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It Takes a Village

An Exploration of Teachers' Experiences of Relational Rupture and Repair with Young People described as having Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs in a Specialist SEMH Provision

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1. ABSTRACT

Government statistics illustrate that school exclusion rates are rising and that students who are already facing disadvantage continue to be disproportionately represented in this data. The students most frequently excluded are those with SEMH needs, with many of these pupils going on to be educated in specialist schools or alternative provisions (AP). A strong protective factor for the inclusion of SEMH students is the teacher-student relationship (TSR), with specialist provisions often placing an emphasis on these by providing smaller class sizes and a greater focus on the students' relational requirements. Despite this emphasis, teachers continue to find their TSRs with SEMH students challenging, consequently, relational rupture or breakdown can be a common feature. Relational Cultural Theory (RCT) conceptualises rupture as an inevitable aspect of relationships and therefore focuses on empathic repair. As teachers inhabit a position of power within TSRs and are therefore, according to RCT, responsible for their repair, this study sought to understand how teachers experienced the processes of rupture and repair in their TSRs with SEMH students in AP. It also considered how the educational setting influenced this process.

An Interpretative Phenomenology Analysis (IPA) methodology was chosen, and semi-structured interviews were undertaken with five teachers employed at a specialist school for SEMH students. The findings highlighted the significance of boundaries in relation to rupture and affirmed previous research regarding the socio-emotional support needed for teachers to maintain their TSRs. The study illustrated the teachers' preference for informal repair and highlighted how the concept of the Working Alliance could support an understanding of relational tensions within the classroom. Finally, it showed the necessity for teachers to be embedded within a supportive relational environment for empathic repair to occur. The implications for both specialist SEMH provisions and for EPs are discussed, such as the promotion of whole school relational approaches and the provision of reflective supervision.

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3. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I outline the experiences that have drawn me to my interest in the maintenance of teacher-student relationships (TSRs) and have shaped my positionality as a researcher. I also describe the definitions that will be used for the purposes of this thesis.

3.1. Researcher interests

My interest in relationships developed during my first career when working as a Relationship Manager in a company which placed client relationships at its centre, due to their importance in terms of generating income. I then transferred my commercial knowledge into the public sector by retraining and working as a Business Studies teacher in a secondary school. Here, negative TSRs, though in the minority, caused me stress and it always came as a relief if, for whatever reason, students I struggled to get on with were absent from class.

Finally, and most influentially, I worked for five years in Alternative Provision which offered one to one tutoring to SEMH students, often within their own home. Working within the student's family home, enabled me to gain a privileged and holistic insight into their lives. Whilst, in mainstream, I often perceived SEMH students as 'challenging' or 'difficult', in AP, I found myself in awe of their resilience given the problematic systemic circumstances they were frequently enduring. My AP students taught me how important their TSRs were in relation to their learning, and I also became aware of how power negatively operated in many of their lives. For example, it seemed unjust that these students, who often presented with the most complex needs, had the least access to teaching (sometimes just 2 hours a week), no access to a proper classroom environment, no access to staff who were properly trained to respond to their needs and little access to resources.

My interest in TSR rupture and repair comes from my experiences in AP, where relational difficulties were ongoing, sometimes resulting in significant

rupture. However, repair was often prevented due to safeguarding issues, and/or tutors being withdrawn from teaching that student. It felt that the opportunity for learning from the rupture was therefore removed, despite it often feeling crucial to the development and growth of the TSR. It could also mean the end of the student's education due to their 'failure to engage', as one-to-one AP is usually only offered when all other educational options have already been tried. Consequently, I am driven to explore this area further to understand what leads to rupture and how the TSR can be satisfactorily repaired.

3.2. Researcher positionality

Given my experiences within AP, I am drawn to Gergen (2009) who considers we are, first and foremost, relational beings, with our development being determined by our 'conditions' (James, 1890). This places me in conflict with traditional educational practice but in alignment with critical psychology due to its position of challenging mainstream psychology (Parker, 1999). Critical psychology encourages psychological practitioners to continually reflect on what underpins their own and society's assumptions, practices, and structures to ensure we are aware of what we are basing our notions of reality on.

Critical psychology's concern with social justice is resonant due to the perpetuation of marginalisation I perceived of many of the AP students that I worked with. It also fits with my interest in deconstructing the narratives around students who teachers find challenging by trying to understand the meaning that teachers attach to their experiences of working with them and how that impacts on their responses. I am also curious as to how the context/setting that the teacher is in may influence their meaning making.

Because of my previous experience of working within AP, I am both an insider and outsider researcher (Gair, 2012). Utilising an IPA methodology suits this positioning as the researcher undertakes both an emic and etic position, firstly gaining an 'insider's perspective' (Conrad, 1987) and then taking on an

interpretative position to understand their experiences in relation to the research question (Smith et al., 2009).

3.3. Definitions

For the purposes of this research, the following definitions will be used:

3.3.1. Social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH)

The current, legally accepted label of 'SEMH' (DfE/DoH, 2015), will be utilised and will adopt the definition from the revised 2015 SEND Code of Practice (DfE, 2015) which describes the behaviours of students with SEMH needs as including:

'becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties...[or] disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder'. (Section 6.32).

Whilst, from a critical psychology perspective, there are arguments not to use a SEMH label due to its ambiguity and subjectivity (e.g. Norwich & Eaton, 2015), and leading students to be seen as 'other' or 'different' (Oliver, 2013) there are pragmatic reasons for retaining it. The term is part of the SEN discourse in schools (Penketh, 2014), and is utilised in research studies, enabling strategies to support these students to be found. These can be used by EPs to support both their own and others' work with SEMH students, enabling them to promote best practice (Carroll & Hurry, 2018).

I would also normally refer to these students as 'those described as having SEMH needs', but, for simplicity purposes in this thesis, I will be referring to them as 'SEMH students'.

3.3.2. The Teacher-Student Relationship (TSR)

I will be using Wubbels et al., (2014) definition of TSR which is:

“the generalized interpersonal meaning students and teachers attach to their interactions with each other” (p. 364).

Wubbels et al., view the quality of the TSR as being built up over time through the moment to moment and day to day interactions between teacher and student, both positive and negative. This definition encapsulates the dyadic nature of the TSR, as both the student and the teacher will attach their own meaning to their shared interactions, indicating there may be differences in the way each have understood a moment of connection or rupture.

3.3.3. Rupture

Rupture is defined as ‘*an experience of some degree of discomfort or affective discord*’ (Miller-Bottomo, 2018 p176), resulting from a misattunement in responding accurately to the needs of another, described by Greene (2000, p. 295) as the “*inability to achieve mutual intersubjectivity*”. The term rupture originated in the therapeutic literature but has more recently been used within educational research (e.g. Raider-Roth et al., 2012).

3.3.4. Repair

Repair has been described in educational literature as ‘a reconnection between the learning partners’ (Raider-Roth et al., 2012). If repair has been successfully achieved, the post rupture learning relationship is considered to have been strengthened due to an increased knowledge and understanding of each other having been reached through the process of repair (e.g. Gilligan, 2003).

3.3.5. Alternative Provision

SEMH students who have been excluded, or are at risk of exclusion, can be referred to a wide range of different educational settings which include special

schools (SS), specially resourced provision (SRP), designated units (Units) and alternative provision (AP). SRPs and Units provide additional specialist facilities on a mainstream or Academy school site (DfE, 2015). These may be run by the school or Academy or in conjunction with the Local Authority. Special schools require students to have an EHC and are usually run by the Local Authority (DfE, 2015), although, again, funding is changing and academy chains may run them in conjunction with the LA and/or other providers. The term AP covers a diverse range of educational settings from Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) to more recent additions such as farms, activity centres and workshops that have developed educational units alongside them.

Given the diverse landscape of educational provision for SEMH students who are being referred on from mainstream education, for the sake of simplicity, I will be referring to all of these as 'Specialist or Alternative Provision', (SAP).

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

4.1. Introduction

This review begins by examining the current school exclusion statistics and analysing their relationship to students facing adversity. It goes on to discuss how students may communicate their experiences of adversity through behaviours that are found challenging within school, which can result in them being labelled as having SEMH needs. Despite positive TSRs being a strong protective factor for SEMH students in school, this review identifies the barriers to TSRs in school and why this may place SEMH students on a trajectory for specialist or alternative provisions (SAPs). Theoretical models which offer explanations as to why the TSR has such significance for this group of students are discussed, together with the reasons why Relational Cultural theory and its concepts of rupture and repair may be useful to consider.

The second part of the literature review homes in on research into SEMH students' TSRs within SAPs. The initial section highlights the SEMH students' voice, identifying what factors help them to connect and form positive TSRs. Their voice is then counterpointed by the teachers' voice, outlining the challenges they encounter when trying to meet the SEMH students' relational needs. It outlines how these challenges can threaten TSRs and result in rupture. Restorative justice as a means of relational repair is considered, before the chapter concludes with justification for this research, together with an outline of its aims.

This critical literature review was conducted with a focus on research into TSRs of SEMH students. The initial key search terms used were TSR, rupture, repair and these terms were then expanded into SEMH, exclusion, special school, AP, Pupil Referral Unit and EP. Literature cited in the papers found was also explored.

4.2. Current exclusion statistics and their relationship to student adversity

The latest statistics show that both permanent and fixed term exclusions from mainstream schools are rising at a substantial rate, with a 35% increase in permanent exclusions between 2013 and 2016 (DfE, July 2019). The rate of permanent exclusions from PRUs is increasing even faster with a 38% increase just since 2018 (DfE, 2019).

Exclusions are not evenly distributed across the school population but are centred on specific pupil cohorts – i.e. those which are already experiencing social disadvantage. For example, students with SEN, those from a low-income family, those in care or from an ethnic minority background such as Black Caribbean or Gipsy Roma, are all disproportionately represented in exclusion data (DfE, 2019; Graham et al., 2019; HoCEC, 2018; Oakley, Miscampbell & Gregorian, 2018). The highest rate of exclusions are recorded for students with SEMH needs (Graham et al., 2019), with Cole (2015) suggesting there could be nearly half a million children with SEMH difficulties at risk of exclusion. More recently, Gill et al., (2017) stated that nearly all excluded students have diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health needs.

The association between mental health needs and exclusion is complex (Graham et al., 2019) but Kennedy and Kennedy (2004), believe that difficult home circumstances can create mental health difficulties such as anxiety, which, if combined with additional problems at school, can generate a high risk of either internalizing (harmful to self) or externalizing (harmful to others) behaviours. Dover (2009) considers these behaviours, such as task avoidance, disassociation, hyperactivity or a high need for control, to be psychological defence mechanisms, which impact a child's ability to learn and also their relationships in the classroom. These types of behaviours can lead to students being categorised as having SEMH needs, despite Boyle (2007) seeing them as a reasonable response to their adverse systemic situations.

Whilst it is an EPs role to establish what may underlie a child's difficulties through evaluating hypotheses over time (Division of Educational and Child

Psychology, 1999), Holtum (2015) found that there were often delays in timely identification of SEMH needs, potentially resulting in student behaviours becoming more entrenched (Brede et al., 2016) and placing them on a trajectory for exclusion. However, EPs can refer to a significant body of research that identifies a positive TSR as a protective factor for school inclusion.

4.3. Positive TSRs as a protective factor

Positive TSRs have been shown to have a particular significance in improving the outcomes of SEMH students (Roorda et al., 2011). Similarly, conflictual or hostile TSRs have a disproportionately negative educational impact for these students (ibid). These findings have been consistently repeated elsewhere (e.g. Breeman et al., 2015; Gazeley et al., 2013). Despite the import of TSRs to school inclusion, barriers have been identified to developing and maintaining positive TSRs with SEMH students in mainstream school. These barriers include dyadic factors such as teachers finding the student's relational behaviours challenging (e.g. Cooper, 2010) and systemic factors such as inflexible behaviour management policies (e.g. Oxley, 2016). Due to budget cuts and a focus on the academic, teachers now have less time and resources to devote to the building of effective relationships with SEMH pupils (e.g. Tucker, 2013). Consequently, the protection that SEMH students can derive from positive TSRs is diminishing at a time when adverse societal experiences are rising and converging (Cole, 2015). The increasingly performative nature of schools (Ball, 2004) and their high stakes exam testing (Jones, 2004) add to the challenges students face. Due to these challenges and the difficulties mainstream schools have in managing pupil behaviour (HoCEC, 2018), SEMH students are increasingly being referred to SAPs.

4.4. How do Specialist Settings and AP (SAPs) differ from mainstream schools?

Whilst SAPs can vary in the quality of their provision (Forgotten Children DfE, 2018), they are similar in that they educate a smaller number of pupils, they

can provide additional specialist facilities and can offer more flexibility across key stages (DfE, 2015). Pomeroy (1999) found that they can offer students a qualitatively different social space, including smaller class sizes, a higher staff to student ratio and a more personalised curriculum. All of these aspects are recognised by students as preferable to mainstream and important to their engagement with learning (e.g. Pillay et al., 2013). However, it is still the quality of their relationships with teachers that is the most frequently cited enabler of positive outcomes (e.g. McCluskey et al., 2015; Pirrie et al. 2011; O’Gorman et al., 2016).

4.5. Theoretical Perspectives on the importance of TSRs to SEMH students

Several theories converge over the significance of relationships to a child’s social and emotional development. For the purposes of this thesis, two of these will be addressed. Firstly, attachment theory (AT) will be very briefly covered. AT is in current widespread usage in schools as the main way of thinking about relationships with students e.g. Geddes, 2018. Secondly, Relational Cultural Theory (RCT) will be discussed, due to its emphasis on relational repair and its focus on marginalised groups (Jordan, 1999). Both these aspects resonate with SEMH students given the difficulties associated with sustaining their TSRs (Fitzsimmons et al., 2019) and also given the position they often occupy at the edges of both the social and educational systems.

Attachment theory, which is now considered an integrationist and multidisciplinary approach (Levy et al., 2012), was initially derived from psychoanalytic theory by Bowlby (1979). Psychoanalytic theory was developed by Freud, who was the first psychologist to emphasise the importance of early adult/child relationships as fundamental to personality development and future wellbeing. Bowlby expanded Freud’s assertion to also include the early relationships importance for the development of self-regulation and for providing templates for future relationships. Over the last twenty years, attachment theory (AT) has become the prominent way of

explaining a student's relationship difficulties and is regularly utilised across social services, and the therapeutic, medical and educational communities (e.g. DfE, 2015; NICE, 2015). It is also often used by EPs when advocating for relational approaches in school e.g. Siegel, 2018.

More recently, however, AT has been criticised for a number of reasons such as a lack of a strong empirical basis (Smith, Cameron, & Reimer, 2017), its overly deterministic approach (Duschinsky, Greco, & Solomon, 2015) and prescriptive classifications that can mischaracterise (Main, Hesse, & Hesse, 2011). It is also based on westernised cultural thinking and therefore fails to account for the different family formations and cultures that many children from ethnically diverse backgrounds within UK schools will have experienced. Within schools, attachment training has often focused on the child's attachment style and discounted the teacher's, therefore ignoring the interplay of the TSR dyad and encouraging a 'within-child' position. There has also been a minimisation of the influence of health, social and political systems on a family's relational resources and, therefore, a failure to consider how power impacts on relational dynamics (Duschinsky, Greco & Solomon, 2015).

Relational Cultural Theory (RCT), on the other hand, consider issues of power as integral to the availability of positive relationships. RCT was established from feminist and multi-cultural thought and argues that those who care for another should be meaningfully resourced, rather than individuated and pathologized. Like AT, RCT emphasises the primacy of relationships and contends that developmental growth and change occurs through connection with an empathic other who is attuned to, and accepting of, their internal world. However, unlike AT, there is a prominence given to the eco-systemic context within which these relationships are happening. There is also a greater exploration of the impact of relational disconnection, recognising that this can happen, not just at the individual level, but also at the familial and sociocultural level due to an unequal distribution of privilege and resource. It considers how societal practices of categorisation and stereotyping such as racism and classism impact on peoples' sense of connection and disconnection (Walker & Miller, 2001) and how those who hold the power for creating norms e.g. what

is learnt in the classroom and what the school rules are, can force those less powerful to the margins (Hooks, 1984).

4.5.1. RCT and Power

Within RCT, power is defined as 'the capacity to produce change' (Miller, 1991) which differs from understandings of power associating it with negative acts of force (e.g., Weber, 1978). RCT's definition builds on Foucault, who considered power to be pervasive, discursive and enacted within relationships, rather than being held within specific structures or individuals. Like Foucault, RCT perceives power to be productive and beneficial as well as coercive or repressive (Gaventa, 2003). Jordan (2002) believes power's links to dominance and repression are due to how it is enacted within cultures such as the UK, which value individualism. Giving precedence to an individual's goals over the group's or society's, creates competition and consequently to winners and losers and to dominance and subjugation.

RCT envisions a more inclusive and enriched model of power which is based on a rejection of the masculine understanding of power as domination but embraces a feminist perspective of using power to mutually enhance the other (Miller, 1991). RCT's premise is that 'all power, including destructive power, is created by, and depends on, relationship' (Walker, 2008 p129). This creates a relational accountability whereby individuals need to embrace their power and make decisions as to how they relate to it and utilise it within their relational interactions. When relational interactions are focused on mutual empowerment, there is a requirement for effective listening, reflection, and a connection to one's own emotional responses to the other before there is an attempt to guide or influence the other. Consequently, RCT considers it incumbent on those in positions of power in relationship to others to reflect on how cultural, societal and familial experiences may be preventing or damaging relational connections, leading to rupture and disconnection

4.5.2. RCT and Rupture

Within RCT, ruptures are seen to interrupt connection and threaten disconnection. Disconnection is defined as 'the psychological experience of rupture that occurs whenever a child or adult is prevented from participating in a mutually empathic and mutually empowering interaction' (Miller & Stiver, 1997, p 65). Ruptures may occur through a lack of empathy, attunement or acceptance or through more acute relational transgressions where power is deliberately used to harm the other. Farber and Penney (2020) consider that teachers have a particular responsibility to recognise how the power dynamic within the TSR has the potential to create disconnection. For example, students may feel their contributions have been dismissed or that they are liked less than other students, that they have not been understood or that their objections are unheard or overruled.

Due to the perceived inevitability of ruptures given the impossibility of remaining perfectly attuned, RCT places emphasis on noticing and responding to them to ensure repair. RCT considers repair to offer both parties (but particularly the less powerful one) the opportunity to grow and change. A process of repair where the student feels able to voice their feelings, to be heard, understood, and responded to empathically, gives them an experience of relational competence (Jordan, 1999). For the teacher, hearing the student's perspective will lead to the teacher's expanded understanding of them, potentially leading to changes to how they relate to them in the classroom. Consequently, a rupture, if followed by a successful repair, leads to a strengthened TSR and the personal growth of each within it (Jordan & Hartling, 2008). Conversely, in TSRs where the less powerful is not accepted or heard, relational resistance and withdrawal can occur, thereby perpetuating relational marginalisation and socio-emotional privation (Miller & Stiver, 1997).

4.6. RCT and SEMH students

RCT's acknowledgement of how power impacts on an individual's capacity to develop positive relationships resonates with the SEMH students' often

adverse familial and socio-economic circumstances that may have compromised their access to relationships that were 'good enough' (Winnicott, 1973). Its focus on repair suggests it may offer insight into how SEMH students' TSRs may be retained even when ruptures have occurred. Given these resonances, RCT appears to be a useful framework to consider in relation to the TSRs of SEMH students.

To explore SEMH student TSR rupture further, the next section of the literature review explores the SEMH students' voice to identify what supports their connection with teachers. It then turns to the teachers' voice, to examine the factors that teachers have stated as problematic in their TSRs to understand the relational tensions that can lead to rupture.

4.7. Supporting connection - What do SEMH students' value in their TSRs?

Studies eliciting SEMH students' views have found that teacher qualities such as warmth, kindness, care, calmness, understanding, reliability, consistency, supportiveness, trustworthiness and being respectful promote positive TSRs (e.g. Cefai & Cooper, 2010; Lloyd-Jones et al., 2010; Pomeroy, 1999). Aligned with the SEMH students' desire for respect was also a wish for a right to reply when they felt they were being treated unfairly and for them to have more say in decision making and more consideration of their opinions (e.g. Cefai & Cooper, 2010; Janhnukainen 2001). Their need for a more equal distribution of power was also mentioned by students in Pomeroy's (1999) study, where the students were clear that they wanted TSRs to be pastoral and humanistic in nature, rather than authoritarian. They also wanted clear and consistent disciplinary boundaries with all students treated fairly, with no judgement, blaming or ridicule (Cefai & Cooper, 2010; Pomeroy, 1999).

SEMH students also say that they appreciate adults who can understand how complex their lives are, who give non-judgemental acceptance, and who might have had life experiences that enable them to share some common ground (Sapiro, 2020). They prefer teachers who might have similar interests and

want teachers who believe in them (Cefai & Cooper, 2010), who do not give up on them (Lloyd-Jones et al., 2010) and who are authentic within their relationship (Miller & Stiver, 1997). The need for authenticity found by Miller and Stiver (1997) has been echoed in research by Munford and Sanders (2015b) and Sapiro and Ward (2019), who found that students wanted genuine relationships that met their needs rather than functional relationships based on the adult's role. However, they also want teachers to be good practitioners through presenting them with learning that they find to be meaningful to their lives, in an enjoyable way. They want teachers to be supportive when they are learning and to give structure to tasks and break them down into small chunks of study (Cefai & Cooper, 2010; Putwain et al., 2016).

4.8. Supporting connection - Teacher qualities that respond to SEMH student needs

A study of teacher's views of the TSR in SAP was conducted by Fitzsimmons et al., (2019). Teachers reported that they connect with their students by 'tuning in' to find a mutual interest and actively looking for ways to invite reciprocity into the relationship. Developing knowledge of their students, for example, about their family situation, improved their TSRs due to the increase in teacher empathy (Denzin, 2007). SAP teachers have also discussed their emotional investment in their students and the importance of providing relationships built on humanistic principles with student behaviour being managed through a warm and caring TSR, rather than being based on behaviourist reward and punishment systems (Fitzsimmons et al., 2019). Teachers in SAP demonstrate high levels of commitment to their student in terms of believing in their potential (Malcolm, 2020), supporting their welfare (Meo and Parker 2004), and working to change their lives (Garner, 1996). Both Lumby (2012) and Pomeroy (1999) report that TSRs in SAP are more egalitarian than in mainstream, with staff prepared to apologise if they felt their actions had had an adverse effect on one of their students (Malcolm, 2020).

However, despite the appearance of synchrony between the students' needs and the teachers' relational skills, TSRs with SEMH students remain problematic (Alvarez-Hevia, 2018). SAP teachers report that although they find a minority of their TSRs rewarding, the majority are problematic due to the challenges they contain (Fitzsimmons et al., 2019).

4.9. Creating rupture - Problematic relational factors for teachers of SEMH students

4.9.1. Difficulties in coping with challenging behaviour

It has been found that the quality of teacher's relationships with well-behaved students need little support in schools. Teachers find joy and satisfaction when students engage positively with them (Hargreaves, 2000), creating energy for their interactions going forward and a positive sense of wellbeing (Roffey, 2015). Conversely, the challenging behaviours that SEMH students can display, elicit negative teacher emotions, such as anger and frustration (Chang, 2013; Cooper, 2010). These negative emotions can result in teacher responses which escalate the conflict (Spratt et al., 2006a).

Challenging student behaviours increase teachers' relational stress (e.g. McLaughlin, 2008) and they can feel frightened, hopeless and ill-equipped to support students experiencing such difficult feelings, leading them to withdraw (Kidger et al., 2010). Regular experience of these feelings has been shown to adversely impact a teacher's wellbeing over time and leads to their burnout due to the high levels of emotional labour required to control the negative emotions they are experiencing (Partridge, 2012). Because of the lack of emotional support in schools, teachers report turning away from students with challenging behaviour and/or mental health issues, to protect their own wellbeing (Kidger et al., 2010).

Inevitably, ruptures are more likely to occur when teachers feel stressed as they will have less capacity for empathy and attunement. Enabling staff to recognise their own emotions, how they respond to them and what they may

do to regulate them is an important pre-requisite for them being able to model emotional literacy to their students (Jennings and Greenberg, 2009). Interventions including reflective practice (Ruch, 2007) through individual and peer supervision within AP is seen as key to facilitating this process (Rae et al., 2017). However, there is currently little recognition that teachers may need access to this type of support (Reid & Soan, 2015), despite many teachers having ongoing contact with distressing and/or challenging pupil situations.

4.9.2. Lack of reciprocity

Whilst Marrable (2014) suggests TSRs containing conflict or hostility are the hardest to maintain, Fitzsimmons (2019) argues that teachers also struggle when 'there is nothing coming back' (stet, p10) i.e. when students fail to reciprocate within the TSR. For a positive TSR to develop, teachers need their students to respond in some way (Noddings, 2013) and, if not, they can feel rejected (Newberry, 2010). Farouk (2014 p27) found that SEMH students reject teachers' efforts 'on a regular basis'. Despite the challenges for teachers in coping with conflictual student behaviour, their TSRs can be better with students who have externalising behaviours rather than internalising, as there can still be some connection (Drugli et al., 2011). With avoidant students there can be little, or no connection and teachers find it difficult to know how to respond in these circumstances (O'Connor & McCartney, 2006).

4.9.3. Lack of recognition and support for the socio-emotional demands of teaching SEMH students

It has been recognised that staff who work with SEMH students need to have effective social, emotional and behavioural skills (Lloyd-Jones et al., 2010) as they are a prerequisite for good TSRs (Jennings and Greenberg, 2009). However, developing the skills needed to create and maintain positive TSR's is given little attention in teacher training (Hagenauer et al., 2015), due to the main focus of teacher development being focussed on non-relational factors such as curriculum and assessment. Currently, there is little explicit recognition of the socio-emotional needs of students, the importance of TSR's

in relation to these and the emotions they can provoke, both in the teacher as well as the student (Riley, 2010). RCT understands that a teacher's ability to feel warmth and empathy towards a student will depend on their own past relational experiences. The individuality of each teacher's relational experiences and the bidirectional nature of the TSR means that different teachers will have different tolerances for the same student behaviour. Therefore teachers can report significantly different stress levels with regard to the same student (Abidin & Robinson, 2002), and this will impact on their ability to develop TSRs with particular students.

Consistent recommendations to overcome these issues have been coverage of SEN needs in teacher training (Mintz et al., 2015) and giving time and support for teachers to be able to reflect on the meaning of their students' behaviours and therefore how best to respond (Price et al., 2018). Further suggestions have included training in psychoanalytic concepts (e.g. Dennison, 2017) and the development of the teaching staff's emotional literacy through psychoeducation (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

4.9.4. Lack of support for new teachers of SEMH students

Research in SAPs has found that initial teacher training does not prepare teachers sufficiently for their role (e.g. Alvarez-Hevia 2018; Maher & Fitzgerald, 2020). Over time, teachers can learn to process the emotions raised within them by student behaviours through a process of reflection, but less experienced teachers can find their TSRs much more emotionally stressful (Farouk, 2014). In Alvarez-Hevia's (2018) study, he recounts a new teacher's shock and horror at their first experience of a student's externalising behaviours within a SAP setting, referencing the 'emotional damage' (p 311) such behaviours can cause to a teacher. Experienced teachers within the SAP recounted to Alvarez-Hevia that new teachers sometimes resigned within their first few weeks.

These studies highlight the difficulties for teachers of SEMH students, particularly those moving from mainstream teaching to SAP. Given the

insufficient training, SAP teacher retention seems to be based on each individual's resilience for the role rather than the appropriate support being given. This may be a contributory factor to the current difficulties in recruiting and retaining AP staff. Students within AP are twice as likely as those in mainstream to be taught by supply staff, with AP vacancies running 2 to 3 times higher than those in mainstream (HoCEC, 2018). A high turnover environment of insufficiently trained staff is not conducive to creating stable and nurturing TSRs.

4.9.5. Tensions at the boundaries

Personal versus Professional relationships

While SEMH students want genuine relationships that permeate outside the official requirements of the adult's role (e.g. Sapiro & Ward, 2019), satisfying this need creates dilemmas for teachers in knowing where the limits of their role lie (Angel, 2019). Farouk (2014, p27) asserts that *'teachers need to manage and control their personal engagement with students so that they are able to form constructive learning relationships without also becoming enmeshed in difficulties which they are then unable to resolve'*. This suggests that teachers need to retain their professional boundaries if they are not to become involved in situations where they cannot affect repair.

However, many SEMH students are living with tremendous challenges, resulting in teachers feeling helpless and hopeless and experiencing themselves becoming therapists or social workers (Hester et al., 2020; Fitzsimmons et al., 2019). These feelings are unsurprising given that the teachers are often working with "young people who are at the very margins of the system" (Pirrie et al., 2011, p.536) and this emphasises the relevance of RCT given its concerns with those at the edges of society. Whilst child protection and safeguarding legislation clarifies that schools are accountable for the wellbeing of staff who work with vulnerable CYP, there can be a lack of clarity about what support is expected or given in practice (Marrable, 2014).

Tensions between support and challenge

A theme that arises for teachers of SEMH students is the ongoing balancing act between providing SEMH students with challenge whilst also helping them to feel safe, which Price et al., (2018) describe as 'working at the edge' (p 396). Farber and Penney (2020) state that relationships which facilitate student growth and development need to be warm and empathic but also need to include an element of challenge. Being able to give the right amount of academic, emotional or social challenge at the right time is a delicate task for teachers of SEMH students and can easily lead to ruptures in the TSR with students either withdrawing or becoming confrontational if 'pushed' too hard (Putwain, 2016 p9). This balancing act may be a harder task for teachers than for pastoral staff, due to their responsibilities for student learning as well as for emotions and behaviour. Claessens et al's (2017) study found that a student's ability to respond positively to teaching challenge depended upon the quality of their TSRs, but even within strong TSRs, teachers still need to recognise that what constitutes challenge will differ from student to student (Towle, 1954), therefore knowing and understanding each student is crucial to getting the balance right.

Tensions between control and care

SEMH students want clear and consistent boundaries that are fairly applied. However, they do not want them applied by authoritarian means (Pomeroy, 1999). This suggests that discipline and behaviour management should be applied through relational rather than coercive strategies, but finding the right balance between care and control when working with students with such challenging behaviours is extremely difficult (e.g. Aultman et al., 2009). Using authoritarian power to discipline and control may negatively impact SEMH students due to their experiences of abuses of power in their past, either directly through relationships or indirectly through the systems they are part of, for example, politically or culturally. Consequently, their responses to the use of power in the present may seem disproportionate to those who have not experienced the same relational disconnections and the accompanying fear

and vulnerability they bring (Jordan & Hartling, 2008), leading teachers to misunderstand student behaviour. Misunderstandings can result in rupture due to the teacher either personalising the student response or defending against it (Kidger, 2010). The use of coercive power can therefore be seen to be reactive and to perpetuate relational disconnection and to damage TSRs.

Authoritarian versus Relational School Cultures

Despite SEMH students clearly benefitting from relational, rather than authoritarian strategies, these are often difficult to develop in mainstream environments which operate within a behaviourist framework. Even within SAPs, which have tended to follow the more relational approach advocated for SEMH students, are shifting back to a behaviourist framework (Pennacchia & Thomson, 2016). This is purportedly due to the current political focus on tangible evaluation data as little recognition is given to improved student socio-emotional outcomes (ibid). The resulting tension between providing relational strategies within a behaviourist context is stressful for teachers, thereby increasing the potential for ruptures within the TSR (Alvarez-Hevia, 2018).

4.10. Repair processes in practice

4.10.1. Restorative practice

The tensions outlined above illustrate the challenges teachers face when trying to understand, empathise and hold boundaries in a non-confrontational way to provide SEMH students with the TSRs which meet their needs. Given these tensions, ruptures to TSRs are bound to occur, therefore placing a focus on how they can be repaired. After rupture, SEMH students desire the right to reply, together with a participatory approach that has a sharing of power (Pomeroy, 1999). This fits well with the principals of the restorative justice approach, which is linked to higher quality TSRs (Fosen, 2016).

Restorative practice is an approach that centres on repairing harm and giving a voice to the injured party (Bazemore & Umbreit, 2001), by bringing together the perpetrator and others involved in an incident, with each person being able

to present their own version of events and how they were affected by it. They then collaboratively decide, how the harm done can be repaired and the relationships rebuilt (Gregory et al., 2016).

Whilst this is a useful relational method to work through a negative event, it tends to be utilised for incidents where physical harm or damage has been caused. As such, it can often be a formalised process that can be perceived as punitive by SEMH students, thereby triggering feelings of shame which can overwhelm their ability to then process any feelings (Price et al., 2018), potentially undermining the benefits of the process.

Additionally, ruptures are not always significant incidents, particularly for students (or teachers) who use avoidance or withdrawal as a strategy. Yet, it is important to find ways to repair ruptures at an early stage, in order to prevent more ruptures, which may result in a long-term disconnection from the TSR. As Lewis (2000) says, poor relationships are defined by their absence of repair processes.

4.10.2. Repair processes in SAPs

In terms of current research on repair processes within the TSR, Malcolm (2020), investigated how the principals of 20 SAP's would respond if a negative staff-student relationship emerged. Interestingly, only 8 out of the 20 principals suggested engaging the staff and student together to work through the relationship difficulties. Of these principals, three mentioned the use of restorative justice. However, the greater majority said that they would remove contact between the two. Other heads said they would 'address the issue' by getting the staff member to build a more positive TSR with the student (ibid p523). However, it is not clear how the staff member would go about this and the solution is presented as an individualised, rather than dyadic process. Malcolm (2020) concludes from this that there is potential to develop approaches that 'make relationships central to understanding complex situations' as current practice would seem to favour teacher-student disengagement from TSRs when problems arise, rather than re-engagement.

4.11. The role of EPs with SEMH students

The BPS (2018) describe the EP role as limiting the effects of barriers to learning and promoting student inclusion. The DfE (2019, p11) state that EPs play a 'fundamental' part in supporting SEMH needs. Given the protection against exclusion that positive TSRs give to SEMH students (Tucker, 2013), providing consultation, training and interventions that support TSR quality and maintenance would uphold both these statements regarding the requirements of the EP role. EPs are well placed to offer advice and guidance to both mainstream or SAP environments, at the individual, dyadic or systemic levels. However, EPs have been accused of colluding with systems and viewpoints which lead to exclusion of the most vulnerable (Munn & Lloyd, 2005). Guidance as to how power can be utilised in the interests of SEMH students would support EPs to avoid these claims.

4.12. Literature review summary

This literature review reveals that the quality of SEMH students' TSRs are crucial to their educational inclusion and engagement (O'Gorman et al., 2016). However, teachers find it difficult to meet their students' TSR needs due to the emotional labour required, the tensions around professional boundaries and finding the right balance between support and challenge and care and control (e.g. Fitzsimmons et al., 2019). There are also systemic issues such as the perceived lack of relevant training and emotional support, in addition to tensions between behaviourist and relational school cultures (Pennacchia & Thomson, 2016). All these aspects make TSR maintenance difficult for teachers and increases the likelihood of ruptures. Whilst RCT places an emphasis on empathic repair, in practice, restorative justice procedures can create shame within students and it has been found that dissolving the TSR by removing the teacher may be considered the simplest way of resolving rupture, hence no attempt at repair is made (Malcolm. 2020).

4.13. Research justification

This literature review has identified a gap in knowledge as to how the teachers of SEMH students can be supported in the prevention of, or successful repair of, rupture. The successful reparation of ruptures leads to a stronger TSR (Jordan & Hartling, 2008), personal growth (Lewis, 2000) and behavioural change (e.g. Safran et al., 2011). As teachers are in a position of power regarding their students and are therefore responsible for the TSR (Giles, 2008), it is important to examine relational rupture and repair from the teacher's perspective. An exploration of how each concept looks and feels to the teacher and an understanding of their views on what supports them to undertake successful repair would illuminate an important but neglected area. There is currently a dearth of educational research into the nuances of SEMH TSR breakdown despite SEMH being identified as a category of need (DfE, 2015) and it being 'vital' that their relationships which are 'not going well' are identified and supported (MacCalluma et al., 2017 p251).

4.14. Research aims and contribution to current knowledge

The aim of my research is to explore the teachers' lived experience of rupture and repair in their TSRs with SEMH students. I will also be exploring how staff practices and school systems support the maintenance and repair of teacher's relationships with their students. This is in view of the importance and relevance of understanding teacher difficulties in maintaining TSRs with SEMH students to the education and educational psychology profession. It also aims to bridge this relational gap in the literature.

The findings could help specialist schools, APs, mainstream schools, and the EPs who support them, to come to a more nuanced understanding of why ruptures between teachers and SEMH students occur, how they can be prevented and how the relationship can be repaired should rupture take place.

This study's research question is:

What are teachers' lived experiences of relational rupture and repair with students described as having social, emotional and mental health difficulties in SAP?

4.15. Research setting

The research will be conducted in a specialist academy which caters for approximately one hundred SEMH students aged between five and sixteen in the north of England. This academy works in partnership with the Local City Council and is also part of a large multi-academy trust that operates across several different LA areas. It opened to students in September 2018.

4.16. Aims and objectives of the planned research

The overall aims of the research within this specialist SEMH academy are:

1. To form an understanding of what teachers perceive to be a rupture in their TSRs
2. To form an understanding of how teachers experience ruptures in their TSRs
3. To form an understanding of how teachers experience repair in their TSRs
4. To identify potential changes in staff practice and school systems that would facilitate positive change with regards to TSR maintenance and repair
5. To understand the implications of this research in terms of EP practice with students, staff and senior leadership within specialist SEMH provisions

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines how my research aims and topic area guided me towards using IPA and I justify my choice vis a vis other possible approaches. A brief outline is also given of the three areas of philosophical thought that underpin IPA - phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography, in the context of how they relate to my research.

5.2. Choice of methodology

Whilst the research methodology can be influenced by the researcher's ontological position, I subscribe to the pragmatic view that the key to meaningful research is selecting the methodology which best suits the research question (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Consequently, I considered my research aims to determine which, of the various methodological approaches possible, would most aptly meet these aims.

Given the gap in the research identified i.e. the current lack of knowledge about how teachers experience rupture and repair with SEMH students, this research is exploratory (Cresswell, 2009). Immediately, this suggests qualitative, rather than quantitative, research as qualitative enables a phenomena to be explored 'from the interior' (Flick, 2009), by taking the voice, views, and perspectives of the participants as a starting point. Exploratory research is interested in investigating the less well understood aspects of a particular phenomenon and I felt that my research aims required a rich investigation of individual experiences rather than gaining the breadth of general experience that would be generated through quantitative or mixed method approaches, therefore I was drawn to a qualitative approach.

5.2.1. Qualitative research approaches

Whilst all qualitative research prioritises the 'what', 'why', 'how' richness of experiences over the identification of cause-and-effect relationships (Willig,

2008), this umbrella term covers a breadth of approaches. To further the transparency of my research (Yardley, 2008), the other potential methodologies considered will be outlined and the reasons for ultimately choosing IPA will be elucidated.

When finishing the literature review, I felt drawn to using IPA as I felt that the experiences of the phenomenon under investigation would vary, teacher to teacher, due to their previous and current relational experiences and the meaning they have made from them. I had used IPA before and felt that its idiographic focus on each individual's unique experiences and meaning making of a specific phenomenon, within a particular context (Ponterotto, 2005), would suit what I was trying to explore. However, I wanted to be sure that my previous experience of using IPA was not the factor that made it seem most appropriate, so I utilised a method recommended by Smith et al., (2009 p45), to identify whether it was best suited to investigate the research gap. This method encouraged me to think about how my research question could be worded differently, which, in turn, could influence which methodology I chose. The table below illustrates my re-worded questions:

Table 1: Re-worded research questions for different qualitative approaches

Research question	Key features	Suitable approach
What are main experiential features of rupture and repair?	A focus on the common structures of a phenomenon (i.e. rupture and repair) as an experience (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009)	Descriptive Phenomenology
What factors influence how a teacher experiences	Developing an explanatory account/ theory around what	Grounded theory

Research question	Key features	Suitable approach
rupture and repair within their TSRs?	impacts/influences teachers' experiences of rupture and repair	
What sorts of stories do teachers of SEMH students use to describe rupture and repair in their TSRs?	A focus on how the stories of rupture and repair relates to the teacher's sense making e.g. via structures or genres	Narrative psychology
How do teachers of SEMH students 'talk about rupture and repair in their TSRs?	Concentrating on the purpose and effects of the language used during the interview i.e. the discourse	Discursive Psychology
How do teachers of SEMH students make sense of their experiences of rupture and repair?	A focus on personal meaning-making in a particular context (e.g. school) for people who share a particular experience (e.g. SEMH teachers)	IPA

Going through the process of generating these research questions immediately helped me to narrow down my choice of approach. I quickly ruled out Grounded Theory as although it has parallels to IPA in that it has a largely inductivist approach, is flexible in terms of process and is utilised to gain a greater understanding of a relatively unexplored topic, its focus is on generating an explanatory account of a phenomenon. The need for an explanatory account means that there is a quest for convergence across the data which contrasts with IPA's interest in divergence as well as convergence

in their respondents' experiences (Smith et al., 2009). Due to the current lack of research into rupture and repair, I wanted the research to be truly exploratory at this stage without the pressure of having to develop or identify an explanatory theory. This may come at a later stage, but I wanted the opportunity to immerse myself in the nuances of individual experiences without looking to generalise them at this point.

I also quickly ruled out Discursive Psychology. Discourse analysis (DA) is concerned with 'how events of reality are manufactured, negotiated and deployed in conversation' (Carpenter, 2009 p3), and, therefore, is not looking to gain new knowledge of phenomena, but is attempting to understand the processes by which the phenomena are 'talked into being' (stet). Smith et al., (2009) suggest that DA can be roughly grouped into approaches interested in power e.g. Foucauldian discourse analysis (FDA) or interaction e.g. Discursive Psychology (DP). FDA was attractive to me due to my interest in how discourses from those in positions of power can result in the establishment of student categories such as SEMH. Yet, in FDA, the participants' discursive representations would be the unit of analysis rather than, in IPA, the meaning that they have given to an experience in a particular context (Smith et al., 2009). Therefore, whilst I am interested in how power may influence the context within which rupture and repair is experienced, the focus of my concern is with the phenomena of rupture and repair, and the meaning given to them by teachers. Therefore, FDA would shift the focus from my core area of interest.

From the question I devised, Narrative Psychology looked quite tempting as its concern with participants' meaning making is shared with IPA, in addition to the acknowledgement of the subjectivity of the interviewer and their role in interpreting how the participant makes sense of their world (Smith et al., 2009). However, whilst IPA's overwhelming interest is in the lived experience, narrative is interested in how participants make sense of an experience through the way they tell their story. These stories are explored for their content, form, and function (Halliday, 1973) and investigate phenomena as they are presented within the story with no separation from their context.

Alternatively, IPA's focus is on the phenomena themselves, therefore enabling a cross-case comparison. This felt important for my interest in rupture and repair, as I wanted to be able to see if there were similarities or differences to how teachers experienced these phenomena, therefore I was prioritising my interest in rupture and repair as particular concepts and more separated from their context than narrative approaches would support.

Finally, I compared IPA to Descriptive phenomenology as this looked a promising alternative approach. Phenomenology endeavours to study lived human experiences, the way things are perceived and how they appear to the consciousness (Smith et al., 2009). This philosophical approach was originally developed by Edmund Husserl and later built upon by Martin Heidegger. IPA shares phenomenology's commitment to accessing participants' inner life worlds through their thoughts, feelings, and memories as they consider the participants as the experiential experts. However, IPA differs in its beliefs around how the essence or structure of a phenomenon as it is described by a participant is analysed.

Phenomenology considers that there can be no use of an external theoretical framework as the participant descriptions of the phenomenon explored should be rooted to the data (Tuffour, 2017). Whilst Husserl believed a researcher could never truly get to the heart of an experience due to the act of actively thinking about, knowing about it and naming it, forms a barrier between the researcher and the object (Peoples, 2020), he felt that by using epoche, this barrier could be removed. Epoche is the process of bracketing or 'phenomenological vigilance' – van Kaam, (1967 p259), which is to intentionally put aside any past knowledge or judgements and to engage with experiences through a radical self-meditative process known as phenomenological reduction (Finlay, 2008). However, Giorgi (2009), argues that a more pragmatic method than Husserl's phenomenological reduction is needed for researchers of participants' lived experiences and suggests reflective analysis, or 'scientific phenomenological reduction', as an appropriate compromise.

In terms of my research, particularly given my experience of working with SEMH students, I would have concerns that my ability to use epoche would be compromised, though Giorgi's (2009) reflective analysis sounds more achievable. However, not being able to bring any theoretical framework or interpretation to the data feels limiting in terms of making a difference (Stainton Rogers & Stainton Rogers, 1997). My thinking resonates with Noon (2017) who argues that the researcher needs to present what the participants' experiences mean for them, rather than giving a 'simply descriptive' account. Consequently, I am drawn to hermeneutics' influence on phenomenology, therefore moving away from a purely phenomenological approach.

IPA shifts from 'pure' phenomenology through the influence of hermeneutics i.e. the art of interpretation or meaning (Tuffour, 2017). Ricoeur, one of the four influential philosophers who shaped the development of hermeneutics within IPA (the others being Heidegger, Schleiermacher and Gadamer), linked phenomenology to hermeneutics due to his belief that meaning was essential to lived experience and therefore the two were entwined. Unlike Husserl's positioning of language as a barrier to understanding experience, Ricoeur felt that experience only fully emerged when it was expressed through language, a process which a participant might find reconstructs the experience's original meaning.

Heidegger also deviated from Husserl's phenomenological thinking by rejecting his method of phenomenological reduction. Heidegger's belief was that people's experiences offered those around them a situation that was fundamentally in need of questioning and interpretation (Henriksson et al., 2012). Within IPA, this notion has been construed as the need for 'detective work' (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009, p. 35) to illuminate participant experiences, which is then followed by the employment of the researcher's pre-suppositions and knowledge to make sense of these experiences. This sense-making process incorporates Heidegger's concept of "being in the world," (Heidegger, 1927/2011), which is reflected in IPA's "explicit commitment to person-in-environment and not just phenomenon-as-experienced" (Quest, 2014, p. 43). I believe these concepts make IPA a better

fit for my research because I am aware through my own experiences of teaching, that the context someone is teaching in e.g. a classroom or the student's family home, can influence the teacher's perceptions of their students, their responses to them and how they interpret those responses. Students labelled as having SEMH needs are also situated within a particular social, cultural and historical context. Being able to acknowledge the context within which the teachers' lived experiences are taking place feels vital to understanding the meaning which they give to their experiences (Eatough & Smith, 2006).

Finally, whilst both the phenomenology and IPA approaches insist that the bracketing of pre-conceived knowledge is crucial, IPA goes on to view this aspect slightly differently. This is because Heidegger considered that to understand an experience required certain aspects of prior assumption and interpretation (Moran & Mooney, 2002) despite these assumptions potentially complicating or influencing the findings (Heidegger, 1962). Therefore, even with awareness of these preconceptions and self-reflexivity throughout the process, the researcher will not have perfect access to the participant's inner world as their understanding will be influenced by their own prior knowledge and experiences. Consequently, the researcher needs to be satisfied with getting as 'close' to the participant's experiences as is possible (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006).

Again, IPA appears a more realistic and achievable approach, especially as a novice researcher and someone new to philosophy. I doubt that I could realistically bracket off my prior knowledge as "one cannot escape the personal interpretations brought to qualitative data analysis" (Creswell, 2009, p. 18). Also, there may be benefits to my 'insider' knowledge of teaching SEMH students. It may give me insight into my participant's worlds and enable me to get 'closer' to their experiences if I can remain sufficiently aware of what knowledge and preconceptions I am bringing to the process. This will be done through keeping a diary and other methods which will be discussed further in Section 4.6.1.

Overall, whilst I am aligned with phenomenology due to my interest in my participants' 'life world' (Carpenter, 2009), the ability to acknowledge my own knowledge and preconceptions and utilise these during the analytic process, together with the focus on meaning rather than description makes me feel that IPA is better suited to my research than phenomenology.

5.2.2. Confirmation of methodological choice

Having gone through this process, I feel confident that I have chosen a methodology that will enable me to meet my research aims. Also, Oxley (2016) specifically recommends IPA to EPs as she believes that gaining a rich understanding of individual educational experiences will enable better EP support to be offered to staff, students and families.

5.2.3. Theoretical underpinnings of IPA

IPA has its roots in the following areas: phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography. Whilst I have discussed much of its underpinnings in the comparative analysis of methodologies above, there are a few additional points to add in relation to this study.

5.3. Phenomenology

Whilst I discussed Husserl and Heidegger above, Merleau-Ponty and Sartre were also contributors to phenomenology. Merleau-Ponty brings the concept of embodiment to phenomenology by emphasising that the world is not just experienced through mental processes but also physically, through our body, our emotions and through our physical and cultural world (Smith et al., 2009). This has influenced IPA in acknowledging the centrality of emotions to understanding experience, which is important within my study due to the emotionality involved in teaching SEMH students.

Sartre's contribution to phenomenology was his view that being human is more about becoming, rather than being, which drove his concept of 'existentialism' (Tuffour, 2017). However, he acknowledged that our decision

making is influenced by our context e.g. our experiences to date, our culture and socio-political climate etc (Lewis & Staehler, 2010). He therefore counterpoints Heidegger's emphasis on the lived world of objects, people and language, with a focus on intersubjectivity, and how the presence or absence of others can affect how we experience a phenomenon (Smith et al., 2009). This feels important to acknowledge in a study with relationships and marginalisation at its heart.

5.4. Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics is about meaning making i.e., an ongoing process of understanding experiences that facilitates new insights, elucidations and interpretations. Heidegger recognised that a researcher's presuppositions cannot be truly bracketed and emphasised the need for their reflexivity to ensure they are aware of what they were bringing to the process. This making sense of the participants' sense making is called the 'double hermeneutic', with Finlay (2011) suggesting that the researcher does not take the participants' meaning at face value but intuitively looks for a deeper interpretation. Inevitably, this places the researcher central to the analysis, together with their pre-conceptions. However, Smith et al., (2009) suggest that preconceptions may only come to light once analysis has begun and the researcher needs to be open to these preconceptions being challenged (known as the hermeneutic circle) and to new ones emerging as further data is explored. This ongoing process of engagement with the double hermeneutic and the hermeneutic circle emanates from IPA's intention to understand the whole by looking at the part, whilst recognising that to understand the part the researcher needs to look closely at the whole (ibid).

As the researcher, I recognise my need for 'bracketing' to focus on the participants' perspectives on their world (Husserl, 1970), and then to interpret their world through my own knowledge and understanding. See Section 8.2.1 to see how I achieved this in practice.

5.5. Idiography

Smith (2004) considers IPA to be essentially idiographic i.e. committed to the detailed analysis of a particular phenomenon in a particular context at a particular time (Ponterotto, 2005). This influences the research methods undertaken, for example, in terms of recruiting small samples of participants who are 'experts' in the phenomenon under investigation. When analysing the data gathered from these experts, each account is scrutinised in detail before there is a cross-case examination of what is common and what is distinct among their experiences (Smith et al., 2009). Idiography's commitment to rich but non-generalisable knowledge can usefully complement existing research to create a more holistic picture of a phenomenon. Currently, there is little research, either quantitative or qualitative, around rupture and repair of TSRs with SEMH students, although there is a plethora of both types of research around the impact of positive and negative TSRs on academic, affective and behavioural outcomes. The findings of my study may therefore point to future directions of research in this area, rather than complementing existing research.

5.6. Assessing quality, rigour, and trustworthiness in research

5.6.1. Quality issues

According to Seale (1999 p471) 'quality is a somewhat elusive phenomenon in qualitative research' as traditional methods of evaluation such as objectivity, reliability and generalisability are inconsistent with the epistemological basis of IPA which is qualitative and interpretative in nature. However, Yardley (2008) recommends attention to four broad areas to ensure a rigorous study:

- *Sensitivity to context* – illustrated through a knowledge of the extant literature on the research topic, through a sensitivity to the relational interactions in the interviews.
- *Commitment and rigour* – this requires an in-depth engagement with the literature, competent data collection and an immersion in the resulting data and analysis.

- *Transparency and Coherence* – transparency is demonstrated through a clear description of how the research stages were implemented, with coherence relating to how well the choice of the IPA methodology fitted with the research carried out.
- *Impact and importance* – is it possible to demonstrate that the research has reported on something interesting, novel or useful?

These guidelines were considered for the duration of the study and will be discussed further in Section 8.2.

5.6.2. Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a necessary part of qualitative research as it can be seen as being co-constituted with its participants due to the researcher's behaviour and relationships having an impact on the data elicited and the findings produced (Finlay, 2006). Myself, as the researcher, is the person central to the collection, selection and interpretation of the data (Willig, 2008) and the findings will be affected by my own experiences and understandings (Finlay, 2006). Consequently, reflexivity is considered another key aspect of quality evaluation, particularly given IPA's interest in meaning and interpretation (Willig, 2008) and, to aid my reflections on the research process, I will write regular notes in my research journal. Relevant notes from this journal will be referred to in Chapter 5 and a reflexive summary is given in Section 8.1.

5.6.3. Ethics

How I implemented the ethical guidelines set out by the British Psychological Society (BPS, 2018) i.e. in ensuring the principles of Respect, Competence, Responsibility and Integrity were followed throughout the study, is detailed in Section 5.6.

6. PROCEDURES

This chapter describes the specific research methods used, including the development of the participant criteria, the interview schedule and explains the data collection and analysis method. It also discusses ethical issues and ways of ensuring the research's quality and rigour.

6.1. Sample

Because IPA is concerned with a detailed examination of the lived experience of a specific phenomenon, it uses samples that are purposive and homogenous (Gil-Rodriguez & Hefferon, 2011). Participants are drawn from the group which is 'expert' on the phenomenon to be explored on the basis that they can offer valuable insights (Smith et al., 2009). For this study, teachers of students with SEMH needs were perceived to be the experts on the phenomena of rupture and repair within their TSRs.

I began recruitment by looking for opportunities through my own contacts (Smith et al., 2009) and my university tutor had links with the specialist SEMH academy outlined in Section 3.1.5. After a discussion with the SLT at this academy, they were keen to support my research and requested that the research findings were disseminated to the academy upon completion of the research. This resonated with my values as an EP, whilst also supporting the research's 'impact and importance' criteria (Yardley, 2008). In addition, recruiting from one academy was helpful to recruiting a homogenous sample, as whilst the age and specific nature of the students' SEMH needs might vary, the teachers were working with students with particular difficulties, in a particular context, at a particular time (Ponterotto, 2005).

6.2. Inclusion criteria

The required experts for this study were drawn from the SEMH academy's cohort of teachers. To meet the aims of this study, I was specific that the

participants were qualified teachers as opposed to teaching assistants or pastoral workers. This is because of the distinct role of teachers in relation to students, with the focus of their responsibility being on the students' learning, rather than on the student's pastoral or relational needs. My literature review focused on teachers and therefore the gap in the literature related to teachers. An additional inclusion criteria was that the teachers had at least a year's experience in teaching SEMH students to ensure they were sufficiently 'expert' in rupture and repair processes.

6.3. Number of participants

The number of participants recommended for an IPA doctorate study is a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 10 (Clarke, 2010). Given I am studying on an applied doctorate course with much less time for the research available, I aimed to recruit between 4 and 6 participants for the study, together with an extra participant to conduct a pilot interview with. I felt this number of participants was small enough to match the time and resources available for my project, whilst being large enough to meet the goals of the research and to provide 'a new and richly textured understanding of experience' (Sandelowski, 1995 p.183).

6.4. Recruitment of participants

I wrote an email introducing the research which was forwarded by a member of the SLT to teachers within the academy who met the required inclusion criteria. My email outlined the research project, an overview of what their participation would involve together with my contact details for those who were interested to receive more information (Appendix 1). Due to Covid 19 lockdown measures I had not been able to visit the academy to introduce the research in person or meet any of the teachers, so I also attached a short personal biography to build rapport (Appendix 2).

On receipt of a request for more information, I sent them the information sheet and consent form (Appendix 3). On return of the consent form, we then

organised a time for the online interview and I sent them an interview schedule guide (Appendix 4) with the intention that this would allow reflexivity prior to our meeting and enhance interview depth. Post-interview, I sent a thank you email together with a debrief letter (Appendix 5).

6.5. The participants

Because the academy has a small number of teachers, retaining their anonymity is important. Consequently, the information relating to each participant has been restricted to type of teacher as follows:

Table 2: Participants

Number of participants	Type of teacher
5	2 class teachers (KS1 and 2) 3 subject specific teachers (KS3 and 4)

6.6. Ethics

Ethical approval for this research was granted by The University of Sheffield's School of Education Ethics Panel in June 2020 (Appendix 6). This covered the additional confidentiality issues raised by the interviews having to be conducted online due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

Whilst issues of consent and confidentiality are always important, these felt particularly significant for this project due to the participant recruitment email being sent out by the Associate Principal of the Academy. I wanted to ensure that the potential participants felt no obligation to participate. All responses to the initial introductory email came to my university email address and it was made clear that no information regarding respondents would be fed back to the Associate Principal.

Confidentiality of data was key as I wanted the participants to be reassured that every measure would be taken to minimise the possibility that their data

could be recognised by either the senior management, or their peers. As the school had a total of only 18 teachers, my participants formed nearly a third of their cohort, therefore increasing the chances of their data being recognised. This was fully discussed with the participants at the start of the online interview, and I outlined how their data would be anonymised, that their individual details e.g. age, years of experience etc, would not be revealed. I also reiterated that they could contact me for further discussions about this (or any other concerns) at any point. These points were also covered in the debrief email and letter.

Regarding consent, once a potential participant had expressed an interest in the research by responding to my introductory email, I sent them the information sheet and consent form and my contact details were included, as well as my supervisor's, in case they had any questions. All participants were informed that they could withdraw consent at any point before, during or after the interview, up to the beginning of September 2020, without having to give a reason. Organisation of the interview only took place after my receipt of the signed consent form.

Verbal consent was sought prior to starting the interview and participants were also reminded that they had the right not to answer any questions or stop the interview if they felt uncomfortable at any point. I also checked whether they were happy for the interview to be recorded and reminded them that they could withdraw consent at the end of the interview. After the interview, a debrief email was sent, reminding them again about their right to withdraw.

Consideration of power dynamics was also recognised as important to conducting ethical research as the IPA approach as defined by Smith et al. (2009) enables the researcher to not just “bear witness” to emergent themes, but to become an active participant in the discovery of those themes (Pringle et al., 2011). However, within this dynamic process is the potential for perceived “power plays” (Smith et al., 2009). To counterpoint perceptions of power, strategies were used to help the research participants feel they were being treated with respect i.e. that their experience had been considered

carefully, that their views were important and opportunities for rapport building were built into the process to enable them to feel comfortable in giving their views. These strategies included, for example, transparency over the research process, rearranging my own commitments to ensure the interview fitted conveniently with the participant's timings and choice of location, and ensuring my availability to answer any questions the participants had either prior to, during or after the interview (Blackstone, 2018). In addition, I shared some information about myself in a short biography alongside a photo in the initial participant email, as a way of equalising the power differential (Oakley, 1981) and establishing a rapport (Hesse-Biber, & Leavy, 2010). These are also ways of overcoming some of the difficulties of building a rapport when conducting interviews online (Levenberg et al., 2018) and therefore also fitted the pragmatics of my research design.

6.7. Method of data collection

My choice of data collection for this research was semi-structured interviews as they would enable a rich and detailed picture of the participants' experiences to be gained, therefore aligning with the tenets of IPA (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). I include detail about how the interview schedule was developed and used in response to Brocki and Wearden's (2006) criticism of not being able to evaluate IPA quality due to a lack of transparency over this part of the process.

I followed Kvale & Brinkmann's (2009) advice to produce an interview schedule in advance. The interview schedule was created around the research themes in line with Smith et al.'s (2009) guidance on developing an interview schedule for use with IPA. Aligning with Merleau-Ponty's concept of embodiment and Husserl's emphasis on intentionality, I sent the participants the question guide prior to interview to allow for their reflection on the questions, potentially facilitating greater interview depth and offering an opportunity for the examples most meaningful to the participants to surface for discussion. However, when I sent the schedule, I did emphasise that the schedule was only a guide as I wanted the ability to adapt to the participant I

was interviewing and to follow lines of interest as they arose, which is key to IPA's explorative inductive approach (Reid et al., 2005).

Every participant referred to having looked at the schedule beforehand, sometimes in reference to discussing a particular rupture e.g. 'this came to mind when I was reading your questions', hence the data felt richer. Because of their prior reflection, some participants started talking about something specific in the rapport building section at the beginning of the interview, a prompt which I would then start with, rather than following the order of questions on the schedule. Ultimately, none of the interviews exactly followed the question sequence on the schedule, but I found it useful as there was always a point towards the end of the interview where I would refer back to it to ensure we had covered all the areas necessary to fulfil the research aims.

This practice enabled very fluid, reflective, and comprehensive interviews to be conducted. It allowed each participant to discuss the aspects of rupture and repair that were significant to them at the level of depth they felt comfortable with. Although there were suggested prompts for each question on the schedule, my actual prompts tended to be specific to what the participant was talking about e.g. reflecting back something that was said and having curiosity about it. On reflection, having the schedule made me more confident to allow the interviews to flow, as it was something I could come back to if necessary. The fluidity of the interviews meant that they varied in length (from 61 minutes to 88 minutes), direction and area of focus, although the questions fundamental to the research aims were still covered.

Prior to these main interviews, a pilot interview was conducted to ensure the questions I had devised were appropriately open ended (Smith et al., 2009) and to ascertain approximate timings. Also, because I had not conducted interviews online before, I wanted to check that the questions I had developed as a means for rapport building at the beginning of the interview, had the desired effect. I also wanted to test that I could correctly utilise the recording facility on Google Meet. The pilot interview I undertook went well enough for me to include it within the main data analysis as my interview schedule elicited

rich responses, the rapport felt positive and the feedback from the participant as to the overall process, including the interview, was encouraging.

Once the pilot had been conducted, the following four interviews were carried out over a period of two months, as and when the participants had an opportunity to take part. The questions were always sent out at least 24 hours beforehand and the debrief email and letter within 24 hours post interview. The interviews were all conducted online, the participant location being either a quiet, confidential space within the Academy or their home-working location, whichever they chose as preferential. I was in a home office which fulfilled the need for participant and researcher confidentiality. After each interview, I wrote reflexive notes as to my own thoughts and feelings during the interview (see Appendix 7), both as a method to note down anything that may improve further interviews and also to assist with the bracketing process during data analysis by being aware of my own processes which may have influenced the data capture.

6.8. Data transcription

Each participant file was coded for anonymisation purposes. They were then transcribed verbatim apart from the removal/anonymisation of any identifying features. Due to IPA primarily seeking to interpret the meaning of participant accounts, Smith et al., (2009) do not consider it necessary to keep a detailed transcription of the prosodic elements of the recordings. Therefore, only significant non-verbal communications were noted, for example, notable pauses or laughter.

6.9. Data Analysis

I followed the steps defined by Smith et al., (2009) to complete the data analysis. Whilst I recount each step in the order outlined for simplicity, the analysis itself was non-linear and iterative, which is the method advocated for an IPA approach (ibid). The steps were undertaken for each transcript before

moving onto the next in accordance with IPA's idiographic approach (ibid) until the final step of looking for patterns across the transcripts.

Firstly, the process of transcription helped to fulfil Smith et al.'s, (2009) advice of repeatedly re-reading the scripts to gain an in-depth familiarity. Secondly, I attempted coding the data using Smith et al.'s suggestion of descriptive, linguistic and conceptual level comments on 'meaning units' (Finlay, 2014 p.126) to develop exploratory comments for each transcript. However, I struggled with this method, as I found that deciding whether my thoughts were descriptive or linguistic etc., distracted me from being immersed in the text. I therefore went back to Smith et al. (2009) and noted they encouraged researchers to be innovative in their approach to IPA, and there is no one 'correct' way to do analysis. I therefore tried the approach of underlining data which felt interesting or meaningful and 'free associating' by writing whatever came into my mind (ibid p 91) in the right-hand margin. This allowed more thoughts to flow, enabling me to write my exploratory comments in the right-hand column of the transcript (Appendix 8).

Thirdly, these exploratory comments, were then expressed as emergent themes which involved producing a concise statement which reflected the psychological essence of the explanatory notes but also resonated with the participant's description (ibid). This process sometimes involved reviewing my explanatory notes and the transcript again as, after I'd written my emergent theme, the theme felt too similar to the explanatory note and had not shifted to the right psychological essence (see Appendix 9).

The next stage involved looking for patterns and connections between the emergent themes within each transcript. As advised by Smith et al., (2009), I wrote out the themes chronologically and then clustered together those that were related. For the initial clustering process, I kept all the emergent themes. Whilst, overall, the themes tended to be clustered around the research aims e.g. rupture/repair/setting, each participant had clusters individual to themselves due to the different 'flavour' of each interview script e.g. A had 'personal identity', B had 'classroom climate', C had 'SEMH teaching in

mainstream' and 'tensions' (see Appendix 10 for C's emergent themes). This different flavour of each one also helped me to bracket off what I had found in the previous transcripts as well as did the systematic nature of my process (ibid).

For each participant, I utilised processes such as abstraction, subsumption and numeration to refine the clusters. Appendix 11 gives the example of these processes in transcript C where, within the theme of 'the work of the TSR', the cluster of 'engagement with learning' was subsumed into 'sites of resistance, success and blame', as numeration identified there was a lack of justification for its continuation as a standalone cluster. In the same example, 'the work of the TSR' and 'rupture' clusters were brought together through a process of 'contextualisation' (ibid, p98) whereby I perceived rupture to be an aspect of the TSR, rather than separate. Therefore, as illustrated, emergent themes from the 'rupture' cluster were subsumed into two new themes called 'the TSR and rupture' and 'from rupture to repair'. Appendix 11 also gives an example of refining through the identification of polarisation whereby C's focus on the negative aspects of mainstream was in opposition to the benefits of the current setting.

For Transcript D, abstraction was particularly useful as I had a high number of emergent themes and clusters. On close inspection, the emergent themes within the clusters around 'teacher', 'TA', and 'classroom climate' could all be abstracted into either the themes of 'Supportive setting' or 'Relationships and rupture', each of which developed into super-ordinate themes.

Finally, I searched for patterns across the transcripts. To support this process, I used large sheets of paper with post it notes for the themes for each participant and laid the 5 sheets of paper next to each other on the floor. Certain patterns emerged immediately, typically around the research aims, where the data was most potent and there were high levels of convergence. However, there was divergence across the subordinate themes and here I had to make difficult decisions around where they fitted, or even whether they fitted. These decisions often involved going back to the emergent themes and

sometimes to the transcripts themselves to think about the meaning I had ascribed to them, whether this reflected meanings elsewhere, and whether there was a higher order concept that might bring them together within another theme. For example, with C's superordinate theme of 'Tensions' (see Appendix 11) there was convergence in other transcripts of these tensions, but all had been subsumed into other subordinate themes. I therefore went back to Transcript C to see if I had given an over emphasis to these emergent themes or whether they truly represented the transcript. I also checked the other transcripts to look for specific convergence or divergence in order to give rigour to the process. I also revisited my research aims to reflect on what the 'tensions' data would add whilst balancing that against IPA's commitment to idiography and phenomenology i.e. to the participants' lived experience (see Appendix 12 for reflections on identifying themes). Ultimately, this process led to a reconfiguration of my subordinate themes, with 'relationships versus curriculum' being brought into a new superordinate theme 'There are 3 of us in this relationship', which also drew in aspects of 'classroom climate' and 'teamwork' from other participant subthemes. C's 'Equality versus meeting individual need' didn't find sufficient convergence within the data, nor a strong enough relationship with the research aims to be included and was therefore removed from the analysis. Appendix 13 maps the journey of two of C's emergent themes.

As the above examples show, this final stage involved a lot of movement and relabelling of themes, and it took a mixture of rigour and creativity for the final super and subordinate themes to emerge that I felt best represented the meaning of the data. Whilst this process involved the double hermeneutic of myself making meaning of the participant's meaning, the rigour of the process enabled me to feel the themes were justifiable in terms of the data but also coherent in light of the research aims.

7. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

7.1. Introduction

In this section, the salient themes that emerged during the analysis are presented and discussed. Eight subthemes were identified which were grouped into three master themes as illustrated in the table below:

Table 3: Superordinate and Subordinate themes

Superordinate Themes	Subordinate Themes
'The kids catch you out'	Connections and resistance
	Boundaries and rupture
	Rupture on a spectrum
Reconnecting	Emotion to reflection
	Building bridges
	Growth and change
It takes a village	Shared values, containment and empowerment
	There are three of us in this relationship

Each of the subordinate themes which comprise a super-ordinate theme are analysed consecutively. These analyses are then followed by a discussion of the super-ordinate theme as a whole. The purpose of presenting the findings and discussion together was to add coherence and retain immersion in specific aspects of the participants' lived experiences. Each discussion also relates to one of the research aims and this will appear under the discussion title. To retain a view of the whole, Chapter 7 summarises the implications of these discussions and outlines the recommendations arising from these findings.

7.2. Superordinate theme 1: ‘The kids catch you out’

Table 4: Superordinate and Subordinate themes of ‘the kids catch you out’

Superordinate Themes	Subordinate Themes
‘The kids catch you out’	Connections and resistance
	Boundaries and rupture
	Rupture on a spectrum

This superordinate theme captures the teachers’ experiences of attempting to form relationships with their students, illustrating the resistance they encountered when trying to connect and their perceptions that the students wanted to ‘catch them out’. It highlights the struggles they experienced around their personal and professional boundaries, together with their difficulties in finding the right balance between support and challenge and care and control. Inevitably, sometimes the balance tipped, and the final subordinate theme illustrates the strong emotions experienced when a major rupture occurred and how their first experience of these powerful emotions appears to have formed a key part of their journey as a teacher of SEMH students.

7.2.1. Connections and resistance

There was convergence across all participants that although they worked hard at creating connections with their students, they often met with resistance to their efforts as C’s contribution illustrates:

‘we do have kids that come in with a bit of folded arms crossed, you are not getting through to me sort of thing, and you have to just keep chipping away at it and just try to find that thing that kind of sparks them up’.

The term ‘sparks them up’ resonates with the ‘sense of zest’ that Miller (1988) describes as a key characteristic of a growth fostering relationship. Often, the respondents would try to connect with their students through the time, thought

and care they put into the curriculum activities for the students, exemplified here by D:

'I came across this newspaper article and made it into a little booklet and I put it in the next work pack that went out. When I rang his mum that week she was almost in tears. She couldn't believe that I'd done something for him, and apparently he read it from cover to cover... so it's sometimes minimal effort from the teacher that with our children can just open the door a little bit and er you can get in a bit'.

D's metaphor of 'opening the door a little bit' emphasises the caution students show around connecting, but his thought, time and effort enabled him to 'get in a bit'. However, this suggests much more time and effort will be required to gain any deeper connection. This extract also shows that care invested in the student can impact outside of the dyad, by supporting positive connections with the student's family.

The data was replete with examples like D's, of the work put into making connections, but also the preventative work undertaken to avoid ruptures, which C described as '*putting in the hard yards*':

It's putting in the thinking beforehand to try and prevent it from happening - building the relationships, trying to set differentiation in lessons, being aware of what different kids like and don't like and then directing kids in certain directions to prevent it from happening'.

Much of this work resonates with what students have voiced as what they want from their teachers (e.g. Pomeroy, 1999), implying that the participants are responding to their students' needs. The participants also talked about the behavioural strategies they used with their students, with A stating:

'I always remain totally calm, I won't respond to their behaviour, I won't raise my voice, I won't argue back if they're swearing at me... 'cos they want a reaction'.

This sense of the teachers feeling deliberately provoked to produce some kind of 'reaction' is repeated elsewhere:

'In this setting, there's children that very much test you'. B

'The kids catch you out' D

To have been 'caught out' suggests D might have felt prompted or triggered into a student response that could be considered unprofessional or wrong in some way. RCT would suggest that students relationally interact in a way that encourages affirmation of their current 'relational image' which may be very rigid due to powerful reinforcement (Miller, 2008). The participants described themselves as being patient and kind, which offered their students the opportunity of viewing themselves differently. However, change takes time and can be initially met with resistance (ibid). C illustrates she understands that the students' behaviours reflect a relational pattern due to their history:

'that reaction has come from something that has happened to them previously, or it may be that they are not ready to kind of build that relationship and so they were worried about... that relationship being formed, so they push against it a little bit'.

These behaviours around 'pushing back' happened every day, highlighting the emotional labour demanded to manage the dissonance between the teachers' care and respect for the student and the resistance they encountered. Perhaps because of the difficulties of managing this dissonance, there were contradictions in the data around how genuine their interactions with their students were, with D stating:

'if you're not genuine, the children find you out... because they can see through that veneer.'

D's use of 'veneer' suggests an artifice or a professional rather than personal approach, which suggests a tension between what teachers may offer and the students' desire for a genuine relationship (Sapiro & Ward, 2019). Yet, C found that there were problems in having a genuine relationship as the one he

describes below ended negatively, resulting in her feeling she should have been more 'guarded':

'I almost let my guard down a bit... I felt like my relationship with him was much more of a real relationship I guess and that I didn't have to, with teaching you're always acting a bit, and I didn't feel like I had to kind of act around him whatsoever. I could always just be myself...'

And A described her relationships with students as a mix of genuine feelings and something more professional, with the professional aspect becoming more apparent with a student she was finding it difficult to stay connected with:

'I would probably say my relationship with that child was more professional because it's hard to invest that feeling into that child if that makes sense? So, yeah, I think, for me, that's when it becomes more of a professional relationship, that's when it becomes important for me to make sure I show the same treatment and the same care towards that child, even if I'm doing it on purpose.'

These descriptions suggest the participants' varied in terms of how much they drew on their personal and professional identities to meet the relational needs of each student. There were also variations in the way teachers responded to the same child, as A describes how her TA has a much more positive view of a student that she struggles with:

'There is one of my TAs who is really invested in that child...she finds him very interesting and she has the same treatment I get. I guess that comes down to personal preference, doesn't it?'

This illustrates that different students can evoke very different feelings in different adults, suggesting each adult's own perceptions and expectations of how students behave vary. This emphasises the importance of students having access to a range of adults as they may be able to connect better with some than others. However, D illustrates that training can improve a teacher's ability to connect with a wider range of students:

'through working with really experienced staff... it was a lightbulb moment really... so I think that because I've really improved my ability to make relationships with children, meeting this child again actually made him see me as a new person and he didn't have the grudge because I was able to be a lot more genuine with him and be myself in a way that I hadn't felt I could be when I first met him because, like children, when you're nervous you get defensive, and then you can't be yourself'.

D believes that the knowledge and skills he learnt helped him to become a 'new person' in the classroom because he was no longer stressed and 'defensive' which had hampered his ability to connect with his students. This resonates with Rodgers and Raider-Roth's (2006) concept of 'presence', whereby the more open and authentic the teacher is, the better able they are to be empathic to the needs of another and to respond to them in a way that encourages mutual connection. However, whilst all the respondents described the high levels of psychoeducation they had received and how fundamental this was to their ability to understand, empathise and, therefore, connect with their students, the students' resistance to connection, often expressed through behaviours the participants found challenging, meant that relational disconnections were ongoing.

7.2.2. Boundaries and rupture

All participants cited the ongoing volatility of student behaviours in the classroom and the impact this had on their attempts to build TSRs:

'Our children maybe need to have the relationship begun again four or five times in one day'. D

'Just because you get that one connection, it doesn't mean that you keep it. It might be that you keep it for a week, or it might be that you keep it for a day... You have to be on your toes 'cause you have got to continually renew those relationships.' C

The need to consistently renew their relationships indicates that there are ongoing relational breakdowns enacted by either the teacher or student. When

asked what their understanding of rupture was and whether they felt 'rupture' described these relational breakdowns, four out of the five participants agreed and responded very similarly in terms of their understanding of what rupture meant:

'A rupture for me, is when that working relationship suffers, because of, um, behaviour I suppose and the way that we react to one another'. A

'I think ruptures a good word. It's not always a breakdown, it could be a blip'. B

E had a more systemic view of rupture, indicating she felt she was the recipient of consequences from relational interactions elsewhere:

'I see the rupture that was maybe defined in the question - where the kid tells the teacher to fuck off and I'm not doing your lesson - I see that as like the little visible bit of the rupture, when the actual rupture is that the child has got a horrific relationship with his dad who's got all kinds of substance misuse, domestic violence, beats his mum up, beats him up, lets him down frequently, keeps saying he's coming back and doesn't come back. So, the rupture is taken out on me but it's systematic of a whole heap of other issues in that child's life'.

E's description of the '*visible bit of the rupture*' could be construed as witnessing the relational strategy the child has learnt. The '*actual rupture*' consists of the treatment the child has experienced in the past (and present) from those in a position of relational power, this having determined the child's relational strategies. The child's strategies are then '*taken out*' on E, suggesting E is in a submissive role and the child's behaviours are being 'done to her' when she has had no part to play in the rupture's development, indicating the abuse of relational power is being passed on by the boy to those within his relational network. This illustrates how a child's familial ruptures can be perpetuated and transmitted systemically at school, leading to further marginalisation of the child.

However, there were many instances mentioned across all transcripts where power was utilised to prevent rupture. For example, E described a boy who came to her lessons but who refused to work because he stated he had no interest in the topic. E accepted this and let the boy sit in the class provided he didn't disturb anyone. After a term, another topic began, and the boy engaged with the learning. This led E to question what rupture meant:

'So, it depends how you define ruptured relationship. There's a ruptured relationship in that I was the teacher, and he was quite openly telling me that he wasn't gonna do my work 'cause he thought the lesson was boring but then a term later he decided he wanted to do it'.

This extract helps to highlight how boundaries are sites of potential rupture. In a traditional mainstream classroom, the teacher response would likely have been different, given the lack of flexibility in behavioural policies. Typically, the teacher would disconnect through their use of authority or a 'power over' response. Or they may stay connected but, by being inflexible over boundaries, induce the student's disconnection by not responding in a way that enables them to feel heard or valued.

However, it is people in power who decide whether they will enforce or be flexible on boundaries, and as E's example shows, she accepted the boy's agency of choosing not to work, therefore keeping the connection which resulted, over time, with his engagement in learning. It also gave the student the experience of being accepted, despite not complying with the expectations of his teacher.

Nevertheless, even in an educational setting where TSRs are a core focus, there was a tension around what the academic expectations of students should be and therefore where the boundaries should lie, as illustrated by B:

'But it's where you set the line... and what you do if they cross them and moving from mainstream to this setting is really difficult...I think there are classroom teachers who come from mainstream that have very clear boundaries and lines that are criticised by their colleagues. But I think that

they are probably getting more outcomes out of their students... I've got to find out where my position is on that'. B

This example highlights that B perceives a relationship between boundaries and student outcomes, but these may be academic outcomes rather than the social and emotional ones prioritised by colleagues, hence the criticism. This illustrates tensions between boundaries, outcomes and peer support hence B is struggling to find the balance that sits comfortably with him. The data is inundated with examples of how the participants continuously walked 'the line' (Aultman et al., 2009) between support and challenge and how highly attuned they needed to be to prevent a student's disconnection, either from themselves or the curriculum. Inevitably, misattunements occurred with varying consequences.

7.2.3. Ruptures on a spectrum

The variations in which boundaries were crossed and to what level, resulted in ruptures being described as a spectrum, with some being moved on from in the moment but with others having a much more powerful impact:

'If it's a minor incident then, you know, often it'll be let go and we'll continue as normal and then we'll work on getting that relationship back on track, if that's a minor sort of rupture. We do have some bigger um, ruptures... and that's a lot harder I think, probably both for students and teachers to, kind of repair, I think that takes a bit longer'. A

A's summary suggests that some ruptures create minimal disruption, and the work can continue although some minor 'work' will be done at some point to get them relationally 'back on track'. This indicates that a disconnection may or may not have occurred, but, if it had, reconnection would be quickly resolved. The regularity of ruptures meant that the participants seemed exhausted by them more than angry or frustrated as A's feelings about a student ripping things off the wall highlights:

Oh god, not again, please stop... do we have to do this again?

He went on to say:

These things don't phase me as much anymore if that makes sense? I've got used to it. I'm able to step back and sort of detach a little bit from the situation.

A's ability to detach resonates with the 'veneer' D mentioned, which suggests A's reliance on her professional identity increases as situations escalate. This echoed across other participants' accounts with each expressing that the majority of ruptures on this scale affected the classroom learning but not themselves emotionally to the extent that they disconnected from the child. This suggests that they had sufficient training, experience and personal capacity to manage these situations, although, as A mentioned, experience of these incidents helped a lot in reducing the emotional impact of them.

However, A refers to more substantial relational breakdowns as '*a lot harder*' to repair, and each participant discussed a rupture of this type that had come to the forefront during the interview. Each rupture appeared to have had a powerful emotional impact on the participant and, interestingly, three of the accounts involved the participants first experiences of a significant rupture suggesting that 'first times' formed a key part of their journey as a teacher of SEMH students.

'one that kind of immediately came to mind was the first kind of really scary moment that I had with a student' C

'because he'd bitten me, and he'd bitten quite hard' A

'there was the first time I got hit. So, he just turned round and punched me on my chin and it really hurt... I did feel wow, I didn't see that coming, literally and metaphorically' D

A converging factor of the ruptures discussed were the powerful emotions that were experienced, the first often being shock leading them to have little recollection of what they were thinking or feeling at the time:

'I think I was really shocked and I probably er I-I don't know I don't know whether, I don't know, I can't answer that at all' D

This is suggestive of the brain going into a freeze response due to the unexpectedness and/or traumatic nature of the student behaviour. After experiencing student violence, the common teacher emotion appeared to be anger:

'I'll be honest, I felt resentment towards the child'. A

But other student behaviours could have an even greater impact on the TSR, with D finding that the emotions raised in him by being humiliated were even more difficult to deal with:

'I had been humiliated and I think sometimes that's harder than any kind of physical assault'

Earlier in the interview, D had referred to feeling humiliated and when asked about it, replied:

'I think this probably all goes back to ACE scores and things like that doesn't it? Humiliation you've suffered in your own life'.

This suggests that D understood that his own early experiences might influence how he perceived or responded to student behaviours. However, in an emotive environment there can be a heightened risk of teachers being unaware of how projecting their own feelings upon their students can result in over-identification, a personal agenda and/or more triggered reactions (Bond, 2020). The teacher having a personal agenda resonates with C's description of her desired relationship with her student:

'my partner said that I can't adopt him, but there's a part of me, because I see so much talent in him...that I would really like to be the person that drives that and sees him through to his potential. There's a bit of a frustration that I can't push him to where he needs to be'.

C is feeling frustrated because her teacher role doesn't enable her to 'encourage' and 'drive' her student in the way she would like. She perceives that this may be different if she could 'adopt him', suggesting she wants to parent this student and, therefore, her feelings have moved beyond a professional relationship. There is a sense that C has her own agenda for this student, which reduces her ability to be present, listen to and be empathetic to her student's needs (Newcomb et al., 2015), which may have contributed to its subsequent rupture.

7.2.4. Discussion of Superordinate theme 1: 'The kids catch you out'

Research aim: What do teachers perceive to be a rupture in the TSRs and how do they experience them?

The Connections and Resistance theme affirmed previous research citing the challenges and emotional labour involved in developing positive relationships with SEMH students (Kidger et al., 2010). The participants described their students as predominantly resistant to their attempts at engaging with them either relationally or academically and found that it was often their attempts to overcome this resistance that resulted in ruptures, despite the 'hard yards' of rupture prevention work that dominated their role. Miller and Stiver (1991) reframe relational resistance as a strategy of disconnection enacted by those who have learnt to keep parts of themselves outside of connection, having experienced negative reactions to important aspects of themselves within 'power-over' relationships in the past. They recommend a specific form of mutual empathy to support connection (Jordan et al., 1991) whereby the one in power 'feels' the experience of the other, with the other discerning that their experience has been 'felt'. The participants keenly felt the students' sense of resistance to their attempts to connect, whilst also sensing their desire to 'catch them out'. Steele (2003) purported that children who have suffered relational maltreatment, will often try to provoke other caregivers into behaving towards them in the same way. Consequently, the teachers themselves appeared to become embroiled in an act of resistance, through avoiding the temptation to respond to their students in the way that was being invited. At these times of challenge within the TSR, the teachers' reliance on their

professional rather than personal identity became greater, suggesting the teachers operationalised a strategy of disconnection of their own by removing their personal self from their relational interactions.

In these circumstances, neither teacher nor student are representing themselves fully in the TSR due to each perceiving the need for self-protection (Jordan, 2013). Whilst this lessens the opportunities for mutuality in the relationship (ibid), the teachers' strategy of self-protection can be seen as a way of maintaining the connection, if repressing aspects of their personal self enables them to avoid repeating a negative relational pattern with the student. This contradicts Palmer's (1997) view that relational connectedness is sustained by staff 'teaching out of who they are' (p1) as the teacher's role is one that is intentional and professional; the purpose being to help the student (Jordan, 2000). Therefore, teacher authenticity and congruence is not, as Kazanjian & Choi, 2016, asserted, about being genuine and having no professional façade, but maintaining relational limits that promote the students' interests (Jordan, 2000).

The Connections and Resistance theme also illustrated the tension experienced by teachers in finding the appropriate personal and professional relational boundaries within their TSRs. Students want genuine TSRs that illustrate that adults care for them over and above the boundaries of their role (Sapiro, 2020), suggesting they will push for what they perceive as personal responses from their teachers. Yet, D found that professional training significantly increased his ability to engage in 'genuine' TSRs. This echoes Jennings and Greenberg's (2009) beliefs that psycho-educational training can shift previously held perspectives and understandings about student behaviours, thereby enabling teachers to become less self-protective and more present within their TSRs. However, the implication that D needs to become a 'new person' to be successful in creating TSRs indicates the transformation this training needs to achieve. The importance of training was echoed by all participants, but it was the shadowing of more experienced staff that D found particularly helpful, suggesting that social modelling of

relationships with SEMH students is also key, despite being a less discussed intervention.

The Boundaries and Rupture theme illustrated the fragility of TSRs, which appeared to involve ongoing disconnection and reconnection rather than solidified periods of connection. There was a consensus amongst the participants that a disconnection, or rupture, was a breakdown that impacted on the student's learning. However, whether the rupture was a relational breakdown within the dyad was contested. Four out of the five participants indicated they felt there was a dyadic aspect e.g. A felt it was the outcome of 'the way we react to one another'. This resonates with Jordan's (2013) description of rupture as an 'empathic failure' (p2) but often, the teachers found it hard to identify the specific aspect of misattunement that had caused the rupture (Building Bridges) due to their difficulties in attuning to the students' feelings (Growth and Change). The fifth participant, on the other hand, perceived the rupture to be systemic rather than dyadic, and that she was the recipient of emotions created through the student's previous relational interactions. Although all participants showed knowledge of the impact a student's previous relationships might have, only E had completely depersonalised her own part in ruptures, by positioning herself as a conduit rather than a cause. Her descriptions of her experiences of rupture suggested this depersonalisation enabled her to stay a calm and containing presence for the students, remaining empathically connected due to her own emotional responses remaining detached from the students. However, the line between depersonalisation and detachment may be fine, and consequently revisits the point above about the balance between the personal and professional boundaries in the TSR.

Whilst Aultman et al., (2009), declared that a teacher's professional identity would define their boundaries, the data from this study suggests it was a complex mix of both personal and professional identities, with the teachers balancing their beliefs, moment to moment and student to student, as to what was beneficial for relationship building and what their role was as teacher. The complexities involved in juggling support versus challenge, autonomy versus

control and meeting individual needs versus fairness, meant that the boundaries the teachers upheld varied with uncertainties as to where they should be on 'the line' (ibid). Boundary tensions have been touched on in previous SEMH student research (e.g. Fitzsimmons et al., 2019), yet they have been given little attention comparative to that in other professions such as mental health and social care (e.g. Pugh, 2007), where students with SEMH needs are also often involved.

Whilst negotiating boundaries creates tension for teachers (Aultman, 2009), Jordan (2013) reframes boundaries as a place of meeting where it is necessary to state one's own limits. She advocates for people to be supported and encouraged to think about and state their own boundaries rather than having limits placed on them. Staff in this study emphasised how important it was for them to set clear expectations, yet there also seemed individual flexibility as to how these were operationalised. E's example of allowing a student to choose whether he worked in her class or not, illustrates that she used her agency and attunement to that student to be flexible in her response. Barnett et al., (2007) would see the student's decision not to work as a boundary crossing, rather than violation, which they considered acceptable if it promoted the student's interests. Stiver et al., (2008) concur, viewing E's renegotiation of her limits as a 'creative moment'. Creative moments arise when a client presents with a difficult dilemma that takes those in the 'power-over' position out of their psychological comfort zone, potentially making them feel uncomfortable or feel they are taking a risk. Making a choice to move towards, rather than away from, connection offers possibilities for change (ibid) and E's support of this student's sense of agency is considered an important issue by both students and staff in AP (Apland et al., 2017; Nicholson & Putwain, 2018). Being embedded within a setting that supported a 'trial and error' approach (Growth and Change theme) was critical to the participants, as it could foster these moments, without resorting to blame if the creative moment ended up in rupture.

The variance in how each rupture was experienced by the participants, both in terms of personalisation and magnitude, is described in the 'Ruptures on a

Spectrum' theme. With many they were able to respond calmly to the situation, suggesting they were remaining psychologically present in the relationship even if the student chose to disconnect. Smaller ruptures within the context of an existing TSR were perceived as relationally unproblematic i.e. frustrating and tiring for the teacher, but not a threat to the ongoing relationship. However, other ruptures occurred which had a significant impact on the participant, therefore affecting their ability to remain connected to the student.

Barnett et al. (2007) found that disconnection occurred after a boundary violation i.e., where the student's actions have been perceived by the recipient as physically or psychologically harmful. However, detecting harm is open to interpretation as one teacher's perception of harm may vary to another's. This was exemplified by this study as the student behaviours that caused the most impactful ruptures varied, teacher to teacher. Yet, for all participants, curricular or institutional boundary crossings appeared less significant than emotional or personal boundary crossings, which could prompt powerful feelings of anger, humiliation or shame. There was also evidence that emotions lingered when there was a lack of understanding about what the boundary crossing had been. Dennison (2017) identified that students can provoke teachers' past relational experiences on an emotional level. This provocation can trigger reactive/defensive teacher responses due to these feelings not having been processed and resonates with the sense of being 'caught out' where the student has provoked a personal, rather than professional response from the teacher. This suggests the teacher's relationship 'with self' is important to attend to as it will impact on their relationship 'to other' i.e. the student. As Marrable (2014) explains, 'within person' emotions prevent a professional's focus from staying on the child. Rodgers and Raider-Roth (2006) assert that bringing the whole self, or 'being present' relies on cohesion between the personal and professional selves and a 'critical self-awareness'. Self-awareness can be supported through reflective supervision as it enables emotions to be recognised and processed rather than remaining unconscious or internalised (Riley, 2010). However, whilst self-awareness can be acquired, Hargreaves (2000) believes its benefits can only be operationalised within an organisational culture that is also emotionally competent and can recognise

and support the emotional challenges inherent within the classroom (Keller & Becker, 2020). Whilst all participants discussed how the Academy's training had given them insight into the students' emotional responses, there was no mention of opportunities to support their own emotional understanding despite it being considered a pre-requisite for providing children with additional needs 'the support and relationships they should have by right' (Marrable, 2014 p409).

Finally, the 'Rupture on a Spectrum' theme drew attention to the significance of the teachers' first experience of a major rupture, which created a memory that appeared autobiographical in nature for several participants. This resonates with both Farouk (2014) and Alvarez-Hevia (2018) who describe the emotional vulnerability of new teachers within AP. In particular, the clarity and intensity of the memory resonates with a quote from an AP teacher in Alvarez-Hevia's (2018 p310) study who:

'still remembers his first day as being an emotionally harmful experience that remains a benchmark.'

The intensity of this impact confirms Jennings and Greenberg's (2009) view that there is a lack of preparation for the emotional difficulties involved in the teaching role. Despite the experience the participants brought with them from their years of teaching in mainstream and the Academy training they received and reported on favourably, they were still vulnerable to the extreme stress resulting from these early traumas. This helps to explain why staff recruitment and retention within SAP is so poor (Gill et al., 2017), and points to the crucial need for a significant induction including the training and emotional support necessary to bridge the substantial gap between teaching in mainstream and teaching SEMH students within SAP.

7.3. Superordinate theme 2: Reconnecting

Table 5: Superordinate and Subordinate Themes of Reconnecting

Superordinate Themes	Subordinate Themes
Reconnecting	Emotion to reflection
	Building bridges
	Growth and change

'I think that maybe the thing that underpins it (repair) you know, is listening to each other, being able to apologise and being able to forgive somebody if they've done something, you know, that's really upset or hurt you. Just maybe those three things make the difference'. D

Whilst this sounds a simple and straightforward process, the following subordinate themes illustrate the complexities in moving forward from a place of rupture, the emotional aspects involved, and the systemic support needed. The final theme highlights the personal and professional growth achieved by teachers through the process of rupture and repair and how this can lead to change.

7.3.1. Emotion to reflection

As illustrated in the previous theme, a major rupture caused powerful emotions in the participants, sometimes meaning they needed to leave the classroom, thereby creating a physical as well as emotional disconnection from the TSR. The 'freeze' state, caused by the initial shock, was followed by the participant's focus on their own feelings which was often anger. For some participants, this anger was externalised towards the student:

'I didn't see that the child had lost their choosing time so, for me, it didn't feel like anything had actually happened. So, in my head, I was thinking, well that child got away with that and, you know, I'm in lots of pain and nothing's happened'. A

But for other participants, the anger was internalised:

'But I should have been more specific' D

'I was disappointed with myself and angry' B

Or a mix:

'I felt I blamed him but now I just think I blamed myself' D

This illustrates an uncertainty post-rupture as to where the anger should be located. Participants who externalised their anger looked for retribution towards the student, despite their ongoing psychoeducation that this type of student punishment will not create behavioural change. Others internalised the anger, blaming themselves for their perceived misjudgement that led to the rupture, whereas others weren't sure where to locate their anger, shifting from student to self.

The high emotions raised by the rupture could translate into a fundamental questioning of motives, illustrated by A, who after a violent incident, finds herself considering leaving:

'Why am I putting myself through this? You know, I've come from a mainstream school where this would have never happened to me.'

However, after the incident, A found himself central to a network of support and care encompassing his physical, emotional and professional needs:

'Academy X were amazing...I have a fantastic TA... and she was just like yep don't come back until you're ready, I will deal with the class... My line manager took me into a room and spent some time talking to me. We had a look at the wound with the first aid team... my manager spent most of the afternoon with me, contacting... my GP who made me contact A and E... the teacher from next door came in and said you're doing a great job, don't think you're not, and... everybody came in to check, people from the team, my headteacher, the Principal of the site came in to see if I was okay. And

I was very worried 'cos I'd done the bite response, and I felt quite guilty about having done it, but, you know, they were backing me up on it, saying I had to do it, you have to keep yourself protected, it's reasonable'.

This level of care and compassion to meet A's holistic needs, enabled her to move from a place of high emotion to a more contemplative place where she could reflect on her values and therefore why she was committed to her job:

'Over the night, when I'd calmed down and had time to think about it, I just remembered that these children have suffered awful torment and I know, first-hand, the impact that can have for years and years afterwards and I think I just needed that time to remember that... once I'd sort of remembered then I was like, right, get a grip, you know, you're there to help these children'.

Once A had had the time and support to process the emotional aspects of the trauma, she could revisit the purpose that drove her teaching. However, her use of 'get a grip', shows she felt frustrated by her emotions and wanted to move on from them, as they were preventing her from helping her students. This seemed common at the Academy – that the teachers' values enabled them to overcome their experience of major ruptures - but there was also a minimisation of the heightened emotional experiences inherent within these incidents:

'when you talk to staff at Academy X we'll say 'oh the first time I was assaulted', as if it was nothing. But... we do choose to work there, and we know that that is one of the things that is likely to happen.'

All but one of the participants were self-critical of their emotional responses to students at different points during the interview, suggesting that they often felt they had been overly affected. This led to them to not always being totally honest about their feelings, which could prevent them from utilising the support available:

'I don't tend to reach out to people. I suppose you don't want to want to own up to such a mighty cock-up do you, or y'know, an error' B

'I think, you know, we're not always really honest at work because, you know, obviously we do really care about the children and so sometimes we don't always say the other things we might be thinking and feeling. So, it's actually been quite good for me to be able to talk a little bit about it' A

A's reference to '*other things*' suggests thoughts and feelings that may be considered as negative or unprofessional about the children. This implies that whilst there is a lot of support available at the Academy, A perceives it to be conditional on presenting her 'acceptable' self, rather than her whole self. This is the same for B, where he feels he may be subject to blame or shame.

Overall, however, the support given at the Academy post-rupture was felt to be high and the participants described that after a period - which could vary from minutes to an afternoon depending on the impact of the rupture - they could reach a reflective state from where they could examine the incident more objectively. Reflection seemed the key turning point for major ruptures, which was not always necessary for those on a smaller scale:

'That is the first time I felt there was a really obvious rupture, because I had been assaulted and up until that point, I don't suppose I had anything to really reflect on'. D

Being able to reflect appeared to help the participants shift from being focused on their own needs to those of the student and support a return to the professional rather than personal self. As A indicates, her thoughts of retribution towards the student who had assaulted her disappeared when she could reflect on her knowledge and psychological understanding of the student:

'So, reflecting on it afterwards, I was like oh why would I want that...? I think yeah, emotions do play a big factor' A

A considers that her emotions had made her think and react in a way that, afterwards, she didn't understand, suggesting that she would have regretted any acts of retribution that she would have liked to enact directly after the incident.

The ability to shift from the emotional to the cognitive and from the intrapsychological to the interpsychological seemed to become quicker the greater the experience of major ruptures the participants had, suggesting that their positive experiences of support after their first major ruptures enabled them to process their emotions more quickly in subsequent incidents. However, resonant with their self-criticism over their emotional experiences, the data reflected an internal drive by the participants to return to the classroom or 'get over' a rupture as soon as possible. Despite this, however, there was a recognition that reflection was core to making the shift from the emotional to the cognitive state needed for repair:

'With the children - sometimes you've got to go back in before you've really been able to reflect very much on what's happened. And I suppose that's where it's hard to repair sometimes, because you might still be feeling...' D

This highlights that when a rupture has caused an affective response in a participant, this affect needs to have been processed if repair is to be effective.

7.3.2. Building bridges

All participants thought of themselves as responsible for the relationship and therefore the one who needed to resolve any difficulties that arose:

'I always assume that when you're the adult in the relationship... it is for you to maintain that respect, to maintain the trust, really maintain that confidence, and, if it is ruptured, you have to work towards establishing what caused that rupture and repair it.' B

Yet, once the participant focus had returned to the dyad and thoughts of repair, there was often anxiety about how the student might be feeling towards them and how that might impact their ability or inclination to repair:

'I didn't know whether he'd be feeling remorseful or whether he'd be looking forward to seeing what injury he had caused.' D

Across the data, it was clear that when participants felt that the student was remorseful for their actions, illustrated either directly e.g. a verbal apology or indirectly e.g. body language, they found repairing the TSR much easier, suggesting that they were receiving a sense of being cared for in the relationship, making the process of repair an authentic response from their personal rather than professional self. Sometimes, participants found that repair was simply about not rejecting the child for their behaviour, thereby giving the child a response that was different to the one expected:

I was probably telling him I'm not rejecting you..., this has happened, but the important thing is me coming back in and still being here to be your teacher and you know that's the repair, isn't it? D

Often, the participants didn't understand why the rupture had happened, so they would make their own attributions about it e.g. 'not accidental' (D). To confirm or dispel these attributions, the participants would look to those with greater knowledge of the child, for example, the pastoral staff or TA's, for information that might help them. Sometimes, TAs had already effected repair or created steps towards repair in their absence, suggesting that repair can be achieved indirectly through others, by them giving the student support, creating distractions or reframing the student's perspective:

He didn't bear a grudge because of the way the TA's handled it... they just changed the subject and covered it up – B

My TA spent some time with the pupil that had done this and spent some time doing a restorative with him. He made me a picture, like an apology picture towards repairing that relationship A

In the same way that connections were sometimes created at 'one step removed', so were ruptures, therefore requiring repair. A gave an example of where an incident had not been fully reported to a parent, who then complained:

Erm so she obviously heard one thing and was like 'what!'... as a parent I'd be furious...

'So, they (the Academy) spoke to her and then I rang her with the support of someone listening in... and explained exactly what happened and from there on mum was like okay, that's fine...'

The involvement of several people in effecting repair was not uncommon, illustrating that both the student and the teacher are each embedded in a network of relationships that also feel the impact of a rupture.

Finding the right time to effect repair was also a factor mentioned by all participants, with attunement to when the student, as well as themselves, might be ready. Often this was over a period of days, but E felt it might take years to effect repair, depending on how you defined it:

'many of our students live in very deprived communities, maybe worry about food being on the table, have parents who don't know how to treat them... That child's traumatic background... has caused the rupture. Our job, over a period of time, is to try and repair it, as it's the child's life, not the one-off interaction between the member of staff and the child and the repair bit is what we're here for. That's the long term.'

E views repair as key to changing the trajectory of a child's life. His perception is that the repair of individual ruptures is integral to the bigger picture of healing the true rupture which E perceives as the child's relationships, not just with their family but with their communities and socio-economic situation. This resonates with RCT's view that relational strategies are borne out of systemic rather than purely dyadic features. The long-term nature of repair alluded to by E resonates with Mechanic and Meyer's (2000) findings that relational trust can only be gained in gradual and iterative steps. Therefore, consistent repetition of repair is needed to ensure that the student feels safe, accepted and trusting of the TSR.

A further consistent theme within Building Bridges was the teachers' preference for informality in repair, with more formalised methods such as restorative justice being viewed as necessary at times but not always productive:

'So, I think if we follow restorative practice to the letter of what the rules say about how we do it and how it works... it can be a bit formal and it stops it from working. I think you see a lot of restorative practice just by staff doing what builds good relationships in the first place, just by building bridges again. E

E indicates that repairing relationships is about teachers '*building bridges*' i.e. reaching out to the student and attuning into what is needed to reconnect. Indeed, most repairs were achieved by the participants finding the right time and space to reconnect with the student. Often this was outside of the classroom, suggesting there was something about being seen as a person rather than 'the teacher' and wanting to connect on a personal rather than professional level.

The data revealed that the focus of repair was about getting it right for the student and regaining their trust. Yet, relational trust is dyadic, and often, after a major rupture, even when repair had been seen to be achieved with the child, several participants acknowledged that their trust had been diminished:

'I was wary of getting close to him again'. A

This suggests it would take A time to reconnect fully with that student. Whilst, for the most part, it seemed repair was sufficiently achieved to enable the relationship to continue, there were occasions when participants found reconnecting difficult:

'He did things to staff which may be humiliated, hurt them, without laying a finger on them that really, really, made relationships difficult. I found it really hard to work with that child - I thought 'what could I do differently?' But now, that child is no longer in school...' D

D's account illustrates that some children have learnt relationship strategies that hurt the adults around them, even when the adults have psychological knowledge and support to cope with those strategies. Despite reflection, D found reconnection difficult, as did other staff, resulting in the child's removal

from school. This highlights that, ultimately, power can be used to make the adults' pain stop.

7.3.3. Growth and change

One of the most common learning points from the participants experiences of rupture was an increased knowledge about the child. Often, the ruptures that most affected the participants were unexpected and left them anxious to understand the student's thoughts and feelings as it made them realise that they hadn't fully comprehended the child's needs:

'I didn't feel like I had to kind of act around him whatsoever... Then it was suddenly like Oh! Actually, maybe I misread you.' C

This led to them finding out more about the child by asking others and consequently rethinking the way they worked with them, sometimes in terms of the way they went about connecting and sometimes in more practical ways such as ensuring safety:

'I made a decision from that point that there wouldn't be an adult left alone with that child anymore, because actually if there'd been two of us, it probably wouldn't have happened.'

This illustrates that using the rupture as an opportunity for learning helped them to change their practice to find a more attuned response that better met the student's needs. However, all participants referred to the difficulties of attuning to their students:

'It's hard to know what's going on in their head.' B

Hence, the changes were often a process of trial and error:

'Because our big issue with that child is, until we can work out what exactly it is that makes him feel that way, it's quite difficult to put the repair in place. It feels that it's like trial and error, we try something and see if that works, and we refine it and try something else.' E

E's difficulty in finding out the child's feelings suggests there is a lack of mutuality in working out what is needed for repair. The emphasis is on the teacher to notice, interpret and respond to the child's feelings, with E finding a *'trial and error'* approach helpful in developing the requisite experience to successfully do so. There is a high convergence between the participants about how ongoing experience is not only key to developing their practice, but also in improving their resilience. For example, in hindsight, A thinks she is now 'stronger' because of her experience of a major rupture, meaning she would be able to recover much quicker if something similar happened again:

'Looking back, having gone through that experience, I would like to think if something like that happens again... I'd be strong enough now to say I can go back in and continue working with the children.'

A's strength could be interpreted as resilience, although E interprets it as being 'thick skinned':

'After two years in, not a lot shocks you because you know what to expect and I think people are pretty thick skinned.'

E suggests that knowing what to expect prevents teachers going into shock. Inevitably, this will enable teachers to maintain better connection and attunement with their students, even when their behaviours are extremely challenging. However, the definition of 'thick skinned' is 'being insensitive to insults or criticism'. Although this could mean resilience, it could also mean that there has been a disconnection from self, whereby the psychic pain caused by the ongoing insults from their students has caused the participant to 'shut down' their levels of sensitivity and therefore their attunement. The following extracts highlight the tensions involved:

I'm very sensitive. Yeah, it's hard working in this setting... B

'Some kids, if they call me certain names and things like that, I sometimes think to myself well, if I start worrying about your opinion when this is how you behave, then I really am in trouble.' C

C's quote implies that if she starts to listen to and value the opinion of her students, then she would be in trouble i.e. in a problematic or difficult situation. Yet, to effect change, the students need to be listened to and heard. Because this is such *hard work* (B), it seems C may be protecting herself from this burden by discounting the student voice. There was a sense that all participants may have used self-protective strategies at times, as all discussed how difficult it was to depersonalise student behaviours. However, they had found psychoeducation, peer support, shadowing, as well as their ongoing teaching experience as key to growing their understanding of SEMH students and developing strategies that improved their practice.

D also found that his work raised his level of personal awareness which helped him to reframe his perception of being humiliated, recognising that it might be the result of his own behavioural interpretation, rather than the intention of the student:

'I think now I will usually be able to deflect things that I might have previously found humiliating by humour you know. I don't mean by totally belittling what's happened, but I just mean that sometimes you can see that humiliation for you is humiliation, but for the other person it's poking fun, isn't it?'

D's increasing self-awareness enabled him to not feel his humiliation so deeply, softening it with his use of humour. This personal growth will enable him to respond less reactively around student behaviours that evoke feelings of humiliation thereby improving his ability to stay attuned and empathetic.

7.3.4. Discussion of Superordinate theme 2: Reconnecting

Research aim: How do teachers experience repair within their TSRs?

The Emotion to Reflection theme found that the physical, affective and cognitive demands of repair varied in relation to the impact of the rupture that had taken place. The repair process for A's first major rupture seemed to mirror the advice advocated for students by the 5 phase Assault cycle (Kaplan

& Wheeler, 1983), with the immediate aftermath of the rupture i.e. the 'crisis stage', affecting her cognitive functioning, making disconnection from the student inevitable. Once the shock of the crisis stage had subsided, A entered the 'recovery phase'. Like other participants, she experienced anger. Hers was directed at the student, whereas others targeted themselves or both. A's professional self was lost, with the learning from her training and teaching experience being overwhelmed by her emotions. Kaplan and Wheeler (1983) recommend a calm space, reduced demands and being around people perceived as safe during the recovery phase. The support provided by the Academy appeared to meet these needs, therefore enabling A to regulate, which then led to her reflection on what had taken place. Zembylas (2003) claims, that a teacher can only honestly reappraise a situation when they feel safe and supported, as this involves emotional risk and vulnerability. The range of physical and affective support given to A, enabled her to reflect and also to feel that she would be 'stronger' and ready to reconnect quicker following another rupture of the same scale, reinforcing Jordan's (2013) point that being heard, cared for and connected increases relational resilience. The importance of first major ruptures being handled well has particular significance as Wubbels et al., (1988) found that initial relational interactions are influential in determining expectations for future interactions. In this instance, A gained the knowledge that she was embedded in a setting which could effectively bear the intensity and variety of emotions that a rupture can entail, therefore enabling her to risk going through such an incident again. If support hadn't been received, A may have avoided student reconnection, or left the setting (Alvarez-Hevia, 2018), illustrating how care of staff is so important to facilitating the care of students (Roffey, 2015).

The Emotion to Reflection theme also captured the criticality of being able to reach a reflective state, as this began the process of being able to shift back from the personal to the professional self through an evaluation of the meaning of the rupture. In A's case, this involved her having to revisit her personal values to decide whether she could incorporate experiencing such a profoundly difficult incident into her professional identity. O'Connor (2008) states that enacting personal values of offering care gives meaning to

teachers' work. A teacher's personal values will also form part of their professional identity as their personal identity is often used to justify how they engage with their role (MacLure, 1993). Their professional identity will also be influenced by the norms, values, and attitudes of Academy X (Gelmez et al., 2019). However, Pratt (2012), asserted that the professional identity is constructed only when 'doing, acting and interacting' (p26) in the work context. Whilst A had undergone training and knew in a theoretical sense what experiencing rupture might be like, it was her active role in it that tested whether she could incorporate such an experience into her developing professional identity. As Britzman (1993, p24) stated, 'a role can be assigned', but whether the identity is taken up is 'a constant social negotiation'. Ultimately, A found it possible to view the pain of the rupture as part of her role, as the meaning she ascribed to it was that it was contributing to a positive student outcome (Webb, 2015). However, this process wasn't straightforward and appeared to involve a deep intrapsychological wrestle between the pain of the rupture, the care she received and the values she espoused. Ultimately, it seemed to fall back to her personal values, illustrating their importance in teacher motivation, despite professional teaching standards discounting their role in teachers work (DfE, 2011).

Support from others to help emotionally regulate and reach a place of reflection appeared crucial, yet some staff seemed more able to reach out for support than others, affirming Aultman et al.'s, (2009) findings. Consequently, there was evidence that some feelings were left unresolved, due to the teachers not feeling able to be completely honest about their emotions. Zembylas (2003, p225) stated that the culture of the setting determines 'teachers' perceptions of emotional propriety, of what ought to be felt'. Whilst the Academy was considered exceptionally supportive by the participants, there were several examples across the data where they felt negatively towards themselves for the emotions they experienced. Their attempts to minimise their feelings echoes with Miller's (1986 p38) regret at the 'long tradition of trying to dispense with, or at least to control or neutralize, emotionality, rather than valuing, embracing, and cultivating its contributing strengths' (p. 38). Hargreaves (1998) describes teachers as passionate

beings, with positive emotions supporting their flexibility and creativity and negative ones diminishing these attributes (Becker et al., 2014). Creating a culture that embraces and supports all the emotions that teachers experience in the classroom will enhance their ability to work with and relate to their students, their students' families and their colleagues (Farouk, 2014).

In the 'Building Bridges' theme, A admitted that she still felt wary of her student, despite having reconnected with him, suggesting she had lost some relational trust in the student. This illustrates that reconnection with the student doesn't necessarily mean a full repair has been made for the teacher, implying they may hold aspects of themselves back until these feelings have been fully resolved.

It was also clear within the Building Bridges theme, that all participants took responsibility for their TSRs and therefore for initiating repair of the relationship. This resonates with RCT, where those in the power-over position need to address the disconnection. Whilst there were opportunities for formal restorative conversations or restorative justice procedures, this more formalised method of repair wasn't perceived as effective, with one participant voicing that *'it would not be the student's choice'*. Consequently, teachers found informal ways of reaching out to students, catching them for conversations at quiet moments or outside the classroom, often just to let them know they were still available to connect. Critics of restorative justice have commented that the power differential involved between teacher and student can perpetuate and/or strengthen an existing sense of shame, which is characterised by feelings of being inferior, worthless and powerless (Tangney, 1991). Walker (2008) finds it unsurprising that those who have been marginalised are uncomfortable with formal uses of power. Miller (1991), however, reframes power as the capacity to produce change. In the repair scenario, teachers are using their agency to repair relationships in a way that better suits their students.

The Building Bridges theme illustrated that the process of repair resonated with that of rupture, in the sense that its impact rippled through more people

than just those within the dyad. Successful repair could involve the teacher or a team of people or could be repaired without the teacher's direct involvement at all. Repair often involved TA, peer and sometimes management support. Sometimes repair was undertaken with the family, which, again, involved staff other than the teacher. The ripples, or systemic nature, of both rupture and repair was captured by E's comment, suggesting that she was having to repair ruptures caused by many others, including family, community and government. These examples illustrate that rupture and repair are not interpsychological processes, as they take place in a context and involve intrapsychological and systemic factors that lie outside of the dyad. This suggests that the wealth of research examining TSRs through a dyadic lens, may be limited by having such a specific focus (Toste et al., 2014), as they will be influenced by the context in which they are examined and by individual differences within teachers. These factors need to be taken into consideration when looking to support TSRs, with their systemic nature resonating with studies emphasising the importance of whole school approaches to support relationships (e.g. Roffey, 2015).

The 'Building Bridges' theme also highlighted that, at times, reconnection was difficult. Prior to reconnection, teachers could feel anxiety, showing that in mutual relationships, both parties experience vulnerability, hence the need to be embedded within a context of relational trust (Stieha & Raider-Roth, 2012). Several participants mentioned that it took time after reconnection for their feelings to be fully resolved, and in one case mentioned, the student's relational strategies proved too painful over time for any adults to bear, resulting in the student's exclusion from school. Recognising the strategy of disconnection that the child is using and why i.e. focusing on the process, not the content (Steele et al., 2003), may help to create a shared understanding of the child's needs across all teachers, enabling consistent and effective responses that meet the child's needs.

In the Growth and Change theme, change was observed to have occurred at two different levels: in relation to self, and in relation to other. In relation to self, A cited evidence of her growth in resilience having experienced a difficult

rupture. Ongoing experience of rupture and repair was cited by all participants as key to improving their ability to manage it, mainly driven by being reflective practitioners and feeling supported to utilise a trial-and-error approach in putting their reflective learning into practice. Additionally, the psychoeducation and peer support they received increased their understanding of student behaviour, enabling a greater capacity to depersonalise student behaviours through more flexible thinking. One participant also illustrated a growing personal awareness of when his own strategies of disconnection were evoked, and, through personal reflection and listening to the perspectives of respected colleagues, to have understood and processed feelings resulting from past adverse experiences, thereby becoming a more robust and empowered practitioner (Probst, 2010).

However, whilst ongoing experience resulted in the participants perceiving they managed the process better, previous research has highlighted that many teachers tighten their emotional and personal boundaries over time as a way of protecting themselves (Aultman, 2009). This resonates with E's description of teachers becoming thick-skinned; therefore, it is unclear whether the teachers' resilience has increased or whether they have reduced their emotional presence to avoid burnout (ibid).

The Growth and Change theme also illustrated growth occurring in terms of the teacher's knowledge of their student. Post-rupture, teachers reflected on their student, trying to attune to what they were thinking and feeling, and gathered information from others about them so they could prevent the same empathic failure from happening again. In this way, the student became more deeply understood, with the teacher adjusting their approach to better meet their student's needs. This affirms Miller and Stiver's (1997) view that it is the process of repair that builds understanding and contributes to growth in relationship.

7.4. Superordinate theme 3: It takes a village...

Table 6: Superordinate and Subordinate Themes of 'It takes a village'

Superordinate Themes	Subordinate Themes
It takes a village	Shared values, containment and empowerment
	There are three of us in this relationship

'people work together and come up with solutions, try different things and find ways of making things work' E

This theme illustrates the systemic support required by the teachers to successfully manage the ongoing nature of TSR rupture and repair. The first subordinate theme focuses on the structures, systems and ethos within Academy X, whilst the second highlights the importance of teamwork in the classroom and the complexities this sometimes involves.

7.4.1. Shared values, containment and empowerment

There was a high convergence in the data that the goals and values of the Academy supported and gave clarity to the work the participants did:

'It's about an ethos and it's about something that sort of transcends teaching requirements.' D

'It's about promoting the SEMH needs and putting that on par with academic needs.' E

D's quote suggests that his teaching sits within a wider context of meaning, that the curriculum is just part of a broader vision for his students, which E considers to be about meeting their SEMH needs.

Whilst it would be easy to assume that all schools for SEMH students would have the same considerations, B disputes that, having worked in a different SEMH setting:

'There was less understanding of what the climate for learning needs to be for things to happen -... less listening to me as a professional... There was no voice'

The data from this study highlights that the reverse of B's experience was true for the participants at Academy X. They felt their views, ideas and feelings were heard and responded to. They also felt there was a clear vision as to the environment needed for SEMH students and they felt supported in their contribution to this. D felt that where the Academy's approach was different was that they supported all staff at the setting to live the values of the school rather than just expecting the students to:

'often in mainstream education, values don't sort of filter upwards to most of the adults that work in the schools. And you're thinking, well we're trying to teach all the children to be tolerant and considerate and kind, but you don't see that in the teachers always. Whereas, at Academy X, there's a lot more of that between the adults that work in the school than I've seen anywhere else really...I almost felt like I was coming home'

'We try to treat our children as individuals who've got every right to be there and valued and I think we do value the staff as well...I don't think you can have one of those without the other.'

D felt that his values were so closely aligned to the Academy's that it felt like 'home' i.e. there was no sense of having to be anything other than who he was. He also perceives a relationship between how staff are treated and how they then respond to their students. This resonates with Roffey's (2017) claim that teachers and students form each other's environments, therefore there is an intrinsic link between the teachers' sense of being valued and supported and the students. Roffey's (2017) belief is that these feelings emanate from being positively connected and this focus on relationships is echoed at Academy X:

'Everything at Academy X is about relationships.' D

To support the development of positive relationships, the philosophy of the Academy is to give students unconditional positive regard, which was mentioned in different ways by all the participants. The systemic methods used to support how this was applied in practice, started with psychoeducation but was also supported by giving teachers ‘freedom’ (C) to prioritise activities in their classrooms that promoted relationship development:

‘There was a really big drive on the first term that was all about building relationships – ‘forget about your curriculum think more about how you can build relationships’. C

However, whilst ‘freedom’ or flexibility in some areas was key, consistency, expectations and routine were imperative in others. All participants discussed how deep thought went into managing every aspect of their lessons, not just the academic content but even how coming in and out of the classrooms were broken down into ‘micro-routines’, how the students had learning journals to record success and how they were assessed using specially developed SEMH trackers. All of these systemic tools helped to prevent rupture and to support repair, but prevention was also supported by the participants being given autonomy to choose what they felt worked well in the classroom:

‘I enjoy what I do more, and I feel like it’s mine more... people will question me about things, but they won’t question me in a negative kind of way, they question me in an intrigued or constructive challenge kind of way’. C

C goes on to describe discussions he had with colleagues, where they would bounce around ideas and he was:

‘just being allowed to be reflective and receptive to ideas and then making something in your own image I guess, build something the way you want it to be, and if somebody is unhappy with it then you’re almost happier to take the hit, as that would make me want to work harder to make it better.’

This was very different to C's experience in mainstream:

'People would say they weren't happy with something but if I could justify it, they still wouldn't listen to me because they wanted me to do it their way and I didn't think it was necessarily right.'

C's experience in mainstream echoes B's in his previous SEMH setting, where neither of them felt their views were respected or heard. C felt that, in mainstream, she was having to teach in a way that felt incongruent to what she felt was right, whereas, when being able to develop and deliver her own ideas, she felt happier and was motivated to work harder. Being trusted and respected as a professional appears to have increased C's resilience and, also, her sense of agency in achieving the relational goals of the Academy:

'So, I have pressure on me now but it's very much on my terms and I can deal with it. Things like the relationships - if I have a breakdown of communication with a kid, I can go and have that conversation with him and I can try and repair that relationship, make it positive next time.'

Being able to use their autonomy and follow their professional judgement was valued and appreciated by all participants and this culture of being listened to and believed in, resulted in a positive relational environment:

'I would say that there's much stronger and better relationships with staff at Academy X than I've ever seen at any school I've worked in. There's definitely a shared ethos that does go up the leadership team and feeds its way back down.' D

This created an environment that supported what many participants referred to as 'open conversations' where an incident could be discussed between the staff involved either through formalised daily debriefs or more informally:

'I'll go and speak to the classroom teacher or the trusted adults and ask them their view on everything and try and work out ways forward.' B

These conversations enabled staff to understand each other's perspectives of a rupture, ideally enabling differences to be resolved, but, if not, at least an opportunity for openness and to be heard:

'We deal with things at the end of the day so that it's done. It might not be forgotten, it might not be forgiven..., but it's been talked about... it's been discussed'. D

These opportunities for discussion for considered crucial for staff wellbeing:

'The key bit of debrief is you're parking everything. If you allowed it to, you'd go home and you'd go crazy within a week'. E

E's comments reinforce the demands of working with the SEMH students and the potential for burnout that goes alongside it. The proliferation of data around the supportive atmosphere of Academy X and its uniqueness in the participants' experiences, highlights the importance, yet rarity, of an educational setting that creates an environment where teachers not only feel they can make a difference to their students but where it is also sustainable to do so. The sense of belonging and integration of its values into the personal and professional self is summed up by D:

'Over time it does become part of you. It really does.'

7.4.2. There are three of us in this relationship.

The autonomy that the participants felt in organising their curriculum and classroom to meet their students' needs, came with responsibility, including managing the TAs and other pastoral staff that supported the students in their domain:

'The line manager responsibility is with the class teacher for all the staff that work in the class. There's an awful lot demanded of the teacher to make sure that staff know what the expectations are, understand their role and are able to ask for clarity... because, in the high-risk environment that we're working... you can feel very vulnerable...' D

D's comments illustrate the reliance that the different staff members have on each other and the importance of working together as a team with each knowing their roles and responsibilities to ensure a safe and productive environment. It is the teacher's responsibility for creating this positive classroom climate – for ensuring that the staff feel confident and able to question, whilst also managing the students' academic work. The TA's contribution was perceived to be their relational expertise, as they were universally considered as the authority on a particular student and highly valued because of this:

'Here the TAs are valued, and their opinion and their knowledge of the kids is respected by staff... They're still directed by the teacher, but if the TA, because they know the kid, says I'm just going to take him out for ten minutes, nine times out of ten, the teacher's going to go with that because they know that's the TA doing the right thing' E

The autonomy given to the TAs to 'do the right thing' resonates with the agency given to the teachers to meet the students' needs. This implies an environment whereby power is given through respect for a person's expertise rather than through a role title. Consequently, the TA's professional judgement is accepted and rarely questioned, suggesting as D stated, that there is confidence that everyone in the classroom knows their role.

To support their relationships with their students, the teachers were highly attuned to their TAs, consistently looking to them for advice and information during lessons, to pick up either subtle or overt signals from them as to each students' state of escalation, moment to moment:

'I will try to seek the trusted adults' guidance all the time, because they know the students so I'll vocalise it – 'you know the student better than I do' so I'll give a lot of eye contact to them so they can give me their guidance if I've gone completely wrong.' B

This affirmation of the TA's role and the reliance of B on them to quickly inform him how to avert or minimise a rupture was particularly important for the

subject specialist teachers who only saw snapshots of students rather than the classroom teachers who were with them most of the time. However, whilst each respected each other's area of expertise, as D states, each prioritise different goals:

'I think a lot of the people who are really well equipped to have good relationships with our kids don't really know what a teacher wants of a TA in a school environment because they are here just to form these really good relationships with the kids'

The phrase '*just to form*' implies that D believes he has things other than relationships to focus on e.g. the curriculum. These differing priorities could therefore create tensions in the classroom as sometimes the participants would be perceived by the TAs as misjudging the level of challenge offered or being inflexible over boundaries, with the resulting ruptures creating heavy relational work for the TAs:

'They get very tired of the constant clashes with students and breakdowns and rupture and crisis... and you caused that crisis because you said no. You set the boundary, or you've given a consequence and they're then having to deal with the fallout of that crisis or that rupture'. B

Three out of the five participants talked about sometimes having felt judged by TAs due to their differences over how a situation was handled, with D expressing how isolated he can feel when he perceives a TA to be defending the student rather than working as a unit:

'Members of staff can almost make it look like the teacher's an island and it's easier to be there on the protective side with the children than actually work as a team'.

This concept of being aligned with either the teacher or the student is expanded on by B, who considers the idea of working towards the same goal as crucial in enabling the teacher and TA to remain united:

'This is my classroom, but you've got to have a relationship with your colleagues, so they are on your side. So, they understand what your end goal is, and they agree with you and you've got to get them onside'. B

This sense of judgements around being right or wrong or being on one side or the other illustrates the opportunities for tensions to circulate around the treatment of students and whilst TAs may judge the teachers, D illustrates an occasion where she felt critical of a TA's approach which seemed to be causing a significant number of ruptures:

'It became quite clear that every small difficulty that had arisen with students had been when one member of staff had been with them.'

B also reports how frustrated he could get when he perceived the TA's focus of strengthening their student relationships, were prioritised over his goal of academic learning:

'You've got this fine balance and you've finally got them and there's a silence in the room and they're focused and then the T.A will crack a joke and you just feel like crying.'

B's sense of having 'got them' i.e. the students' attention on the task, is quickly followed by him 'losing them' as the TA's joke interrupts the students' connection to learning, illustrating the TA's focus on the relational, rather than academic, outcomes. An alternative explanation may be that the TA was resistant to the task themselves, due to the perceived emotional labour it might mean for them.

However, B and D were both well aware of how '*massively important*' (E) their TAs are to their work and resolved these issues in different ways – B through the use of humour:

'It got to the point where I was having a laugh with them all saying, 'I'm going to put a sign on the door saying this is a quiet space...' so that they don't come in and just disrupt...'

And D through an 'open conversation' where the TA was able to reveal more about themselves which helped D to understand why the difficulties were taking place:

'It was a member of staff who does need more training, who does have some insecurities and they were able to explain... a little bit about that. When I asked them how lockdown had gone, they'd found it very tough... and I totally understand that that was probably why they went straight in'.

D shows that he recognised that both intrapsychological and systemic factors were influencing the TA's dyadic interactions. By exploring the TA's actions in a caring and curious way, D found that his perceptions of the TA changed therefore improving his understanding of them. His intervention '*was actually taken really well*' by the TA, suggesting that they had appreciated his concern which ultimately supported a change in their behaviour.

Yet, whilst this situation turned out well, it had involved thought and anxiety over time for D before he felt it appropriate to intervene. This illustrates the added layer of emotional labour for teachers, in managing the process of rupture and repair with their classroom staff as well as their students.

7.4.3. Discussion of Superordinate theme 3: It Takes a Village

Research aim - *To identify potential changes in staff practice and school systems that would facilitate positive change with regards to TSR maintenance and repair*

The features within the school community that supported rupture and repair processes were outlined in the 'It takes a village' theme. It was clear from the data gathered that the ongoing, and sometimes extreme, emotional, physical and cognitive challenges faced by the teachers during the process of rupture and repair, were well supported by the Academy in several different ways.

One of the key features outlined in the 'Shared values, containment and empowerment' theme was the resilience the teachers gained from their

alignment with the values of the Academy. All but one participant mentioned disillusionment with the mainstream system from which they had come, where aspects of schooling which they had felt important e.g. teaching creatively, giving pastoral support, were considered secondary to the production of academic results. They also felt their views as professionals were unheard. However, these aspects were reversed at the Academy. The teachers felt respected, they were given agency to manage their lessons as they felt best, but within an overarching ethos which prioritised relationships. This created a strong sense of identification with the Academy, resonating with Skaalvik and Skaalvik's (2011a) view that shared values between the teacher and their school enhances the teacher's sense of belonging. They also found it affirmed the teacher's sense of purpose, increased their job satisfaction and reduced burnout, which helps to explain why staff retention at the Academy is much higher than at the average SAP. This alignment between the Academy and the teachers in terms of what the students needed in order to learn, created an environment where the teachers could fully enact their values, enabling them to be more present to their students, consequently increasing their ability to connect.

Unlike in the mainstream setting, the Academy was formed with the needs of SEMH students at its heart and therefore the systems within the school were created to meet these needs. This gave greater flexibility to the teachers in terms of the curriculum and lesson planning etc., but this flexibility was offered within a structure which created routine and consistency. This structure included daily debrief sessions, which ensured the opportunity to have 'open conversations' about difficult incidents was planned into the day. The flexibility within the school structure appeared to offer the participants a clarity of purpose but agency to meet that purpose, which could be construed as a containing, yet empowering environment. McCaffrey (in A.Foster & V.Z.Roberts, 1998), described organisational containment as being provided by effective management and being 'embodied in clearly defined tasks and clearly defined roles, and in systematic provision of spaces in which reflection can occur and difficulties can be struggled with'. Academy X's organisational structures appeared to fulfil these requirements, in addition to providing the

containing function required from leadership which involves those in management positions, to listen, to accept and to respond reflectively to the concerns of their staff (Obholzer, 1996). Participants spoke of being listened to and respected, suggesting they received the emotional containment necessary to go forward creatively rather than be overwhelmed with the anxiety that such a fast changing and demanding environment can provoke (Cooper & Dartington, 2004).

The 'Shared values, containment and empowerment' theme illustrated how the non-hierarchical management style empowered the teachers. It also highlighted how the management approach modelled and mirrored the relational style that the teachers used with their students and their TAs. Management used their power to support the teachers by supporting trial and error approaches, by ensuring there was appropriate training and by providing flexibility within their systems when needed. The provision of containment, modelling and mirroring reflects an amalgam of several paradigms including psychoanalytic and social learning, but the striking difference for the participants was the relational, rather than authoritarian, style of management which appeared to be the bedrock upon which the other approaches sat. The authoritarian leadership style is the natural outcome of a culture which esteems individualism and therefore a power-over style of relating due to the need for conquest and competition (Walker, 2008). In contrast, the Academy's leadership approach builds on RCT's concept of 'fluid expertise', where there is not one expert, but each staff member holds certain aspects of wisdom and understanding (Jordan, 2017), therefore requiring a team rather than an individualised approach. This led to the Academy embodying a high level of relational trust, illustrated by the support the participants felt from their colleagues but also in their ability to be vulnerable. For example, they felt able to ask their peers '*their view on everything*' e.g. on why a rupture may have happened, so they could '*work out ways forward*'.

An atmosphere of relational trust is not common in schools (Bryk & Schneider, 2003) and four participants commented on how this culture had not been present in their experience of mainstream teaching. Bryk et al., (2003) believe

that care, respect and integrity are key to management behaviours which foster relational trust, while Raider-Roth (2005) considers that empowering teachers to believe in their own abilities is crucial. All these management characteristics were favourably reported on by the participants. Kennedy and Laverick (2019) suggest that school management who experience positive emotional and relational containment for themselves can go on to provide it for others, whereas those who are not held and contained will struggle. Some leaders may naturally come to their roles with the high levels of social and emotional literacy required but others, particularly in times of stress, need support themselves to maintain their ability to 'contain the containers' (McLoughlin, 2010). Whilst the SLT of Academy X appeared to be providing the staff with what they required, Kennedy and Laverick (2009) recommend a relational model of supervision to support headteachers in sustaining their ability to be reflective and relational practitioners.

Whilst the Academy's leadership had to support and contain the relational climate of the school, the teachers had the responsibility for containment within their classrooms, which included managing at least two TAs as well as their students. Because of the fast moving and '*high-risk environment*' of the classroom, the TAs were integral to the participants' relationships with their students, hence the final theme being labelled 'There are Three of us in this Relationship'. The teamwork included ongoing communication, both verbally and nonverbally, inside and outside of the classroom, to monitor the escalation of any particular student. Trust in their TAs enabled the participants to feel more confident in their teacher-student interactions, knowing they would be supported if a rupture occurred. Rodgers and Raider-Roth (2006) affirmed the importance of trust in supporting teachers to remain connected to their students stating that "teachers need to know and trust themselves and they also need to know and trust their students and the contexts in which they work" in order to sustain presence (p. 283).

However, whilst the majority of relationships within the classroom worked well, tensions could occur, with some participants feeling judged, blamed or isolated like '*an island*' by their TAs at times, which resonates with

psychoanalytic defence mechanisms such as projection and splitting. These defence mechanisms are evoked when emotional or physical threat is perceived, but are often unconscious reactions (Shohet, 1999). Students who are feeling challenged in the classroom may 'project out' aspects of themselves they feel are unacceptable or unbearable e.g. their anxiety, aggression or fear (Segal, 1989), and these emotions can be absorbed by the staff working with them. Alternatively, they may be unconsciously felt by staff and then projected out onto their colleagues (Hinshelwood, 2001). Indeed, Hinshelwood (ibid p131) states that classroom emotions appear "to travel through the network like a ball on a pinball table" which could explain why ruptures with students could result in ruptures between the teacher and the TA. The effect of these 'pinballing' emotions, as so clearly expressed by D, was to decrease the participants' sense of connectedness and support in the classroom, leaving teachers '*feeling like crying*' or '*feeling vulnerable*'. These feelings of vulnerability can evoke more controlling and less empathic teacher responses (Kennedy & Laverick, 2019), therefore leaving them more susceptible to ruptures.

The importance of the teachers and TAs to be working completely alongside one another, resonates with the concept of the working alliance (WA), which has strong links to the therapeutic literature but has more recently been applied to educational contexts (e.g., Koch, 2004; Meyers, 2008). The effectiveness of the WA is predicated on the level of agreement between the parties involved on their overall goals, the tasks to achieve those goals and the quality of emotional attachment or bond that supports these activities (Bordin, 1979). Whilst it might be perceived that both the participants and their TAs would be working towards the same goals, the 'There are Three of us' theme illustrates that whilst the participants' core role is teaching, the TA's focus was '*just to form*' good student relationships. In such a volatile environment, there was a '*fine balance*' between meeting the teacher's goals of learning and the TA's goals of promoting relationships, which sometimes resulted in tensions or frustration with one another when their desired goals weren't reached.

There were also examples where the impending emotional labour required by the TAs could be interpreted as being resisted through their need to '*crack a joke*'. Humour is a defence mechanism and it appeared to be sometimes used to prevent a lesson starting, even when the students were ready. A TA's exhaustion in coping with rupture may make them resistant to the forthcoming challenge for their students, illustrating that their energy for what lies ahead is as important as the teachers and the students. The participants appreciated the formal opportunities for discussing the frustrations of working in a 3-way relationship, and as modelled by the management in 'Shared values, containment and empowerment', they often found informal conversations involving curiosity and respect, helped them to overcome these tensions.

The complexities of managing rupture and repair, not only with their students but also within their TA relationships, places a strong emphasis on the teachers' emotional literacy, so they can be attuned to the relational needs of both and also to the learning tasks which will enable them to achieve their overall goals. Recognition of the goal differences between the teacher and the TA, together with discussions around how this may create tensions at the boundaries and how these could be mitigated would seem useful. This would enable the emotions experienced in the classroom to become conscious rather than unconscious and consensus over the goals and tasks to be gained. In addition, psychoeducation about the relational dynamics that can occur in stressful situations such as projection and transference, may help the teachers and TAs to recognise when ruptures between them have been caused by emotions transferred from their students or from each other. As Stieha & Raider-Roth (2012 p516), state 'the process of establishing and supporting an atmosphere of trust in a school requires continual effort and attention' and bringing an awareness to unconscious tensions and emotions creates a language for improving mutual understanding, thereby improving the connectedness and emotional climate in the classroom (Weare, 2015).

8. IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1. Summary and Implications

The aim of this research was to explore the teachers' lived experience of rupture and repair in their TSRs with SEMH students in AP together with the staff practices and school systems that supported TSR maintenance and repair.

In 'Connections and Resistance' it was found that ruptures were ongoing due to the resistance to connection that the students showed, and the fragility of these connections once made. Responding empathically to challenging behaviour designed to '*catch them out*' was exhausting for the participants, affirming previous research regarding the emotional labour involved in teaching SEMH students (e.g. Kidger, 2010). Teachers felt their previous 'toolkit' from mainstream offered little to support them within SAP, hence the psychoeducation, the debrief sessions and shadowing/observing other staff was immensely important in helping them to understand and therefore connect with their students. These findings illustrate the importance of providing a comprehensive induction and support package to staff new to AP.

'Emotion to Reflection' illuminated how high impact ruptures, if well supported, could be opportunities for significant personal and professional growth resulting in greater resilience through their experience of 'supported vulnerability' (Jordan, 2004). This has particular significance for first ruptures due to initial experiences being influential in determining expectations for future interactions (Wubbels et al., 1988). Alongside an induction package, it needs to be considered how these first major incidents can be supported, both formally and informally to ensure incoming teachers are prepared for, and supported through, such intense feelings of vulnerability and overwhelm (Aultman et al., 2009).

Rupture was perceived as a relational breakdown that impacted on the student's learning, which could vary from a '*blip*' to a major incident.

'Boundaries and Rupture' illustrated how ruptures appeared to occur when the teacher's limits met the student's limits. Evidence suggested that teachers found ruptures harder to recover from when the student had crossed or violated an emotional or personal boundary or when they couldn't make sense of why a rupture had occurred. Both these scenarios could leave the teacher with lingering emotions, both within self and between self and student, suggesting the teacher was not able to be fully present, either to themselves or to the student. These findings add to the body of research that recommends reflective supervision for staff working with SEMH students from external providers (e.g. Willis & Baines, 2018), which has been shown to build resilience and promote self-efficacy whilst reducing burnout (Blick, 2019; Riley, 2010). Rae et al., (2017) recommend that EPs offer both individual and group supervision to staff and assist them to evaluate their own needs, so a supervisory package can be drawn up to meet them. This approach provides the flexibility and individualised support that teachers working with challenging pupils need (Blick, 2019).

'Boundaries and Rupture' illustrated how the volatility of the students and the fragility of their relational connections created ongoing boundary tensions for the teachers in trying to find the right balance between support and challenge or care and control. This made it hard for the teachers to know where they were on '*the line*' (Aultman et al., 2009). Teacher flexibility at the boundaries was shown to prevent rupture and promote student growth, supporting Stiver et al.'s (2008) concept of 'creative moments', which describes moments when power is used in an empathic and imaginative way to create positive outcomes. This study therefore upholds Aultman et al.'s (2009) suggestion of professional development for teachers using typical classroom scenarios or observations to facilitate discussion and reflection on the boundaries upheld.

This discussion of boundaries would also prove useful in supporting the working alliance (WA) in the classroom. In 'There are three of us in this relationship' the WA helped to explain why, despite the mostly strong working relationships between the teachers and TAs, there might be occasional tensions. The TA's primary focus was on relationship building with the student

whereas the teachers were balancing the student's relational needs against curricular challenge. Utilisation of the WA concept would support open conversations between teachers and TAs, whereby each other's goals can be considered, and a shared understanding brought as to how these may impact on classroom boundary decision making.

The other benefit of utilising the WA as a model, is that it frames the TSR as only one of three aspects involved in an effective working relationship, thereby shifting the emphasis from the purely relational to other professional aspects of the teacher's role. This will help to strengthen the teacher's professional identity by recognising the other crucial elements they bring to the classroom. It will also help them to recognise that when there are strains on the emotional bond between themselves and either their TAs or students, there can still be productivity if there is consensus over the classroom goals and tasks.

Whilst some tensions between the teachers and TAs may be caused by different goal orientations, conflict in group situations can also be induced by unconscious factors. Classroom tensions that were mentioned by the teachers, were found to resemble instances of projection and splitting, which have been observed to flourish in emotionally charged educational settings (Dunning et al., 2005) and particularly within school teams (Dennison et al., 2006). Consequently, they are important concepts for EPs to consider when trying to understand and improve school group dynamics (Pelligrini, 2010) and these findings affirm previous suggestions that teachers faced with challenging behaviours may benefit from understanding and exploring these concepts through EP training, consultation, or supervision (Dennison, 2017). This training and support will reduce the emotional tensions in the classroom, thereby creating the positive emotional climate which promotes student learning (Yan et al., 2011).

'Building Bridges' found that what constituted repair varied. Sometimes the only repair needed was the teacher's acceptance of the student and their willingness to remain connected, thereby giving the student a different relational experience, which can create powerful change (Meehan & Levy,

2009). More major repair required teacher reflection on what the child needed for repair, which could include information finding from others and attuning to the right time and place for reconnection to take place. This study highlighted the teachers' preference for informal rather than formalised repair, affirming Harber's (2004) concerns that an authoritarian approach can undermine restorative practice. However, the teachers adopted a restorative *approach* rather than formalised practice, concerning themselves with attuning, listening and repairing (McCluskey et al., 2008) whilst also being agentic in identifying where and how reparation took place. This illustrates the importance of the setting providing a restorative practice ethos whilst empowering teachers to decide how their restorative skills will be utilised to best effect.

'Growth and Change' illustrated how the process of repair often involved growth in the teacher's knowledge and development of their practice, through the reflection and information gathering from peers that ensued post rupture. This increased their knowledge of the student and developed their professional practice by helping them to identify what could have been done differently. In some circumstances, there was evidence of personal growth due to them being able to reframe their own emotional responses to a child's behaviours. However, whilst ongoing experience of rupture and repair was perceived by the teachers as highly valuable in improving their ability to manage these processes, this study was not able to tease out whether this improved ability was due to personal and professional growth or to the development of self-protective strategies which reduced their presence (Stieha & Raider-Roth, 2012). The data suggested the former but would benefit from further investigation.

Finally, 'Shared values, containment and empowerment' highlighted the crucial importance of rupture and repair processes being situated in a context of shared values, systems and training designed to meet the needs of SEMH students and a leadership that facilitated staff empowerment and containment. These factors, together with the non-hierarchical leadership style of modelling and mirroring created a high level of relational trust, which was fundamental to sustaining the constant cycle of connection, rupture, repair and

reconnection between teacher and student (Stieha & Raider-Roth, 2012). The necessity for a coherent, whole school approach affirms Roffey's (2016) claim that thirty years of research has continually shown that the most effective schools are those which place 'connection, community, positive relationships, high expectations, and social and emotional learning' at their heart (p38). However, even within this supportive haven, there was still a culture of minimising emotional experiences. Keller and Becker (2020) want schools to acknowledge teaching as an inherently emotional endeavour and therefore facilitate authentic discussions of the emotions raised. This could also be achieved through supportive peer and/or individual supervision as recommended above (e.g. Rae et al., 2017).

Above all, several themes illustrated that the process of rupture and repair is not purely dyadic, but involves intrapsychological, interpsychological and systemic factors. These complex interactions have ripple effects both inside and outside the school, supporting RCT's claim that relational interactions are influenced by contextual and social factors (Jordan, 2006). It also affirmed Miller's (1991) claim that power can produce relational change. The leadership empowered the staff to be agentic in their TSR development and supported a flexible approach which enabled creative moments to occur. Placing a greater focus on power in relationships and how it can be positively used to create relational change would specifically benefit SEMH students at the margins of education.

8.2. Recommendations

The findings from the analysis and discussion support the following recommendations in relation to school and EP practice. The recommendations are made to address the following two research aims:

- *To identify potential changes in staff practice and school systems that would facilitate positive change with regards to TSR maintenance and repair*

- *To understand the implications of this research in terms of EP practice with students, staff and senior leadership within specialist SEMH provisions*

The recommendations are presented in a combined manner, given the inter-relatedness of some of the school changes and the support that could be offered by EPs.

8.2.1. Connections and Resistance theme:

SAPs to provide:

- **psychoeducation**
- **opportunities for shadowing more experienced staff**
- **opportunities for daily debriefs**
- **Induction support package for new staff**

EPs can support the production and delivery of individualised psychoeducation and training packages as training is one of five core functions of an EP (Executive, 2002). EPs could also offer a collaborative role in developing an appropriate induction support programme for new teachers due to their access to up-to-date educational research on SEMH/TSRs/SAPs from bodies such as the DECP.

8.2.2. Emotion and Reflection theme:

SAPs to provide enhanced support for new teachers when experiencing early ruptures.

EPs can collaborate with SAPs as to what this support might look like and whether EP support could be accessed on an ad-hoc basis if required for either post-rupture teacher consultation (either problem-solving or solution focussed) or the provision of reflective supervision.

8.2.3. Boundaries and Rupture theme:

Schools to provide access to appropriate training for teachers to help them develop appropriate personal, professional, curricular and classroom boundaries and the support in maintaining these, particularly under times of stress e.g. post rupture.

EPs can provide training and reflective practice to support teachers in exploring the values, beliefs and previous relational experiences and their personal and professional boundaries, to understand how these may impact upon their TSRs.

EPs can offer a flexible package of support i.e. group or individual supervision, and modelling of peer supervision for in-house peer supervision groups to be run. These should be run on an ongoing, proactive basis and not in response to crisis (Rothi et al., 2008).

EPs can support or provide training/workshops around the concept of the Working Alliance (WA) and facilitate systemic work e.g. forcefield analysis (Lewin, 1997) to work towards an effective classroom climate. Termly reflective or solution focussed discussions could support each classroom team to discuss progress towards the agreed goals.

EPs to provide training on psychodynamic concepts (Dennison, 2017).

8.2.4. Building Bridges

SAPs to advocate and implement restorative approaches for staff and students.

EPs to support the school with training, psychoeducation, workshops and reflective discussions to support restorative approaches between teachers and students, teachers and TAs, management and staff (Crowley, 2013).

8.2.5. Shared values, containment and empowerment

For the SLT of SAPs to oversee the development of a whole school relational approach

EPs to offer systemic support at an organisational level (Higgins & Gulliford, 2014) utilising recent EP research supporting a relational approach (Roffey, 2012) and underpinned with the principles of RCT i.e. that positive relationships enable growth, that relationships are systemic in nature and that power should be used to develop agency in others.

N.B. EPs will be better equipped to support the above implementation if they work within services that operate a whole service relational approach, which has devised structures and systems that promote connection, and that support repair processes. This will ensure they are operating from a place of practice-based evidence (Fox, 2011) and can therefore empathise with the challenges a relational approach may bring, but are resilient, critically self-aware and knowledgeable enough to manage these appropriately.

9. REFLECTIONS

This section outlines the limitations of this study, through reflecting on and critically evaluating the research process using Yardley's (2008) research quality criteria outlined in Section 4.6.

9.1. Personal reflexivity

This research was impacted by the Covid19 pandemic. I originally wrote a proposal to investigate SEMH TSRs from the student's perspective but had to change at short notice. Despite the initial difficult emotions about this, I became truly absorbed in the new topic and whilst the topic change made timings stressful, the data collection was much easier. My 'insider' knowledge of having taught SEMH students helped me quickly build a rapport with the participants, despite never having visited the academy or met them in person. However, my literature review was done post data collection, and I found this need to 'work backwards' difficult. I feel this may have affected the coherence of my argument for the research aims, despite my pre-research skim literature review showing a dearth of research in the area.

In hindsight, due to Covid and the demands of my TEP placement, I should have had 3 or 4 participants rather than 5. I feel I did manage to analyse it well, but it has added pressure to a very pressurised time.

I found the analytic process difficult, partly because of the volume/richness of the data, but also balancing the steps outlined within IPA with Smith's advocacy for creativity, whilst justifying and being transparent about my decision-making processes. Also, finding the balance between retaining the participants' voices when also interpreting, meant that I was continually questioning myself and travelling between my findings and the transcripts and back again to ensure a rigorous process.

I also found that ensuring all voices were heard in each theme quite difficult. Whilst there was a great deal of consensus between scripts, each participant

revealed a more in-depth picture of a specific aspect of rupture or repair, hence individual voices came to the fore on particular themes. However, if the data is looked at across the scripts, all their voices come through, which feels fitting given the tension in IPA between a rich understanding of the meaning of an experience against a focus on the particular.

Finally, I found myself deeply caring about producing research which did justice to the honesty and openness of the participants. Interestingly, I felt more moved by their responses when I was immersed in the transcripts than when I was hearing their accounts first-hand. Whilst Smith et al., (2009 p82) recommend immersion and 'active engagement' with the data as step 1 in the IPA process, there is no mention of the potential emotionality of this process, despite IPA often being utilised within studies which analyse inherently emotional topics. Yet, I found the data analysis to be an affective, as well as cognitive, process.

Eatough & Smith (2017 p8) cite the IPA methodology as encouraging the researcher to 'assume an empathic stance and imagine what-it-is-like to be the participant'. Assuming an empathic stance and immersing myself within the data surfaced different emotions within me, including a deep sense of responsibility, and for a period of time during the analysis, I could often wake up in the night with the data swirling in my head as new understandings emerged.

I believe the intensity of the emotions I experienced were due to a variety of reasons. Firstly, I felt very committed to the research due to the sensitivity of the data I had collected and the trust the participants had imparted to me. Secondly, the insider aspect of myself as researcher i.e. having had personal experience of some of the struggles they discussed, meant there was some emotional resonance with my own past experiences. Finally, due to the nature of the DEdCPsy course, I had to 'hold' a lot of the data processing/analysis for specific weeks which were earmarked for university study rather than placement work. I feel this led to some internal rumination which may not have occurred had I been better able to dictate my own research schedule. This may have been further emphasised by the solitariness of the research process

due to Covid-19, whereby conversations I may previously have had with university colleagues or even friends regarding the research matter, were few and far between. However, I feel the rumination led to a deeper level of immersion which ultimately lent itself to a more in-depth analysis. I am also reminded of Merleau-Ponty and his ideas about the embodiment of experience and how the body reveals the world to us in specific and different ways. The data analysis experience for me was an embodied experience, not just a cognitive one.

As a result of this, I would be interested to hear greater discussion in the research literature about the emotionality of IPA analysis, how it may have affected others and if the depth of the empathic stance can influence the richness of the understanding of the participants' lived experience. Eatough & Smith, (2017 p12) cite Harre and Gillett (1994, p154) as perceiving emotions and emotionality as discursive acts which can be analysed 'something like conversations'. However, they believe discourse analysis to omit the less easily perceptible, but psychologically powerful and emotional aspects of people's accounts which they consider can be better attended to within an IPA methodology. As a novice researcher, it would have been useful to read more about how these aspects are empathised with and 'digested' in practice and how researchers take care of themselves during this process.

9.2. Critical Evaluation of Methodology

Having completed the research process, I have reflected on the quality of the research using Yardley's (2008) guidelines for assessing the quality, rigour, and trustworthiness of the research I have produced:

9.2.1. Sensitivity to context.

As the researcher, I was aware that having the support of the SLT of the Academy in promoting my research might make the teachers feel they 'ought' to participate. It also made me consider how I could ensure that their participation was not known to SLT and the data and findings could be written

and reported back in a way that supported their anonymity, particularly given the small number of teachers in the school making them easily identifiable. These issues were openly addressed in both written form (the information sheet) and verbally, both before and after the interview, together with the options for withdrawal of their data. The extracts used have been anonymised as much as possible, in terms of any data which may help to identify them e.g. subjects or ages of children taught. I was also aware of the interactional nature of the interviews and used rapport building techniques and sensitivity to their availability etc. to place their needs for an appropriate time and place to the forefront.

My need for reflexivity throughout the research process, particularly given my background as a teacher within SAP was addressed through regular reflections in my research diary. An example is given in Appendix 7, which touches on my own background in relation to the interview process. This research journal was used to capture my feelings during the interview and data analysis processes and therefore promotes transparency regarding how the links between data and theory were made (e.g. Appendix 12).

9.2.2. Commitment and rigour.

I read widely about IPA theory and read several papers where this methodology was used, and this was in conjunction to my experience of having used this method once before. I spent many hours being immersed in the data through listening to the recordings and re-reading the transcripts many times over. The necessary rigour has been applied through good use of my research supervision to discuss difficulties/uncertainties during the analysis process with evidence of the process that is presented within this thesis.

Sometimes member checking is recommended to ensure rigour but, through reflection and discussion with my research supervisor, I chose not to involve respondents in interpreting, verifying or (re)writing the findings of my research. Member checking stands in contrast to the fundamental interpretative nature

of IPA, hence Smith et al., (2009) caution strongly against it. There is an inherent subjectivity to IPA, but this is acknowledged in the process and is limited by my rigour and reflexivity outlined above. Consequently, I recognise that I retained control and power in the research process; in the end, I am the one that spoke for my participants (Doucet and Mauthner, 1998).

9.2.3. Transparency and coherence.

The transcripts are available for my examiners to view, as well as my reflective diary. I have ensured that my interpretation and analysis is clearly linked to the data and the theories surrounding it. I have sought regular supervision where I have been able to have the coherence of my thinking discussed and critiqued.

9.2.4. Impact and importance.

The most significant criteria for judging research is its impact and utility (Yardley, 2000). This research has both confirmed previous research and added to the current literature available in both the areas of teacher- SEMH student relationships and the development of relational schools for SEMH students, both areas which are of significant import in supporting vulnerable students to remain engaged within education. The recommendations will be presented and discussed at the Academy where the research was carried out and will also be presented to my Psychology Service.

Although the generalisability of my findings will be limited due to the size of the sample and its homogeneity, this is an accepted aspect of an IPA study and my aim was to explore a particular phenomenon in a particular context and, as such, the findings may not be generalisable across TSRs where the student doesn't have SEMH needs or in other educational contexts such as mainstream.

9.3. Recommendations for further research

- a) IPA research with SEMH students to understand their lived experience of TSR rupture and repair
- b) Participatory research with SEMH students to understand their educational goals and how they would like to go about achieving them (fits with the Working Alliance in the classroom)
- c) Action research where the 'input' is teacher reflective discussion on boundaries, planning for change in the classroom and using an evaluation of that change as the feedback loop to understand what further action planning is necessary.

10. CONCLUSIONS

SEMH students have often experienced adverse childhood experiences (Piper 2021) which can impact on their ability to make positive relationships in school (Lumby, 2012). This can lead to their exclusion, thereby perpetuating their social disadvantage. Many excluded students are referred to SAP, where currently 64% of students are recorded as having SEMH as their primary need (IntegratED, 2020). The TSR has been identified as the most significant predictor of positive outcomes within SAP (O’Gorman et al., 2016), but SAP teachers struggle to meet SEMH students’ relational needs, therefore ruptures are a common feature within their role. These ruptures can lead to the exit of the teacher as well as the student (Alvarez-Hevia, 2018).

A gap in the literature regarding an understanding of how teachers experience rupture and repair was identified. Consequently, this research set out to explore the teachers’ lived experience of rupture and repair with SEMH students within SAP. Data was gathered through five semi-structured interviews with teachers from a SEMH SAP and was interpreted using IPA.

Eight subordinate themes were developed which were formed into three superordinate themes:

- **The kids catch you out**
- **Reconnecting**
- **It Takes a Village**

The findings and discussions in Chapter 6 addressed the first three research aims with regards to exploring the teachers’ lived experiences of rupture and repair and identifying staff practices and school systems that support TSR maintenance and repair. The implications of this research for school and EP practice were outlined in Chapter 7, thereby meeting the fourth and fifth research aims.

The major findings of this study showed that teachers' experiences of rupture and repair were varied and ongoing due to the resistance to connection they encountered from their students. Ruptures tended to occur at the boundaries which could vary due to the teachers' differing values, beliefs and previous relational experiences. Repair required reflection, was often informal and could involve a team but wasn't always effective and both rupture and repair could sometimes leave lingering emotions within the teachers.

This study has illuminated that to sustain the demands of ongoing rupture and repair, teachers have to be embedded within a network of supportive relationships where they feel empowered to respond to their students empathically, aided by the flexibility of systems designed to meet the needs of their students. The process of rupture and repair is supported by an environment which is high in relational trust and empowerment, as well as providing psychoeducational support and training to give teachers the skills to teach SEMH students, something which mainstream teaching had ill-prepared them for.

EPs have an important role in espousing the resilience and wellbeing inherent within supportive relational environments for all students, but particularly those for SEMH students given their marginalisation within education. RCT is a useful framework for EPs to draw attention to power in relationships and to highlight how it can be used positively to create change. It also illustrates the centrality of supported relationships for development and growth. As Seagar (2014, p5) asserts, "care can only be successfully provided by a carer who is also cared for".

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

INTRODUCTORY EMAIL TO PARTICIPANTS

Hi there,

I'm a trainee Educational Psychologist at the University of Sheffield and I am looking for participants for the research study I am undertaking as part of my doctoral training.

My research intends to explore your experience of ruptures in your teacher-student relationships and also your experience of their repair, which, from your perspective, may or may not always have occurred. For the purposes of this research the term 'rupture' covers anything from a brief relational disconnection or disagreement to a more severe disruption/breakdown within your teacher-student relationship. If you would like to read it, I have attached a little bit of information about myself and why I am particularly interested in this research area.

Ideally, I would like to interview 6 participants for this research – 1 participant for the initial pilot interview (which is an opportunity for me to test out my questions, find out how I can make the online interview experience as comfortable as possible, gauge the time it takes etc.) and then 5 participants for the main data collection. Hopefully, my aim is to complete the pilot interview by the 7th July and all the further interviews before you break up for the summer on July 17th, and I will try to be as flexible as possible to fit in with times when you might be available.

I believe the interviews will take approximately an hour, but this could be shorter or longer depending on your responses to the questions asked. I am interested in your personal views and feelings on this subject and they may or may not reflect the opinions or views held within the Academy, therefore it is important to note that I will not be passing on any information to the Academy about who the participants are. In addition, the data collected from the interviews is confidential and will be anonymised. If you email me to express an interest in taking part in the research, I will send you more information on the whole process so that you can make a fully informed decision.

If you feel that participating in this research is something that might interest you please get in touch with me at wfitzsimmons1@sheffield.ac.uk and I will send you more details together with a consent form to send back if you decide you would like to go ahead. I very much hope that the research sounds of interest to you and that you decide to get in touch. I would be delighted to hear from you!

Best wishes,

Wendy

APPENDIX 2

SHORT PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY FOR BUILDING RAPPORT WITH PARTICIPANTS

I originally started my career in business and marketing but retrained as a Business Studies teacher in my late 20's and taught for several years at an outstanding secondary school near Cambridge. After a career break to look after my two young children, I returned to work and spent 5 years teaching within Alternative Provision (AP), mainly across Key Stages 3 and 4. A large proportion of this work was one to one in the student's home, in local libraries or in the local McDonalds – whichever best met the student's needs. It was this work that sparked my interest in psychology, as the teaching 'toolkit' that I'd used in mainstream schools didn't feel effective in AP.



To follow my interest in psychology, I undertook a part-time Masters degree while teaching and for my research project I interviewed fellow AP teachers about their experiences of developing and maintaining their teacher-student relationships. This research highlighted how important the teacher-student relationship was, but also how emotionally demanding it could be and it identified factors that teachers felt could support relationship maintenance. What was outside of my research scope, but was often mentioned during interview, was the teacher's experiences of relationship rupture with their students and the opportunities (or not) of repair. Consequently, I'm really interested in researching this aspect to extend the current knowledge base around teacher-student relationships.

Within this research, I want to understand how teachers' experiences are influenced not just by the student or the teacher themselves, but by the factors external to them such as within the setting. My aim is for the research findings to help AP settings such as Academy X to support teachers with the process of relational rupture and repair and therefore help to sustain positive teacher-student relationships.

When I'm not studying or working, I enjoy walking, spending time with my family and watching Gogglebox and Escape to the Country, which are my guilty pleasures! I've also, on occasion, been known to tap dance...

APPENDIX 3

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET & CONSENT FORM

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Introduction

First of all, thank you for showing an interest in my research project and for taking the time to read this information sheet. Before you decide whether you might like to take part in the study, I am sure you will want to understand why the research is being done and what it might involve. Please take the time to read the following information and, if you wish, discuss it with others. It is quite a lengthy document due to the transparency and clarity I need to bring to the research process, but it will hopefully cover any questions or concerns you may have. However, if after reading this sheet, there is anything you are unclear about or there is an aspect you might like to discuss, please feel free to get in touch via the contact details included at the end.

Purpose of the study

I know from talking to my research supervisor (who is the link educational psychologist for your school), to X in your leadership team and from looking at your policies and procedures, that your school places great value on the relationships between its staff and students. I am particularly interested in how these relationships are maintained when difficulties arise and what support or changes, if any, might be useful within the school setting to help sustain these relationships when ruptures occur. (For the purposes of this research, the term 'rupture' covers anything from a brief relational disconnection or disagreement to a more severe disruption/breakdown within your teacher-student relationship).

My research is intended to explore your experience of ruptures in your teacher-student relationships and also your experience of their repair.

Why have I been asked to take part?

I would like to interview teachers such as yourself, rather than teaching assistants or pastoral staff, as past research has shown that teacher-student relationships are important to student learning, but that these relationships can be difficult to maintain. This is particularly so for teachers of students who have been described as having social, emotional and mental health needs. You have been asked to participate because you are a teacher within this school community and consequently could have some valuable experiences to share in this research project.

What will it involve?

You will be invited to take part in an interview that will last approximately an hour. In normal circumstances, I would have liked these interviews to take place face to face, but due to the current social distancing measures, they need to be completed online on Google Meet. Google Meet has been recommended by the University of Sheffield as being the most suitable and secure online platform for the purposes of this research study and I believe you have access to it via your school email. If you would like to take part but currently have not used this platform, I am happy to give instructions/advice and/or discuss any concerns you may have.

During the interview, I will ask you questions about your experiences of rupture and repair in your teacher-student relationships, what they have been like and how you have felt about them. I am interested in your personal opinions and views, which may or may not reflect opinions and views held within your school. Your responses will be audio recorded with your permission and no visual data of the interview will be recorded. During the interview, you can stop at any time and you can decline to answer any of the questions I ask. Before the interview, I will send you an outline of the questions I will be asking so you have some time to reflect on them and you can contact me if there is anything about them that you would like to discuss.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no foreseen dangers or risks of participating in this study. However, if you feel any unexpected discomforts or risks arising during the research, please let me know immediately so I can respond to your concerns. Whilst I do not anticipate any of the interview questions will prove to be of a sensitive or emotional nature, I will signpost you to the provision you have access to within school such as the School Wellbeing Champion, your line manager or a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). I will also provide you with information of a national organisation for wellbeing after the interview in case any of the issues raised during the interview later cause you any distress.

What are the possible benefits of taking part and how will the research findings be used?

I hope you will find participating in the research an interesting opportunity to reflect on your experiences in a confidential space. In addition, the data gathered from yours and your colleagues' participation will potentially contribute to how positive teacher-student relationships are supported within your school community. Through consultation with SLT, it has been agreed that I will disseminate the findings to them on completion of the research (estimated June 2021), as they are interested to understand whether the recommendations might be useful in enhancing current practice. I will also present the findings through a presentation/discussion to all the teachers at the Academy so you will also be aware of the research outcomes.

Agreement to take part and ability to withdraw

If, after reading this information, you decide you would like to take part, this information sheet will be yours to keep and I will then ask you to sign a consent form.

Even after giving consent, you can withdraw from the research at any time and you do not have to give a reason for making that decision. I will continually seek your consent to be involved with the research, verbally, at each stage of the project i.e. before, during and after interview. If you wish to withdraw at any point, you can contact either myself or X, my research supervisor (see contact details below) and ask for your data to be withdrawn from the study. This can be done up until the data analysis has started to be written up, which is estimated to be from the beginning of September 2020.

Data confidentiality and anonymity

I will be using the University of Sheffield secure email system to send emails to you, should you decide to participate. If you could respond using your school email address system which the school setting has affirmed is also secure, I can ensure that all the communications between ourselves can be held confidentially and securely and in line with the principles of GDPR.

Only I (and a professional transcriber if used) will have access to the audio recordings. If a transcriber is used, they will sign a confidentiality agreement to ensure no personal information is divulged to third parties and that the data will be stored securely and returned immediately on completion of transcription. All the audio recordings will be destroyed after they have been transcribed. My research supervisor may be shown aspects of the transcripts but apart from that, only I will have access to them, and they will be destroyed no later than 3 years after the research project has been completed. Until they are destroyed all your data will be kept confidential and secure in a password protected computer.

The only exception to the confidentiality of data will be in the unlikely event that an indication of malpractice or a safeguarding issue is spoken about during an interview. This will not be kept confidential and will be followed up within the appropriate procedures set out by the school i.e. reporting it to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead or a member of the SLT, and/or to the Children's Services which govern the school.

Due to the qualitative nature of the research, direct extracts from the interview transcripts may be used in the final report. There is a very limited possibility an extract could be linked back to yourself, but the chances of this happening will be kept to an absolute minimum by anonymising names and changing all other identifying criteria. These anonymised extracts may potentially be used in presentations and academic publications if there is interest in this research further afield.

What is the legal basis for processing my personal data?

It is a requirement for me to inform you that in order for me to collect, use and process your personal information as part of this research project, there must be a basis in law to do so. This research is serving 'a task in the public interest' and 'processing is necessary for the

performance of a task carried out in the public interest' (Article 6(1)(e) of the University of Sheffield Research Ethics Policy). This is the basis on which I am conducting the research.

The results from the research will be made available as a final thesis in 2021 and a copy will be made available to you. You will not be identified in any reports or future publications as pseudonyms will be used to protect your anonymity. Your school will be anonymised.

Who is organising and funding the research?

This research is organised by the University of Sheffield.

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 Sheffield University's School of Education ethical review procedure. The University's Research Ethics Committee monitors the application and delivery of the University's Ethics Review Procedure across the University.

Thank you. Any questions?

Thank you for considering participating in this research project. If you have any questions or concerns before, during or after your participation in this research, my contact details, and those of my supervisor, are below:

Researcher contact details:

Wendy Fitzsimmons (Trainee Educational Psychologist - University of Sheffield)

Email: wfitzsimmons1@sheffield.ac.uk

Research Supervisor contact details:

CONSENT FORM

Title of project: Exploring teachers' experiences of rupture and repair in their teacher-student relationships.

Agreement to consent: I confirm that (please tick or shade in the box as appropriate):

	Yes	No
Taking Part in the Project		
I have read and understood the participant information sheet that has been provided for the above research project	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the research project and my participation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that taking part in the project will include an interview online via Google Meet, a secure internet platform, that will be audio recorded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I agree to take part in the above research project.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How my information will be used during and after the project		
I understand that my responses and any other information I provide during the research will be confidential (except in malpractice and safeguarding matters)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my responses will be anonymised before analysis and I agree to anonymised excerpts of my words being quoted in the research report or future research outputs such as presentations and publications.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
So that the information you provide can be used legally for this research:		
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"/>

Participant:

Name of Participant

Signature

Date

Researcher:

Wendy Fitzsimmons

Signature

Date

APPENDIX 4

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE AND GUIDE

Semi-structured interview schedule

Rupture of teacher-student relationships

1. When I talk about a rupture in a student-teacher relationship what do you interpret that to mean?
2. What might that look like in your teacher-student relationships at Academy X?
3. Can you give me an example?

Prompts: What happened? What were you feeling/thinking either before/during/afterwards? About yourself? About the student? Have these feelings/thoughts changed in any way since? Is there another example you want to share?

4. Is there anything you felt might have helped prevent the rupture?

Prompts: Beforehand/during/after? Related to yourself/student/other staff, students/ school environment/home environment etc

5. In hindsight, is there anything you felt you might have contributed to the rupture?

Prompts: Beforehand/during/after? Related to yourself/student/other staff, students/ school environment/home environment etc

6. Is there another example you might like to talk about that reflects a different type of rupture?

(Prompts as above)

Repair of teacher-student relationships

7. From the examples above (or others, if ones particularly spring to mind) I'm now wondering about your experience of their repair. What does relationship repair mean to you in your student-teacher relationships at Academy X?
8. What might that look like?
9. Did the example(s) above result in relational repair? (If yes – carry on with that one, if no – explore why not)

Prompts: What happened? What were you feeling/thinking either before/during/afterwards? About yourself? About the student? Have these feelings/thoughts changed in any way since?

10. If no to Q9 - can you give me an example of where you have experienced a relational repair?

Prompts: What happened? What were you feeling/thinking either before/during/afterwards? About yourself? About the student? Have these feelings/thoughts changed in any way since?

11. Is there anything you felt you might have contributed to the repair?

Prompts: Beforehand/during/after? Related to yourself/student/other staff, students/school environment/home environment etc

12. Have you had an experience where a relationship has not been able to be repaired?

Prompts: What happened? What were you feeling/thinking either before/during/afterwards? About yourself? About the student? Have these feelings/thoughts changed in any way since?

13. Is there anything you felt could have helped a repair to be made?

Prompts: Beforehand/during/after? Related to yourself/student/other staff, students/school environment/home environment etc

14. We have spent some time talking about your experiences of rupture and repair in your teacher-student relationships. I am just wondering if there is anything else you think might be important or useful for us to talk about or that you might want to share about your experiences?

15. Do you think there is anything we have not talked about but might be useful in the prevention of rupture or improvement of repair of your student-teacher relationships at Academy X?

APPENDIX 5

PARTICIPANTS THANK-YOU EMAIL AND DEBRIEF LETTER

Dear X,

Thank you so much for taking the time to participate in my research. It was lovely to meet you and I hope that you found it a positive experience to take part.

What now?

I will transcribe the recording of our interview, anonymise it and then analyse yours and your colleagues' experiences in the context of the current psychological research into teacher-student relationships in education. My analysis and findings of this research will be written into my thesis which will be completed, at the latest, by September 2021.

Confidentiality and anonymity

You will remember that we talked about your information being anonymised. That means I will replace your name with a pseudonym so that no-one can identify your words if I refer to them in my report. All the other information that might help readers link the information back to you e.g. place, organisational names etc. will also be anonymised. Only I (and a transcriber, if used, who will have signed a confidentiality agreement) will have access to the interview audio-files. These will be kept on a password secured computer and will be destroyed after they have been transcribed. Myself and my supervisor will be the only people to access the data once transcribed and the transcripts will also be destroyed no later than 3 years after the project has been completed.

Withdrawing from the research

If, before I start to write up my research, you decide you would like to withdraw from this study, you would need to let me know by 1st September 2020 by contacting either myself or my research supervisor using the following contact details:

Researcher contact details:

Wendy Fitzsimmons (Trainee Educational Psychologist - University of Sheffield)

Email: wfitzsimmons1@sheffield.ac.uk

Research Supervisor contact details:

X (Lecturer in Educational Psychology – University of Sheffield)

Edgar Allen House, 241 Glossop Road, Sheffield, S10 2GW

Email: X@sheffield.ac.uk

You can also use the contact details above if you have any questions you'd like to ask about the study or have any concerns relating to it.

If you feel upset by anything in the interview

Whilst I don't anticipate that anything we have covered will result in you feeling upset, here is the website for MIND, a mental health charity, which offers information and a support line should anything that we talked about trigger anxious or depressing feelings.

<http://www.mind.org.uk/>

Once again, thank you for taking the time to be part of my research – your participation is very much appreciated.

Best wishes,

Wendy

APPENDIX 6

ETHICS APPROVAL



Downloaded: 04/09/2020
Approved: 25/06/2020



Dear Wendy

PROJECT TITLE: Exploring alternative provision teachers experiences of relational rupture and repair with students described as having social, emotional and mental health difficulties

APPLICATION: Reference Number 034685

On behalf of the University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on 25/06/2020 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 034685 (form submission date: 22/06/2020); (expected project end date: 14/07/2021).
- Participant information sheet 1079229 version 3 (22/06/2020).
- Participant consent form 1079230 version 2 (19/05/2020).

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

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

Yours sincerely

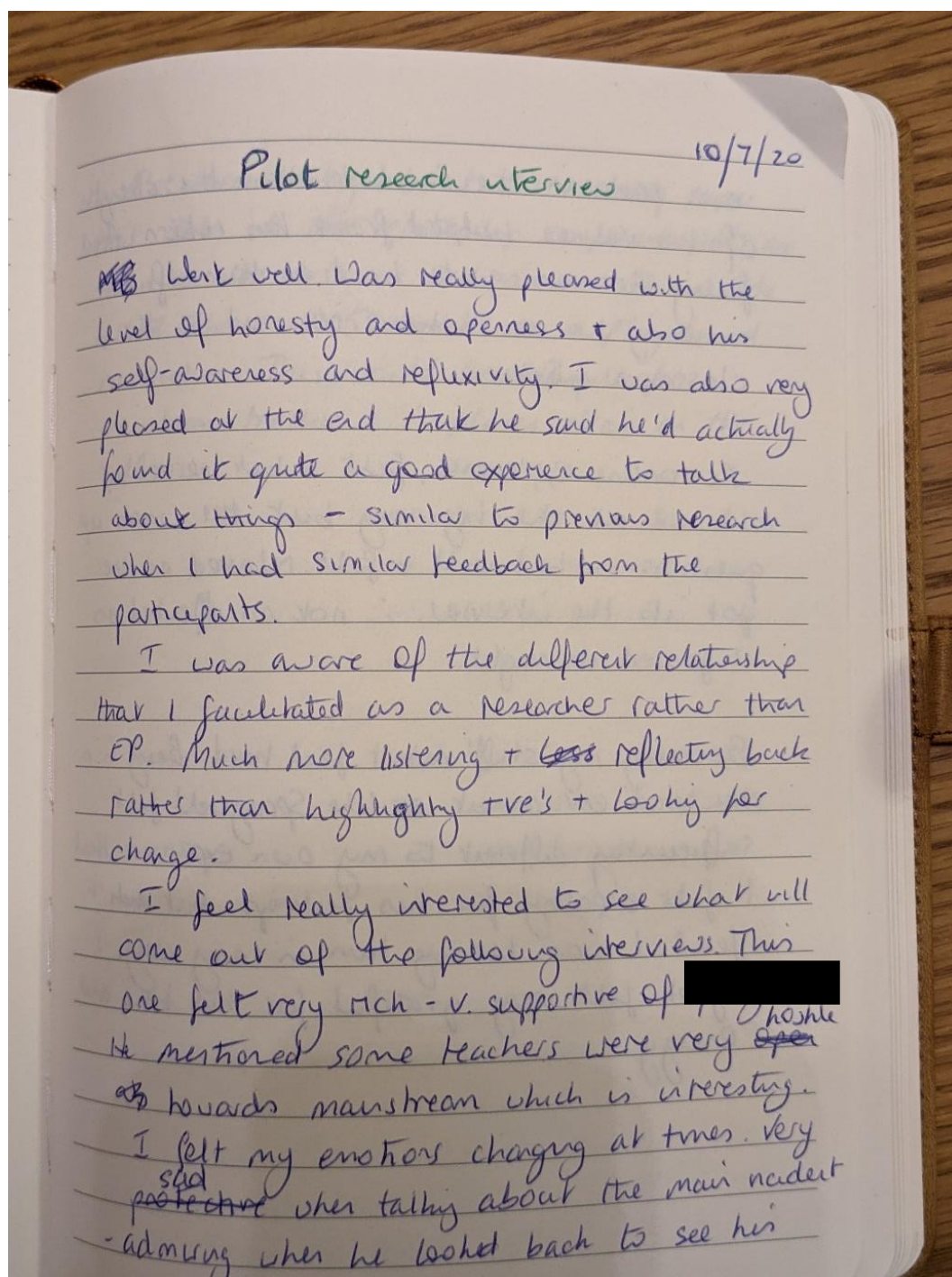
David Hyatt
Ethics Administrator
School of Education

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

- The project must abide by the University's Research Ethics Policy: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/rs/ethicsandintegrity/ethicspolicy/approval-procedure>
- The project must abide by the University's Good Research & Innovation Practices Policy: https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.671066!/file/GRIPPpolicy.pdf
- The researcher must inform their supervisor (in the case of a student) or Ethics Administrator (in the case of a member of staff) of any significant changes to the project or the approved documentation.
- The researcher must comply with the requirements of the law and relevant guidelines relating to security and confidentiality of personal data.
- The researcher is responsible for effectively managing the data collected both during and after the end of the project in line with best practice, and any relevant legislative, regulatory or contractual requirements.

APPENDIX 7

EXAMPLE REFLECTIVE NOTES ON INTERVIEWS



own part in the incident. How the strength of his values helped frame his return. And feeling he was quite hard on himself when wishing he could have returned to the classroom quicker.

Re-online experience, felt a bit nervous/awkward at the beginning but the warm up questions worked well + felt relaxed as we got into the interview. ∴ not as affected as I feared it might.

Bracketing my 'stuff' didn't feel hard. Being in a structured environment ~~so~~ like [redacted] felt sufficiently different to my own experience that I felt empathy for his feelings but didn't feel I was leading him in any way. I just felt very grateful for his time and energy.

I've been thinking about the research paper that looks at the relationship component parts as based on the task as well as connection. ie Bob talked about Yr 5 students on a play based curriculum. This would be difficult for a mainstream teacher + ∴ places strain on the ref^o.

APPENDIX 8: EXAMPLE OF TRANSCRIPT WITH EXPLORATORY COMMENTS

<p>'cause normally I can, like I say, I can separate the, I can detach myself a little bit. And sort of say right you know end of time, deal with it, okay they've trashed the classroom again, I've got to redo it all again, it's fine part the job, you know, I'm helping these children, that's the main thing. Erm but that was the one time when I, I got re-quite upset and I was really like oh my gosh I don't know if I can I do this. And erm, you know, am I coming back in tomorrow or not sort of thing, erm yeah about middle of January.</p>	<p>Professional self vs personal self. The time it was the most under threat. The incongruence of required behaviour over authentic response. What fits within perceived role What fits with values - helping children Personal/professional crisis - can I carry on? Will I permanently disconnect?</p>
<p>NT Yeah, so when you were thinking, am I going back in tomorrow, you know, wwhat was it like you felt emotionally you couldn't face it or</p>	
<p>[Interuption] Yeah</p>	
<p>NT [Overlap] Whwhwhwhat</p>	
<p>[Continued] Partly, I mean, erm I think, part of it was a er why am I putting myself through this? Don't get me wrong I, I love working at [redacted] and there are lots of elements I love about it but there will always be some elements that are hard, you know, and that, I think if anyone says no I don't struggle with anything at [redacted] they're lying [chuckle] because everybody does</p>	<p>Have gone beyond a point of personal tolerance Intensity of emotions 'love' vs 'the hard elements' Sense of belonging? or, at least, shared experience Not alone with these feelings</p>
<p>T [Overlapping laughter]</p>	
<p>[Continued] They're lying, I'm sorry, they really are, because you know, it is tough, it is a tough job, erm and I think, part of me was thinking, why am I doing this? Why am I putting myself through this? You know, I've come from a mainstream school where this would have never happened to me and I'm actually willingly</p>	<p>There is no doubt it is tough Questioning of self? Resorting to underlying values? Mainstream as a place of safety? Less tough?</p>

APPENDIX 9: EXAMPLE OF UNSATISFACTORY EMERGENT THEMES

		was about middle of January because, yeah, about middle of January. I remember because it was the <u>only time I've actually got properly upset at work</u> , and er,	Memorable: Represents the intensity of experience
Incongruence of personal/professional self and values		'cause normally I can, like I say, I can separate the, I can detach myself a little bit. And sort of say right you know end of time, deal with it, okay they've trashed the classroom again, I've got to redo it all again, it's fine part the job, you know, I'm <u>helping these children</u> , that's the main thing. Erm but that was the one time when I, I got re-quite upset and I was really like oh my gosh I <u>don't know if I can do this</u> . And erm, you know, am I <u>coming back in tomorrow</u> or not sort of thing, erm yeah about middle of January.	Professional self vs personal self. The time it was most under threat. The incongruence of required vs. authentic response. What fits within perceived role What fits with values - helping children
Teacher Disconnection/exit Personal/Professional crisis in over coming rupture	INT	Yeah, so when you were thinking, am I going back in tomorrow, you know, wwhat was it like you felt emotionally you couldn't face it or	Personal/professional crisis - can I carry on? Will I permanently disconnect?
	A	[Interuption] Yeah	
	INT	[Overlap] Whwhwhwhat	
Questioning Revisiting values Push/pull factors Love Emotional labour	A	[Continued] Partly, I mean, erm I think, part of it was a er why am I putting myself through this? Don't get me wrong I, I <u>love working at</u> [redacted] and there are lots of elements I <u>love about it</u> but there will always be some elements that are hard, you know, and that, I think if anyone says no I don't struggle with anything at [redacted] <u>they're lying</u> [chuckle] <u>because everybody does</u>	Have gone beyond a point of personal tolerance Intensity of emotions 'love' vs 'the hard elements' Sense of belonging? or, at least, shared experience Not alone with these feelings
Struggle to stay is common to all (thought of disconnection is shared)	INT	[Overlapping laughter]	
	A	[Continued] They're lying, I'm sorry, they really are, because you know, it is tough, it is a <u>tough job</u> , erm and I think, part of me was thinking, why am I doing this? Why am I putting myself through this? You know, I've come from a mainstream school where this would <u>have never happened to me</u> and I'm actually willingly	There is no doubt it is tough Questioning of self? Resorting to underlying values? Mainstream as a place of safety? Less tough?
Questioning of professional self Safety in mainstream			

APPENDIX 10: EXAMPLE OF PARTICIPANT C'S INITIAL CLUSTERS OF EMERGENT THEMES

Emergent Themes - 1st transcript

Volatility of TSKs - moment by moment ^{hypervigilance (by both)} ^{greater in personal AP}

emotional labour ^{high emotion ie low/halo} ^{harder with difficult children} ^{so rely on professional identity}

Rel's as dyad - reactions to each other / diff skill have diff rel's ^{with some child}

Psychoed - systemic understanding of CYP imp for depersonalisation ^{is more than a killing off} ^{violence/phys reality (need for regulation)} ^{safety/safeguarding}

Rupture ^{struggle between personal + professional} ^{growth, understanding, improvement} ^{experience = depersonalisation/better management}

Reflection ^{negative feelings or self} ^{can be experienced as trauma}

Repair ^{right time (for both)} ^{takes time} ^{consistency, UPR, trust, ...} ^{time correlates to rupture size}

Setting ^{shared values} ^{right people} ^{'fantastic' support} ^{structure} ^{attuned, 'Glen' TA's}

Rupture creates dissonance ^{despite knowledge/values etc} ^{enables setting constraint}

Personal vs professional identity ie. emotions vs rationality

Impacts both rupture + repair

Connecting factor is reflection ^{emotional to rational} ^{personal to professional}

Despite excellent rel's ⇒ difficult to be truly honest about feelings towards CYP. Remaining professional. Can't say the unsayable.

Personal identity ^{empathy} ^{understanding} ^{surface acting} ^{soy} ^{natural care}

Both enable connection

Professional identity ^{values} ^{psychoeducation} ^{deep acting} ^{curriculum} ^{student knowledge}

Teaches emotional struggles mirror students (not in control) professional has to un out over emotional/personal (modelling to students)

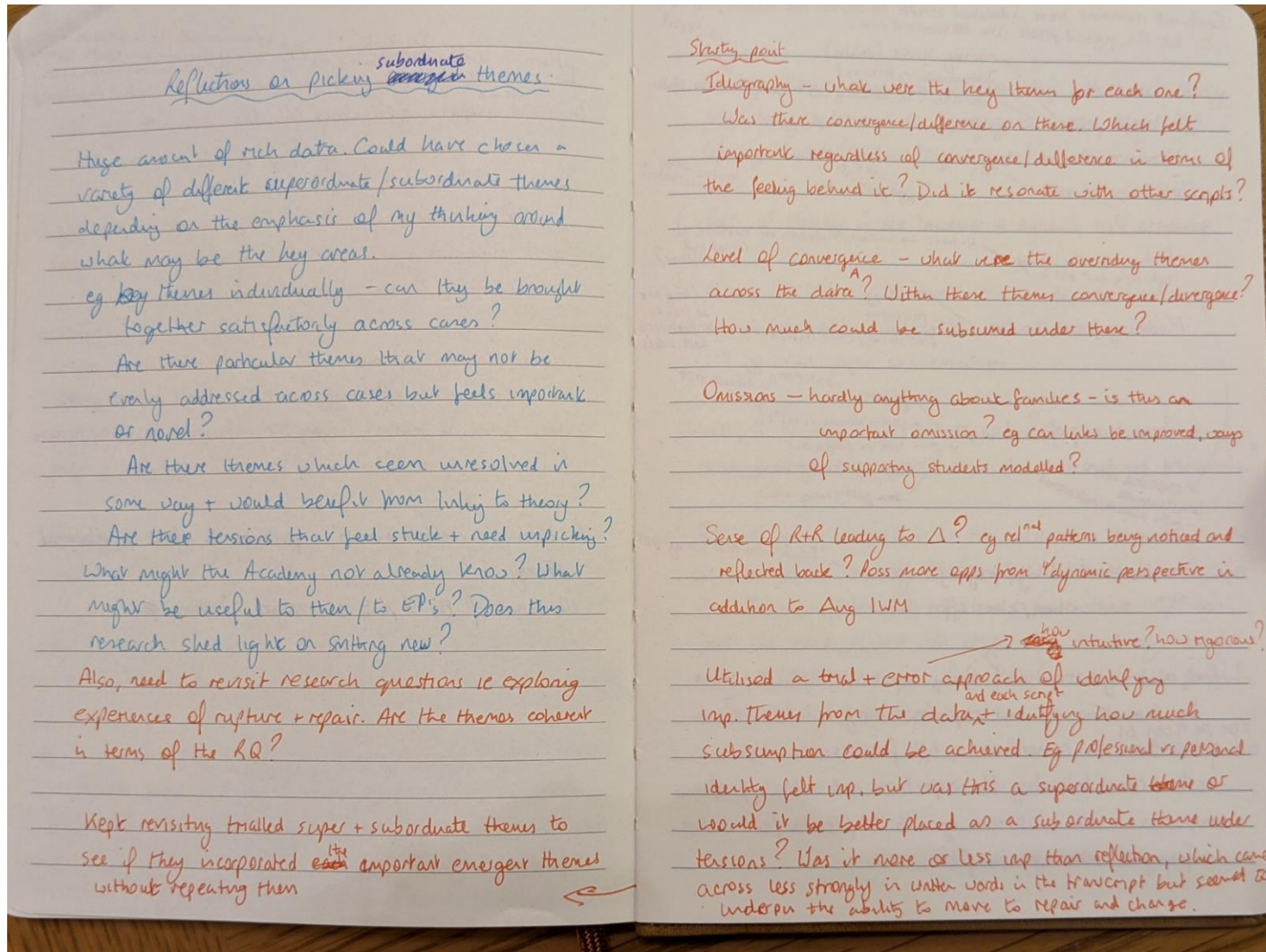
APPENDIX 11: TRANSCRIPT C – MOVEMENT FROM INITIAL CLUSTERS TO SUBORDINATE THEMES

Initial clusters		Final themes
<p>The work of the TSR</p> <p>Sites of resistance, success and blame</p> <p>Engagement with learning</p> <p>Preventing rupture</p>	<p>The work of the TSR</p> <p>Sites of resistance, success and blame</p> <p>Engagement with learning – subsumed into cluster above and renamed ‘sites of engagement and resistance’</p> <p>Preventing rupture</p>	<p>The TSR and rupture – Elements abstracted from ‘Rupture’ cluster</p> <p>Sites of engagement and resistance</p> <p>Rupture prevention</p> <p>Rupture causation</p> <p>Psychological impact of rupture</p>
<p>Rupture</p> <p>Boundaries and failure</p> <p>The emotional impact</p> <p>Post rupture rationalisation and reflection</p>	<p>Rupture</p> <p>Boundaries and failure – subsumed into ‘TSR and rupture’</p> <p>The emotional impact - subsumed into ‘TSR and rupture’</p> <p>Post rupture rationalisation and reflection – subsumed into ‘from rupture to repair’ and renamed to ‘Moving on’</p>	<p>From rupture to repair – elements abstracted from ‘Repair’ theme</p> <p>Moving on</p> <p>Information and personalisation</p> <p>Repair one step removed</p> <p>Resolution</p>

Initial clusters		Final themes
<p>Repair How to make it right? One step removed Resolution</p>	<p>Repair How to make it right? – some themes subsumed into 'Moving on' and others into 'Information and 'Personalisation' One step removed Resolution</p>	
<p>Tensions Relationships versus curriculum Equality versus meeting needs</p>	<p>Tensions Relationships versus curriculum Equality versus meeting needs</p>	<p>Tensions Relationships versus curriculum Equality versus meeting needs</p>
<p>SEMH teaching in mainstream Authoritarian Lack of agency Value dissonance Judgement and blame Performance precludes relationships</p>	<p>SEMH teaching in mainstream – recognised as polarisation from the 'Supportive setting' theme, therefore subsumed into combined new theme Authoritarian Lack of agency Judgement and blame Performance precludes relationships</p>	<p>Psychological support from setting Shared goals Leadership modelling and containment Empowerment and freedom Relationships and teamwork</p>
<p>Supportive setting Respect, empowerment and freedom Goals, structures and training Leadership modelling and containment</p>	<p>Supportive setting Respect and freedom Goals, structures and training Leadership modelling and containment</p>	

Initial clusters		Final themes
	Supportive relationships	

APPENDIX 12: REFLECTIONS ON THOUGHTS WHEN SELECTING SUBORDINATE THEMES



APPENDIX 13: TRACKING THE JOURNEY OF TWO EMERGENT THEMES FROM PARTICIPANT C

