept of time spent in detention (should show decrease rather than consistently receiving accumulative detentions).</p> <p>Attendance at homework club monitored.</p> <p>Student and staff voice on effectiveness of a more supportive approach.</p>	<p>With immediate effect, ongoing with regular review.</p>
<p>Proactive package following exclusion, addressing anti-social behaviour which has occurred outside of school, to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Restorative conversations on return to school (may have training implications for staff)</li> <li>-Involvement from community police officer</li> </ul>	<p>Student develops understanding of how behaviours impact on the wider community.</p> <p>Student positively reintegrates back in to school following exclusion.</p> <p>Avoidance of remaining in a negative cycle and</p>	<p>Developed initially by identified staff with key skills and co-ordinated by SLT in charge of behaviour.</p> <p>Following implementation to include parents,</p>	<p>Gathering feedback from all involved following exclusion and reintegration back in to school on effectiveness and perceived support.</p> <p>Data on school exclusions should identify decrease or</p>	<p>Planning to begin Summer term 2020 with implementation in the Autumn Term 2020. Ongoing evaluation and review.</p>



<p>-Pastoral support -Positive re-integration back in to school through focusing on strengths and improvement (avoid labelling the student and continuation of negative cycle).</p>	<p>repeat exclusions. Students are provided with a fresh start and staff are supportive following exclusion.</p>	<p>students, school staff, and community police officer.</p>	<p>non-repeat of exclusion.</p>	
<p>Incorporating findings from research in to development of document to exist alongside school behaviour policy, outlining stages involved in identifying vulnerable students and steps taken to increase engagement (see 'Levels of Pupil Engagement')</p>	<p>Reasonable adjustments to behaviour management incorporated in to a whole school approach, allowing flexibility for vulnerable students.</p>	<p>Developed by SLT/ school SENDCo/ SEMH champion and disseminated to all school staff.</p>	<p>Behaviour logs should show decrease in students reaching later stages of disciplinary procedures.</p>	<p>Planning to begin Summer term 2020 with implementation in the Autumn Term 2020. Ongoing evaluation and review.</p>

\*The term 'vulnerable' in this document refers to all students who may struggle to adhere to school expectations as identified through a range of sources including, but not exclusive of: the SEND register/ behaviour logs/ consultation with staff and other professionals/ student and parent voice.

*Compiled by Elisabeth Sheppard, Trainee Educational Psychologist, Sheffield University, in collaboration with Senior Vice Principal at XXXX as part of a research project with the school.*

## **Appendix X: Letter to participants post research**

18<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear Participant,

I hope that you are well and are keeping safe during this unusual time.

I wanted to write to you to thank you for taking part in my research project. It seems a long time ago now but earlier this year you shared your views with me about how behaviour is managed in your school. Since our interview I have been busy considering all the things that you and the other students told me.

These were the main things that I found:

- Moving from primary school to high school with new rules and expectations can be difficult.
- Students want to have a chance to explain what happened and to be listened to when things have gone wrong.
- Having extra support has helped you to get less detentions, and you would like to continue to have support.

Miss L and I have worked together to think about how your views can be used to make changes which support you and lots of other students. These include:

- Supporting students when they start in Year 7 to help them to have a really good start to high school.
- Making sure students have someone to talk to when they are finding things difficult.
- Making sure students who get lots of detentions are supported to try and understand why that is happening.

There are lots of other things that the staff from your school are working on to make sure they are supporting all students, and your views have really helped with this.

So thank once again for agreeing to talk to me and share your views. It has been really helpful for me and for the staff at your school in understanding the needs of young people.

Best wishes,

Lizzy Sheppard

Trainee Educational Psychologist

University of Sheffield

## **Appendix Y: Post research questions for participating school**

### **Post Research Reflections**

Have your thoughts, values or priorities (and those of others) changed at all as a result of taking part in this project?

Have your thoughts/ views (and those of others) been challenged during the course of taking part in this research?

Has taking part in this research encouraged you and others to reflect on professional practice?

Are there concrete actions that will occur as a result of taking part in this research?

Will taking part in this Action Research project lead to further developments in school, e.g. evaluating the impact of action, exploring the views of other groups in the school community?

Do you think that the results of this research have the potential to be useful to other settings?

Would you be interested in working together in the future, e.g. disseminating results in your setting and others, sharing the research experience and tools developed?

What do you consider to be the benefits of participating in a research project like this?

What do you consider to be the barriers to engaging in a collaborative research project?

***Many thanks for your participation, Elisabeth Sheppard (Trainee Educational Psychologist, University of Sheffield).***