



**What is happening in a HART consultation? A multi-methodological
exploration of a group consultation framework**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Educational and Child Psychology

The University of Sheffield School of Education

Submission Date: March 2026

Abstract

The number of children who are looked after in England has increased annually since 2008 (ONS 2023a). Children who are currently in care and those who are care-experienced are more likely than non-care-experienced peers to have SEND (Jay and Gilbert, 2021), with SEMH being an increasingly frequent area of need for this population (Department for Education, 2019). Alongside this increased need, is an educational psychology workforce that is spread thin across all areas of practice whilst continuously striving to prioritise CLA. Working indirectly with CLA is not only in accordance with NICE (2021) guidance but is also an efficient intervention with long-term gains for the CLA and adults within their microsystem.

Within this study, the Hull Attachment Resilience and Trauma (HART) consultation framework is explored using a multi-methodological analysis. A single case study design employed observation to capture what is happening in a HART consultation.

From the analysis three main themes were identified; ‘fluid enactment of roles’ related to how the participants engaged in discussion from multiple perspectives throughout the HART – some roles enabled catharsis and others were more resonant of contained neutrality; ‘conscious engagement with the story’ related to the conscious happenings such as joining the dots and working together; whilst the final theme ‘subconscious manifestations’ referred to the psychoanalytical processes within the group consultation.

The discourse analysis is built upon ideas from the primary analysis, considering how educational psychologists can use their power to flatten power and enable the ‘subconscious manifestations’ defined within the primary analysis.

The interpretations were aligned with interpretations for further development of the HART consultation and group consultation more widely. Highlighting the value of frameworks for discussion as transitional objects that enable a freeing of tensions which may otherwise present as barriers to emotional support for systems of adults around children who are looked after. In supporting adults to experience emotional containment and increase confidence it is hoped that support for the child extends beyond the limited time involvement educational psychology services can currently offer.

Acknowledgements

There are too many people to thank in such a short summary. To my supervisory team at the University of Sheffield, you have been so gracious in enabling my dreams not only within this research but also with the doctorate programme, alongside my new venture into motherhood.

To Frankie, you are not only an academic and pastoral tutor but have also been my life coach, therapist, and good friend at times. Thank you.

To Rob, the hours of debate we have shared in research tutorials have been an exercise of the mind. Your unwavering support, guidance, and praise has pulled me through some of the pits of thesis writing. Thank you.

To my wonderful colleagues, many of you have seen multiple versions of me over the past six years. To Lisa, thank you for seeing potential in me when a nervous and fairly broken 24-year-old stumbled into the interview room. To Morgan, you are so much more than a supervisor, you have gone above and beyond for me countless times and sung my praises louder than most, thank you.

To my wonderful parents, this is the final degree... I promise. You can finally stop referring to me as the perpetual student, 24 years of almost constant study has finally reached a close. It's my turn to buy the graduation dinner.

To my fiancé, Mike, in the many moments of self-doubt, you have stood by me and seen something that all too often I could not. Thank you for solo parenting our little Olive for the final months of this writing process. I really could not have achieved what I have without your continuous support.

To Olive, thanks for being the most welcome distraction. I appreciate being born mid-way through Mummy's doctorate journey means you have attended seminars and work meetings from an impossibly young age, but you are the shining crown in this three-year program. Thanks for keeping me busy and grounded. Finishing this course on time is for you.

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Introduction

Research of this kind, that interrogates and explores the assumptions and expectations around the role of an EP, necessarily calls into question what the role of educational psychology is within the education of children who are looked after, and how educational psychologists can be a useful agent of change, even from a distance. The present paper will explore a model of group multi-agency psychological consultation as a vehicle to action educational psychology support. The Hull Attachment Resilience and Trauma (HART) consultation was developed to meet a growing demand for support from educational psychology services; particularly for children who are looked after. The HART is a framework for a group consultation aimed at developing a systemic understanding of what has happened in a child's life.

In Western society, we are surrounded by a general assumption that to be a psychologist means to work with individuals. I have had many discussions where my role has been mistaken for that of a medical professional, such as a psychiatrist, resulting in questions about my ability to diagnose. However, describing the breadth of practices psychologists engage with beyond the medical model is a significant feat. Perhaps it is unsurprising that the medical model is pertinent in shaping our culture around access to care when the NHS is often cited among the highest-ranking reasons Britons are proud of their country (Newton, 2020; IPSOS, 2012). The United Kingdom is an inherently individualistic society; processes across health, social care and education require a need to be located within an individual to access avenues of support. The arguments for and against diagnosing and categorising people could span multiple theses' alone. Instead, this introductory verse is an acknowledgement of how culture and policy shape the daily practices of professionals and those with whom they support.

Educational psychology has historically been tied to the within-person approach, a model that focuses on individual assessment and intervention. This approach, exemplified by Cyril Burt's work, involves observing and assessing individual children to determine their trajectory – *which shaped peg can this child be described as, and which establishment accepts those types of children?* While the language used within 21st-century EP practice aspires to highlight individuals' strengths and draw

links to how the system around the child can be supportive, the culture of problems being described within individuals remains. This thesis does not seek to propose an alternate solution. Instead, it looks closely at a model of systemic practice that is employed to support individual children who are looked after (CLA), thereby highlighting the unique role of educational psychology in the broader field of psychology' namely through the skill set of consulting with systems to develop new or mutually agreed perspectives. I argue that consultation is an approach to assessment and intervention. Therefore, the utility of consultation and exploration into specific models and frameworks is vital in enabling greater access to systemic practices in addition to one-to-one work.

1.1 Motivation

I was fortunate to progress from a psychology undergraduate program to doctoral clinical psychology training. Prior to this, my knowledge of the profession of psychology had been closely linked with the medical model, and, like many others, I was (and remain) proud of the NHS. Thus, I sought a psychological role within health care. My training experiences spanned a range of sectors: working with individuals experiencing homelessness and with young adults with additional learning needs who were exploring what avenues they could explore throughout adulthood. I spent time working in an acute mental health assessment ward, psychiatric intensive care (PICU) and finally, a child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS). Across that time, I met an array of people, all with their ideas of how they hoped psychology could help them and stories of how they had come to the position where help was being sought – there were some exceptions within CAMHS owing to the children's ages.

Working in the PICU and assessment wards was pivotal in developing my professional values and positionality. Case after case, I would meet with adults, sometimes barely 18 years old, each time hearing how their lives had presented them with difficult circumstances. Exploring the systems around these individuals, it was not uncommon for them to have difficulty identifying a consistent support network, and where a network existed, all too often, they were unable to provide appropriate support, often because of their own needs. Therefore, it was not uncommon for primary and secondary mental health services – professionals being paid to help – to be the consistent support. However, the difficulties were often

internalised and became at one with the individual during this cycle of problem identification to access support. Their internal working model reinforced the belief that “I am a problem”.

Referrals often echoed one another; for example, ‘this is [patient name], this is their third admission in [insert number] years, they present with [insert diagnostic term]. They are receiving [insert names of medication], and the multi-disciplinary team feel they would benefit from a further psychological assessment to determine treatment options.’ The word treatment has connotations of power imbalances; the expert is to define the outcome, and the recipient is positioned as an individual in need of expert help. Furthermore, it reinforces cultural expectations about what should be considered (ab)normal and in need of change to align with cultural expectations; there is little opportunity to explore alternative perspectives that may be openly received by the wider system.

Whilst I may have developed a good rapport with individuals, supported them to explore their life stories and provided psychoeducation on potential support strategies, I could not work with the systems around the individual. Even when scheduled frequently and in advance, the ward staff rarely attended and engaged in group supervision. At times, I wondered if the systemic strain contributing to overscheduled diaries and reduction in the ability to prioritise supervision reinforced the notion of the difficulty being within the individuals, subliminally sending the message that they needed to help themselves.

It was common for the adults I met on the wards to describe becoming unaffiliated with education in their childhood; some were also care leavers. Almost all shared concerns about re-entering the community and being alone. It was challenging work. I knew why my practice was limited to individual sessions (funding and practices that align with national guidance that individual therapy is the gold standard). However, I needed more personal and professional fulfilment. I often wondered if my clients would be less self-critical had a system existed around them throughout their childhood and adolescence to support them to make sense of and work through difficult experiences.

It was only when working at CAMHS that the profession of educational psychology became known to me. It was a pleasant surprise to learn that there are not only

psychologist roles beyond health care but educational psychologists are positioned under different terms, enabling more opportunities to work systemically. Not long after this revelation, my clinical psychology training journey ended. It was a scary time, but supported by my system, I developed a story that made sense and did not perpetuate a self-deprecating narrative. I moved to a new role within educational psychology shortly after.

1.2 Educational psychology and me

Drawn into educational psychology by the idea that working with children would inevitably mean working with the system surrounding them, I was excited to begin working alongside like-minded others in an innovative service. Guidance around 'how to' was less wed to daily practice, and instead, there was a culture of working in a person-centred way, whether standardised or dynamic practice; the contribution was primarily concerned with ethical and efficient practice. The AFIE (assessment, formulation, intervention, evaluation) cycle was the taught approach to casework within clinical psychology. Similarly, educational psychology is intertwined with the APDR (Assess, Plan, Do, Review) graduated approach (*SEND Code of Practice*, Department for Education, 2015). However, what constitutes assessing and 'doing' is open to interpretation but often inclusive of conversations across the child's eco-system (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) – often termed consultation (Wagner, 2000).

I quickly learnt that whilst the role of an educational psychologist is closely tied to children, it is often so much more frequently about working with those around children. I have been working in a Local Authority (LA) Educational Psychology Service (EPS) as an assistant and then as a trainee EP for six years. I have not yet met a child who has requested that the adults in their lives make a referral to an educational psychologist (EP). My involvement has always been responsive to adults' descriptions of children; how we speak of children (Billington, 2012) is significant in how we come to understand them.

1.3 An introductory overview of the history of consultation and problem solving within educational psychology

Consultation as a practice within educational psychology has undergone an evolutionary meander, taking into its stride a spectrum of practice that addresses consultee-centred consultation which focuses on a singular concern (i.e. a behaviour within the classroom) and systemic practices (at a whole class or whole school

level). Nevertheless, consultation has long sought to be supportive through collaboration. Caplan (1970) cited mental-health consultation as a solution to meeting unmanageable rises in requests for psychological support following the Israeli holocaust; at the time diagnosis was de-prioritised to enable more holistic discussion of what had happened and to co-produce support plans to help trauma-experienced individuals (Caplan, 1970; Caplan and Caplan, 1993).

Within the context of educational psychology it was Patsy Wagner's (2000) exploration of psychological consultation within educational settings that remains a cornerstone of the practice. Although, critiques of the early descriptions of consultation are associated with the close alignment to behaviourist practices. Nevertheless, Wagner (2000) wrote of the familiar tale that educational psychology practice is all too often intertwined with the legalities of SEND assessment and consultation was described an antidote... 25 years on and very little has changed. For Patsy "consultation is a voluntary, collaborative, non-supervisory approach, established to aid the functioning of a system and its inter-related systems" (p. 11) – a broad umbrella description that creates space for a multitude of embodying frameworks. Wagner's description of consultation emphasises the use of psychology that supports the complexity of social systems and involves a process that enables concerns to be raised. Through collaboration that includes assessment, intervention and reviews, the developing support is egalitarian and individualistic. When successful, Wagner (2000) writes that consultation develops greater capacity in the consultation experienced system – they can experience greater success in developing solutions in the future with less emphasis on pathologizing a need. Echoing similarities with Caplan's (1970) consultative aims.

Since Wagner's (2000) publication numerous consultation models have emerged, some formally documented while others function informally within individual EPSs. Nonetheless, key consultation practices—such as information gathering, collaborative problem exploration, and the co-construction of solutions—remain fundamental to EPs' daily work (Fallon et al., 2010). However, the question of why an educational psychologist and not another professional facilitates a consultation process has long been discussed within the problem-solving literature (see Monsen et al., 1998).

Educational psychology was described by Pearson and Howarth (1982) as a problem-solving profession, owing to the skills required to gather information about presenting problems and support systems to find solutions. Whilst literature relating to problem-solving models, many of which include an element of consultation, discuss the complexity of human nature and how often simplistic repetitive procedures are inept in providing solutions without skilful execution, there remains an echoed pathway to access this which makes problem-solving inherently reactive. In contrast, educational psychology consultation in the broadest sense has the potential to be preventative, yet the implications are still associated with problem-solving through a dialogue that is structured between the consultant (EP) and the consultees.

Groups are considered, by some, invaluable in supporting individual change, perhaps because of a sense of connectedness, a sharing of responsibility or opportunities to be reflective and reflexive in practice. Hanko (1990) suggests group processes that ask questions of the attendees rather than advising from an expert stance supports the group, and the individuals within, to become empowered. Within the UK there is an expanding range of group consultation approaches such as Annan and Moore (2012); Duffy and Davison (2009); Farouk (2004); and Gill and Monsen (1995, 1996). Farouk's (2004) framework sought to overcome, what he viewed as, shortcomings in the emotional needs of the consultees and the belief systems which develop as part of a school's culture. Instead, Farouk (2004) sought to devise a framework that is psychodynamically informed whilst offering a structure for consultees to consider the wider school context. Farouk's (2004) group consultation framework outlines four phases which although distinct, overlapping and revisiting the description and clarification, reflection, personal theory generating, and strategy generation are common occurrences. Farouk's process suggests that as consultees become more au fait with the process the EP is able to adapt their role from consultant to facilitator; similarly, the consultees transition between roles across the consultations also.

1.3.1 Consultation as an (inter)national solution

Consultation is described as one of the core functions of practice within educational psychology (Fallon et al., 2010) and is consistently included across the curriculum for educational psychology training programmes in the United Kingdom (British

Psychological Society, 2023). Internationally, our western neighbours in the United States are alongside the UK in their historic and ongoing interest in the use of consultation with schools, with papers suggesting consultation was utilised from 1925 in the US and was viewed as an increasingly viable approach to practice (Bramlett & Murphy, 1998). The United Kingdom's interest in consultation sparked within the literature from the 1990's onwards as Wagner's 2000 text explored the conceptual and process matters of consultation in order to begin a discussion about how educational psychologists could be proactive instead of reactive; her solution was consultation. Since Wagner's (2000) flexible framework, rather than prescriptive detailed manualised approaches, consultation practices have evolved (discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2). Nevertheless, consultation is viewed as an option that maximises the limited resources within EPS' (Kennedy et al., 2009) by promoting systemic development within schools and thus builds capacity for additional approaches to EP support (Kratochwill et al., 2014).

1.3.2 A local solution

As my induction period in the EPS tapered, the intricacies of the hows and whys within EP practice began to intrigue me. Aside from statutory practices, there was no 'waitlist', however, this did not mean there was little demand for EP support across the city. The shift in EPS models and the 'businessification' of practice is discussed by Lee and Woods (2017). As a newcomer to educational psychology, I was surprised to learn about the financial trading within LA services. The virtual school for children who are looked after (CLA) was one of the most powerful customers, securing large quantities of EP time. Referrals for CLA were steadily increasing, and individual assessment was neither equitable nor the most appropriate type of EP involvement, so the service moved to adopt a group consultation framework. However, whilst inspired by Wagner's concepts of consultation, the HART consultation is distinctly more directive in its staged approach and more aligned with the framework outlined by Farouk (2004).

1.4 Local context

The LA EPS hosting the research within this paper may be described as a stretched service; each EP (including trainees, qualified and seniors) had between 7-14 schools within their patch. Furthermore, the LA had just over 770 CLA in 2023 (Office for National Statistics, 2023a), which equated to one qualified EP for every 97 CLA.

The needs of CLA nationally are discussed in greater detail in the following chapter, in summary, social, emotional and mental needs (SEMH) are increasingly being identified within the CLA population. Supporting schools and other closely linked professionals, such as social workers, to understand the links between lived experience and individuals' belief systems is one of the overarching aims of the Hull Attachment Resilience and Trauma (HART) consultation framework.

1.5 The HART consultation

1.5.1 At the heart of the HART; origins and foundations of the consultation

The HART consultation framework was devised by a LA EPS to meet the increasing demand for support from Educational Psychologists for children who are looked after. The HART was developed by a working group within an Educational Psychology Service in Northern England to support the work commissioned by the virtual school, in response to challenges with supporting CLA. Often referrals seemed misaligned and an inefficient use of resource; for example concerns about behavioural presentations were accompanied by requests for cognitive assessments. The role of Educational Psychology in supporting CLA felt unclear but wanted and needed.

Whilst there was call for a program of intervention, the working group were aligned with Wagner (2000) and hoped that consultation could future proof practice across schools by supporting consultees to develop their knowledge, skills and confidence without pathologizing need. The HART working group sought to explore solutions. The first solution utilised Newton's (1995) Circles of Adults, which had been adapted to include person centred planning visualisation tools. The 'Circles of Adults for problems' (Inclusive Solutions, ND) offers a framework for problem solving alongside in-depth discussion about the emotional needs of a group that accompany their concerns. The HART development working group facilitated a CoA with a pilot school and reflected on the benefits and drawbacks for its utility with CLA. The timeliness and structure of the process was considered beneficial in providing a consistent offer to all CLA; this also would support the planning of time, budget and workload as each consultation would equate to a similar fee. However, the CoA (Inclusive Solutions, ND) lacked in its discussion of 'what has happened?'. The working group aligned with the views shared in the recently published 'Power Threat Meaning Framework' (Johnstone et al., 2018) and considering the utility of compassion and

empathy, it was felt that making sense of the young person's lived experiences as a group would offer platform for solution focused discussion.

In search of an alternative approach Cameron and Maginn's (2008) pillars of parenting and models of professional childcare and emotional warmth (Cameron & Das, 2019) became central in the development of a new way of working. Cameron and Das (2019) emphasise the utility in supporting adults who work directly with children daily in completing 'therapeutic tasks' in 'golden opportunity moments' – a difference from suggesting the child should engage with a time limited intervention. Cameron and Das (2019) shift the responsibility to the system of adults around a child and promote the professional child-care model (Cameron and Maginn, 2008, 2009, 2011; Maginn and Cameron, 2013). The pillars of parenting (see Table 1) are central in a series of consultation meetings with adults around a child, each session holds a specific focus and lasts half a day over the course of one year.

The consultations within the professional child-care model were beyond the resource scope of the LA EPS, and so the working group set out to devise a new framework for consultation; amalgamating elements from the CoA (Inclusive Solutions, ND), Power Threat Meaning Framework (Johnstone, et al., 2018) and the pillars of parenting (Cameron and Maginn, 2008).

1.5.2 Attachment and the HART

Ainsworth and Bowlby's theories of attachment (see Bretherton, 1992) remark on parental relationships, particularly in infancy, and the role such experiences play in developing a 'blue print' for future interactions. Data about the reasons children move into the care system suggests neglect, witnessing and/or receiving abuse and parental absenteeism (HMG, 2023) is an all-too-common occurrence. Considering attachment theory and children's development of what a relationship is, their role in relationships and how to apply such observations into their own interactions shapes their internal working model. When facilitating a group consultation educational psychologists may explicitly and implicitly reference attachment constructs. However, as Wagner (2000) emphasised, there is value in supporting a group to hear and engage with theories such as attachment and purposefully adopt it as a lens to view the child's experiences through. Criticisms of such approach may argue that such practice may impose a limit on how consultees view a child, for example attachment

theory may be considered as too deterministic and contradictory to Seligman's positive psychology and hope

1.5.3 Resilience and protective factors and the HART

There are multiple definitions of resilience, as a construct it is regarded as heterogeneous, however the HART adopts Cameron and Maginn's (2008) understanding that resilient individuals have an ability to 'bounce back' from adversity. Within the school environment adversity can present itself in myriad forms including social and academic challenge. Overcoming multiple hurdles in a day can be a challenge for many, but more so for individuals whose protective factors are limited and so is their current level of resilience.

Reviews of resilience (see Stainton, Chrisholm & Kaiser, et al., 2019) suggest three core components including the presence of adversity, protective factors and then overcoming adversity – suggesting resilience is developed through experience and support.

The HART explicitly discusses current and future plans to support the development of resilience as a skill, whilst also providing a continuous backdrop of context for hypotheses about why and how a child has acquired their resiliency skills. By framing resilience as a skill, the goals and responsibility for skill development can be distributed across the system, stepping aside from a within child deficit to instead encompass compassion about their experiences and finding golden opportunities for teaching and support through adversity at a range of intensities.

1.5.4 Trauma and the HART

"Trauma happens when any experience stuns us like a bolt out of the blue; it overwhelms us, leaving us altered and disconnected from our bodies. Any coping mechanisms we have are undermined and we feel helpless and hopeless. It is as if our legs are knocked out from under us" (Levine & Klein, 2009, p.4)

Within England the most common reason (65%) children are taken into the care of the local authority is because they were at risk of abuse or neglect, figures which have remained similar for around 5 years (HMG, 2023). The high prevalence of CLA's experiences of trauma is frequently documented; over 90% of young people in care have been exposed to at least one form of trauma (Dorsey et al., 2012; Stein et al., 2001). Many children enter care because of adverse childhood experiences

(Simkiss, 2019) with the ‘toxic trio’ of parental substance misuse, domestic violence and mental illness (Rehill & Hendry, 2014) being a frequently shared experience. Developmentally children who are taken into care beyond infancy have limitations placed on their ability to form secure attachments with a secure and consistent care giver; an experience which is evidenced as a protective factor within childhood trauma (Cheong et al., 2017; Liebermann et al., 2005). With such a vast research base alongside practice-based evidence, the inclusion and acknowledgement of trauma was imperative in the development of the HART consultation. The timeline task within the HART explicitly explores the consultees knowledge of the child’s lived experiences and creates space for the discussion of traumatic adverse childhood experience(s).

1.5.5 The process of a HART

The HART outlines that the CLA social worker and at least one familiar adult from school must attend for the HART to be actioned. In addition, carers, virtual school representatives and other involved professionals are invited. The HART is a framework for group consultation facilitated by two EP’s – typically one qualified plus an assistant. The two EPs collaborate to facilitate discussion throughout the process and graphic onto templates for each task. There are five tasks within the HART

Task 1: Timeline discussion

The social worker is typically encouraged to share their knowledge of the child. However, all attendees at the consultation typically contribute to discussing the child’s life. The EP’s role is to ask prompt questions such as “*When did they move into care?*” and “*Do we know who was living in that house at the time?*”. The timeline begins pre-birth, and the EP contributes links to theories and literature about development alongside the child’s story. Throughout the timeline discussion, one of the EP’s scribes’ events onto a timeline (typically on A2 flipchart paper), which is pinned to the wall so that all attendees can visualise the events in sequence. The timeline process may take approximately 45-60 minutes to complete, capturing birth, placement moves, school moves and key life events within their system, such as parental imprisonment and births/deaths of relatives.

Task 2: Hypothesising the internal working model

One of the EPs introduces the concept of an internal working model and explains that the IWM is captured through I statements. Examples of I statements are shared, and the group is encouraged to hypothesise aloud what they think the child may believe about themselves, others, and the world. The group is encouraged to refer back to the timeline during this process. The I statements are written onto A2 paper and pinned to the wall, and the EPs contribute psychological theory and draw links to critical events on the timeline.

Task 3: The future internal working model

The group are then asked to think about the child's future and share aspirational I statements. The group are encouraged to suggest I statements that are realistic within the child's remaining time in education. The I statements are written on A2 paper pinned to the wall alongside the current internal working model; the display of all group-constructed ideas is designed to support the group in assuming a hopeful position for the child. The future internal working model is intended to be something other than success criteria for discussion at review.

Task 4: Strength identification

The child's strengths are discussed and noted on a sheet of A2 paper. The EP also contributes strengths they have heard about the child through stories.

Task 5: Pillars of Parenting (PoP) framework

Cameron and Maginn's (2008) pillars of parenting arose from social care practice in children's residential homes and supported consultations to develop residential staff in their practice with CLA. PoP employs an approach that focuses on emotional warmth. This approach aims to enhance staff members' understanding of and empathy towards the experiences of the CLA. Consequently, it enables adults to participate in work that empowers themselves and the CLA they are assisting (Cameron & Maginn, 2008, 2009, 2011; Cameron & Das, 2019). Cameron and Maginn (2008) proposed eight pillars see table 1. The template shown in Appendix 1 is populated throughout the HART consultation by one of the EP's and then reviewed and amended in the final task of the HART.

Table 1. A summary of the pillars of parenting that underpin the personal and interpersonal beliefs and skills component of the model

A) Acquiring a sense of well-being and self-identity	
Pillar 1: Experiencing primary care and protection	In addition to all the primary care needs, this might include staff performances like offering reassurance in periods of distress either verbally or with a hug, attending to a child's appearance so that he/ she feels 'good', also supporting attendance and ensuring continuing success at school
Pillar 2: Forming warm relationships.	Children's home regulations require that 'children should feel loved', which can be achieved by 'parenting' that is warm, kind, sensitive, and responsive. This type of parenting ensures thoughtful consistency in behaviour management while engaging in activities with the child and encouraging two-way communication.
Pillar 3: Increasing positive self-perception.	Since much of children's self-worth results from how others treat and respond, this pillar can be achieved by positive regard, recognition of positive behaviour, protection from abuse or bullying and setting reasonable standards for learning and behaviour.
Pillar 4: Achieving a sense of belonging	The devastating effects of rejection, particularly parental rejection, highlight 'belonging' as a significant psychological need. Developing this pillar can involve staff, including extended family members, valuing cultural affiliations, building a child's identity, and creating opportunities for shared fun and humour.
B) Developing self-belief and self-efficacy	
Pillar 5: Building resilience	Resilient individuals can bounce back from adversity. Factors likely to enhance resilience in a child or young person include—promoting friendships with school peers who are doing well and providing a key worker who acts as a mentor and offers consistent support/ encouragement.
Pillar 6: Enhancing self-management skills	Self-management is the insulation which prevents inappropriate behaviour when enticing or compelling outside factors try to break through. Examples here include— teaching self-managing behaviour, mentoring basic skills, encouraging on-task behaviour and promoting self-reflection
C) Building social interaction skills	
Pillar 7: Improving emotional competence	Residential carers and foster/ adoptive parents can support and encourage relationships with children and adults outside the family, teach the language of emotion, and encourage the development of empathy (i.e., understanding the needs of others as well as one's own needs).
Pillar 8: Developing personal and social responsibility	This lifelong process involves developing a sense of responsibility for others, accepting differences, treating people in a fair and valued way and expecting the same treatment from others in return
Devised by the Pillars of Parenting co-directors and a large number of residential carers and foster/ adoptive parents (revised 2005, 2007, 2013, 2014 and 2018)	

Table cited in Carmichael (2021) – Adapted from Cameron & Das; Empowering residential carers of looked after young people. The impact of emotional warmth on professional childcare (2019, p. 1899)

1.6 Rationale for the research

The demand for HART consultations increases annually within the LA hosting the present research. Unpublished research conducted by myself in contribution to an MA Education (Carmichael, 2021) sought to explore how attendees of HART consultations experience the process of the consultation, their perceptions of the impact of HART consultations and their views on how children may think about it. The findings discuss the term 'lightbulb moment'; all participants spoke about something happening during a HART consultation that they otherwise do not have the language to describe. At the end of the research process I was left feeling there was an additional subconscious complexity occurring, however, I was unclear whether it was interpersonal or intrapsychic or something else. However, what is known to happen consciously within HART consultations begins with the description of the framework (see Appendix 2); however, the current research explores the research question:

What is happening in a HART consultation?

Literature Review

2.1 Overview

Within this literature review, I intend to address two key areas of literature. The first pertains to the population of children who are looked after, how they are defined, and the context that outlines what constitutes adequate care and positive outcomes. The later element of the literature review focuses more intently on interventions and programs aimed at supporting children who are looked after, I endeavour to cast greater focus onto systemic solutions such as consultations and highlight the gap in the literature base, which the present paper seeks to situated itself; educational psychology consultation as a supportive intervention for children who are looked after. To my knowledge, aside from my own paper (Carmichael, 2021), there are, at present, no published articles about the HART consultation.

2.2 Children who are looked after

2.2.1 A System That Cares The care of children who are looked after (CLA) by the Local Authority (LA) is legislated by the Children Act (His Majesty's Government (HMG), 1989). In England, children are considered looked after if they are placed within accommodation provided by the LA for more than 24 hours, placed under a care order, or placed for future adoption. Children may enter the care system for a multitude of reasons. For many, a history of neglect and or abuse within the home forms part of their care journey (DfE, 2021); abuse may be physical, sexual, emotional or a combination. Such experience increases the vulnerabilities of CLA (Dixon, Ward and Blower, 2019). The abuse may be targetted towards the child(ren) or observed by them. Nevertheless, this lived experience often impacts a child's sense of safety and belonging (Maslow, 1967). However, it is the responsibility of adults in children's lives to safeguard them against currently occurring and possible future harm (*Working Together to Safeguard Children*, HMG, 2018).

The suggestion that placing a child in care could be sufficient in supporting CLA through limiting or stopping exposure to complex home environments is fallacious, especially where educational outcomes are concerned (Sinclair et al., 2022). In addition to this, carers have a right to 'give notice' on a placement, thus requiring the LA to find alternate accommodation for the CLA within 28 days (*Section 22, The Children Act*, HMG, 1989; *Regulation 14, Care Planning, Placement and Case Review regulations*, DfE, 2010). It is not uncommon for CLA to have multiple

placement moves; often, relational rupture (Hughes, 2009) and carers' difficulty meeting needs are typical precursors to placement changes. When such events occur, it adds further to the loss and rejection experienced by CLA. For some CLA, this repeated cycle is a barrier to them making and maintaining relationships with adults who are capable and passionate about forming secure relationships that protect them (Rahilly & Hendry, 2014). However, the environmental changes associated with moving into care are described as alleviating the stress and pressures for care experienced young people in Sinclair's (2019) research. Nevertheless, it is not a linear enough change to reverse the impact of pre-care experiences on educational attainment.

2.2.2 Statistics of care

Office for National Statistics figures suggest 83,840 children were looked after as of 31st March 2023, a 2% rise from the previous year (ONS, 2023a). Children who receive social care from the LA, including CLA, are more likely than their non-care-experienced peers to have SEND (Jay & Gilbert, 2021), with SEMH being a high area of need for this population (DfE, 2019). Often, children who are taken into the care of the LA have complex emotional and mental health needs as they have already experienced events that have negatively impacted their sense of self. Such experiences shape how a child interprets a typical relationship (Bandura, 1977); this can then increase their vulnerability to future abuse, thus reinforcing the cyclical nature of disrupted relationships throughout life (Bazalgette et al., 2015; Luke et al., 2014). Furthermore, once children are placed in care, uncertainty about the longevity and suitability of the placement often remains (Sebba et al., 2015; Allnatt, 2019; Hanrahan et al., 2019; Williams et al., 2020; Ellis & Johnstone, 2024); further contributing to the power adults in their lives continue to possess.

2.3 A case for change – Victoria Climbié

The tragic case of Victoria Climbié, a young girl who died in 2000 following neglect and severe abuse, was the catalyst for a re-evaluation of child protection services within the United Kingdom. The Laming Report, which followed in 2003, was an inquiry by Lord Laming (2003) that highlighted failings within the care of Victoria and outlined 108 recommendations to reform the system. Key outcomes from the report included the 'Every Child Matters' framework (2004) and the creation of the role of a Director of Children's Services. The Laming Report was pivotal in curating policies

(*Care Matters: Time for Change*, DfE, 2007; *Improving the Educational Attainment of Children in Care*, Department for Children, 2009) that aim to improve the welfare and education of children who are looked after. For example, the emphasis on better care coordination across multiple agencies included education. Furthermore, concerning educational support, equality for CLA within education meant a re-evaluation of the opportunities available for CLA within the education system.

2.4 The introduction of virtual schools

A virtual school is not a physical building but a body of professionals, typically employed by the LA, who are experienced in education and social care. Their primary aim is to work with schools and other agencies to advocate for equality and improve the educational outcomes of CLA (Sebba & Berridge, 2019). The current model for Virtual schools in England shares many similarities with the first pilot. In 2002 (LGC, 2002), Liverpool City Council piloted a conceptualisation of the virtual school, a model that formed a board of governors meeting monthly to advocate for the needs of CLA in their physical schools, which included securing funds to ensure all CLA had access to IT equipment. The executive director, Annie Shepperd, described how governors signed a pledge to CLA regarding the importance of their duties as corporate parents (LGC, 2002).

The diligence of Liverpool was only replicated nationally following the publication of The Children and Families Act (HMG, 2014), which brought about local governmental changes by implementing statutory requirements for all LA to appoint a Head of the Virtual School (VSH). Typically, the role is undertaken by a previously experienced Headteacher (Harrison et al., 2023), and their primary duty is aligned with strategic management to improve educational outcomes. Additional statutory guidance issued in 2018 (*Promoting the education of CLA and Previously CLA*; DfE, 2018) gave local authorities little more direction on carrying out such obligations.

Since CLA are one of the most vulnerable groups in school, the government has prioritised their needs. With the advent of virtual schools in England, the demand for professionals whose primary responsibilities include supervising CLA education, facilitating contact between various CLA support organisations, and providing advocacy increased. Further responsibilities were added to the priorities of VSH in 2021 when the paper '*Phase One Evaluation of the Virtual School Head's extension of duties to children with a Social Worker and Post-16 Pupil Premium Plus Pilot*' was

published (DfE, 2022). Furthermore, VSH's have recently undertaken the additional responsibility of managing the pupil premium plus funding for CLA for those over 16.

Whilst VSHs' statutory responsibility increases, guidance is still needed on how virtual schools should operate to promote geographical equality. Currently, the professional resources and allocation of funds—some LAs keep strategic oversight of pupil premium plus funding, whereas others pass this responsibility to schools—vary across the country (Harrison et al., 2023). The allocation of additional funds through the pupil premium budget (DfE, 2018) provides CLA with access to additional support that may otherwise be unavailable. Educational Psychologists are amongst some of the purchasable services available to CLA through VSH's discretionary budgeting; therefore a literature base on the suitability and utility of EP's within this field is essential. Nevertheless, such literature is still scarce (see Samul, 2021).

2.5 Outcomes for CLA

When scoping the literature base for CLA within education, much of the discussion focuses on outcomes, so it seemed important to include this. However, I must note as a foreword to the following sections that a literary focus on outcomes may be considered a narrative that perpetuates a capitalistic and/or right-wing society, thus defining success primarily on an individual's ability to exist without support from the state. I believe the definitions of 'positive outcomes' within the literature to sometimes be too narrow but an essential discussion to include nonetheless. Although to balance this, it may be argued that focusing on measurable outcomes, such as attainment, is a benevolent measure which strives to define a gap and thus secure further funding for the care experienced population.

2.5.1 A critical discussion of success criteria

Aside from education, one of the functions of school is to socialise and supervise children (Rose, 1999); with peer relationships being cited as a key factor in supporting academic achievement (Shao, Kang & Lu et al., 2024). Therefore, it may be argued that learning functional skills in school requires more than specific learning interventions; a holistic view of education may support increased literacy and numeracy skills in adulthood. Furthermore, much of society is more easily accessible to those who possess skills in reading and writing; leaving school without such skills can lead to barriers in adulthood.

Meritocracy suggests that greater effort leads to greater academic achievement, with arguments that it is possible to out-work adversity as ‘you get out what you put in’ (Darnon et al. 2018). However, I argue this claim oversimplifies the complex factors influencing educational outcomes and celebrating only academic meritocratic achievement enables a cycle of ‘within-ing’, thus attributing poor educational outcomes to the person whilst under-acknowledging the systemic influence of the education system (Mijs, 2016). Therefore, when individuals fail to meet expectations, it is viewed as a personal failure rather than a product of institutional and structural inequities (Bottrell 2007, Darnon et al. 2018).

The criteria for defining educational success, or what is termed in the literature as positive outcomes, is tied closely to progression into further education or secure employment based upon grades from standardised assessment. Defining success in such narrow terms is incongruent with my personal and professional values. As is discussed later in section 2.7 and 2.8, educational psychology involvement is rarely focused solely on academic attainment, but instead covers a wide range of needs including social, emotional and mental health. However, data is presented in the following section to demonstrate awareness of the narratives about educational outcomes. Furthermore, acknowledging drivers and barriers within the Chrono and Macrosystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) is essential when applying a critical lens to literature about vulnerable groups such as CLA.

2.5.2 Educational Outcomes for CLA

The educational attainment of CLA is an area of frequent re-evaluation; given the statutory responsibility and funding attached to support the education of CLA, particularly within England, this is unsurprising. Despite this, it remains accepted amongst the literature that CLA have lower educational attainment than their non-care experienced peers (O'Higgins et al., 2015; Brady & Gilligan, 2019). However, the adverse outcomes of CLA are not limited to education (Harleigh-Bell, 2016; Gill & Daw, 2017; Murray et al., 2020). The relationship between care and educational outcomes is not considered linear (Gilligan, 2007). Instead, pre-care events are hypothesised as significant contributors to ongoing difficulty (Berridge, 2006; Sebba et al., 2015).

A literature review by O'Higgins et al. (2015) looked at international quantitative studies of CLA and educational outcomes; whilst the included literature led to

conclusions that describe a relationship between being in care and poorer outcomes, causality remained undetermined. Nevertheless, the findings were stark.

Internationally, children in care leave school with less developed literacy skills, such as reading, writing, and numeracy (O'Higgins et al., 2015). However, critiques of the research in educational outcomes include meritocracy, which sets the benchmark for what is deemed as a positive outcome. Even excluding that argument, much of the literature is comparative and looks at the grades of CLA versus the general population. This focus on comparison is emphasised by the description of an 'attainment gap' (Sinclair et al., 2022; Berridge et al., 2020; Sinclair et al., 2019; Jay & McGrath-Lone, 2019; Sebba et al., 2015; O'Higgins et al., 2015). The term 'gap' has many connotations, such as deficit and difference; such language may further an 'othering' of CLA. A further perspective shared by VSHs in Harrison et al.'s (2023) report suggests that preventing further adverse outcomes from occurring is often considered progress and a positive outcome in itself; however, they recognised the difficulty in researching events that do not happen.

Sinclair et al. (2022) explored what conditions support CLA to achieve positive educational outcomes. Their findings suggest that CLA can benefit from being educated in settings where pupils with educational disadvantages are already progressing, from stable and supportive housing placements, and from encouraging involved practitioners to be hopeful and optimistic when considering the potential of CLA (Sinclair et al., 2022). Supporters of Sinclair et al.'s findings argue that the paper provides a comprehensive framework for improving educational outcomes for CLA, through emphasising the need for a combination of supportive practices which creates an environment conducive to learning and personal development. This perspective is supported by evidence showing that holistic approaches, which address both educational and social-emotional needs, are effective in promoting positive outcomes for CLA (Gilligan, 2007). In contrast, Sinclair et al. (2022) may be criticised as overlooking wider systemic issues; while acknowledging specific conditions for support is beneficial, it does not address the underpinning causes of educational disparities. I argue that a balanced approach, combining systemic change with educational practice is necessary to create equitable and effective educational environments for children who are looked after.

2.6 The current landscape of need – SEMH

The mental health and well-being of all children, but especially CLA, is the responsibility of a network of adults. However, monitoring well-being and mental health can be a complex task due to the subjectivity of tools, and CLA's reservations about trusting adults can further complicate this. Within dyadic development psychotherapy, children's experiences are conceptualised as contributing factors to 'blocked trust' (Hughes, 2009), which can act as an ongoing barrier to their ability to communicate their needs and then accept support. Humanistic psychology (Maslow, 1967) would suggest that without a sense of safety and belonging, both of which align with trust, individuals are less able to utilise their executive functioning skills, thus making education a more significant challenge.

Nationally, CLA are most likely to have social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) as their primary area of need in an education, health, and care plan (DfE, 2015). Despite this, much of the literature that considers how to best support CLA within educational settings focuses significantly on educational attainment and outcome measures. Beyond SEND registers CLA and CSC experience higher levels of mental health difficulties than the average population (Durbois-Comtois et al., 2021; Engler et al., 2022), and they are significantly more likely to attempt to end their lives by suicide (Evans et al., 2017). Therefore, it is imperative that supporting the needs of this population is a priority at all system tiers. Macro-systemic commitment to supporting CLA is evident through the statutory responsibilities of VSH's, and beyond education, the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE, 2021) has published guidelines suggesting relationships, mentoring and systems change models are essential in supporting the mental health needs of CLA and previously CLA. However, the breadth of supportive practices remains vast.

2.7 Approaches to support SEMH

A review of evidence-based and published interventions for CLA experiencing mental health difficulties (NSPCC: Luke et al., 2014) suggested that developing an understanding of attachment theory led to positive outcomes for CLA through training targeted at education staff and carers (the mesosystem; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). For example, the Nurturing Attachments training program (Golding, 2013; previously known as Fostering Attachments, see Golding, 2008) was found to result in minimal change in the presentation of CLA in a short-term study (Laybourne et al., 2008).

This limited outcome may be attributed to overly generalised materials that do not specifically address the unique needs of individual CLA. Conversely, another training program focused on developing an understanding of attachment during infancy led to deeper understanding and more positive outcomes (Dozier et al., 2008). The effectiveness of indirect work, such as training, lies in its ability to foster systemic change that benefits more than the individual CLA. In contrast, the review by Luke et al. (2014) highlighted the success of direct interventions such as life story work and mentoring buddy schemes, which are not typically practised by educational psychologists (EPs). The review concluded that direct work is most effective when implemented through a collaborative approach involving multiple agencies; EP consultations can facilitate this coordinated approach.

A further systematic literature review by MacDonald et al. (2024) looked at interventions to support the mental health and well-being of CLA and care-experienced young people through a socio-ecological lens. Their exploration grouped interventions into three domains; 'intrapersonal' as those that focused on working with the children and young people to develop their knowledge and skills; 'interpersonal' working with carers alongside CLA to develop their relationships by developing their sense of confidence and competence; and mentoring interventions which develop the community of supporters by linking CLA with a range of appropriately experienced adults (Macdonald et al., 2024). Macdonald et al.'s (2024) review generated five themes from an international pool of data, two of which relate to the burden of interventions: emotional, cognitive and time resource burdening; the other identifying tensions between professionals such as health and social care, which may inhibit the anticipated effectiveness based upon a need for ongoing communication. The barriers to intervention in MacDonald et al.'s review refer to the broader system, not the CLA, thus supporting an argument that opposes within-child pathologising. Under the NICE guidelines, support for CLA should be offered to the

“allocated social worker, to reduce professional turnover. Support could include, for example, supervision with regular meetings to check on the well-being of workers and reflect on practices that promote positive relationships; consultation for complex and specialist problems; trauma-informed training in communication skills to support positive relationships” (NICE, 2021, p. 13 – 14).

In addition to this

“1.5.3 Ensure that there is sufficient specialist professional expertise to support, and provide consultation for, looked-after children and young people with more complex needs. This could be provided through more intensive (responsive) trauma-informed training, or by sharing expertise across agencies” (NICE, 2021, p. 24).

Educational psychologists are therefore well placed to incorporate NICE guidance alongside professional practices to support CLA throughout their education; taking a non-medicalised view of SEMH, they need to consider multiple perspectives and support collaboration with the system around the child.

2.8 The Role of Educational Psychology

2.8.1 Contextual Overview of Educational Psychology

Cyril Burt, the first English Educational Psychologist is primarily associated with a reductionist style of practice, which assessed children to categorise who could (not) attend school (Maliphant et al., 2013). While the assessment of children remains a large part of EP's workload (Lee & Woods, 2017) it is no longer the only task of an EP, despite statutory duties accounting for a high percentage of workload.

Nevertheless, the history of educational psychology practice is intertwined closely with an association of power and influence, however the limitations to this are a thesis worth of debate within themselves.

As the political context shifts, so do national and local priorities, impacting the capacity for practice beyond EHC assessments within educational psychology services (BPS, 2017; McKay et al., 2016). Within EP services, currently, systemic pressures result in much of our practice being reactive rather than preventative; the power of the macro-system relatively amplified the statutory workload of EPS's (Association of Educational Psychologists, 2023). Research suggests there needs to be more clarification about the role of EP's beyond the statutory work, particularly about systemic practice (Atfield et al., 2023). EPs finding alternative pathways and outlets for practices that are not wedded solely to assessment are well documented. Within section 1.3 Wagner's (2000) motivation in pursuit of consultative practice was introduced and will be returned to throughout this literature review.

Despite this, individual assessment dominates much of EPS allocated time in schools, many LA EPSs share concerns that they cannot foresee a future where it is

possible to continue meeting the demand (Atfield et al., 2023). This overshadowing of statutory practice is associated with a clog in the system whereby services have little time for systemic or early intervention work, which could negate further Education, Health and Care Needs assessment requests (DfE, 2015). Similarly, the limitations on the capacity for non-statutory practice and limited training places were associated with consistent difficulties in recruiting and retaining EPs (Atfield et al., 2023). Therefore, the profession is contending with an array of difficulties. Thus developing the evidence base for practices that are equally effective and efficient in supporting children, particularly those who are looked after, is essential in driving macro systemic changes that enable greater opportunity for early intervention work such as consultation.

According to the HCPC, in 2020, there were 3672 registered EPs in England; however, this included an unknown amount of retired and no longer working EPs (Atfield et al., 2023). The school workforce census reported 2325 EP's in the academic year 2022/23; however, not all schools nationally completed the survey. Nevertheless, this estimation of the EP workforce compared with a population of approximately 16,638,829 0-25-year-olds (figures from mid-2022, Office for National Statistics, 2023b) equals approximately 1 EP per 7156 0-25-year-olds. I argue that EP's are well positioned to support at a systemic level and that group consultation should be considered a vital part of a long term solution.

Despite the pressures within LA EPSs, some note a shift in the positioning that drives EP's approach to work (O'Farrell & Kinsella, 2018), however even when EP's are seeking to align their practice with systemic school-level work such as through consultation, schools continue to associate the role of EP's primarily with individual assessment work with the CYP (see Jones & Atkinson, 2021). Beltman et al. (2016) reported a discrepancy in the views of schools and psychologists, with psychologists stating they offer indirect support through programs at the school level.

Comparatively, the teachers in Beltman et al.'s research associated psychologists directly with the child only, with assessment being the primary unique contribution of psychologists. Furthermore, support beyond directly working with the child is often attributed to other non-psychologists and professionals (Ashton & Roberts, 2006; Gilman & Medway, 2007; Beltman et al., 2016). Yet consultation frameworks are a

staple within the toolbox of practicing educational psychologists and support a shift towards a systemic understanding of what has happened in a child's life (Johnstone, et al. 2018) in place of medicalising what a child can or cannot 'do'.

2.8.2 Educational Psychology and Virtual Schools

Virtual schools and educational psychologists have independent statutory roles within education, share their roots in local authorities, and have the flexibility of approach afforded by limited guidance on 'how to do X' (DfE, 2015). VSHs are strategic leaders, similar to EPs, who are considered by some as "*agents for systemic change rather than a caseworker*" (Mackay, 2002, p. 6). The strategic leaders of virtual schools have been participants in numerous research reviews into their practice (Harrison et al., 2023; Moorehouse, 2023; Sebba & Berridge, 2019), with the summary of multiple papers reinforcing the idea that nationally, they all carry out their duties in their unique ways with different staff groups and different approaches to funds delegation being pertinent characteristics. Nevertheless, Harrison et al.'s (2023) report on the effectiveness of VSs heard how VSHs experience the responsibilities aligned with their role as a need to "*marshal other agencies*" and know "*the go-to person in other agencies to influence decisions*" (p. 13). The VSHs regarded one of their skills in being a dutiful VSH as "*nag-ability*" (p.8). However, what they are specifically nagging for and from whom needs to be clarified.

Within the host LA, the VSH had forged a working relationship with the EPS through years of collaboration and annual increases in the delegation of virtual school funding to purchase EP time; this is one example of how a VSH seeks to overcome barriers and curate consistent opportunities for joint working. What this joint working approach says about how the VSH values EP support is hypothetical; however, previous research into the experiences of HART consultations with the EPS indicated positive experience that facilitates pauses and 'light bulb moments' (Carmichael, 2021). Therefore, one may argue that consultation should be named as a useful intervention for supporting the educational needs of CLA.

The strategic role that VSHs hold fluctuates nationally; some services sit within education, others within social care (Drew & Banerjee, 2019), but the role of VSs in helping guide teams around CLA has led to many virtual schools stepping back from individual casework and instead looking to more systemic and strategic alternatives

(Harrison et al., 2023). There are models where the staff structure of Virtual schools extends beyond teaching professionals; for example, (Mendis et al., 2018) describe a VS with youth offending officers and education welfare staff, amongst others. However, there is no evidence within the literature that an EP has a fixed role within any virtual schools participating in research. The literature relating to the EPs working with VSs must still be expanded.

In Sebba and Berridge's (2019) research, one of the 16 VSHs managed an educational psychology service as part of their broader strategic role; however, this likely insufficiently represents EP involvement with VSs as only 16 out of a possible 343 VSHs participated. An exploration of the nature of EP practices to support CLA included a sample of five LAs (Norwich et al., 2010). The primary data was collected through questionnaires followed by interviews with four EPs. The key themes from the data suggest EP's work with CLA often centred around the management of behaviour, support for designated teachers around the emotional impact of their work, assessments and systemic practices at differing levels of the eco-system (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Furthermore, when exploring the challenges experienced concerning consultation, the most commonly reported difficulties were tensions between expectations held by staff in children's social care and education, lack of clarity about the DT role, trying to encourage approaches considering children holistically, the mobility of children in care, supporting schools to understand their responsibilities for children in care as a crucial part of their work, and the small number of CLA within their schools (Norwich et al., 2010). Nevertheless, EPs are well positioned to support the needs of CLA through the VS as part of early intervention practices.

The British Psychological Society's guidance around competencies of educational psychologists (BPS, 2023) includes the ability to use therapeutic techniques and processes to be drawn upon in direct work with children and young people. The currently stretched position of EPSs in England means EP's are often not best positioned to engage in extended periods of intervention work due to time and resource availability limitations. Moorehouse's (2022) doctoral research sought to explore CLA and professional perspectives of mental health support in schools and other services and how EP's can better support this. Moorehouse's (2022) findings suggest that therapeutic support for CLA was most often accessed through school.

More expansive research pools suggest that CLA agree that school is most frequently the primary source of support for their well-being (Moorehouse, 2022; Fargas-Malet & McSherry, 2018; Tatlow-Golden & McElvaney, 2015; Townsend et al., 2020). In contrast, when support for mental health is accessed through non-school-based interventions, e.g. through health care and charitable organisations, the time limitations of intervention coupled with CLA's relational needs resulting in extended periods of rapport-building means schools notice little benefit from short programs of individual intervention (Moorehouse, 2022). Therefore, despite EPs having credibility and training to provide therapeutic support, the microsystem of the child's school is best placed to provide appropriate provision.

There are numerous reports citing approaches to mental health support for all children and those who are experiencing/have experienced care (for example, see Luke et al., 2014). However, some authors (Daniel et al., 2009; McMurray et al., 2008; Moorehouse, 2022) propose that a barrier to accessing relevant support is the disjointed understanding of the child's needs. The value EPs can offer to overcome such barriers alongside virtual schools is the ability to facilitate multi-agency consultation. Narratives of concern are discussed alongside theoretical interpretations. In section 2.8, the argument that jumping to intervention before conceptualisation through assessment was introduced; however, whether EP consultation is considered an assessment process, intervention, or something else is to be debated.

2.8.3 Literature base for non-EP interventions

Within the literature, there is a developing interest in interventions that support vulnerable groups such as CLA to overcome the barriers that are highlighted in the damning summaries of 'attainment gaps' and poor outcomes. Nevertheless, with the increased interest comes international reviews, many of which have a scope beyond what is possible within this section. For example, NICE guidance (2021) endorsed recommendations that are eco-systemic, inherent in supporting change across the system through mentoring and support for positive parenting practices. However much of the intervention data is related to diagnostic terms and thus reinforces the idea that a person must have a problem, even if the solution to said problem, then lies with the system that surrounds them. Typically, EP practice endeavours to provide preventative support which catches cases before this point.

Evans et al (2023) conducted a systematic literature review of interventions aimed supporting the mental health and well-being of children in who are looked after. The CHIMES ('**C**are-experienced **c**hildren and young people's **I**nterventions to improve **M**ental health and **w**ell-being outcomes **S**ystematic') review included international papers and included non-diagnostic literature that explores well-being and synthesised findings to define interventions that are likely to be cost effective and therefore feasible within the UK. Similarly to my argument that consultation is an intervention, Evans et al (2023) defined an intervention

“as an attempt to disrupt existing practices in any part of the social system (e.g. healthcare, social care, education, youth justice). They could operate across the following socio-ecological domains: intrapersonal; interpersonal; organisational; community; and policy. They could be mono-component or multicomponent. There were no a priori criteria for implementation (i.e. delivery setting, delivery mode, delivery agent).” (p.4)

Evans et al. (2023) reported that most papers that defined interventions focused on interpersonal support for the system around the child, most of which occurred over one to seven months and predominantly centred around training to develop the ecosystem's confidence and knowledge. Non-specified practitioners delivered many of the interventions included by Evans et al. (2023); however, of the 41 interventions categorised as having an interpersonal (systemic focus), less than a quarter specified involvement from a psychologist of any kind – some specified a clinical psychologist but mainly interventions were associated with training or extra-curricular visits. None of the papers in the CHIMES review (2023) shared a resemblance to group consultation, and all required at least 4 weeks of involvement.

2.8.4 Consultation within Educational Psychology

Consultation within educational psychology was introduced in section 1.3, however further critical analysis of the practical application of group consultations within EP practice is discussed here. Psychological consultation was described as a rapidly increasing approach to supportive practice by Caplan (1970) in response to an unmatched ratio of need to resource (Caplan and Caplan, 1993). Shifting away from diagnostic practices towards collaborative discussions centred around holistic multi-ecosystemic (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) interventions was a change in clinical psychological practice, which rippled across applied psychology. Several models of

EP consultation have been presented in the literature (Farouk, 2004; Wagner, 2000; Monsen & Frederickson, 2002; Woolfson et al., 2006). Wagner's (2000) introductory overview of frameworks for psychological consultation in schools aligns with a behaviourist paradigm. A critique of this early approach to consultation is that the focus on behaviour inherently positions consultation as a reactive practice, which remains a factor affecting the current EPS delivery model (Haycock & Woods, 2025). However, a strength of behaviourist informed consultation is that consultees are supported to hypothesise about an observable response.

Group consultations such as the unpublished 'emotional wellbeing support framework' utilises functional behavioural analysis and multi-element planning (Eccles & Pitchford, 1997; LaVigna & Willis, 1992) to guide group discussion. A critical discussion about the success of the EWSF may argue that consultees familiarity with the topic (experience observing behavioural responses) supports them to participate more competently and confidently within a multi-agency group discussion. However, like the HART consultation, there remains a gap in the literature interrogating the EWSF.

There are multiple frameworks of consultation which have entered the daily practices (Fallon et al., 2010) of EPs. The blueprint process of information gathering, exploration of the presented need and co-construction of the following steps are routine within most educational psychology consultations. Furthermore, SENCos in Ashton and Robert's (2006) paper aligned the process of collaboration with the unique skill set of EP. In addition, EPs have been commended for their ability to convert tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge (Nolan & Moreland, 2014) and utilise interpersonal empathy and warmth when supporting systems through cognitive and emotional changes (Jones & Witz, 2006). Therefore, describing a framework and providing a manual is likely insufficient for systems to work through a difficulty. EPs' presence in psychologically informed consultation is contentious. I argue that there is a fine balance between upskilling the educational workforce to enable greater opportunities for indirect psychologically informed intervention (see Stanbridge & Campbell, 2016) without 'giving psychology away' (Fogg, 2023) in the quest of expecting schools to understand and meet the needs of all students in a self-sufficient manner. The role of EPs within consultation can fluctuate across a spectrum, including positions such as expert, facilitator and collaborative contributor.

Working alongside systems affords valued opportunities to foster relationships with schools (Ashton & Roberts, 2006). There are several frameworks of consultation where the EP's involvement is flexible – i.e. more than a facilitator but cautiously averting a solid association with 'expert'. In Solution circles, a 'discussion tool' that does not label itself as a consultation framework, EP's are guided by Brown and Henderson's (2012) framework to facilitate discussion without assuming an expert role. However, the pre-determined process which encourages the consultees to work together to find a solution does not require an EP to be present. Therefore, with training the tool can be employed by systems without direct guidance from an EP upon each use. Solutions circles is not reliant upon psychological theory, therefore there is no psychology to 'give away'. However, whilst a valuable tool to support some scenarios, I critique its applicability within the complex SEMH needs of children who are looked after as I argue it would over simplify and lack the nuance required to understand what has happened and instead rush to explore a solution.

Alternatively, within the Circle of Adults (Grahamslaw & Henson, 2015) approach, the EP's guide a group through a range of discussion topics, including team formulation about the views of child from their perspective. Furthermore discussion points for hypothesis sharing and explicit discussion about the applicability of psychological theory is integral to the process. Unlike the circle of adults, an EP or applied psychologist is essential within a circle of adults. However, whilst the circle of adults steps beyond the solution circle in its approach to hypothesise about what is happening for a child (present) it misses an exploration of what has happened.

Where a circle of adults is aligned more closely with psychological formulation (Johnston, 2011), Annan and Moore's (2021) staff sharing schemes involve EP's working alongside other professional with the aim of enhancing the systems capacity to address educational challenges. Despite multiple frameworks, the general practice of consultation has resulted in teachers praising the utility and value that EPs bring to consultation in a facilitative role (Bozic & Carter, 2002; Nugent et al., 2014). Conversely, I wonder about the impact of systemic power, the narrative of Doctorate qualified professionals and scarcity of EP's more widely (Haycock & Woods, 2025)... does this lead schools to place greater value on the decreasing contact they have with EPs?.

The literature about what is and is not referred to as group or multi-agency consultation is vast, with papers describing school based well-being interventions, team formulation and helpful conversations (AMBIT) all in an approach which involves more than two adults participating in a conversation about a young person. Gibbs and Miller (2014) describe consultation as a psychotherapeutic response between EP and teacher, as the temporary containment provides respite from societal rules and pre-existing narratives about the causality of problems. Similarly group consultations are described as opportunities that allow attendees to assume novel roles (Muchenje & Kelly, 2021; Gibbs & Miller, 2014) and explore perspectives of one another. Smith et al. (2021) meta-analysis of systemic consultation suggests that such opportunities have a direct positive impact on the mental health and well-being of the child at the centre of the discussion. The development of the wider system has been associated with an increased ability to provide psychological input to the child (Sheridan & Gutkin, 2000); perhaps the introduction of hope and shift away from a permanent deficit narrative – such as attachment styles (Bowlby, 1973) supports school staff to experience less anxiety (Tizard, 2009) about their ability to support a child through difficulty.

While systemic development through consultation is generally seen as positive for supporting children and young people (CYP), the role of primary caregivers has been underemphasised. Gibbs and Miller (2014) highlighted the potential of empowering parents through temporary systems but noted that systems outside of school are not temporary for CYP. McGuigan (2021) raised concerns that focusing on educational settings may disempower families, as EPs are typically engaged through educators' needs. Newland (2014) emphasised the importance of recognising family systems in CYP development across various settings.

Research into EP consultation for CLA (Osborne & Alforno, 2011) found that adults in a parental role (adoptive or fostering) valued pre-consultation information about the process and reported attendance at school as a critical factor contributing to a positive experience. However, little literature explores consultation to support CLA beyond the experiential explorations of Osborne and Alforno (2011) and Carmichael (2021).

2.9 Rationale for current investigation: Exploring innovative frameworks

The literature review suggests that interventions to support CLA's mental health and well-being are prioritised across multiple sectors. EPs are ideally placed as multi-skilled practitioners to support this process. EPs' supportive role through the implementation of consultation has resulted in a slow but positive shift in the wider systems' expectations of EP involvement. Consultation is valued as an intervention for the wider system, which then influences a ripple effect down to positive outcomes for CLA. Despite this, an investigation into what is happening in systemic group consultations for CLA was not found during the literature review process.

Furthermore, publications about specific consultation frameworks for CLA are equally challenging to locate. NICE guidance calls for evidence-based interventions; this paper seeks to curate the start of an evidence base for the Hull Attachment Resilience and Trauma Consultation framework for CLA.

Methodology

3.1 Overview

In this chapter, I will first consider the position I have taken within my research, specifically addressing how I align with the epistemological and ontological position as a researcher and the role this plays within the research context. I will explain the role positionality has played in my decision-making. I am often innovative in my practice beyond research; rarely does a single tool meet all criteria. My research has taken a similar route. My thesis presents a multi-methodological approach using ideas from interpretative phenomenological analysis, reflexive thematic analysis and discourse analysis. This chapter will explain my methodological decisions, outlining my research design and procedure. My research is an exploratory case study; as an insider researcher, I was driven by my passion for distributing power while balancing the application of a lens that deduces interpretative meaning.

3.2 Philosophical considerations

3.2.1 Value base

Given the interpretative manner of the research, the role of values, referred to as axiology, is essential to acknowledge. My value base has undoubtedly influenced the choice of my research topic, the process, analysis, and how the findings are reported.

"No person is a vacuum, going into a research situation with no cognitive models, views of the world, or a mediation of the meanings by the use of language. We all have schemata and frameworks to model the world around us." (Jenner, 2004, p. 97)

I value transparency; therefore, refraining from reflective discussion can contribute further to societal power imbalances. Before becoming a Trainee Educational Psychologist, I worked for three years as an Assistant Educational Psychologist within the same service I have been in placement throughout my training. Therefore, my vested interest in my chosen area has developed over numerous years. Before practising within educational psychology, I was working towards a career in clinical psychology, working with young adults who would share how their childhoods and support systems were fraught with adversity and confusion – rarely did they feel understood, and rarely did they feel able to consider the systemic nature of their stories. Moving to work within educational psychology was a good fit for me

personally and professionally. I believe working to develop a shared understanding of complex situations can lessen the load and foster the re-distribution of power and responsibility. This is one of the reasons I am passionate about developing systemic practices such as consultation and why my research design sought to include participants within the analysis process.

I feel strongly about the role of educational psychologists within multi-professional settings, and cautious of furthering a narrative of EPs as experts, I sought to consider how I could analyse through interpretation without contradicting my values—one of many challenges in the research process. Similarly, participatory research is not typical within the real-world application of multi-professional consultation. Therefore, it was essential to be mindful of my presence's impact on the system. It is therefore acknowledged that not only will my ontological and axiological position impact the research, but also that my presence and the discourse I offer will interact and influence, to varying degrees, with all the other elements of the research. The nature of the research makes it impossible to remain at an 'arm's length' (Rousseau & Fried, 2001); instead, I am within the research.

My relationship with the service and previous direct experience facilitating HART consultations mean I am an insider researcher observing my colleagues; therefore, I share some of the roles and experiences with the participants (Asselin, 2003). My presence throughout the HART process meant I played "a direct and intimate role in both data collection and analysis" (Corbin-Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, p.2). Whilst being an insider may add a layer of complexity, such as role confusion (Asselin, 2003), the nature of discussions in HART consultations may contribute to accessibility issues if an outsider undertakes the research. In a later chapter, I will address how I sought to overcome some of the challenges associated with insider researchers' identification with participants, as the risk of empathising with the participants could have contributed to their voices being silenced through an assumption of understanding, or a possible 'over-empathy' by becoming emotionally invested in the story (Watson, 2009; Watson et al., 1991) of the HART.

3.2.2 Positionality

Positionality is how a person describes their worldview and positions themselves in the social context in which research occurs (Rowe, 2014). Like many qualitative researchers, I acknowledge that each individual's relationship with the world is

unique and subjective. Like Holmes (2020), I agree that it is not possible to separate my views to claim objectivity.

A subjective lens is present throughout the discussion in HART consultations, which is acknowledged within the introduction; everyone can share their views and perspectives. Subjectivity is central to my practice within the real-world application of educational psychology and my relationship to research. The research is concerned with exploring what is happening in a HART consultation. As a critical researcher, I take the stance that the concepts such as emotions, behaviours and internal working models that are discussed alongside the stories told within HART consultations are socially constructed. "Universal or true definitions of concepts do not exist because these definitions depend on who does the defining" (Maddux, et al., 2019, p. 12). Therefore, I will not be defining such constructs within this paper.

My passion for facilitating co-constructive discussions, explicitly considering the cultural, historical and social experiences, suggests that I am inherently social constructionist within my position. While Holmes (2020) suggests positionality is not fixed, I felt I aligned with Gergen's (1985) principles. Within the curation of the research design, my positionality remained firm; I felt that taking a different position to ask a similar research question would be inauthentic.

3.2.3 Social Constructionism

The post-modern movement saw a shift away from research seeking to determine a single universal reality (Burr, 2015). Instead, the introduction of social constructionism began examining the *"ways in which people understand the world, the social and political processes that influence how people define words and explain events, and the implications of these definitions and explanations – who benefits and who loses because of how we describe and understand the world"* (Gergen, 1985, p.3-4).

Therefore, the conceptualisation of a child's behaviour and interactions with others, for example describing a child as 'dysregulated', *"are products of particular historical and cultural understandings rather than... universal and immutable categories of human experience"* (Bohan, 1996, p. xvi.). A single true definition of subjective human experiences cannot exist as it depends on the narrative's author, which is shaped by their experiences and so forth. Therefore, in the context of HART consultations, adults seek to explore what has happened in a child's life and formulate the possible implications such experience has on the child's developing

sense of themselves, others and the world. The meaning attributed to the child's presentation by others, both at school and in the community with carers, is socially constructed by a system of adults. It does not claim to be 'the truth' but instead shapes a working hypothesis which may promote empathetic practice and drive avenues of support that may otherwise not be considered.

Gergen (1985) outlines four key assumptions to clarify what constitutes a social constructionist approach. Gergen proposes that a social constructionist relates to at least one of the four assumptions (see Table 2.)

Table 2. Gergen's (1985) assumptions of social constructionism and my reflections on how they relate to the research.

Gergen's (1985) assumptions of social constructionism	My reflections
A critical perspective on the taken-for-granted world	I began this research from a critical stance, focusing on what happens in a HART consultation. I set out to explore HARTs in a holistic sense and used research methods that apply different approaches to the same question. Setting aside taken-for-granted knowledge (Gergen, 1985), such as the framework and mandatory attendees, I sought to explore the meanings derived within the process.
Knowledge is set in a cultural and historical context.	Knowledge of educational psychology consultation has been constructed more widely through pre-existing narratives around consultation. I acknowledge the debates about the role of the EP and the intention to distribute power within group consultations. While I am not directly researching the role of EPs within HART consultations, I will interpret the experience through the lens of knowing that EPs have increasingly less direct time with schools. So, the 'powerful expert' and 'problematization of children to access EP time' are important contextual considerations. My knowledge about the cultural relationship between schools, social care and educational psychology will be essential when I attempt to understand their experience.
Social processes construct and sustain knowledge.	Discussions about children construct a knowledge of the child and the meaning associated with elements of the child's story.
Knowledge and social action go together.	There are infinite social constructions, each suited to a unique social action. Within HART consultations, deciding on future actions to support the child is only possible by exploring and deducing shared understandings of the child.

As a researcher, I cannot claim to be entirely separate from HART consultations. Therefore, it was important for me to employ a social constructionist lens in order to remain congruent. The meaning derived from the research experience and data is co-constructed through language, relational process and reflexivity (Willig, 2013). I can only complete exploratory research into HART consultations in a HART consultation. However, I cannot claim to theorise what is happening in HART

consultations more widely at this early stage of research into the field. I can only interpret what is happening in a HART consultation, what meaning is being socially constructed within the discussion about the child, and what meaning I interpret and align with the process. I am not attempting to uncover knowledge, but instead share my evolving constructions of reality. The evolutionary element of my interactions with the data and the resulting interpretations mean I could not define the minutiae of process for phase 2 until I had completed phase 1; this aligns with my values of transparency and reflexivity.

3.2.4 Phenomenology

The science of appearances was coined as 'phenomenology' in the 18th Century by J. H. Lambert, a German mathematician. Until then, knowledge had only been considered objectively, so a critical stance on the role of experience was atypical. Phenomenology placed experience at the heart of research. By the late 19th Century, Husserl theorised that all phenomena are only experienced through 'beings' and, therefore, only exist through those who experience them; it is impossible to separate the person from the experience (Husserl, 1964).

Husserl's exploration of the foundations of knowledge assumed that people had a conscious awareness of experiences that afforded them structure. It is conscious awareness of experience that was of interest to Husserl, not the reality of the experience (Willig, 2013). Husserl suggested that too often, experiences are mapped onto pre-existing categories of experience, and instead, Husserl was concerned with attending to '*things as they are*' (Smith et al., 2022). To adopt a phenomenological attitude, Husserl suggests we must consider how we perceive the world, moving towards a more significant consideration of experience rather than remaining consumed by assumptions (Smith et al., 2022). To facilitate this, Husserl stated that a process of 'reductions' must occur to 'bracket off' the world; he argued that this supports one to reach the essence of the phenomenon being explored (Finlay, 2008). Intentionality is the term Husserl used to describe how, to *be* conscious, means to be conscious *of* something (Langdridge, 2007).

Heidegger critiqued and developed Husserl's phenomenology, stating that people cannot be detached from the social world. Instead, we must acknowledge that our experience exists within social, cultural and historical contexts (Langdridge, 2007). Heidegger suggested that knowledge is grounded within and socially constructed in

the lived world (Smith et al., 2022); he referred to this as 'being in the world' (Spinelli, 1989, p.108). Heidegger described how people communicate, relate and make sense of one another through 'intersubjectivity' (Larkin et al., 2011).

Merleau-Ponty built further upon Heidegger's philosophy and suggested that 'being-in-the-world' (Spinelli, 1989, p. 108) is *our body* encapsulating the knowledge we develop and the experiences of existing in the world, not the transcendental ego (Larkin et al., 2011). Therefore, despite sharing a similar experience with another, one can never claim to know another person's experience in its entirety (Smith et al., 2022).

Sarte was interested in consciousness and believed it to be a continuously evolving process shaped through experience (Smith et al., 2022). Sarte suggested that people constantly make sense of the world as they experience it. Therefore, there is no beginning or end to conscious experience as it is shaped through interactions (Langdridge, 2007).

The emphasis on lived experience is critical across phenomenological approaches and how people perceive the experience is more important than what is already known about the experience. The language used to describe the phenomena plays an important role; language is necessary to describe phenomena. Phenomenology's emphasis on lived experience and subjective interpretation also aligns closely with the qualitative approach of thematic analysis. Thematic analysis, particularly reflexive thematic analysis, benefits from phenomenological principles by focusing on the meanings and experiences of participants. This approach allows researchers to identify and analyse themes that emerge from the data, grounded in the participants' lived experiences and the context in which they occur (Braun & Clarke, 2019)."

3.2.5 Foucault and Phenomenology

Like Merleau-Ponty, Foucault reconsidered Heidegger's phenomenology. Dreyfus and Rabinow (2014) present an interpretation of Foucault's work about phenomenology and hermeneutics. Initially suggesting that Foucault's early work indicated structuralist thinking, therefore applying a scientific lens to humans to locate and describe basic elements. However, Dreyfus and Rabinow (2014) worked alongside Foucault. They learnt that although he never defined himself as a structuralist, he was inclined to appreciate the vocabulary within structuralism and, at

times, believed that structuralism was "the most advanced position" (p. xi) to be in as a scientist researcher. Foucault also revealed that he had considered publishing a text entitled 'Beyond Hermeneutics' and later shared some of this unpublished text. However, he stated that his conceptualisation of power within this remains fluid.

In Foucault's (1973) 'The Order of Things' he shared his conceptualisation of knowledge, acknowledging the role of interpretation and the associated complexity of meaning being manifested at both a superficial and a deeper level. Foucault suggested that interpretation "dooms us to an endless task" (Foucault, 1973, p. 373). Foucault did not propose a theory, but instead, the intersectionality between discursive practices associated with Foucault's work and phenomenology has been termed 'critical hermeneutic approaches' (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 2014; Demetrio, 2011).

The role of power within texts has been contemplated by many; for example, the power of the unconscious is often attributed to Freud, Nietzsche is credited with contemplating cultural powers, and Marx with class systems and capitalism (Demetrio, 2011). As illustrated in the summary of social constructionism and hermeneutic phenomenology, it is difficult to contemplate a lived world where such powers play no role within a text; in the sphere of research, the text is often transcribed. According to the argument above, the role of power within the wider context surrounding the HART is unavoidable; therefore, engaging in interpretation without acknowledgement of the distributions of power and how these are inextricably linked to language used by participants would feel like a disservice to the process and the research question.

3.3 Methodological considerations

3.3.1 *Epistemological Reflexivity*

In this research's initial conceptualisation, I was driven by my previous enquiry into HART consultations. On reflection, whilst the previous research project had ethical rigour, I had made bold claims based on the single but recurring suggestion of "lightbulb moments" (Carmichael, 2021). My motivation to continue my research had metaphorically hoodwinked me despite feeling grounded in my social constructionist position. In contradiction to this, I was positively suggesting that the phenomena of a lightbulb moment must exist. The question of what lightbulb moments are was not

only contradictory to my positionality but was also too big, too vague and loaded with the assumption that all participants who experience HART consultations also experience the same type of moment. Even if this were true, the likelihood of each participant's experience sharing objectively definable characteristics was highly uncertain.

I sought supervision with research mentors and colleagues who utilise HART consultations within their practice; this long and, at times, challenging journey led me to reconsider what I wanted to explore and how to summarise that within a purposive research question. Considering my epistemological reflexivity (Piekiewicz & Smith, 2012), could I shift my positionality to navigate a problem? This would be incongruent not only with the research topic but also with my values.

Having defined my research question, I began exploring a range of qualitative methodologies, each with comprehensive frameworks that set out theoretical underpinnings and research design guidelines. However, it became clear that whilst the guidance of predefined methodologies could be helpful, individually, they all fell short of providing the depth I sought. Within supervision, I questioned each approach, considering how many HARTs would be required for data saturation and how the data would relate. I concluded that the research question would benefit from 'methodological eclecticism' (Nolen, 2020).

3.3.2 *Multi-methodological research*

The literature suggests a varied opinion not only on the terminology used, such as mixed-methods, multiple-methods and multi-methods designs (Morse, 2020) but also on whether the terminology is interchangeable. For example, Morse and Niehaus (2009) suggest that "*Mixed method design consists of a complete method (i.e., the core component), plus one (or more) incomplete method(s) (i.e., the supplementary component[s]) that cannot be published alone, within a single study.*" (p.9). This description of a QUAL-qual mixed method supports exploratory research questions. Within the literature, many papers utilise multi-methods descriptors (Nolen, 2020) through mixed data collection methods (O'Reilly & Kiyimba, 2020); they are not multi-methodological.

Whilst the present research is not multi-methods, in the sense of multiple data collection points with differing analytic methodologies, the underpinning drive within

decision-making remains the same as it “*developed out of a more open approach to research which focuses on finding the best tool for the job, rather than beginning from a fixed position*” (Shaw & Hiles, 2017, p.238). Shaw and Frost’s (2015) paper critiquing silo mentality within research likened the multidimensional experience of humans to the need for pluralism within research methodologies. Earlier in this chapter, the appeal of methodologies described in detail with links to their theoretical basis and practical guides was acknowledged. However, Chamberlain (2000) discussed how qualitative research may be at risk of ‘methodolatry’ if mixed qual-qual approaches seek to be defined within such concrete terms.

Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA; Smith, 1996) is one of the practical applications that commits itself to phenomenology and hermeneutics as a key characteristic. Whereas reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022, 2006), whilst still phenomenological, can be more flexible in its interrogation of a phenomena... in this case a HART consultation. When scoping analytic approaches much of the literature was siloed referencing a single approach. I sought to explore literature that encompassed multiple approaches within a single study, accepting that seeking a perfect fit could lead me on a “hallowed method quest” (Braun & Clarke, 2020, p.1). Whilst an essential step in developing the foundations and integrity of my methodological approach, the contradictions of theoretically founded and atheoretic approaches prompted a high degree of uncertainty. Perhaps it would be simpler and more easily understood if I adopt a single off the shelf approach, but this contradicted everything else I had worked through in my process thus far. Complicated further by the argument that outputs across a range of methodologies including reflexive thematic analysis, IPA and discourse analysis could share a high degree of similarity (Braun and Clarke, 2013) I explored three methodologies.

3.3.3 *Reflexive thematic analysis*

Thematic analysis is described by Fugard and Potts (2020) as a family of methods, with similarities and differences in the value base, conceptualisation and procedures. Three types of thematic analysis are suggested by Braun et al. (2019); early theme development within coding reliability approaches, this utilises a research team and multiple coders; reflexive approaches that have delayed theme development and explicitly highlighting the researcher’s interactivity with the data set; and thirdly a combination of the above.

Reflexive thematic analysis, developed by Braun and Clark (2006, 2022), is a qualitative method that emphasises the active role of the researcher in the process of identifying, analysing and reporting patterns otherwise termed 'themes'. RTA is characterised by a flexibility and reflexivity which enables researchers to engage with data whilst also acknowledging their own influence within. As discussed in sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2, I feel this element of interactivity and transparency is essential in any research that I undertake.

3.3.4 *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*

Interpretative phenomenological analysis, a methodological application of phenomenology, was the work of Jonathan Smith (Smith, 1996), who sought to operationalise philosophical theory alongside psychological research that was both experimental and experiential. Later, Smith (1997) articulated the researcher's process of deducing meaning from the participants, who are making their meaning—he termed this a 'double hermeneutic'. This explicitly brings the interpretive dyad between researcher and research that utilises IPA.

When performing IPA, one must carefully navigate between several levels of interpretation while delving deeply into texts that represent participants' individual experiences (Smith, 2004). It is also possible to invoke the double hermeneutic, which proposes that two interpretive engagements give rise to different interpretative layers (Ricoeur, 1970). “*The work of thought, which exists in deciphering the hidden meaning in the apparent meaning, in unfolding the levels of meaning implied in the literal meaning*” (Ricoeur, 1974, cited in Kearney, 1994p 101) is how Ricoeur described interpretation. Between taking an empathetic stance and imagining what it is like to be the participant and being critical of what is occurring and probing for meaning in ways that participants might be unwilling or unable to do themselves, hermeneutic approaches are used by IPA to encourage researchers to adopt a both/and approach. The former seeks to stay close to the participant's sense-making process while producing a rich understanding. To create a nuanced, complex narrative with multiple alternative interpretations, the researcher must set aside prior assumptions. However, the participants are always the starting point within IPA. IPA requires a prolonged absorption of the transcript, pushing for increasingly detailed interpretations while simultaneously trying to maintain an interpretative hierarchy (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014).

3.3.5 *Reflexive Thematic analysis vs IPA: which one if either?*

In my initial exploration of methodological approaches, I quickly felt IPA would support my research question; asking what is '*happening*' in a HART consultation led me to become tunnel visioned in the experiential elements of a HART, and so I was determined that I could only interpret the 'happenings' through an IPA lens for phase 1. This is despite reading about silo mentality and hallow method quests; in reflection as a novice researcher the simplicity was appealing and so I hadn't considered alternatives much beyond this. As I began to explore the 'how to' process of IPA (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2022) there were elements that were not aligned with my axiology and research aims; for example the process of identifying personal experiential themes felt inappropriate in my investigation into a group process. My research question did not seek to consider what is happening for an EP, a teacher, or other consultee within a HART; therefore separating their contributions did not seem the correct fit.

IPA has a dual analytic focus as it combines a thematic orientation, by identifying themes across participants, with an idiographic approach which focuses on the details of each individual case. Furthermore, a detailed analysis of each individual is suggested in IPA prior to developing themes across the group in the process of exploring personal experiential themes and then group experiential themes. Comparatively, reflexive thematic analysis develops themes across all participants from codes *only after* analysing the data set in its entirety. The themes are less rooted in individual cases but more so across the larger group – this aligned with the group process as a whole and efforts to distribute power amongst the participants rather than singling each in turn. Despite this, I wanted my methodology to remain grounded in phenomenology.

In an attempt to seek clarity I completed a side-by-side comparison of IPA and RTA (see table 3.), highlighting each of the steps that aligned the most with my research. The process of comparison suggested that I should complete neither true IPA nor true RTA and instead eclectically borrow ideas from both to complete a process that I have termed The Carmichael method – IPA inspired Thematic Analysis.

Table 3. A comparison of process across RTA and IPA

Reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022)	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith et al., 2022)
Step 1 Familiarisation and immersion through reading and re-reading whilst making notes and observations of the data.	Step 1 Reading and re-reading at a deep level
	Step 2 Exploratory noting: Smith et al.'s (2022) guide for how to write exploratory notes, suggests one approach that includes making notes that are descriptively focused on making sense of the surface-level transcript, linguistically focused on gaining insight into how participants use language to aid their sense-making, and conceptual notes that have a great focus on conceptual exploration
Step 2 Coding, a process of label generation that captures the important features relevant to the research question	Step 3 Smith et al. (2022) describe step three as a "task of managing data... as the analyst simultaneously attempts to reduce the volume of detail... whilst maintaining complexity" (p. 86).
Step 3 Theme generation by examining the codes and identifying patterns across the data	Step 4 Locating connections and naming experiential themes. Smith et al. (2022) describe a process of naming personal experiential themes (PETs) as the highest order of groupings, themes that relate to an individual account before considering interconnectivity and cross-over of PETs to define Group Experiential Themes (THEMEs)
Step 4 A critical phase where themes are checked against codes, examining whether the narrative is convincing. During this process codes are refined, divided and discarded.	Step 5 Search for connections across emergent PETs
Step 5 Defining and naming themes, alongside a detailed analysis of each theme	Step 6 Repeat step 4 & 5 for each individual participant
Step 6 Write up the themes joining them up into one narrative, making it explicit what the researchers influence has been in response to each.	Step 7 Look for patterns across PETs and identify patterns termed Group Experiential Themes (THEMEs) whilst still acknowledging the uniqueness of each experience.
	Step 8 Write up the findings in a coherent narrative integrating quotes from participants.

3.3.6 *Discourse Analysis*

Discourse analysis is an umbrella term which covers a range of ideas and approaches. The underlying assumption of all discourse analysis is that all language is productive. I interpret this to mean that all language socially constructs versions of 'reality'.

Discourse analysis rejects the idea that language can be unambiguous; it is not possible for discourse to simply label without constructing meaning (Willig, 2013). Whilst discursive approaches may be interpreted as a critique rather than a methodology, there are two popularly cited methodologies that sit beneath the umbrella of discourse analysis. Discursive psychology (DP) considers how everyday language is performed to construct meaning, reality, responsibility, and identity (Wiggins & Potter, 2008). The second methodology, Foucauldian discourse analysis (FDA), focuses on discursive resources available within a culture, how the resources lead to the construction of positions that are classified as subjects and objects, and how the aforementioned constructions present a version of reality (Harre & Van Langenhove, 1999). However, whilst the approaches are considered independent of one another by some (Burr, 2003; Langridge, 2007), Potter and Wetherell (1994) instead argue that the line between DP and FDA should be more blurred. Furthermore, Wetherell (1998) and Willig (2013) support the union of DP and FDA alongside one another as both focus on the involvement of descriptions and categories (Stainton-Rogers & Willig, 2017). Adopting a 'twin focus' will support me to develop an interpretation that considers both the positioned and evolving nature of discursive constructions and the larger social and institutional contexts (of meaning, practices, and social relations) within the HART they are constructed within.

DP was first used by Potter and Wetherell (1987), but not named as such until 1992 by Edwards and Potter. Influenced by conversational analysis (Woofitt, 2005), DP retains its link with psychology due to the focus on phenomena, similar to IPA. However, it conceptualises language as a 'discursive action' rather than a vehicle to talk about something that is already constructed. Therefore, the focus of DP is 'how' discourses are constructed; within the presented research DP considers the action orientation of talk within HART consultations.

FDA was developed by a group of researchers in the 1970s who, inspired by the work of Michel Foucault, based an approach on exploring the relationship between

subjectivity and language (Willig, 2013). Parker (1992) writes about the facilitative yet limiting, constraining, and enabling power that discourses can have concerning who can say what, to whom, and where. Within FDA, there is an emphasis on the culturally available discourses and how they influence those within; Willig (2013) describes this as a “discursive economy” (p.130).

“Discourse cannot be analysed only in the present, because the power components and the historical components create such a tangled knot of shifting meanings, definitions and interested parties over periods of time”. Powers (2007, p. 26)

Dominant discourses affirm and legitimize current institutional and social structures, which in turn receive additional support and validation from them. 3.3.7 Case Study Methodology

The phenomena of HART consultations and what occurs within has not yet been documented within research-based literature. Therefore, seeking to address a research question that is highly specific and reliant on large pools of data is not yet possible. There is insufficient rationale, beyond personal interest, to limit the research to a definable area of HART consultations (plural). Instead, exploring a single case in detail provides a vehicle for exploration at greater depth. Yin (1994) argues that case studies are suitable where the topic is revelatory and, therefore, has not been accessed before. To my knowledge there are no published articles citing HART consultations at the time of writing.

Willig (2013) writes about a “resurgence of interest in the case study” (p.108) in order to facilitate a deeper understanding of unconscious motivations, thus providing an explanation in addition to the description. This rationale for instrumental case study methodology is congruent with the research question, as a descriptive account of the framework is readily available and shared with attendees prior to the consultation (see Appendix 2). Therefore, what is happening in HART consultations may be less conscious than the process guidance.

Selection of the case was not limited to characteristics any more specific than a HART consultation within the host local authority. The research question is ideographic and concerned with the particular; therefore, the object of study needs to be boundaried. The boundary of the case study in this research is a single consultation.

Ideography is one of the Flick's (2009) defining features of case study research. In addition to this, case studies should adopt a wide lens in order to situate the case within the ecological context. Within the context of research into a HART consultation, it is not possible to consider what is happening within, without acknowledging the pre-existing relationships amongst the group, the pressures to be multi-skilled as an educator, and the access to support from educational psychologists. Within chapter one the context of trading across the eco-system is highlighted. Flick (2009) suggests triangulation is imperative for a single case study design, in order to "arrive at a better understanding of what is going on" (Willig, 2013, p.108). Flick (2009) adopts a realist ontological position, suggesting there are objective truths about the world that can be studied. Therefore, Flick's argument for triangulation is congruent with their positioning. However, the current research is being explored from a social constructionist position; therefore, gathering multiple sources of data on the same case would provide no greater clarity than utilising a single mode of data collection at greater depth. Within my research design I had contemplated facilitating a focus group as a secondary point of data collection, however, framing the interpretation feedback session as a focus group would require me to provide a starting point and direction; thus contradicting the aim to redistribute the interpretative power – allow the participants to interact with what was of interest to them.

Taking an interactive approach to case studies was considered an opportunity for therapeutic gain by (Smith, 1993), as creating space for self-reflection on-action offers an opportunity for introspection. This case study design employs an interactive approach, similar to that taken by Smith (1995a), by working alongside participants to discuss the meanings deduced which in turn guides the next stage of data analysis – discourse analysis. However, typically discourse analyst do not identify with case study methodology. The presented research is novel and eclectic, the methodology is driven by the research questions rather than published how to guides.

3.4 Ethical considerations

3.4.1 Overview

During conceptualisation, I referred to the Health and Care Professions Council's guidance on conduct and ethics for students (HCPC, 2023), the British Psychological Society's 'Code of Human Research Ethics (2021a) and 'The Code of Ethics and

Conduct' (2021b). Ethical approval for the research was given (see Appendix 3) through The University of Sheffield's ethics procedure (see Appendix 4). In addition to this, additional ethical approval was granted through the information governance team within the host local authority for the research (see Appendix 5).

3.4.2 Participation in the interpretative process

Participation in HART research has the potential to involve an element of self-reflection; particularly the phase 1 feedback discussion whereby my interpretation of the transcript and themes were shared. This may have invoked self-reflection in the participants that may not have otherwise occurred (Willig, 2013). Smith (1993) framed the self-reflection that may occur within participant interpretation as potentially therapeutic. However, this may not be desirable by all as the introspective experience may present self-awareness which may not have previously been considered. Furthermore, participants could interpret the themes in a manner that suggests contradictions in their actions or narratives; this could prompt regret or resentment for participating.

The potential benefits of participants' involvement with interpretation include 'respondent validation', whereby the participants elaborate, comment, validate or challenge the suggested interpretation (Silverman, 1993 p. 153). However, my status as a researcher psychologist may have led the participants to perceive me as an expert. Therefore, the feedback process risked being viewed as information sharing rather than interactive evaluation and challenge (Willig, 2013). The interactive phase could miss its purpose. Nevertheless, even if participants shared comments of agreement and validation, I could never be sure whether it is more representative of acquiescence (Willig, 2013).

3.5 Participants

Ethical approval from both the university and local authority-based ethics boards was obtained prior to the recruitment of the participants, all of whom would be attendees at one HART consultation for one child. The criteria for involvement were that participants must already have been eligible to and have confirmed their attendance at a HART consultation and that all attendees of the HART consultation gave independent consent to participate prior to the HART consultation occurring. The Educational Psychology Service sets out the eligibility for attendance at a HART consultation. To ensure the process can be facilitated, it is mandatory for the child's

social worker and at least one member of school staff to attend a HART consultation. The child is not present for their HART consultation for various ethical reasons. The nature of discussion during the timeline is sensitive, and children may not know some of the intricate details, such as events before their birth or factors influencing placement moves. Non-mandatory attendees typically include the class teachers, virtual school education coordinators, foster carers or residential care staff, the fostering social worker and other currently involved professionals such as colleagues from clinical psychology and support workers from therapeutic services.

3.6 Recruitment procedure

The Educational Psychology Service within the host Local Authority have a service level agreement with the virtual school; all HART consultations are agreed upon at bi-weekly allocation meetings attended by the virtual school deputy head and the lead for work with children who are looked after within the EPS. Once ethical approval had been granted by the University and the Local Authority, the invited attendees for the next scheduled HART consultation were distributed an information sheet (see Appendix 6) via email (see Appendix 7). Only when all attendees of a HART provided consent (see Appendix 8) to participate was recruitment complete. I was fortunate that the first set of HART attendees all provided consent, thus resulting in a short recruitment process.

3.7 Data collection

Whilst the core component of the research takes inspiration from RTA and IPA much of the literature that suggests 'how to' do IPA relates to the collection of data through interviews and focus groups. I felt passionately that utilising a naturalistic data set would be of greater value and insight than constricting the potential yield of insights to responses to predefined questions; this process aligns more easily with the guidance for RTA. Whereas discourse analysis is more frequently aligned with naturally occurring data (Wiggins, 2005; Potter & Hepburn, 2005) as typically questions asked within DA are concerned with accountability and stakes are managed within the real world (Willig, 2013). Furthermore, Wiggins and Potter argue that abandoning interviews is a worthy progression towards the exploration of "more exciting places" (p.5). The utility of collecting data from environments that already occur is associated with less separation of people from their practices, thus resulting in direct relatability instead of retrospectively seeking to apply findings to the practice

of enquiry. Furthermore, by capturing ‘life as it happens’, there is an opportunity to analyse what may otherwise be considered mundane.

3.7.1 Observation

Højholt and Koushult (2014) describe the dilemma often faced by EP’s, in real-world practice and research, whereby information about a child (or an experience) is presented by an individual. However, the ability to develop a rich understanding of the situation is limited by a lack of contextual knowledge about the concern.

“It is difficult to understand an action if we do not have access to knowledge about what the specific action was a response to, or what the person’s intention was in relation to this particular practice and the other participants”

(Højholt and Koushult, 2014, p.317)

I utilised participant observation within a naturalistic setting as the sole data collection method. According to Flick (1998) there are definable features that are descriptive of the approach to observation within research. In this research, the observation was overt; therefore, all participants consented to the observation before the consultation. The observation was conducted in a natural setting; the HART consultation was scheduled to occur regardless of whether the research observation occurred. In order to maintain an event as close to an unobserved HART consultation as possible, I did not participate in the consultation beyond the round of introductions. Nevertheless, in order to facilitate the research, I was required to maintain a balance of being present enough to understand what was happening (in the literal sense) without becoming too involved in order to remain a researcher rather than EP, which would enable me to further investigate the phenomena.

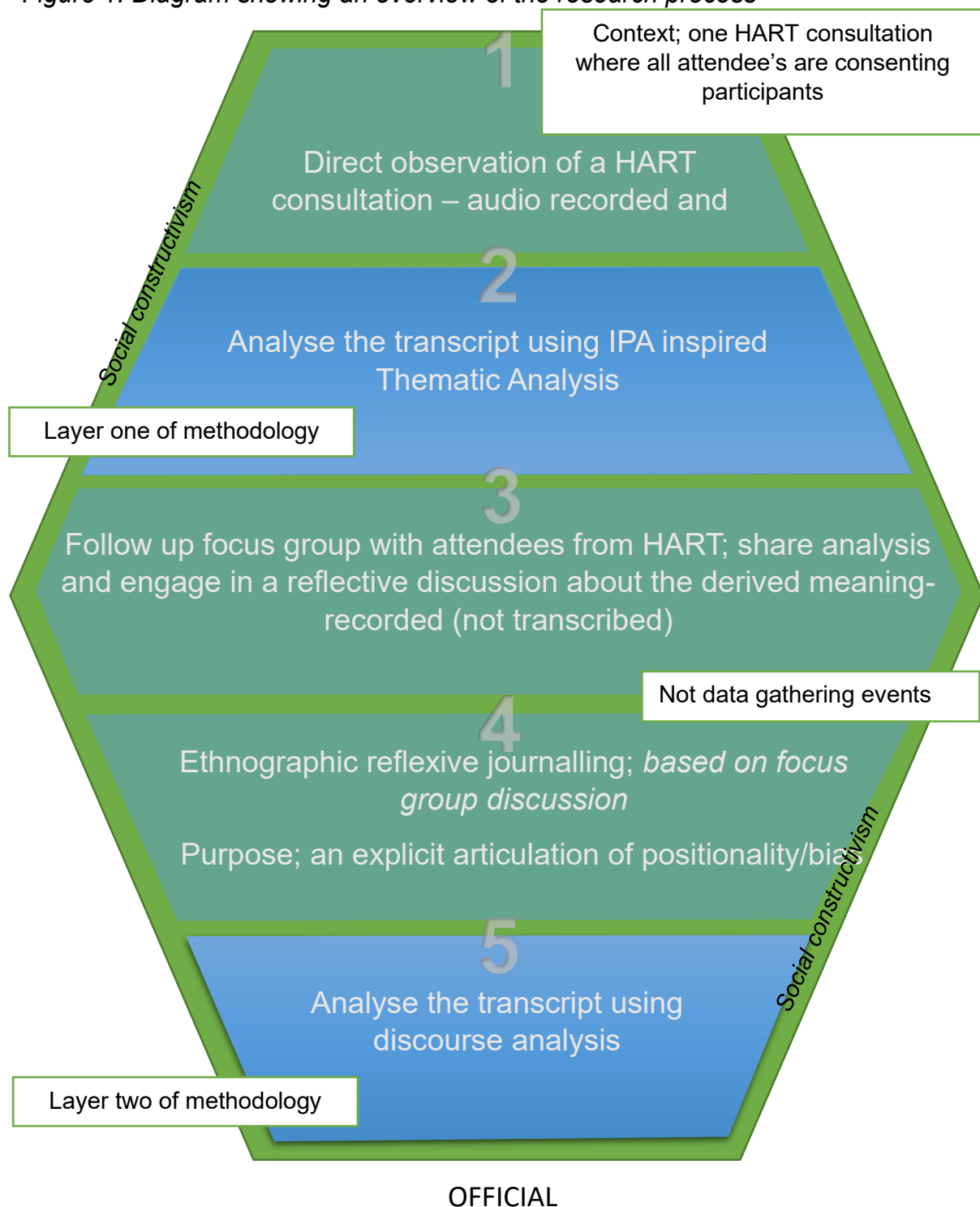
3.7.2 Transcription

I observed the HART consultation but did not take process notes, as my data set would be comprised of a transcript of the discussion. I recorded the audio using a portable recording device. I manually transcribed the two hours of recorded audio, familiarizing myself with the discussion. During the transcription process, I considered the practical issues suggested by Mischeler (1991) and included line numbers and a single time marker to signify that the timeline discussion had been completed.

Within the information sheet, it stated, “*Given the participatory nature of this research, you will be involved in discussions with myself and other co-researchers, and we will agree on how we can maintain the confidentiality of participants and the families we work with. This may include not disclosing the location of the EPS but rather describing it as a 'psychological service' located in the UK*”. Participants were given access to the full transcript draft and allowed to amend details such as their speaker names; of the participants who engaged in confidentiality checks and discussion, none requested their name to change.

3.8 Analysis

Figure 1. Diagram showing an overview of the research process



3.8.1 *The Carmichael method – IPA inspired Thematic analysis*

As discussed in section 3.3.5 a novel approach to analysis was undertaken as part of phase one of the analytic process. Inspired by IPA and RTA, I began the process of reading and re-reading the transcripts; a process defined as step one in both approaches. Following Smith et al's (2022) guide I made exploratory notes, initially following their guidance, highlighting and commenting on descriptive, linguistic and conceptual elements within the transcript. I identified some challenges in this approach, noting that my exploratory notes were often descriptive with some conceptual queries. After a few pages of notetaking I abandoned Smith et al's guidance and instead made notes and observations more aligned with Braun and Clarks reflexive thematic analysis. Having completed the first phase of notetaking Smith et al (2022) suggest formulating experiential statements as a means to manage the data but maintain complexity... my process aligned more so with Braun and Clarks (2022) coding phase whereby I assigned labels to capture features of relevance to the research question (see appendix 10). I then embarked upon theme generation by examining the codes and identifying patterns; this was in place of Smith et al's naming of personal experiential themes.

Smith et al. (2022) suggest that personal experiential themes are constructed first; this process is typically used in conjunction with research that uses multiple individual interviews to answer an overarching research question. However, the current research employed a single audio recording methodology, which differs from suggestions of employing IPA in group environments, which typically engage with a focus group approach to interviews. In such instances, personal experiential themes are still suggested as the researcher offers some structure to the group. In the present study, I did not interact with the participants beyond research formality procedures such as consent seeking.

I have not engaged in the identification of Personal Experiential Themes (PETs) (Smith et al., 2022) as the process does not relate to the research question "What is happening in a HART consultation?". Schmidt argued that "parts can only be understood from an understanding of the whole, but that the whole can only be understood from an understanding of the parts" (Schmidt, 2006, p. 4 cited in Willig, 2013). Therefore, to begin the analysis process by exploring individual accounts

within the transcript would have likely hoodwinked my ability to consider the overall sense of the group process.

Having coded and identified emerging themes a process of examination occurred in order to refine the themes, during this process some were merged, divided and discarded. I identified groups of themes and named these 'main themes' and within each there were sub-themes that give more meaning to the main theme. As part of my sense making process I developed maps for each theme (see appendix 13 – 26) as part of a more detailed analysis.

3.8.2 Participant collaboration

Whilst phase 1 of the analysis provided an overarching sense of the experience of a HART through my interpretation, ending the analytic process at that point seemed contradictory to the systemic element of multi-agency consultation. I did not feel I could interpret what happened in the HART consultation without sharing my interpretations thus far with the participants. As highlighted within section 3.4.2, participants were invited to engage in a feedback session.

3.8.3 Embedded reflexive process

Completing qualitative analysis requires a high level of familiarisation with the data set and then, again, familiarisation with the interpretations derived. I had spent a considerable amount of time comprehensively analysing the transcript using The Carmichael method. In many ways, I had immersed myself in the role of analyst; this immersion was vital in supporting phase 1 of the analytic process. However, in order to participate in a secondary phase of analysis I felt passionately that I needed to engage in reflexive supervision with others and create space for reflection within my writing (see Appendix 12).

3.8.4 Discursive Analysis

I felt strongly that the specific process for phase 2 analysis could not be determined until I had shared my primary analysis with the participants. I recognise that as a researcher I interact with and influence the interpretative process, but I wanted (as much as possible) to redistribute the power to my participants. In section 3.4.2 I addressed the potential limitations of active participation. Whilst I had rationale for a double analytic process, the specificity of which strand of discourse analysis to apply and then choosing an accompanying process guide remained undecided until the core analysis component was complete. The uncertainty that accompanied this

process was a frequent discussion point within research supervision (see appendix 27). I was excited by methodological eclecticism, but as a novice researcher, I worried that the research would become too big for a taught doctorate thesis. In addition to this, balancing new ideas and approaches with realistic expectations and achievable processes at times felt more daunting than exciting.

Upon completion of the first chapter, I embarked upon a reflexive process to guide my decision-making (see Appendix 12). Aware of the comprehensiveness that The Carmichael method had achieved, there were moments when I doubted my rationale; however, I later acknowledged this as a characteristic of stress and not a reflection on the research as a whole. I considered using only FDA or DP instead of employing a hybrid approach drawing up both strands (Wetherell, 1987; Willig, 2008). There were pros and cons of using either or both. Section 3.3.4 outlines the similarities and differences between discursive psychology and Foucauldian discourse analysis.

If I were to complete phase 2 of the analysis through an FDA lens, I may have excluded how language is used within the HART. FDA casts the net towards the wider context, considering discourses such as professional boundaries, expertise, and power differentials, all of which are influential and interesting. However, this strand of enquiry alone may not have sufficiently addressed the research question, though rejecting the FDA and only using DP would dismiss the wider context beyond the HART.

The discourse analysis chapter draws upon elements from both DP and FDA as a supplementary component. In contrast to Billig (1997), the process of phase 2 was characterised by a non-rules approach. Instead, I employed an eclectic interpretation of DA. Gee (2011) described their borrowing of discursive ingredients to make 'a new soup' (p.11). Similarly, Hepburn and Potter (2003) support 'anything goes' approaches to DA.

In my search for ideas to support my DA strategy, I considered FDA-focused practices such as Parker's (1992) seven criteria for distinguishing discourses and the accompanying 20-step process. However, given that I had already completed a comprehensive primary phase of analysis, many of the 20 steps would have to be disregarded; therefore, I could not claim to have followed their suggestion. Gee (2011) writes about their 'soup' of discourse analysis; first describing seven building

tasks that occur within written and spoken language, from the tasks Gee postulated accompanying questions:

1. "How is this piece of language being used to make certain things significant or not, and in what ways?" (p. 17)
2. "What practice[s] is this piece of language being used to enact (i.e., get others to recognize as going on)? (p.18)
3. "What identity[s] is this piece of language being used to enact? What identity[s] is this piece of language attributing to others, and how does this help the speaker or writer enact [their] own identity? (p.18)
4. "What sort of relationship[s] is this piece of language seeking to enact with others present or not?" (p.19)
5. "What perspective on social goods is this piece of language communicating?" (p. 19)
6. "How does this piece of language connect or disconnect things; how does it make one thing relevant or irrelevant to another?" (p.19)
7. "How does this piece of language privilege or dis-privilege specific sign systems or different ways of knowing and believing or claims to knowledge and belief?" (p.20)

Gee's seven questions resonated with my intentions towards DA. However, I embarked upon further reading to avoid settling on ideas due to research fatigue and time pressures. Wiggins and Potter's (2017) approach to DP draws upon a high level of additional transcription data to support conversation analysis; reflecting on their ideas led me to rule out DP as a main characteristic. Nevertheless, their summary of coding and non-formulaic development of insights inspired me, and so I re-emerged myself within my recording and transcript; with consideration of my reflexive journal and research aims, I set out to engage in the supplementary element- phase 2.

Analysis

4.1 Overview of analysis

As a novice researcher, doing something which does not yet have a 'how-to guide' is equally daunting as it is exciting. I did not embark on this research journey naively. Shaw and Hiles (2017) described the breadth of work and skill required in multi-methodological research and regarded it as the task of research teams. The mixed qual-qual design follows Morse and Niehaus' (2009) definition. The use of the Carmichael method, an IPA inspired thematic analysis, provides a comprehensive investigation into the phenomena of the HART in its entirety; this contributes the core component of the research and will interpret the immediate 'happenings' within the HART, likely addressing conscious elements. Meanwhile, the discourse analysis supplementary element of the mixed qual-qual design will consider the wider system in which the HART is taking place. Consideration of the influence of the wider systemic narratives, such as scarcity of professional resources and the power of EP's, may uncover the subconscious processes enacted within the language. Participants cannot leave their prior experiences at the door upon entry. Furthermore, the discourse analysis will undertake a light touch conversation analysis to support the argument.

Completing only the core thematic component risks limiting the interpretative experience to understandings that have already been constructed. Whilst the methodology has a big Q qual component paired with a smaller supplement, I should acknowledge that aside from my supervisor as a sounding board, I am an independent researcher. The presented methodology required significant reflexivity within the planning process and demanded immense hours. The supplementary element will embody many characteristics of DA; however, has not be performed on the transcript in its entirety.

I have presented the analysis across two chapters as the processes were independent of one another with a reflexive period separating the two; however the secondary phase of analysis should be regarded as introduction to the wider discussion chapter which draws upon discourses within and beyond the HART consultation.

The Carmichael method – IPA inspired thematic analysis

In this chapter, I will share the first phase of my analysis of the group experience to address what happens in a HART consultation. I will begin by sharing an overview of the transcript. Telling the story of the transcript provides an opportunity to consider the development of trust and general shifts amongst the group, which aids the contextualisation of the themes, which are then discussed in detail.

5.1 The story of the HART

Two qualified educational psychologists facilitated the HART consultation at a primary school; one facilitating EP was linked with the school for other practice areas and, therefore, had a pre-existing relationship with the SENCo. In attendance was the Primary School SENCo, who had known the child for approximately five months; the Advanced Social Worker, who had been working directly with the child for six months but had historical oversight of the case; the Foster Carer, who had been caring for the child for eight months; and the Virtual School Education Coordinator who had been overseeing the child's education for at least three years but had never worked directly with the child.

The HART consultation commenced with a round of introductions (prior to the start of the recording). During the introductions, each participant shared their experience of HARTs; only the EPs and the Education Coordinator had previous HART experience. I then introduced myself as the researcher and provided an opportunity for further questions about the research before starting the audio recording.

The HART commenced with an overview of the process, which seemed to prompt concern from the social worker, who then began seeking allies; they communicated that they had not prepared and did not feel confident in their knowledge of the child's life story. This concern prompted reassurance, praise, and validation from other participants, which developed relationships and softened the social worker's initial defensive position to one more attributable to vulnerability. This similar morphing of defensiveness into vulnerability was later mirrored by the foster carer, whose initial engagement focused on providing value through specific knowledge. At times, their interjections colluded against the past as if to ensure the group were aware of the actions of previous adults, thus implicating past adults with the responsibility for the child's trauma. I had wondered if the attribution of responsibility to others was

defensive and thus positioning the adults currenting in the child's life as socially good.

The consultation lasted approximately two hours; the participants moved between roles to contribute to a joint storytelling effort. At a descriptive level, participants were task-focused, finding facts about what had occurred and validating one another's accounts of events, which sometimes seemingly only existed within their memories to make sense of the complex life story. Subconsciously, the participants sought allies, at times awarding praise to each other to reinforce that they were not contributing further to the list of adverse experiences in the child's life, and in doing so, some participants aligned and protected themselves by colluding against the past as if to distance themselves from those who had, by their description, unfairly rejected the child.

While formulation was not limited to the EPs, some participants easily aligned with the EPs' hypotheses, perhaps suggesting they believed in the EP as an expert. However, the EP's participation remained grounded in the process and less frequently meandered off track; the difference between 'expert' and novice seemed to subside as the HART progressed. There were periods of listening where the dialogue was only between subsets of the group; often, this was related to the topic of discussion, but at times, the active observer position may have indicated that the discussion was too unusual for some group members to participate.

The HART consultation had seven participants. Initially, my analysis had suggested that seven roles were enacted throughout the process; the roles are discussed in detail in section 5.4. The Fact Finder and Clarifier contributed most significantly to the timeline process. However, the roles were not owned by single participants; instead, fluidity supported the story to be told by multiple participants. The Formulator and the Empathiser were present throughout. The role of 'The Child' was often present alongside the Empathiser and the Formulator; the child's views were shared as if they were an active participant in the consultation. As the group dynamics became more established, the Describer of Daily Difficulty occasionally contributed; however, their participation was often juxtaposed with empathy. This juxtaposition seemed particularly prevalent when the same participant enacted the two roles in unison, suggesting participants explored different perspectives within

their storytelling. A final role was added when revisiting my analysis; the Optimistic Advocator participated only towards the end as if their presence was welcomed once the Descriptor of Daily Difficulty had sufficient cathartic freedom.

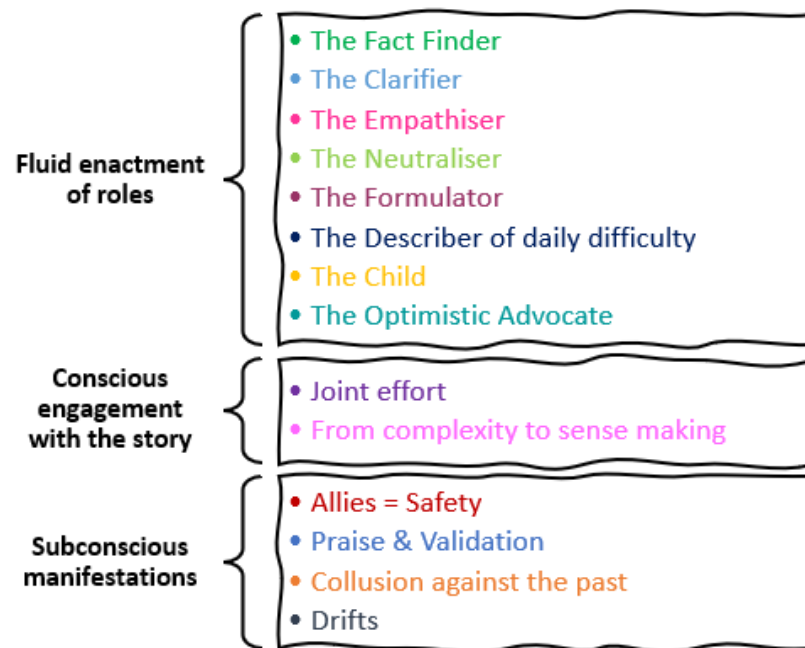
The storytelling element of the HART, mainly occurring within the timeline process, commanded the highest proportion of time during the consultation. Group formulation through discussion of the child's hypothesised belief system (the internal working model current and future) ebbed and flowed; at times, non-EP participants led the ideas, but drifts that buffered the formality and broke the emotional tension occurred frequently, suggesting that pausing practice to consider how the Child may view himself in the world was emotionally challenging; these moments are discussed further within '*The Bless Him's*'.

The final stage of the outlined process, mapping actions onto a Pillars of Parenting (Cameron & Maginn, 2009) framework, was the least noteworthy moment within the HART. There was little time reserved for collaborative discussion about the framework; instead, the EP shared a summary of what had been populated throughout the HART in the closing statements. The mapping of themes and the frequency of participants seeking allies, providing reassurance and praising one another throughout the process suggests that the discussion was more valued than the framework of action. In their summary of the framework, EP2 appealed to the participants and praised their current practice, suggesting there was little to change, which itself was part of the justification as to why a HART was requested in the first instance. The Descriptor of Daily Difficulty's presence at intervals throughout the HART affirmed the need for support. However, in creating a space for the difficulty to be spoken about and formulated, the need for additional further action was less so. Perhaps the de-emphasis on action suggests that the consultees were empowered to take ownership of further action and feel less reliant on the presence of an 'expert' beyond the microsystem. Was the HART the intervention?

5.3 Main Themes

There were three main themes, each with sub-themes illustrated below in Figure 2. Each main theme and sub-theme will be discussed respectively with illustrative quotes.

Figure 2. Summary of Main Themes



5.4 Theme 1: Fluid enactment of roles

As I explored the transcript, I started to identify intentional actions being undertaken. The transcript includes the participant's relationships with the child. Therefore, their professional titles, such as social worker, are assigned as the speaker's name alongside each contribution. Nevertheless, the intentional actions were not attributable to individual participants as there seemed to be less rigidity and formality. Instead, my interpretation suggested that the roles undertaken throughout were communal. Some roles were distributed amongst participants more than others, and at times, the fluidity of the roles meant some were present in conjunction with another during a single contribution. I had initially wondered whether each role was a main theme in its own right; there were fluctuations in the presentation of the roles, but the intention remained grounded in an overarching theme—my decision to define individual roles as sub-themes was motivated by the relationship between the roles. To speak about them separate from one another would be an inadequate solution to

the research question, as many of the roles cannot exist without one another, and some roles are aligned so closely with one another that they could be described as co-dependent.

5.4.1 Sub-theme 1: Fact Finder

The Fact Finder was present consistently throughout the timeline process of the consultation and was enacted mainly by the education coordinator. However, the role was also shared sporadically amongst other participants. 'Fact Finder' is defined as a desire to contribute by finding knowledge within the child's case file, sharing new knowledge that may otherwise be undocumented, and contributing to maintaining momentum throughout the consultation. Much of their contribution consisted of reading through files to share a summary of events. For example,

"Yeah. Erm, Let's have a look. School had no concerns about (Sister 1), but (Sister 1)'s talking to school about things that are happening at home. Mum and Dad are sort of brushing that off. erm,... (Brother 2)'s behaviour is up and down. Erm, (Brother 1), (Child)'s brother's not attending school. Erm." (lines 211-213).

The affiliation with skim reading files and relaying the summarised information meant the Fact Finder's contribution aligned with 'conscious engagement with the story' (see Appendix 13). This was particularly evident when enacted by the Education Coordinator, who strived to remain boundaried and separate from subconscious manifestations. Remaining in the role as Fact Finder served to maintain the overall pace of the consultation and as a defence mechanism to maintain emotional distance from the process; I wondered what the HART meant to the Education Coordinator.

5.4.2 Sub-theme 2: Clarifier

Unlike the Fact Finder, the Clarifier's presence is more consistent throughout the HART. Initially, my exploratory notes had queried whether the Clarifier's role was also focused on maintaining momentum. However, having two roles for the same intentional action was confusing when I returned from a reflective pause in my analysis process. In the final iteration of 'Clarifier', their intentional actions were limited to questioning and summarising; their collaboration with the Fact Finder and Neutraliser worked towards maintaining momentum indirectly (see Appendix 14).

Given the significance of their reliance on others, I wondered how important and prevalent the Clarifier's role was. Nevertheless, the Clarifier played an integral role in the HART consultation. The inquisitive Clarifier primarily asked questions such as *"At this point were the children? They weren't having contact with Mum? Were they not supposed to have contact with Dad either? As part of a safety plan?"* (lines 523-524). The summarising Clarifier often relayed information back to the group without colluding with narratives about the past, for example, *"Okay. So Maternal Grandma is looking after the children with support from their eldest"* (line 289).

5.4.3 Sub-theme 3: Empathiser

Empathiser was omnipresent and enacted by all participants throughout the consultation; this meant that, at times, Empathiser was enacted alongside other roles. The Empathiser and Formulator worked closely with one another; their shared contributions complimented one another with emotive problem solving such as

"it's like that awful catch 22. Like, is that children needing to be in control because of those survival instincts, And actually, they, he, just needs someone... He needs to let go of that control.", "and let someone put those boundaries in place and keep him safe. But at the moment, he perhaps doesn't trust that any adult can do that for him" (lines 632-633 & 635-636).

Empathiser worked to buffer some of the descriptions of daily difficulty, almost as if to rescue the narrative of the Child, for example, *"because I hit Miss So-and-So, yeah. And he goes. I think I've made them I'm sad. I think you maybe have."* (lines, 1408-1409). Similarly, Empathiser's position did not alter, even when interjections colluded against the past. Empathiser remained grounded in their intention to recentre discussion on Child by considering his likely feelings and protecting the narrative around him (see Appendix 15).

5.4.4 Sub-theme 4: Neutraliser

Neutraliser was scarcely present, which led me to question its significance in the final drafting of sub-themes. Nevertheless, the pertinence of the Neutraliser is that in the overall story of the HART, their role modelled professionalism when the group dynamic became emotional, particularly when colluding against the past. The Neutraliser shifted the tone away from blame *"so there's basic, kind of, physical*

health needs" (line 589) without disrupting the space for catharsis that collusion against the past offered (see Appendix 16).

5.4.5 Sub-theme 5: Formulator

The Formulator was quiet at the start of the timeline process, listening and learning from other, more dominant roles as the group began to join the dots, making sense of the child's complex timeline (see Appendix 17). Initially enacted by a single participant, the Formulator began by noticing patterns in the stories:

"He doesn't know whether he's coming or going, does he? At that point... and being so young and not being able to, kind of, talk about, or process that just"
"Really inconsistent, unpredictable. What's happening next? I need to..."
 (lines 408-409 & 411).

Formulator later morphs into something more communal, with other participants formulating aloud, perhaps unintentionally, to start with *"yes because he's had no control"* (line 628), but later with more intentionality as the consultation process actively seeks formulation to hypothesise about the child's internal working model. For example, *"I feel safe, I suppose, isn't it?"* (line 1567). Despite the role also being enacted by non-EPs, some of the suggestions from the EP differ in their links to broader knowledge of theory and literature. It is this type of enactment that makes the EP's role invaluable:

"Given that (Child)'s so little, when all of this, Awful stuff was happening his perception and his like 'neuroception' like..." "his sense of danger he's completely hypervigilant, so he will be much more able to pick up those sorts of things from people's behaviours" (lines 842-844 & 846-847).

5.4.6 Sub-theme 6: Describer of Daily Difficulty

Descriptions of difficulty slowly entered the consultation, in addition to stories about the child from the past. The difficulties were described in the present; for example, *"(Child) definitely remembers doesn't he. He knows something because the way he portrays..."*, *"around violence, he's very violent."* (lines 248-249, 251). As participants reassure one another and allies are affirmed within the group, the descriptions of difficulty increase; both additions likely have the same subconscious intent: to communicate that help is needed (see Appendix 18). While space was made within the HART consultation to share what behaviour was seen that matched the

hypothesised current internal working model, the Descriptor of Daily Difficulty's presence throughout other areas of the consultation suggested that sharing the difficulty was cathartic "*it is tricky because we know he's doing that for that big reaction*" (line 1476).

The Descriptor of Daily Difficulty's presence alongside other roles, such as Empathiser, meant the semantic choices when describing events moved from an empathetic position of 'it is not his fault' to a narrative that 'he is making poor choices', thus uncloaking the professional Empathiser to reveal a plea for guidance; "*But, there has to be a reaction, for the other children's sake. So, it's either he is removed or they are removed and then that causes a huge reaction*" (lines 1478-1479).

5.4.7 Sub-theme 7: The Child

The role of The Child as a participant and a listening observer was sporadic throughout the consultation. Often, the role of The Child was present alongside Empathiser and Formulator (see Appendix 19), who used language that directly addressed The Child despite them not being physically present in the consultation. When the child's story is summarised, the tone used throughout is reminiscent of the interpretative messages the child may have taken from each experience, for example, "*We're not going to make arrangements for you to be part of our family.*" (lines 940-941), which is an incredibly emotive approach to storytelling.

Furthermore, The Child's role serves as a way for the EP to model communication with the child beyond the HART consultation, as if to share a script: "*We want you to be here, no matter what.*" "*We know you've had a really tricky time, basically. And we get that, and we understand you, and we're not going to punish you for that*" (lines 1397, 1401, and 1403).

Participants were skilled at speaking in the first person as if The Child was an active participant in the HART. While the use of the first person is anticipated and encouraged within the internal working model sections, it occurred during the timeline process also. "*He always does say as well, no one likes me and no one loves me*" (lines 539).

5.4.8 Sub-theme 8: Optimistic Advocate

The Optimistic Advocates' presence in the HART mirrored the process, as they began contributing consistently when the process requested suggestions for the future internal working model.

The primary intention of the Optimistic Advocate was to contribute hope and positivity to the discussion, which consciously engaged with the process as outlined in the expectations for input but subconsciously acted as a buffer for the emotional weight of the description of difficulty. For example,

“I think maybe something around I can say what I'm good at, or I can, I can say what I'm proud of about myself, because at the moment, He doesn't really identify any of his... positives does he? It, it's just worry around getting it wrong all the time.” (line 1688-1691).

The Optimistic Advocate's input was often supported through validating additions (see Appendix 20).

5.5 Theme 2: Conscious engagement with the story

The theme 'Conscious engagement with the story' captures the overarching framework of the HART. The sub-themes within address the conscious elements associated with the process (see sub-theme: 1 'From complexity to sense-making) and conscious relational acts (see sub-theme 2: Joint effort).

If a summary of what happens in a HART consultation were to be presented, it would be unsurprising to hear that HARTs are a consultation that supports joint work to develop an understanding of a child's life. I wondered if the theme was too obvious and asked myself, 'Did I complete a thorough analysis to summarise pre-existing knowledge?'. However, within conscious engagement with the story, elements link with enabling subconscious manifestations; this deeper interpretative lens encouraged me to include this theme. Furthermore, the sub-themes provide an overview of what may be consciously happening in a HART consultation and thus address the research question.

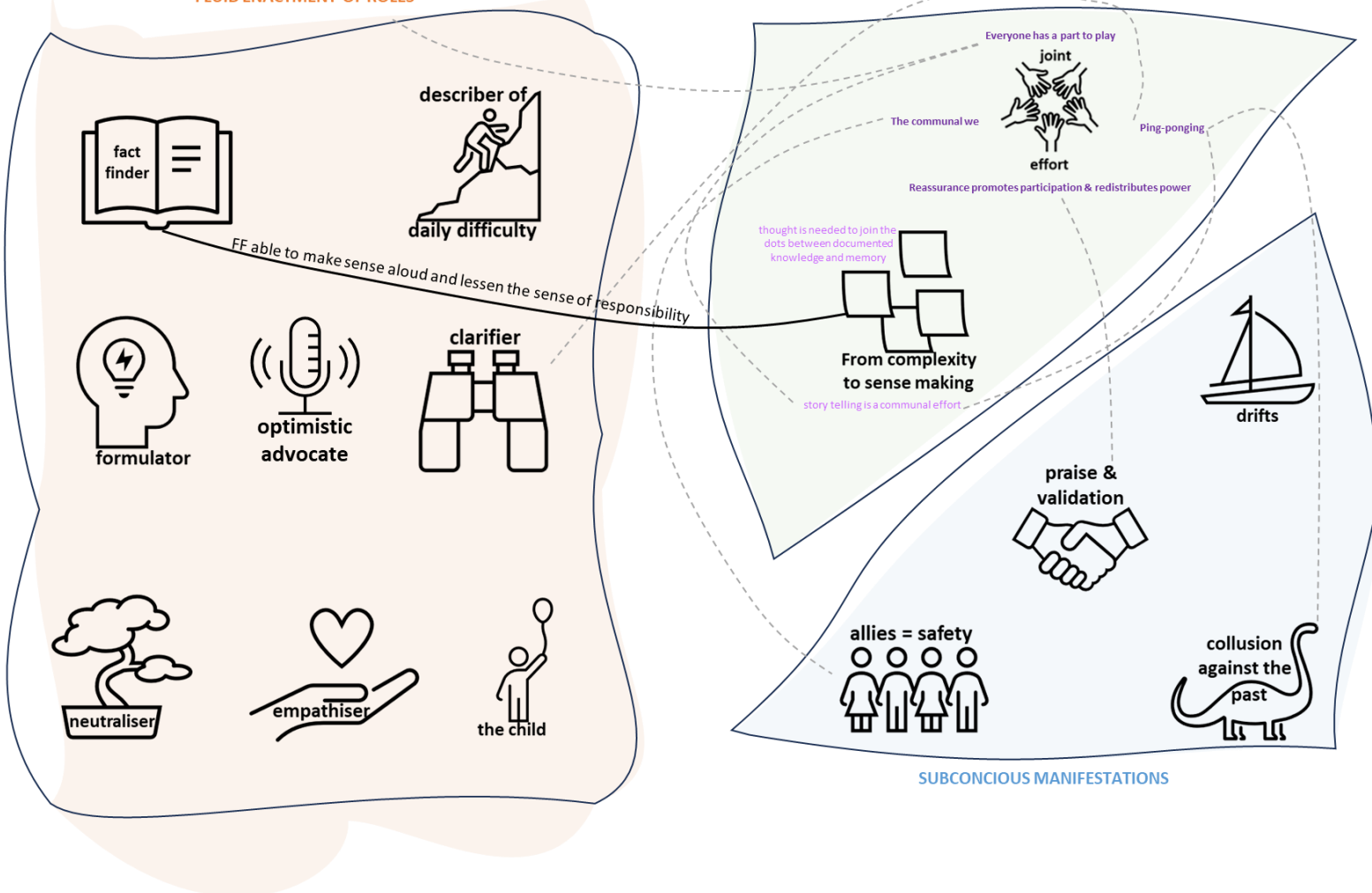
The child's life story was mapped onto a timeline within the HART. However, the volume of events meant it required joint effort, enacted in a range of modes, to move from a sense of overwhelming complexity to a shared understanding. The sub-

themes within 'conscious engagement with the story' are closely linked with one another; therefore, an annotated theme map has been included within the text (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Map showing the links between sub-themes within the main theme

'Conscious engagement with the story'

FLUID ENACTMENT OF ROLES



5.5.1 Sub-theme 1: From complexity to sense-making.

The subtheme 'from complexity to sense-making' was characterised by two broad, process-based elements. The first was that storytelling needed to be a communal effort; I had contemplated whether this stood alone from 'joint effort'; however, this sub-theme focuses on the story (see Appendix 21). The Fact Finder was vital in providing details from the child's file. However, the telling of the story required checking in with others, for example, "*They made their own private application, didn't they?*" (line 743)

Furthermore, whilst the events documented within the child's file provided a skeleton, the disjointed nature of documenting each encounter separately within the child's file meant additional thought was required to join the dots and link events on the timeline to one another and also to situate the events within the wider context. For example, when talking about the events of the child moving into care, additional information about the wider (inter)national context became apparent: *"you forget about Covid!"* (line 503).

5.5.2 Sub-theme 2: Joint effort

The sub-theme 'joint effort' addresses the conscious relational elements of what is happening within a HART. At the start of the HART, the process was outlined, and the expectations for joint effort were set through communicating that everyone will have a part to play within the consultation; this was supported by reassurance which sought to promote participation and redistribute power away from the EP as a leader and instead as a process facilitator. For example, *"think about (Child) from the earliest sort of, stages, and that's where it comes in really helpful, erm obviously having social worker here to provide some of that. But equally other people will know, lots of information, we can feed into that"* (lines 12 - 14). In addition to this, the concept of joint effort expanded later to include the responsibilities of the wider system who were not present within the HART *"everybody's been really kind of, you know, partial to that including the, the IRO, CAMHS consultant..."* (lines 1176-1177).

Whilst responsibility was not explicitly mentioned within the HART, the use of 'we' as a communal pronoun throughout acted as a reminder that the system is to work in unison and that the responsibility for the child belongs to all who safeguard him. Multiple participants used the communal we, which subconsciously supported a sense of safety in that the system are allies in their caring approach.

Supporting one another through reassurance seemed vital in maintaining a group with shared goals, mutual respect and trust for one another; sometimes, the reassurance was frequent interjections of agreement, such as *"yeah"*, to communicate that the speaker was being heard and validated. Other times, reassurance was more about appealing to others to participate in all elements of the consultation, reassuring them that their views were equally important and useful.

"I think you've alluded to some sort of ideas around what his internal working model... might be. But... if anybody feels like it, they could share some ideas" (lines 1278-1280).

The joint effort also presented itself within the HART as interactions, which I have coined as 'ping-ponging', whereby participants finish each other's sentences and build upon each other's contributions quickly (see Appendix 22).

5.6 Theme 3: Subconscious manifestations

Subconscious manifestations is the most interpretative theme of the three. The sub-themes within address a variety of relational themes and psychodynamic elements which were interpreted within the transcript; many of which share a likeness to defence mechanisms such as projection and transference. Naming the sub-themes was particularly challenging within this theme. I felt strongly that there were elements of vulnerability, façade and anger but to use these descriptors seemed overly polarised and pessimistic. Subconscious manifestations within the HART were vital in supporting the overall process; they are the complex relational phenomena that occurred throughout the consultation.

5.6.1 Sub-theme 1: Allies = safety

The sub-theme 'Allies = safety' is characterised by two main acts: needing others and receiving others, alternatively named the helped and the helper. The helped communicate their need to find allies within the consultation to develop a sense of emotional and professional security. Within the HART, looking for allies was characterised by discourse markers such as "*you know*" being intertwined within stories to check others are following and on side.

"We wouldn't just go out. We wouldn't just go into the home and sit and observe, you know, we would take them out for walks and things, you know, and (Child) was just adorable with (Brother 3)." (lines 867-869).

Such pleas for help convey the vulnerability of the adults within the system. However, vulnerability was also presented as overt emotional displays: "*Oh god! I'm gonna start crying*" (line 696). This emotional vulnerability morphed into honest vulnerability and accompanied roles such as 'Describer of Daily Difficulty' and 'Formulator' (see Appendix 23).

The receiving of allies – the helper – put others at ease and, in doing so, created space for the aforementioned vulnerability; sometimes, this included participating in vulnerability to level the ground for others to express their vulnerable selves. There were close links with joint effort, and praise and validation when the helper allies were in action. At times, vulnerable moments led to ‘drifts’, which either halted vulnerability or supported further vulnerability through a deepening of the wider context through extra storytelling.

5.6.2 Sub-theme 2: Praise & Validation

Praise and validation occurred throughout the HART consultation and could be categorised as appealing and aligning (see Appendix 24). When participants of the HART appealed to one another, they often praised others' practice and decision-making, thus strengthening an alliance and subconsciously working to distance the participants from the difficulties associated with the past. Therefore, praising current practice further colluded against the past, for example

“You know, [SEnCo] you’ve been kind of on board haven’t you, as well, always meeting with monthly support meetings.” (line 1177-1178).

Aligning with others' suggestions was another key element within the ‘praise & validation’ sub-theme, often characterised by interjections of agreement around the suggestions of the Formulator. Interestingly, this validation occurred frequently when the Formulator was enacted by an EP, for example, *“With you saying about Alpha male as well”... “yeah yeah yeah So that just shows you how much like he respects that or thinks of his Dad.”* (lines 596 & 603). Such rapid alignment made me question whether there was a subconscious hierarchy within the HART consultation. Were some participants more desirable allies? Were some participants aligned with a greater sense of expertise?

5.6.3 Sub-theme 3: Collusion against the past

Colluding against the past epitomises how consciously engaging with storytelling enabled subconscious processes to occur, as glimmers of suppressed emotion bubbled to the surface, inferring blame towards others. At a descriptive level, the accounts of traumatic events could be understood as fact-sharing and sense-making; however, the tone of blame and frustration was sometimes palpable within the transcript. For example, semantics and tone, such as *“yeah, she set the house*

on fire”... *“no on purpose”* (lines 159 & 164), provided insight into the participant's emotional connection to the child's life story.

The emotive undercurrent of colluding against the past seemed to enable catharsis; within the transcript, this was identified as the professional façade being dropped; the Fact Finder would slip into opinion-driven accounts by reading between the lines of the documented story, for example *“So yeah. So for me”, “it went from everything's perfect to (Child)'s done this this and this.”* (lines 773 & 775), with validation from others who aligned *“they weren't really supporting them were they”* (line 774). As summarised in the sub-theme ‘praise & validation’, aligning with others to collude against the past protected the participants from resonating with the idea of contributing further to inadequate support for the child.

5.6.4 Sub-theme 4: Drifts

Within the HART, there were intervals where discussion drifted off topic; initially, within my analysis of the transcript, such drifts seemed like irrelevant filler periods of chatter, talking about dogs and birthdays. However, the sub-theme drifts remained within the final cut of themes because the drifts were significant when understanding what is happening in the HART consultation. The drifts were needed; they provided buffers in the formality for various reasons. Buffering the formality occurred frequently at the start of the HART consultation to establish relationships, reassure participants and promote joint effort. Similarly, drifts as formality buffers followed long periods of storytelling, *“Well next time he says ‘I want my drink’, don't pass him it {laughter}”* (line 1546) to distract from descriptions of difficulty; to dismiss a difficulty supports the maintenance of a belief system within the system that things are going well.

Drifts as discourse markers, coined ‘the bless hims’, refers to the moments when, at a surface level, participants may believe that they are engaging in discourse that communicates empathy when hearing about the child's stories. Initially, ‘the bless hims’ belonged to the role of the Empathiser (see Appendix 26). However, as I revisited my analysis, they did not seem congruent with the remaining intentional actions of the Empathiser. Whilst phrases such as ‘Bless him’ and ‘Oh Gosh’ may have been seeking to communicate disbelief and disappointment consciously, really, they are discourse markers that fill a silence – participants say something because they do not know what else to say.

Discourse analysis

6.1 Introduction to the discourse analysis

As outlined in chapter 3, the big Q component, The Carmichael method, and the small q competent, here presented through a discursive lens, was separated. Upon completion of chapter 5 I entered a reflexive writing period, summarised within appendix 12. The reflexive period was included as a means of creating space and allowing time, for me as the researcher, to step aside from the process undertaken in phase 1, and thus approach the discourse analysis reenergised and clearer in my knowledge of the underpinning theory and philosophy aligned with discursive analysis more widely.

Phase 1 had been useful in giving language, through codes and themes, to the descriptive (conscious happenings) and interpretative (sub-conscious happenings) within the HART. However what it seemed to miss, and thus contradicted by axiological values and researcher positioning, was discussion and interrogation of wider concepts such as power and socio-historic and cultural narratives that are within the language used in all interactions.

In the conception of the research I had been curious about what is happening in a HART consultation, but the eco-systemic nature of group consultation led me to a design that incorporates a dual analytic process. I had outlined from the onset that the plan for 'how to' would evolve alongside the research. As a novice researcher I felt it was important to separate the two elements clearly within the final write up, but also within my mind. In doing so, I reached a crossroads after completing phase 1 where I had wondered how, or if, I would be to complete a discourse analysis. There was a longer than anticipated gap in-between phase 1 and phase 2, I felt stuck and explored my options in supervision (see Appendix 27) and at times became overwhelmed with the possible avenues such analysis could explore.

This chapter draws upon the ideas of multiple discourse analysts. As a supplementary component to the 'Carmichael method', the discourse was considered 'little d' (Gee, 2011), focusing on how language is used within the HART. Some of the wider discourses, such as politics, culture, and history, what Gee (2011) refers to as 'big d', will be introduced here but considered in greater detail within the closing chapters.

This chapter considers how language is used to create space for subconscious 'happenings' within the HART and how language is used in relation to power dynamics between participants and the wider system. The selection of the discursive excerpts was driven by feedback from the participants following the first phase of analysis and a period of reflexive journaling. In the initial research design, I had proposed that the participants would be pivotal in the selection of discursive components; however, as can be seen in my reflexive account (see Appendix 12), there was likely too much happening and too little time within the reflection session to create sufficient space for in-depth group reflection. Furthermore, I had not anticipated the comprehensiveness of the 'Carmichael method' and how much intersectionality there could be across the core and supplementary components, much less the conflated overlapping of critical discourse analysis and discursive psychological practices such as conversational analysis.

The following sections are intended to be approached as an introductory chapter ahead of wider discussion; discourse analysis within this research is flexibly applied as the underlying principles form the basis of many discussions. However, processes such as those outlined by Parker and Gee are interwoven into a narrative that supports a discourse informed discussion.

6.2 Power

Power is a construct defined in a variety of ways. According to Foucault (1980), power is inextricably linked to knowledge, embedded in social networks, and is pervasive in human interactions. Instead of possessing power, an individual exercises it. Rather than domination and control, power is exercised through strategic influence, such as thoughts, attitudes, and connections. Individuals are both subjects and objects of power, as they exercise, accept, and reject authority at the same time. As a result, power is cyclical and always has a reciprocal effect. According to Foucault, power is not always destructive but rather generative because it enforces order, forms institutions, and creates individual' subjectivities in society.

Although present in the HART consultation, power was discrete. Inherently, all participants exercised a different level of power within the consultation at intervals. However, describing the exercise of power in the HART consultation as fluid may be

too broad when contemplating what is happening in the HART, and instead, contemplating how and why power seemed fluid and, at times, flattened is a concept of interest. Was it a conscious act of the facilitating EPs to attempt to flatten power in their opening statements, or was the flattening of power facilitated by all parties?

All attendees at the HART have different levels of power that impact their subject position; their prior level of experience with consultation, their knowledge of the process, the child, and the system all contribute to a unique manifestation of how power is exercised. Applying Foucauldian principles of historicity, the narrative about educational psychologists being experts likely influenced the non-EP's assumptions about the power of EPs within the consultation. Furthermore, the HART consultation is a model developed and facilitated by EPs. The language used by EPs throughout communicates that they are leading the process but acknowledges the importance of contributions from others, for example.

"It's helpful to kind of be together, isn't it?"... "and have opportunity to look at that. Okay, so hopefully (Social worker) will be able to join us again in a minute. I'll move us, as I say because I'm mindful of the time, I'll move us onto the next part. So, we've sort of briefly talked about this part but it's considering what, erm (Child)s current internal working model might be" (lines 1268 & 1270-1272)

Despite the connotations of expertise and its association with EPs' power positioning, the transcript includes periods where the EP refrains from the discussion; the non-EP participants exercise their power by sharing the child's story; and the participation of others in the process highlights the relational aspect of power as different participants contribute to the development of a shared understanding.

6.2.1 Power as a hot cake; juggle it and pass it around quickly until its intensity is diffused

Marx and Engels conceptualised features of power in relation to economics and class; whilst their ideas were primarily associated with production (Moore & Hobsbawm, 2012), their applicability to the wider context, such as social and political control, provides a lens to observe the influence of wider culture within the HART consultation.

Marx and Engels's first power construct are related to controlling resources. Resources may be associated with objects; however, I propose here that the participants are themselves a resource. There are narratives about the scarcity of EPs and the high caseloads held by local authority social workers; both factors influence their time availability. However, the EPS holds power over the social worker as they are the facilitating resource. Therefore, when agreeing to facilitate the HART consultation, there is a commitment to make resources (two EPs) available. In contrast, social workers are mandatory attendees; without their presence, a HART cannot occur – their power is tied to the HART consultation despite them having no prior experience.

Within the opening statements of the HART, the EP's speech communicated leadership over the process, for example.

“So, I’m aware there’s obviously that there’s a mix, isn’t there, of people who’ve been to HART consultations and some people who haven’t. So, I’ll briefly run through the process just before we get started” (lines 1-3) and “what we kind of tend to do is the timeline first and then we move on to sort of planning and more positives and look at (Child)’s strengths, but we feel it’s really important to go back to that information” (lines 59-61).

However, it emphasised the need for collaboration amongst the group, thus distributing power and responsibility. Furthermore, the EPs exercised their power by managing ethical and emotional dimensions; for example, communicating the possibility of emotional arousal during the timeline process demonstrated a pastoral power in which care and support are integral. This exercise of power aligns with Foucault, and Marx and Engels’ notion of power as productive; in creating a safe environment, the EP used power to flatten power.

“Today, we’ll be looking at his experiences, erm, throughout his life and sometimes that can be really, not very nice. It can be quite upsetting and often when we do HART consultations, it’s the timeline bit that schools often don’t know, not for any other reason than actually, sometimes we just don’t get together in the same room and share all of this information. Erm. And often, the school staff say, oh my goodness, I didn’t know all of that in that much

detail, erm and that can sometimes be a light bulb moment, but it also can be quite upsetting as well." (lines 50-56)

Drawing upon the ideas of Big D and Little D together is essential when contemplating how power is used to flatten power. For example, the EP's ability to utilise what is often subconscious, whilst also consciously acknowledging what is explicitly discussed is a unique skill of the EP which enables a new dimension of reflexivity. An example of this is the EP's use of colloquial jargon-free language and relaxed tone "*that can sometimes be a light bulb moment, but it also can be quite upsetting as well*" (line 56). Initially, the phrase "*light bulb moment*" suggests attendees of the HART may experience a new level of clarity, thus framing the experience within the HART as, possibly, transformative and empowering. However, by juxtaposing "*lightbulb moment*" with "*quite upsetting*", the EP introduces the idea that such revelations may result in an emotional response. The selection of phrases such as "*quite upsetting*" is useful in supporting the EP to establish rapport with the attendees. Pronouns are not used as if to intentionally avoid dividing the participants. Instead, the neutral tone demonstrates empathy and compassion whilst remaining in a position of knowledgeable power holder, but not the sole power holder.

6.3 Role identity and subject positioning

Within discourse analysis, how people are located within and shaped by discourses contributes to their subject positioning. Various factors influence the automatic uptake of roles within discourse. Often, as people become aware of their role, they begin to resist the limitations of the role's boundaries – "where there is power, there is resistance" (Foucault, 1976, p. 95).

The primary analysis identified a cast of roles within the discourse. However, participants stepped in and out of the roles, with the arrival of new roles leading to the exit of others. For example, as the Clarifier sought accuracy, the other party continued to collude against the past; the EP then exercised their power to shift away from curiosity and instead neutralise (see lines 170 – 185) – "*gosh, I wonder about mums state of mind and how distressed she must have felt at that time too*" (line 179) thus moving beyond the narrative of collusion. This statement positioned the EP as empathetic; the vulnerability of the Mum was emphasised whilst also reflecting societal values surrounding maternal mental health. The statement served to guide the discourse towards a supportive perspective. However, the use of the

phrase 'gosh' may be interpreted as a validating acknowledgement of the previous speaker's feelings, while also communicating the surprise about hearing the story. 'Gosh' softens the statement, making the EP's contribution less formal, distancing them from a formal expert position and instead to a compassionate listener. Furthermore, the EP's ability to observe and comment with an alternate perspective is a subtle power dynamic as the EP's distance from the case allows for an assessment of the discourse in a contained environment, thus not joining in with the speaker's affect and instead maintaining a containing environment. The nuance of discourse was present throughout the transcript, as the conscious discussions and subconscious processes occurred simultaneously.

6.4 The subconscious happenings within the HART

Within the primary analysis, a main theme, entitled subconscious manifestations, was introduced. This theme included my interpretations of discussions that sought connection through praise of one another and validation that their current actions are in the child's best interests—this was perpetuated by a subconscious distancing from the past through collusion against it. In addition to this, the discussion often drifted, often serving as an emotional buffer and an opportunity to mark a pause in the discussion. The drifts were a topic of interest to all participants at the review; however, their engagement with the ideas was grounded in conscious action, with some wondering about the purpose of the drift. For example, "*Am I alright to pop another coffee?*" (line 482) Following the discussion about carers 'giving notice' on the placement, in the review, participants consciously considered how they need space and time to recuperate in long meetings; the drifts were considered part of the natural ebb and flow. But for the EP's, the drifts were likened to therapeutic pauses instigated by a participant but enabled by the group. The concept of group consultation as an opportunity for supervision will be revisited within the conclusion.

During the analysis review session, the participants were particularly interested in their use of the phrase '*bless him*'. Whilst only a brief utterance, the two words were used repeatedly throughout the consultation, thus amplifying their significance. Typically, 'bless him' has connotations of pity, empathy or a term to affectionately comment on another who is considered deserving of compassion, perhaps due to vulnerability. Furthermore, 'bless him' positions the speaker as benevolent, thus possessing social good (Gee, 2011) power. However, elevating the speaker's power,

referring to the subject (The child) as a person in need of blessing, means positioning the child as the least powerful. The conclusion expands further upon the purpose of educational psychology consultation and the concept of discussing children without them present as a potentially disempowering practice.

The frequency of the statement ‘bless him’ suggests that it became a cultural norm within the consultation space, as if refraining from engaging in the act of blessing him would be to separate oneself from the group. However, the colloquialism of the phrase may be interpreted as a power softener, reducing the formality and instead uniting the system around the child as a unit that holds a similar value base – the child needs protecting. Similarly, using ‘bless him’ following a narrative that colludes against the past further supports the speaker's position as more closely aligned with the subject, which may maintain social harmony within the group.

Within the HART, there was a need to hold a space for emotion; at times, catharsis was abundant. Whilst at the start of the HART the EP's introduced the group to the process, sharing that some things “*can be really, not very nice*” (line 51).

The use of language and pause here acts as a mitigator in the EP's approach to sharing that the HART may not be a comfortable experience, and the abbreviated language de-formalises the warning as if to reduce the intensity, thus reflecting societal and cultural norms where harsh language is absent within sensitive environments as if to model and set the tone. Furthermore, later, the EP states, “*so just feel free to take a minute. Just say can we have a minute or to leave the room, that's, that's fine*” (line 57-58); this positions the EP as compassionate and attentive thus creating a space where participants can, if they feel comfortable, express their emotions safely. However, within this, the EP has used their power productively to set group rules – ‘*leave the room if needed*’, which subtly reinforces a leadership position within the group.

The EP's productive power to set rules, contain emotions, and facilitate the process suggests that within the HART, the EP's power often positions them as influential. Despite the EP's return to colloquial, informal language throughout, the subconscious messages, their input, and reframing of perspectives solidify their role as different from the group.

Discussion

Within this chapter, I will first share my interpretations of the two analysis phases, noting elements where intersectionality is present. In the process, I will explain the themes from the primary analysis with links to existing literature and utilise the conclusions from the discourse analysis to enrich this discussion. The findings will then be considered alongside ideas from the literature review, and where needed, new theoretical elements shall be introduced to answer my research question:

What is happening in a HART consultation?

7.1 Bringing the data together

The Carmichael method (IPiTA) had three themes: fluid enactment of roles, conscious engagement with the story, and subconscious manifestations. The intersectionality of the discourse analysis is most linear when considering the roles, particularly the EP's position as observers at intervals but most frequently with clarifying, formulating, and neutralising. Within the discourse analysis (DA), the EPs' ability to utilise the power attributed to them by the micro and macro system enabled a position that supported the other participants in exploring roles fluidly. I will address the unique skill set of EPs in creating therapeutic spaces later within this chapter. Furthermore, the EPs facilitative role supported subconscious processes that may be likened to elements from psycho-analytical practices. Thus, the IPiTA findings complement the discursive discussion concerning the subconscious manifestations. However, I have interpreted this as a by-product of the roles undertaken by the EPs and other participants.

Considering elements from IPiTA and DA together, I have drawn four overarching conclusions. The conclusions presented here are summaries of the analysis undertaken and therefore relate to the transcribed HART only. Whilst reference is made to wider concepts, it is not possible within such small-scale research to make generalised or theoretical conclusions; nor did the current study aim to do as this would contradict the social constructionist positionality which underpins all elements of the process.

7.2 The role of the EP within the HART

Within the HART consultation, other than the Education Coordinator who explicitly identified their role as a Fact Finder;

“I did (Child)s first PEP. erm, when he was in nursery and then it transitioned over to another worker. So, I’ve got the understanding because I did case supervision for that member of staff anyway, but I’ve got quite a few pieces of the puzzle. I think, in terms of what’s gone on. So…” (lines 86-89 – Education Co-ordinator).

Only the Educational Psychologists defined the parameters of their role within the opening statement, “[*What*] we start off with, as you can see, is a timeline” (line 12)... “We’ll then move on to thinking about erm (child)’s internal working model.” (line 15). The repeated use of ‘we’ set the scene for collaboration. The role of EPs is often associated with power and influence, as highlighted within the literature review. However, the discussion regarding what type of role the EP enacts within the HART is difficult to describe because it is not limited to ideas such as ‘the EP is the expert’ or ‘the EP is the facilitator or leader’ but instead the EP fluidly moves around a spectrum of action. Perhaps each participant’s perception of the EP’s role was unique; this argument aligns with my social constructionist position.

The role of EPs in consultation more widely refers to the key features of general EP consultation, including directed collaboration; demonstrating empathy and deep listening; questioning, wondering, and challenging; summarising and reformulating; suggesting and explaining; strategizing; focusing and refocusing; and restating and revisiting outcomes (Nolan & Moreland, 2014). This conceptualisation of the consultation process echoes therapeutic approaches, emphasising the balance between the EP’s emotional availability and attention to practical matters throughout, when supported by a secondary EP handling administrative tasks such as record keeping (Hayes & Stringer, 2016).

Furthermore, within the HART, two facilitating EPs enabled a consultee-centred focus and provided the CPD opportunities described by Munroe (2000) and Nolan and Moreland (2014). This dual-EP approach enhances relationships and acknowledges the EP’s role within the consultation as more than just a facilitator, countering the argument that practitioners remain detached and unaffected by the systems they work with (Pelligrini, 2009). The EP’s emotive connection to the story within the HART can be captured through their use of “*gosh*” and their blending *with* the system rather than being detached, they reinforce this blending through their use

of “we”. Viewing consultation as a second-order process favours curiosity and an anti-expert stance, aiming to join systems in exploring difficulties to support ongoing change for children who are looked after.

However, no matter how much the EP may strive to remain neutral within the consultation, some argue that *“Psychology is not, and cannot be, a neutral endeavour”* (Fox & Prilleltensky, 1997, p.3 cited in Mackay, 2008). Neutral or not, the collaborative approach afforded within this HART consultation supports the foundations of relationships with schools, as highlighted by the SENCOs in Ashton and Roberts's (2006) research, providing ongoing opportunities to revise and enhance support for children and young people, and the wider system such as social care.

7.3 The HART enabled fluidity

I propose that the HART was the vehicle for discussion. The framework itself and the visual presentation of task discussion on large paper may be considered as ‘transitional objects’ which enable participants to be free from the direct gaze of the EP (Billington, 2014), the group and other wider social discourses about what can be discussed by who and when - inclusive of governmental discourses about the role of health, social care and education individually and jointly; which at times may feel smothering of professional autonomy. This HART, like the consultations discussed by Gibbs and Miller (2014), offered a temporary respite from other social rules and norms.

In addition to the HART being a ‘transitional object’, the role of relationships within the HART was significant. Interwoven into the tasks of the HART framework are a series of unscripted questions, which enabled relationships to unfold and lead to the development of a more sophisticated consideration of experience: *“We experience life in the area of transitional phenomena, in the exciting interweave of subjectivity and objective observation, and in an area that is intermediate between the inner reality of the individual and the shared reality of the world that is external to individuals”* (Winnicott, 1971, p.75). The structure afforded by the framework freed all participants to work relationally with one another; the ‘business-side’ of the discussion is managed and facilitated by the framework – it is carried by the tasks.

The utility of consciously defined processes is discussed later in the implications section.

The HART's ability to enable the fluidity of roles is so closely intertwined with the skill set of EPs, and the present study does not seek to separate the person from the vehicle. Nevertheless, within the HART, whether consciously or subconsciously, the participants moved between roles. At times, there was likely a conscious shift away from roles such as 'Describer of Daily Difficulty' as the position of the group shifted towards a more neutral or hopeful tone. However, what enabled participants to move between roles with such ease is likely attributable to multiple factors. Firstly, the HART framework draws upon multiple approaches to consultation, such as offering a structured, yet subtle, approach to problem-solving (for the origins of problem-solving consultations, see Gutkin and Curtis, 1982) yet reliant upon the interpersonal skills which are highlighted by Schein (1988) in their description of process consultation. Like the consultation studied by Nolan and Moreland (2014) the HART consultation enabled a new conceptualisation of the concerns of the system around the child, thus enabling the "*repertoire of the consultee [to be] expanded and the professional relationships restored or improved*" (Knotek & Sandoval, 2003, p. 245 cited in Nolan & Moreland, 2014).

The fluidity within the HART was intertwined with the positions of power held by all participants. EPs are all so often associated with high-power positions with an expectation that the EP will provide an account of the concern of the system that is distinct (Billington, 2014) and that the EP's contribution to the lives of children is in their ability to "*create and preserve linguistically and conceptually privileged enclosure[s] of knowledge which will accord with certain principles of 'governmentality' (Foucault, 1979)*" (Billington, 2014, p.119). However, in addition to the expectation of a unique formulation contributed by the EPs within the HART, Bion's (1970) suggestion of the 'container' and the 'contained' goes a step further in supporting the argument that the HART consultation enabled fluidity of role and perspective because the system was held therapeutically, at least for the duration of the HART.

7.4 The HART was a therapeutic intervention

Educational Psychologists' daily practices and skill sets have been interrogated across the wider literature, with the recognition of therapeutic skills most often associated with direct work with children (Lee & Woods, 2017). However, the utility of EPs' therapeutic and relational skills likely contributed to the success of the HART consultation. Within the analysis, the use of pause, drifts and subconscious relationship seeking was highlighted, much of which shares a likeness with psychoanalytical therapeutic practices. For example, pausing (Levitt, 2001) creates space for thought for the system. It allows the system to engage in personal contemplation rather than seeking 'expert' instruction, although Lee and Woods's (2017) paper suggest that systems continue to seek EP involvement for professional assessment, thus aligning EP with 'expert'. In developing the system's confidence, it is hoped that the impact of the HART will extend beyond the consultation itself.

Throughout the HART, the EP's contribution was most frequently grounded in curiosity and interspersed with psychological theory to support the accounts shared by the participants. Other than the direction of how to action tasks within the HART framework, the EPs refrained from directive discussion. Nevertheless, the HART was reviewed positively by participants (see figure 4).

Figure 4. Complimentary reviews at the end of the HART

1972	SOCIAL WORKER; It's been good hasn't it?
1973	FOSTER CARER; Yeah
1974	SOCIAL WORKER: I've enjoyed it actually
1975	SENCo: really, really useful.

Moving to work systemically and supporting the adults therapeutically rather than engaging in direct work with children, particularly those who are looked after, enables long-term support as the microsystem around the child is more emotionally available. For example, within the HART, having the space to engage in collusion against the past allowed adults to speak freely and in a contained environment. Without such opportunities, there is a risk of countertransference; this was described as events from earlier in the child's life during the timeline discussion. The participants seemed keen to distance themselves from such ideas, thus validating their position as different from that of adults in the past.

7.5 HART as supervision

In addition to the therapeutic element of the HART consultation, the subconscious manifestations were conceptualised as the HART ‘sort of being a bit like supervision’ – a comment made by an EP in the feedback session. Furthermore, within the DA, the discussion about power being used to flatten power also touched upon the intricacies in the relationship between EP and the child's microsystem. The ability to engage in reflexive practice is closely tied to supervision within the applied psychologies; supervision is essential for EPSs to deliver high-quality services (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter, 2010) and is thus a familiar practice for EPs. Historically, supervision stems from Freud's group discussions with colleagues where the agenda centred around reviewing their ongoing work with clients (Carroll, 2007); thus, practice acknowledged how thinking with others instead of isolated personal contemplation was essential in developing the observational stance of the professional (Howard, 2007). Furthermore, group supervision is described by Page and Wosket (2001) as a space that forms “a learning alliance” (p.9) where those involved can experience reflective learning to better understand themselves (Wedlock & Turner, 2017). The experience of learning alongside one another for a similar purpose is consistent with the flattening of power within the HART consultation.

Within the IPiTA, the conscious engagement with the story supported the participants to move from complexity to sense-making, thus suggesting that learning about a child's story from multiple perspectives and having the space to reflect in action (Schon, 1992) creates a safe environment for transparency and reflection. For example:

EP2: Did you know all of that?

SENCo: I knew the majority of that yes, erm there's the odd bit, I didn't know he'd gone to live with family, with Auntie sorry before he'd then gone into, erm gone on to (Carer 1)'s. And I didn't know about the two half-sisters. I don't think

EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: no, I didn't know about that

FOSTER CARER: No, I didn't either

EP1: It's helpful to kind of be together, isn't it? And

EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: yeah, (lines 1262 – 1269)

Furthermore, the EP's role within the supervisory element of the HART was most attributable to a therapeutic facilitator, enabling participants to assume a position of not knowing and being comfortable within that position. The DA discussed the attribution of power to those who hold knowledge yet did not explore how participants, for example, social care colleagues, experience a pause in responsibility. Did the HART offer respite, through supervision, for the social worker?

The literature base for EP's supporting inter-professional supervision is beginning to expand and is regarded as an important way for EPs to utilise their skills to promote positive outcomes for children (Ayres et al., 2015). In promoting the psychological skills, knowledge and understanding of non-EPs through interprofessional supervision, EPs are able to adopt more creative approaches to offering systemic support, thus, moving a step further away from a need to locate needs within a single child and instead developing systemic processes that support wider populations such as children who are looked after. However, a wider systemic shift is required if the HART is to be considered as a model of group interprofessional supervision.

If individual supervision of psychology trainees is considered a "luxurious necessity" (Page & Wosket, 2001, p. 14), there are likely to be barriers to affording said luxury to those in a non-psychological role. For example, in systems where supervision is not mandatory and the funds to purchase time from trained practitioners, such as EPs, are often ring-fenced for individual casework, how can supervision become the new norm? Perhaps the HART needs to remain conceptualised as an intervention to secure its place within the support repertoire for children who are looked after.

7.6 Was the HART truly collaborative?

Much of the discussion throughout the latter analysis and discussion chapters has returned to power distribution within the group setting. Educational psychology often proclaims to offer opportunities for collaboration, perhaps because collaboration is a core principle of most EPs' professional practice and potentially because of statutory guidance that mandates that parents/guardians must be consulted with and decisions made in collaboration. However, I wonder whether the HART consultation would be interpreted more widely as a genuinely collaborative process, given the discussion of EP's positions of power and the rapid alignment of others with EP's

hypotheses. This question is contradictory to the IPiTA sub-theme of working together.

The terminology of collaboration and co-production can be confusing within educational psychology literature. For example, the notion of co-production is suggested to include work with children and their parents/caregivers in a participatory capacity (DfE, 2015), yet others argue that there is no clear consensus for what co-production really entails (Brandsen et al., 2018). Whereas others (Boswell et al., 2021) define co-production as “an equal relationship between people who use services and the people responsible for services” (p.2). I remain uncertain about the difference between co-production and collaboration, other than the distinction that the former, which makes more reference to macro-systemic decision-making and the fact that collaboration may be more closely tied to micro-systemic changes. Nevertheless, whether the HART consultation can be considered collaborative can be debated.

Conclusion, implications and limitations

In this chapter, I will discuss the research's conclusions and link them to the associated implications at different levels of the Ecosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). I will critique my argument throughout and acknowledge the research's limitations.

8.1 Conclusions

The research has illuminated that the HART consultation was multi-dimensional, with conscious actions having myriad interconnections with subconscious occurrences. In this sense, there is a great deal that is happening in the HART, both consciously and subconsciously, which may be characterised as follows:

The HART offered respite from problem-saturated discussion; this was **understood to be therapeutic** across the ecosystem. Directly supporting the micro-system indirectly supported the child at the centre.

The HART was a space for multi-agency learning, similar to interprofessional supervision, which aligns with NICE guidance to support the well-being of looked-after children.

The HART was not free from discourses about power roles; however, ***the framework supported professionals in stepping aside from their preconceptions about power roles.***

The HART was a space where EPs used a framework of tasks to manage a process. This ***enabled the EP to use their warmth and interpersonal empathy skills while supporting a system through cognitive and emotional change*** (Jones & Witz, 2006).

The framework acted as a supportive base to which the EP can redirect the group when neutralising highly emotional chatter; it supports the EP's interpersonal skills in protecting participants from feeling silenced or dismissed.

The fluidity of roles within the HART provided **a platform for participants to reconsider their perspectives, develop their confidence and redistribute power.**

8.2 Implications

The research does not seek to provide generalisations about models of group consultation within educational psychology practice. However, it is possible to infer that the following conclusions may be of value for EPs and EPSs delivering the HART consultation framework. Wider implications for consultation should be approached with caution as the context of this HART consultation is unique and the framework itself was designed as a supportive intervention for the system around children who are looked after.

Nevertheless, the present research provides insight into a new dimension of reflexivity within educational psychology consultation. The construct of power cannot be ignored; it is omnipresent. Furthermore, while there may be a desire for EPs to resist the position of power, I propose instead that EPs are uniquely positioned to use power to flatten power; shifting focus to empowering the wider system around the child. Both analysis phases lead me to this conclusion. Within the primary analysis it was suggested that participants within the HART fluidly move between multiple roles. The EPs often enacted roles that managed ethical and emotional dimensions in the group through a use of productive power, as is highlighted in the DA. The EP's use of power was understood to be productive through facilitating the process and enabling a felt sense of safety whereby alternate narratives and catharsis could be explored, for example through descriptions of difficulty and collusions against the past. My conclusion here is one interpretation of the analysis within this thesis; it does not aim to be a universal truth but instead offers a single perspective on the phenomena of a HART. As a reflexive social constructionist researcher, I am not seeking to conclude that this same enactment of reflexive practice will occur in all, or any other, HART consultation. However, to speak of an observed phenomenon at depth offers one version of a single reality at unique moment in time.

Educators, social care colleagues and the wider system of adults around children who are looked after likely benefit from developing their psychological knowledge. The HART in the present study offered a vehicle for learning in an applied setting with the child's lived experiences providing a backdrop for participants to directly link psychological theory to a real-world application. The timeline task was the longest element within the HART, developing a shared understanding where participants shared a range of roles which enabled them to explore what has happened in the child's life alongside questions about how this may present in their current interactions. The EP's contributions in the role of the formulator included psychological theory and research-based evidence. For example, considering attachment theory in a vacuum may be significantly more difficult than discussing the role of nurture concerning the child's early life experiences alongside the story of said experience. Therefore, I have concluded that in this HART consultation the link between theory and practice was supported by the EPs use of power. As this paper is amongst the first to explore the HART consultation framework, it is not yet possible to generalise such a conclusion to suggest that this would occur in HART consultations consistently. However, it is hoped that by illuminating some of the strengths from a case study example that the evidence base can expand beyond this paper to support research which may offer opportunities for generalised conclusions.

8.2.1 Systemic practices supported positive working alliances

The participants regarded the HART consultation positively. However, the positive experience shared between the micro-systems around a child may not always directly link to measurements of impact, for example, positive educational outcomes which were highlighted as a frequently explored topic in the literature base for children who are looked after. The present paper offers a narrative that explores the conscious and subconscious elements of what is happening within a HART consultation and therefore cannot make claims related to long term impact. However what this paper can do is offer an argument that supports the profession to step aside from the determination to attribute success only to the educational outcomes of individuals. Perhaps instead attributing 'success' to emotional contentment and the foundational development of rapport and trust that is facilitated through the EP's use of interpersonal warmth and empathy throughout the HART.

Working with an ecologically informed approach supports the argument that ‘the problem is the problem, not the person’ and ‘if it works, do more of it; if it doesn’t work, do something different’ (Rees, 2017, p. 226). As EPs engage more frequently in practices within the eco-system of children, perhaps as a profession we may shift to become less closely tied to the within-person medical model. Shifts within the profession beyond the HART are exploring narrative approaches (Fogg, 2017), critical approaches (Williams et al., 2017) and the applicability of strength-based positive psychology (Joseph, 2017). EPs are well-placed to support the well-being of children through consultation (Dunsmuir & Cobbald, 2017) and thus further support the shift away from established practices. Yet the accessibility of EPSs remains affected by a postcode lottery of how LA’s, virtual schools and academies manage their budgets.

As discussed in section 1.5, the HART was developed as a practical solution to meeting demand and to offer a tool that steps away from siloed practice by bringing multi-agency discussion to the forefront of service delivery for children who are looked after. The themes from the primary analysis (see joint effort and allies = safety for example) illuminates the phenomena of multi-agency practice supported by educational psychology involvement. In this HART consultation the consultee’s had a shared experience of enacting different roles, at times this led to explicit shifts in narratives and perspectives.

8.2.2 Training competent facilitators of consultations

The role of EPs within the HART and other consultations more widely has been discussed in earlier chapters. However, the trainers of educational psychologists can take inspiration from this insight into the HART consultation to develop the curriculum for trainees. The current paper suggests that the unique skill set of educational psychologists can be difficult to define, with soft skills such as interpersonal warmth and professional empathy being acknowledged as subjective experiences rather than easily definable concepts. Within this HART the role of the EP was flexible, they participated alongside the consultees at times moving between roles but often returned to a productive use of power through leadership and process facilitation. There were periods of observation only from the EPs, however it is not possible from the analysis undertaken to hypothesise about how the EPs had developed and refined their attuned listening and reflexive skill set. Nevertheless, within this

consultation, as is discussed in section 7.3, I concluded that these soft skills likely supported the conscious and subconscious processes within the HART.

This paper does not seek to debate whether individuals who successfully receive invitations to train as EPs inherently possess such skills or whether trainees can be taught to be empathetic and warm. However, this paper does invite doctoral programs to reconsider how they support trainees in exploring their consultative practices and developing their soft skill repertoire in a safe environment.

Furthermore, to go beyond this consideration, this paper argues that formative experiences of facilitating interprofessional group consultation, such as the HART, are invaluable in freeing the trainee from the stressors of 'how to' do consultation, as the framework offers a map of how to and when to – within the analysis this was highlighted as the productive power of the EP to lead the process. Having a framework to guide as opposed to regimented steps is a freeing arena for soft skill development.

In section 7.3, I suggested that the HART framework can be understood as a transitional object that enables participants to be free from the EP's gaze. However, perhaps consultative frameworks such as the HART free the facilitating EP from the gaze of their own self-criticism and self-doubting ego. Trust in the process may enable the development of soft skills and result in more emotionally available practitioners within the moment.

8.2.3 Transparency supports fluidity and rapport

The HART consultation has five pre-defined tasks, which are shared with the participants as part of the invitation to attend; these tasks are recapped at the start of the consultation and reminders for the process include large sheets of paper organized in order of the tasks. Whilst some may critique the rigidity of such a defined process, I argue that the transparency alleviates tensions around what will happen and manages expectations for the consultation. Furthermore, the utility of frameworks for trainees and newly qualified EPs is invaluable in supporting access to a diverse range of educational psychology practices.

In addition to the practical benefits of predefining the consultation process, transparency lends itself to ethical practice, as attendees can query the process ahead of the meeting in private if they feel it is needed.

8.3 Dissemination of research

The research has enabled the discussion of implications for practice that is relevant to educational psychologists, the virtual school and other professionals who have a direct working relationship with children in care and their carers. To disseminate the research within the host local authority, I will be presenting my research at a LA information-sharing event facilitated by the educational psychology service; local authority colleagues from the virtual school and social care will be invited to attend alongside educational psychologists. In the future, I intend to share the findings with a regional interest group and intend to lead a working group to develop supporting documents for the HART consultation, such as a manual with links to the evidence base. The interpretations and implications could also be further disseminated within a research journal; however, at present, I am unsure which journal would be the most appropriate given the value of a new methodological contribution alongside the novel publication of text around HART consultations. It is hoped that this research represents a springboard for further research into the area of HART consultation and other frameworks of interprofessional group consultation.

8.4 Limitations and ideas for further exploration

The present paper utilised a case study approach, which was micro-scale into a single HART consultation. Therefore, whilst the paper did not seek to produce widely generalisable findings, it did use idiographic processes that are interested in the particular rather than nomothetic research that is more broad and generalisable. It would be interesting to utilise similar multi-methodological approaches to multiple HART consultations, for example, using each HART to derive 'personal experiential themes' and then cross-examine to define group experiential themes to answer the research question "What happens in HART consultations?". Furthermore, it would be interesting to adopt a similar methodology to other frameworks of interprofessional group consultation to explore the utility of transparent pre-defined tasks more widely.

The participants did not discuss power in the current paper, yet it has remained central to the supplementary interpretation. Thus, the research became quite psychodynamic. One critique of this is that the research may be considered inaccessible for the participants or other non-EPs to learn from without a significant reduction in the psychological content. However, if the psychological element is reduced or removed, the value of the insights may be altered.

The present paper uses a novel approach to qualitative analysis; however, no guide would ratify the procedures followed. Therefore, ethical rigour can be based only on my demonstration of thinking within the appendix chapter and throughout text quotations and figures. Within my initial search for a methodology, I often wondered how I would know the analytical process was complete. Even when processes such as IPA determined individual stages with each session of analysis and writing, additional interpretations were made. For example, the addition of the Optimistic Advocate. Similarly, within the DA, my ideas developed with each interaction with the transcript. I took solace in the guidance of Foucault, who suggests that interpretation can doom you to an endless task. Therefore, there are likely alternate constructions to be derived by each reader, this is congruent with my social constructionist positionality. I sought not to follow a silo mentality and instead move beyond the box, even if this felt unfamiliar and daunting.

There is very limited research in the field of HARTs; one critique of this paper is my passion for the field will undoubtedly lead to an element of bias. However, I have strived to overcome this by sharing elements of my reflective journal. Furthermore, the local authority EPS who participated in the research may have an agenda to participate in HART research to expand the literature base. One critique of this is that the LA EPS had a biased interest in using phrases such as 'light bulb moment' within the transcript so that the framework gains traction and thus becomes politically visible. Such exposure could open access to additional funding streams for EP-curated work in the mainstream literature base, such as NICE guidance for CLA.

Many limitations are associated with being an insider researcher, but I overcame the challenges by supervision, reflexive journaling, and observing the HART instead of facilitating. Such intimate access to a HART consultation would be hard to access without being an insider, and it is an essential starting point for future research into the HART consultation. The insider position could lead me to be biased in empathising with the participants and thus silence their voices by the assumption that the experience described is universally understandable when, in fact, transparency and jargon-free detailed descriptions are essential. This applies to all multi-agency practice beyond HARTs.

The literature regarding looked-after children pays close attention to educational and other outcomes as a measure of the effectiveness of individual and systemic approaches to supporting the population. It would be interesting to further explore whether there is any direct approach to assessing the impact on the educational outcomes of the children whose systems engage in HART consultations. Furthermore, HART consultations only occur because of the lives of children. Within the DA chapter I considered the power of the child within, despite their physical absence they were emotionally and mentally present.

In summary, what is happening in a HART is similar to the iceberg of the conscious and subconscious mind. On the surface, there is a series of actions; these actions are balanced between ensuring participants feel comfortable but not so comfortable that they cannot consider an alternate perspective. The EP's role is to facilitate and check-in; perhaps think of the EP as Goldilocks checking to see if the discussion is too hot or too cold and providing guidance and reassurance whilst using the framework as a supportive platform. The HART is a highly emotive space where power is used for good.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Figure showing the grid populated during task five; mapping onto the pillars of parenting framework

Developing a sense of belonging	Managing life events	Acquiring social confidence
Providing quality care & protection	Enhancing resilience	Improving emotional competence
Building warm relationships		
Promoting an appropriate level of self-worth	Teaching self-managing skills	Developing personal and social responsibility
Ensuring a sense of belonging		

Appendix 2: Email template used by the EPS to invite attendees to HART consultations

I am emailing on behalf of XXX Psychological Service to invite you to a Hull Attachment Resilience & Trauma Consultation for **[NAME] at [SCHOOL]**

The HART consultation is an educational psychology consultation framework which aims to develop a shared understanding of the child/young person's needs and how to support them. The consultation begins by discussing a timeline of the child/young person's life so, for the meeting to take place, the social worker must be present to share important details from their chronology. A representative from the child/young person's school and Virtual School will also be invited, alongside any other important professionals that have been identified. Where appropriate the child/young person's carer is invited to attend; **the social worker should contact the carer to invite them.**

The HART consultation will be facilitated by **[EP NAME]** ([INSERT GRADE] Educational Psychologist) and **[NAME]** ([INSERT GRADE] Educational Psychologist) jointly.

The proposed date for the meeting is **[INSERT DATE, TIME at VENUE]** The consultation should last approximately **2 hours**.

This will be followed by a HART Reflection, on **[INSERT DATE, TIME at VENUE]**.

The information below is attached to the email:

Hull Attachment, Resilience & Trauma (HART) consultations
(Reframing the narrative of children who are looked after)

Rationale & Context

The Hull Attachment, Resilience & Trauma or HART consultation is an educational psychology consultation framework, which forms part of the core offer for children/young people looked after within [REDACTED]. Referrals for HART consultations are made to the Educational psychology service through the [REDACTED] Virtual School.

HART consultations aim to support all the key adults in a young person's life to develop a shared understanding of their needs and appropriate strategies to develop and support their well-being. The meeting begins by discussing a timeline of the young person's life, reflecting on key experiences and the impact of these on their development. Discussion then focuses on supporting the young person and a plan, using the 'Pillars of Parenting' framework is devised collaboratively.

What does it look like in practice?

- Multi agency consultation including school staff (must be an advocate for the child), social worker, foster parent, FSW, virtual school, clinical psychologist.
- 2 hour meeting, usually an EP and Assistant EP - short report follows.
- Review of the plan in 8-12 weeks (assess, plan, do, review).

The Steps to this approach are as follows;

1. Mapping a timeline of the young person's life and discussing the possible psychological and developmental implications of this.
2. Interpreting the young person's 'internal working model' and how their thoughts about the world and relationships might impact on their learning and behaviour.
3. Considering the young person's strengths and our hopes for them in the future.
4. Co-construct strategies, interventions and actions to support the young person at home and in school.

For further information about positive reframing please watch:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RjoXNAGUVmo>

Appendix 3: Approval of ethics application to the University of Sheffield



Downloaded: 03/01/2024

Approved: 04/12/2023

Georgia Carmichael

Registration number: [REDACTED]

School of Education

Programme: Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology

Dear Georgia

PROJECT TITLE: What is happening in a HART consultation?

APPLICATION: Reference Number 053879

On behalf of the University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on 04/12/2023 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 053879 (form submission date: 20/11/2023); (expected project end date: 30/08/2024).
- Participant information sheet 1123198 version 2 (20/11/2023).
- Participant consent form 1123199 version 2 (20/11/2023).

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

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

Appendix 4: Ethics application submitted to the University of Sheffield



Application 053879

Section A: Applicant details
Date application started: Sat 20 May 2023 at 09:34
First name: Georgia
Last name: Carmichael
Email: gcarmichael1@sheffield.ac.uk
Programme name: Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology
Module name: Thesis
Last updated: 04/12/2023
Department: School of Education
Applying as: Postgraduate research
Research project title: What is happening in a HART consultation?
Has your research project undergone academic review, in accordance with the appropriate process? Yes
Similar applications: N/A

Section B: Basic information				
Supervisor				
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Name</th> <th>Email</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Rob Begon</td> <td>r.begon@sheffield.ac.uk</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Name	Email	Rob Begon	r.begon@sheffield.ac.uk
Name	Email			
Rob Begon	r.begon@sheffield.ac.uk			
Proposed project duration				
Start date (of data collection): Mon 20 November 2023				
Anticipated end date (of project) Fri 30 August 2024				
3: Project code (where applicable)				
Project externally funded? No				

Project code
- not entered -

Suitability

Takes place outside UK?

No

Involves NHS?

No

Health and/or social care human-interventional study?

No

ESRC funded?

No

Likely to lead to publication in a peer-reviewed journal?

Yes

Led by another UK institution?

No

Involves human tissue?

No

Clinical trial or a medical device study?

No

Involves social care services provided by a local authority?

No

Is social care research requiring review via the University Research Ethics Procedure

No

Involves adults who lack the capacity to consent?

No

Involves research on groups that are on the Home Office list of 'Proscribed terrorist groups or organisations'?

No

Indicators of risk

Involves potentially vulnerable participants?

No

Involves potentially highly sensitive topics?

No

Section C: Summary of research

1. Aims & Objectives

Educational Psychologists (EPs) frequently use consultation as a systemic approach to support the needs of school pupils. Consultation often involves working with adults to explore concerns held by the system, develop a shared understanding of what may be contributing to the current concerns, and how the system can respond and support the pupil. A model of consultation called the Hull Attachment Resilience and Trauma (HART) consultation was developed for use when EP support was requested for children who are looked after. The model is underpinned by research from across the applied psychology such as attachment theory. It explores early childhood experiences and how they may contribute to the child's approach to relationships within their daily life. The HART consultation facilitates a space for the child's story to be heard, with attendees including social workers, foster carers and school staff contributing details of (pre)birth through to the present day. All parties are then supported to hypothesise the child's current and ideal future internal working model, these are shared as "I" statements, for example, "I cannot trust adults to care for me". The child's strengths are discussed openly, this is particularly important following a discussion of the potential difficulties experienced by the child as it supports the reframing of the child. The final step in the HART consultation employs the pillars of parenting (Cameron & Maginn, 2008). The child support needs across the three main strands (developing a sense of belonging, managing life events, and acquiring social competence) are discussed and interventions and strategies are mapped onto a grid. It is this final section which forms a suggested action plan for the school.

I am only aware of one piece of previous research (Carmichael, 2021) exploring HARTs. The research looked into the experiences of attendees and a key theme from the thematic analysis suggested a moment of change entitled "a light bulb moment". In addition to the research mentioned above, anecdotal feedback from EPs who use the HART consultation suggests it is an increasingly requested support model and regarded as useful.

The current research seeks to explore 'What is happening in a HART consultation?'. The exploratory nature of the research intends to find meaning (hermeneutics) through an inductive methodology. The currently unpublished exploration of HART consultations (Carmichael, 2021) suggests participants experienced a "lightbulb moment". The participants in Carmichael (2021) reflected on their experience of HART consultations in a general sense; the discussion was not centred around one common experience so it was not possible to ascertain in greater detail what that moment was for each participant. Whilst previous research indicates an occurrence of something within HART consultations, knowledge of what is or may, happen remains undetermined. Therefore, there are no pre-defined hypotheses to be tested, instead "the aim is to explore, flexibly and in detail, an area of concern" (Smith and Osborn, 2015, p. 28).

2. Methodology

The current proposal seeks to centre the research within a specific context with a small sample whom are homogenous because they have experience of the same HART consultation. Therefore, an intra-paradigm (O'Reilly and Kiyimba, 2015) 'multi-methods' (Anguera et al, 2018) approach is proposed to facilitate a dual-layered analysis of a single specific context. The first layer of analysis will be IPA and the second Foucauldian discourse analysis (FDA).

The 'double hermeneutic' approach to IPA (Smith, 2012) is well matched with the positionality and value base of the researcher. In order to explore experience, interpretation is key and so a process must be facilitated in order to present an opportunity that can be made sense of. In this research, a HART consultation will occur in a naturalistic manner; a request for EP involvement will lead to the HART being offered, following the information sharing and consent procedures, the initial phenomenological analysis will be the interpretation of the researcher – a double hermeneutic.

Whilst a double hermeneutic IPA methodology addresses some of the experiential elements of interest within the research, only including this amount of data would be limited and incongruent with the researcher's value base and the underpinning values of group consultation. The design and methodology outlined thus far address the researcher's interpretation of 'what is happening in a HART consultation?', yet contribute to a power imbalance in that the participant's views on the interpretation are not actively sought. Through an information-sharing event at a follow-up focus group, the researcher hopes to hear the views of the participants, thus including them in the data analysis procedure. The researcher will then personally reflect on the experience of sharing the IPA summary in order to complete a secondary layer of analysis on the primary transcript. FDA is proposed as the second phase within this research as it acknowledges discourses within the wider system and cultural context; within the lives of children in care there are often dominant discourses which can present within HART consultations; it is hoped that the research can consider this within the exploration of what is happening "in" a HART consultation.

There are 5 key phases in the methodology.

Phase 1: Data gathering

Data will be collected at a single interval through direct observation and audio recording of a HART consultation. All attendees must have read and signed the information sheet and consent form prior to attending the HART consultation; without this the researcher will not attend the HART to maintain the ethical rigour of the study. The HART consultation will be facilitated, as per the consultation framework guidelines, with two educational psychologists. The researcher will be an additional attendee and therefore will explicitly state their role as researcher before starting the audio recording; this means they shall not participate in any of the HART discussions. The purpose of the researcher's presence at the HART consultation is to answer additional questions regarding the research and to ensure the audio recording equipment works. In addition to this, the researcher's role seeks to minimise any additional demands placed on the facilitating EPs.

Phase 2: Data consolidation and analysis layer 1

The researcher will transcribe the audio recording and anonymise it appropriately. Participants will be contacted at this point and given a window of opportunity to read the transcripts to ensure that no confidential data has been missed or inadequately anonymised; if no participants wish to view the transcript an additional review of the transcript will be completed by the researcher. The first layer of the data analysis will employ a double hermeneutic approach of interpretive phenomenological analysis (Smith, 2012). IPA has been identified as a suitable first analytical lens to begin addressing the primary research question 'What is happening in a HART consultation?'. The underpinning ontology of the research is social constructivism (Burr, 2015), therefore the researcher is not seeking to define the 'is' in the research question, but instead to begin making sense of the experience(s) for those whom it is happening for? After all, the purpose of consultation in this research has been conceptualised as a systemic intervention; therefore making sense of what is happening within the defined system of people involved.

Phase 3: A non-data gathering event

A follow-up focus group will take place at the review meeting (this is an event that occurs as standard practice within the HART consultation guidelines) therefore all participants will be able to participate should they wish. At the focus group the researcher will share the headlines of the IPA via a short spoken presentation and a printed summary sheet.

The researcher will explicitly state that the information shared is the researcher's interpretation of the consultee's experience within the HART. The follow-up focus group will afford the opportunity for group reflection on the interpretive phenomenological analysis; the focus group will be semi-structured and will provide an opportunity for the researcher to hear the participant's views on the IPA. The researcher will ask an open question "tell me your views on the IPA summary information that has been shared".

Phase 4: A non-data gathering/producing event

the researcher will engage in ethnographic reflexive journaling based on the focus group discussion. This sets out the opportunity for the researcher to overtly engage in reflexive practice ahead of a re-analysis of the primary transcript. The purpose of this phase is to explicitly articulate the researchers positionality and bias following one layer of analysis and feedback ahead of further re-analysis in phase 5.

Phase 5: Data analysis layer 2

A re-analysis of the primary transcript applying Foucauldian discourse analysis (Willig, 2008). FDA is proposed as a key staged within this research as it acknowledges discourses within the wider system and cultural context; within the lives of children in care there are often dominant discourses which can present within HART consultations; it is hoped that the research can consider this within the exploration of what is happening in a HART consultation.

3. Personal Safety

Have you completed your departmental risk assessment procedures, if appropriate?

In progress

Raises personal safety issues?

No

There are no physical safety concerns associated with observing a HART consultation or contributing to the follow-up focus groups. Such events will occur in their natural environments on school property.

The nature of discussions in HART consultation can be sensitive and share explicit detail about the lived experiences of children before they move into care. The researcher is familiar with the consultation model and has weekly 1:1 supervision with a senior EP plus monthly peer supervision within the EP service. In addition to this, the researcher engages frequently in supervision with staff from the University; all of the aforementioned opportunities support positive mental well-being and provide a space to discuss difficult conversations that may be heard during the HART (data collection).

Section D: About the participants

1. Potential Participants

The local authority that is hosting the research requires all EP support for children who are looked after to be requested via the Virtual School. Potential participants will be identified through their requests for HART consultation through the virtual school. Bi-weekly allocation meetings are held with the virtual school and EP service.

The research is looking to study one specific HART consultation; whilst there is guidance on mandatory attendees the potential variety in roles and relationships for attendees can vary significantly for each case. For a HART to be scheduled and confirmed at least 2 EP's, the social worker and a representative from the school are required to attend. Potential additional attendees include foster carers, representatives from the virtual school, the fostering social worker and other involved professionals such as clinical psychologists and speech and language therapists. therefore potential participants could vary, however, all invitees will be offered the opportunity to participate and consent.

2. Recruiting Potential Participants

Information about the research will be shared with the virtual school at the start of the academic year (September 2023) - this will stipulate that only one HART consultation is required for the purpose of the current research and that selection of the HART will be based upon the consent of all attendees.

All HART consultation requests received will be processed as per the LA EP service protocol. the initial invitation for HART consultations is sent to the school, the social worker and the virtual school; it is stipulated in the protocol that should they know of others who should be or wish to be invited that they inform the EP. All potential attendees will be sent a copy of the information sheet and consent form.

The process of sharing information sheets and consent forms will be repeated for new HART requests until a consultation whereby all attendees consent to be research participants.

2.1. Advertising methods

Will the study be advertised using the volunteer lists for staff or students maintained by IT Services? No

- not entered -

3. Consent

Will informed consent be obtained from the participants? (i.e. the proposed process) Yes

All potential participants will receive a copy of the information sheet and consent form - the consent form is electronic. Whilst electronic consent forms risk limiting the sample, in the host LA all requests for EP involvement are received electronically therefore all parties who

are invited to HART consultations engage with consent procedures electronically already.

The consent form will be shared via email with all attendees who are invited to contribute to the HART consultation.

4. Payment

Will financial/in kind payments be offered to participants? No

5. Potential Harm to Participants

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

There is no potential for physical harm to the participants. Prior to attending HART consultations, all attendees are aware that the discussion may be sensitive (however this is not different for the research). The EP service offers additional support as standard to attendees of HART consultations if they have experienced distress during the consultation (again this is no different for the research).

As part of the follow-up focus group the participants will engage in discussion about the analysis of the HART consultation transcript, participants will be able to share feedback during this process. There is no anticipated distress or psychological harm to the participants.

How will this be managed to ensure appropriate protection and well-being of the participants?

Participants are able to withdraw their consent and leave the research process at any time; if this occurs participants will be reminded that they can access additional support through the researcher - this is stipulated on the information sheet. The researcher will be available after each point of contact for an immediate debrief with any participant to support their well-being.

6. Potential harm to others who may be affected by the research activities

Which other people, if any, may be affected by the research activities, beyond the participants and the research team?

The lived experiences of the child in care who the HART consultation is being held for will be discussed, the researcher will be an additional attendee at the HART consultation for the purposes of the research therefore their story will be heard by an extra person. However, children and young people are not present at HART consultations.

What is the potential for harm to these people?

There is no anticipated effect of the research activity on the young person whose lived experiences are discussed.

How will this be managed to ensure appropriate safeguarding of these people?

Whilst the HART consultation will be transcribed, all sensitive data and identifying information within the stories told will be anonymised.

7. Reporting of safeguarding concerns or incidents

What arrangements will be in place for participants, and any other people external to the University who are involved in, or affected by, the research, to enable reporting of incidents or concerns?

The information sheet states:

For all queries please contact the researcher by emailing gcamichael1@sheffield.ac.uk

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

You should contact Dr Rob Begon (University Research Supervisor) r.begon@sheffield.ac.uk should you wish to raise a complaint. If you feel the complaint has not been handled to your satisfaction you can contact the University's Registrar and Secretary.

Who will be the Designated Safeguarding Contact(s)?

The designated safeguarding contact for the research will be the research supervisor Dr Rob Begon, however safeguarding concerns specifically about the child being discussed (not research related) will be escalated to the DSL in the school as per the school safeguarding procedure. Further information on this is not yet possible to share as it is not yet known which school the HART consultation will be facilitated at.

How will reported incidents or concerns be handled and escalated?

The researcher will work in collaboration with the virtual school to follow the safeguarding procedures outlined by the school and/or LA dependent on the nature of the safeguarding concern.

Section E: About the data

1. Data Processing

Will you be processing (i.e. collecting, recording, storing, or otherwise using) personal data as part of this project? (Personal data is any information relating to an identified or identifiable living person).

Yes

Which organisation(s) will act as Data Controller?

University of Sheffield only

2. Legal basis for processing of personal data

The University considers that for the vast majority of research, 'a task in the public interest' (6(1)(e)) will be the most appropriate legal basis. If, following discussion with the UREC, you wish to use an alternative legal basis, please provide details of the legal basis, and the reasons for applying it, below:

- not entered -

Will you be processing (i.e. collecting, recording, storing, or otherwise using) 'Special Category' personal data?

No

3. Data Confidentiality

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

The HART consultation will be recorded using a dictaphone, and the audio recording will be securely stored on google drive in line with the University of Sheffield's data storing policy. The audio recording will be transcribed and anonymised; again this will be stored on the researcher's university google drive account. The audio recording will be securely destroyed once the transcription process has been completed as detailed in the information sheet.

Demographic data shall not be recorded or published.

The researcher will make it clear that all identifiable data, including case information such as name, age, school etc, and the participants' information such as names and job roles will not be published.

Once data collection and transcription is complete participants will be provided with the opportunity to read the anonymised transcript and raise concerns/suggest amendments. Similarly, if during the follow up focus group participants share concerns regarding the anonymity within quotes attached to the interpretative phenomenological analysis process; then the transcript and analysis notes will be reviewed and amended accordingly. Such changes will only be made if the concerns are regarding anonymity; changes to the analysis will not be possible.

4. Data Storage and Security

In general terms, who will have access to the data generated at each stage of the research, and in what form

Transcripts and audio files will only be stored on the secure google drive.

The audio recording will be securely destroyed upon completion of the transcription process as detailed in the information sheet.

What steps will be taken to ensure the security of data processed during the project, including any identifiable personal data, other than those already described earlier in this form?

All of the information will be stored in a secure location on a password-protected Google Drive. Securely stored information will only be accessible to the research team. Upon completion of the research project or publication, any identifiable data linked to participants will be permanently deleted.

Will all identifiable personal data be destroyed once the project has ended?

Yes

Please outline when this will take place (this should take into account regulatory and funder requirements).

Audio recordings and transcription(s) will be stored until the end of the research project (30th August 2023) or until publication.

Section F: Supporting documentation

Information & Consent

Participant information sheets relevant to project?

Yes

Document 1123198 (Version 2)
Participant information sheet

[All versions](#)

Consent forms relevant to project?

Yes

Document 1123199 (Version 2)	All versions
Additional Documentation	
Document 1123200 (Version 1) Research proposal	All versions
External Documentation	
- not entered -	

Section G: Declaration
Signed by: Georgia Carmichael Date signed: Mon 20 November 2023 at 11:09

Official notes
- not entered -

Appendix 5: Ethical approval letter from the host local authority

Georgia Carmichael

Tel:

Email:

Date: 24th January 2024

Dear Georgia,

RE: Research Governance Application - What is happening in a HART consultation?

Thank you for your Research Governance application.

I write to confirm that your Research Governance Application has been approved, subject to you agreeing to the conditions outlined below.

I note that your application does not make reference to the LAs complaints process. Could you please therefore confirm that you will:

- (1) Add details of the LAs complaints procedure to the documents that you share with potential participants.
- (2) Undertake to inform [PRINCIPAL EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST] in the event that there are any complaints submitted during your research.

Please note that Research Governance approval means that the research project has been deemed to comply with the Council's safeguarding, data protection and information security standards. Given that your research does not involve the use of existing Council data and does not seek to involve children and young people that the Council are involved with then there are no safeguarding or data protection issues that I need to raise with you.

I would like to wish you all the best during this research project. The Council looks forward to being informed of the findings in due course.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Education Organisation, Governance and Operations Manager



Appendix 6: Information sheet

V.2
17.11.2023



Participant Information Sheet

What is happening in a HART consultation?
Hull Attachment Resilience and Trauma consultations – part of the core offer for children who are looked after by [REDACTED] Council.

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

What is the project's purpose?

The aims of my research are;

- to explore moments of change within a HART consultation
- to make sense of the experience of participating in a HART consultation
- to explore the discourses about children in care and their lived experiences as discussed in a HART consultation

This research is part of my Doctoral Training and should be completed by September 2024.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen to participate as you have confirmed your attendance at a scheduled HART consultation.

Do I have to take part?

Taking part in the research is entirely voluntary and it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep (and be asked to sign a consent form) and you can still withdraw up to the point of full analysis of the data and not thereafter (it is anticipated that analysis will be completed no later than 90 days after data collection at the HART consultation, however the final date for withdrawal shall be 01/04/2024). You do not have to give any reasons for why you no longer want to take part and there will be no adverse consequences if you choose to withdraw. If you wish to withdraw from the research, please contact me at gcarmichael1@sheffield.ac.uk

Please note that by choosing to participate in this research, signing the consent form will not create a legally binding agreement, nor is it intended to create an employment relationship between you and the University of Sheffield.

What will happen to me if I take part? What do I have to do?

If you participate, I will attend the scheduled HART consultation to provide you with an additional opportunity to ask questions and/or withdraw consent. If all participants in attendance consent the HART consultation will occur as planned with the Lead Educational Psychologist for the child's school

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17.11.2023

and an Assistant Educational Psychologist facilitating the HART consultation. During this consultation, I will audio record the session and refrain from contributing to ensure the HART consultation framework does not differ from typical practice.

After the HART consultation, I shall transcribe the audio recording and anonymise all identifiable information including names. You will be contacted at this point and given a period of 10 working days to read the transcript and ensure no confidential data has been missed or unsatisfactorily anonymised. If you do not wish to view the transcript an additional review of the transcript will be completed by the researcher. Once transcribed and checked the original recording will be securely destroyed.

The transcript will then be analysed using a research methodology called interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA); this method has been chosen as it seeks to make sense of the experiences of attendees at HART consultations. The IPA method is called a double hermeneutic; this means the researcher is seeking to make sense of a secondary experience therefore it is interpretive.

All HART consultations have a review session, within this review session you will be invited to participate in an additional discussion facilitated by the researcher. This discussion will provide you with the opportunity to hear the analysis described above and engage in a discussion about the meanings derived. Please note the HART review and this discussion will not be transcribed, however the discussion will inform a reflective process for the researcher ahead of the final stage of analysis.

After the HART review and discussion of analysis the researcher will independently engage in a reflective process documenting any potential research bias or changes in perspective based on the discussion between participants. Again this does not contribute to formal research data, however increases the integrity of a secondary phase of analysis. The final stage of analysis completed by the researcher is called Foucauldian Discourse Analysis; this process looks at the use of language and will be completed on the original transcript from the HART consultation.

The researcher has chosen to complete two methods of data analysis in order to address the research question. The methodology aims to place minimal demands on the participants and will not require additional time or resources from schools and other services involved in supporting the care of children who are looked after.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

Participation in HART consultations includes discussion about the lived experiences of a child who is looked after, this includes the reasons of why they moved into care and therefore may elicit recollections about incidents of a sensitive, upsetting or stress-inducing. If these feelings become too overwhelming you are able to leave the discussion at any point and we will discuss what support you may need. This may involve accessing external support if we feel this is appropriate. You are free to withdraw from the research at any time up to the point of submission of my thesis and do not need to provide any explanation.

Although your identity as a participant will, of course, remain anonymous, assumptions may be made regarding the location of the EPS the research was conducted in given the identification of myself as the author. Given the participatory nature of this research, you will be involved in discussions with myself and other co-researchers and we will agree how we can maintain confidentiality of participants and the families we work with. This may include not disclosing the location of the EPS, rather describing it as a 'psychological service' located in the UK. Also, professional titles of participants not being disclosed. After reading the transcript, you may feel that the detail may lead

V.2
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to identification of yourself or a family you have worked with. If this is the case, then we will work together to change the details before submission to ensure anonymity.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Whilst there is no immediate benefit for those participating in the project, it is hoped that this may provide an opportunity to engage in research that can develop the practice of consultation within educational psychology.

What will happen to the information I share?

Your consent form and the recording of the HART will be saved onto a Google Drive file created specifically for this research and the original versions destroyed. Data stored on Google Drive is encrypted and password protected. All information that is taken from you will be anonymised to maintain confidentiality. You will not be identifiable within the research.

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

Throughout the research I will comply with the terms of the Council's Data Protection Policy, which can be accessed via the Council's Intranet:

<http://home.hullcc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures/ict-and-information-governance/data-protection>

Also, I will comply with the terms of the Council's Information Security Policy, which can be accessed via the Council's Intranet:

<http://home.hullcc.gov.uk/policies-and-procedures/ict-and-information-governance/information-security>

The analyses will be used as part of my doctoral thesis which will be published online at: <https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/>. The contents of the Google Drive file will be deleted once my thesis has been approved and published.

Who has ethically reviewed the project?

This project has been ethically approved by the School of Education, University of Sheffield's Ethics Review Procedure. The University's Research Ethics Committee monitors the application and delivery of the University's Ethics Review Procedure across the University. It has also been approved by [REDACTED] Council Research Governance.

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

You should contact Dr Rob Begon (University Research Supervisor) r.begon@sheffield.ac.uk should you wish to raise a complaint. If you feel the complaint has not been handled to your satisfaction you can contact the University's Registrar and Secretary.

V.2
17.11.2023

Contact for further information

Researcher:
Georgia Carmichael
gcarmichael1@sheffield.ac.uk

Research Supervisor
Dr Rob Begon
r.begon@sheffield.ac.uk

What to do next

If you are interested in taking part in this research or have any further questions, please email me at gcarmichael1@sheffield.ac.uk

Thank you, your participation is really valuable to this research and I appreciate any contribution you are able to make.

Appendix 7: Recruitment email

Good afternoon,

My name is Georgia Carmichael, I am a trainee educational psychologist in my final year of study at The University of Sheffield. As part of my Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology I am completing research into the Hull Attachment Resilience and Trauma (HART) consultation model.

As part of the research I will need to observe a HART consultation. Whilst the HART consultation is being held for *this child* in particular, my research is seeking to explore the process of a HART consultation to address my research question “what is happening in a HART consultation?”

If consent is gained from all attendees for this HART consultation, then I will observe the HART consultation in person and audio record the discussion. The recording will be transcribed (written into a text script) and anonymised. No names or identifiable data for the child or yourselves will be included in the transcript. Once the transcription process is complete the audio file will be permanently deleted. I will complete analysis using IPA and share an overview of this with you at the HART consultation review meeting in the following half term. I will then complete secondary analysis using a different research method; Foucauldian Discourse Analysis.

For more information about the research I have attached the participant information sheet.

If you decide you would like to participate in this research please **complete the consent form via this link.**

This research project has been granted ethical approval from The University of Sheffield and XXX Council's research governance departments. If you have any concerns, and feel able to, please contact me directly at gcarmichael1@sheffield.ac.uk.

Thank you in advance,

Georgia

Georgia Carmichael (she/her)

Trainee Educational Psychologist

Appendix 8: Participant consent form

Consent form for participation in research: What is happening in a HART consultation?

By signing this consent form I agree to be a participant in the study being completed by a trainee educational psychologist from the University of Sheffield; and I understand that the purpose of the research is to explore what is happening in a HART consultation?

This consent form has been shared alongside the research project information sheet V.2 dated 17.11.2023

gcarmichael1@sheffield.ac.uk [Switch accounts](#)



Not shared

* Indicates required question

Name of the participant *

Your answer

Please accept this tick as an electronic signature. *

☐ I agree to participate in the above study.

If providing consent on a paper form please sign here:



Please select today's date. *

Date

dd/mm/yyyy

Taking part in research I understand that: *

☐ I have read and understood the project information sheet (dated 17.11.2023) or the project has been fully explained to me. (If you will answer No to this question please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what your participation in the project will mean.)

☐ I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

☐ I agree to take part in the project. I understand that taking part in the project will include a HART consultation that I am contributing to being audio recorded, transcribed and analysed.

☐ I agree that whilst I am participating in the HART consultation an audio recording will be made. I agree to being audio recorded and for transcripts of the anonymised audio recordings to be used in the research.

☐ I understand that my taking part is voluntary and that I can withdraw up to the point of full analysis of the data and not thereafter (it is anticipated that analysis will be completed no later than 90 days after data collection at the HART consultation, however the final date for withdrawal shall be 01/04/2024). I do not have to give any reasons for why I no longer want to take part and there will be no adverse consequences if I choose to withdraw.

☐ I understand that by choosing to participate as a volunteer in this research, this does not create a legally binding agreement nor is it intended to create an employment relationship with the University of Sheffield.



I understand how my information will be used during and after the project *

- ☐ I understand my personal details such as name and role will not be revealed to anyone other than the researcher
- ☐ I understand and agree that my words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs. I understand that I will not be named in these outputs.
- ☐ I understand and agree that other authorised researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.
- ☐ I understand that my information will be kept on a secure google drive until such a time as it is no longer needed. This will be either when the research project has ended in September 2024, or upon publication.

If you have any questions, please contact gcarmichael1@sheffield.ac.uk

The contact details of the researcher responsible for managing data is

(gcarmichael1@sheffield.ac.uk)

The research supervisor is Dr Rob Begon (r.begon@sheffield.ac.uk)

If you wish to escalate any concerns regarding the ethical practice within this research project please contact the Head of the School of Education: Professor Rebecca Lawthorn (r.lawthom@sheffield.ac.uk.)

Submit

[Clear form](#)

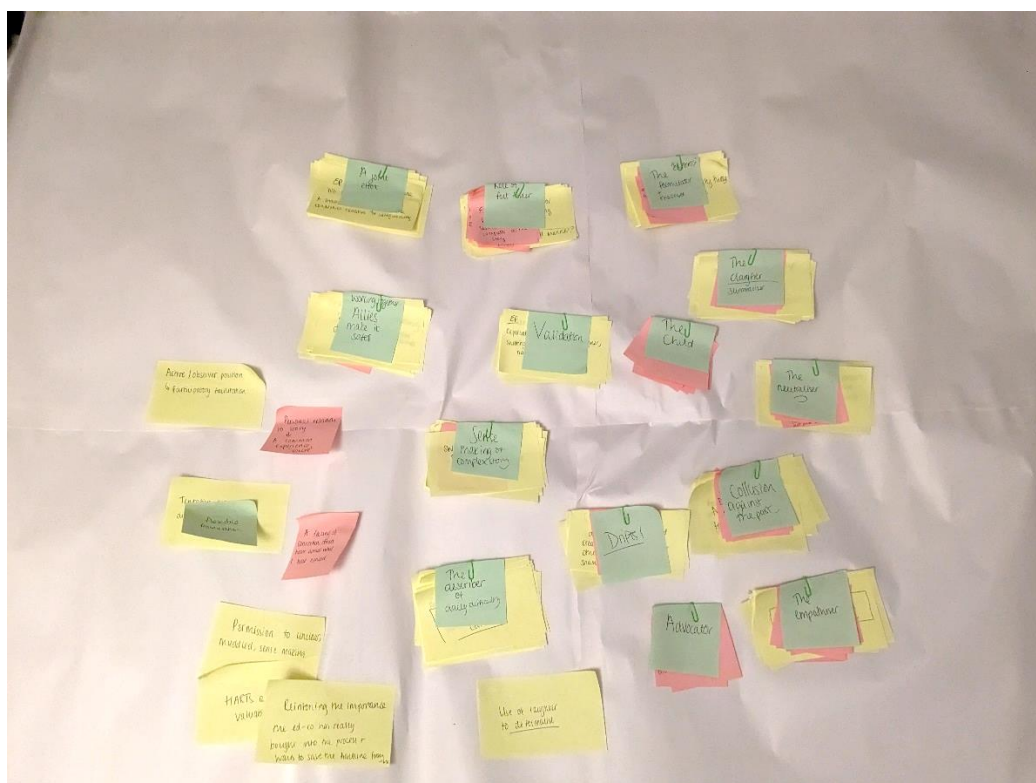
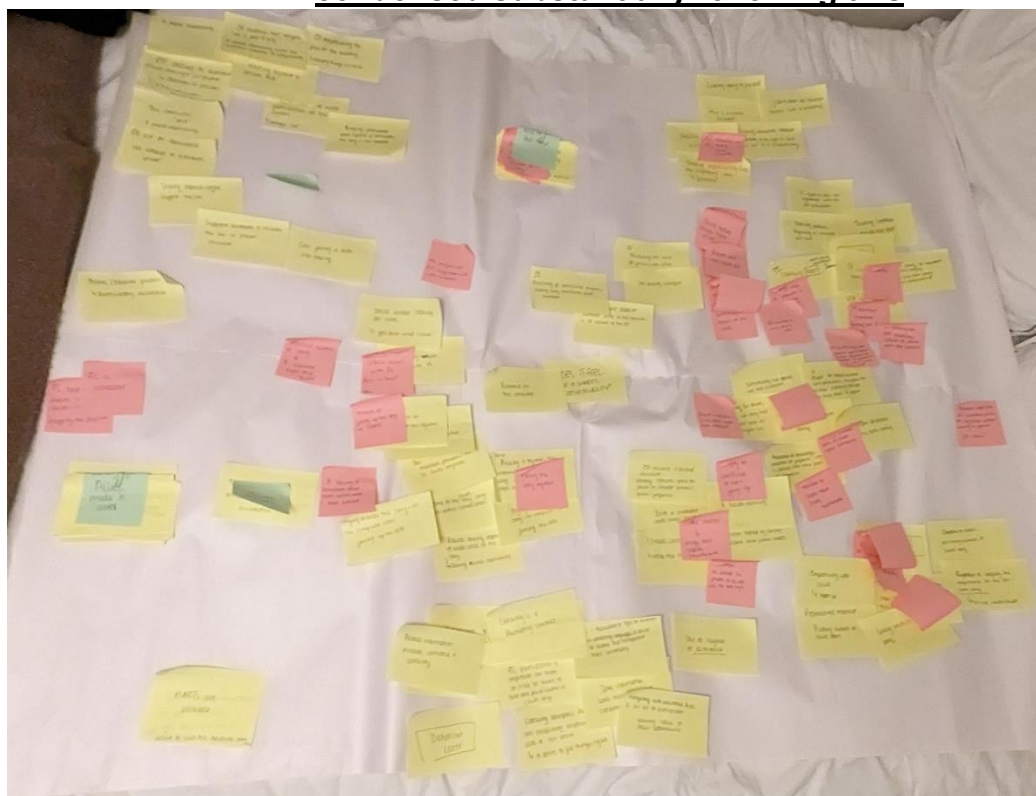
Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

This form was created inside University of Sheffield. [Report Abuse](#)

Google Forms



Appendix 9: Image of post-it note mapping process; the data needed to be condensed substantially following this

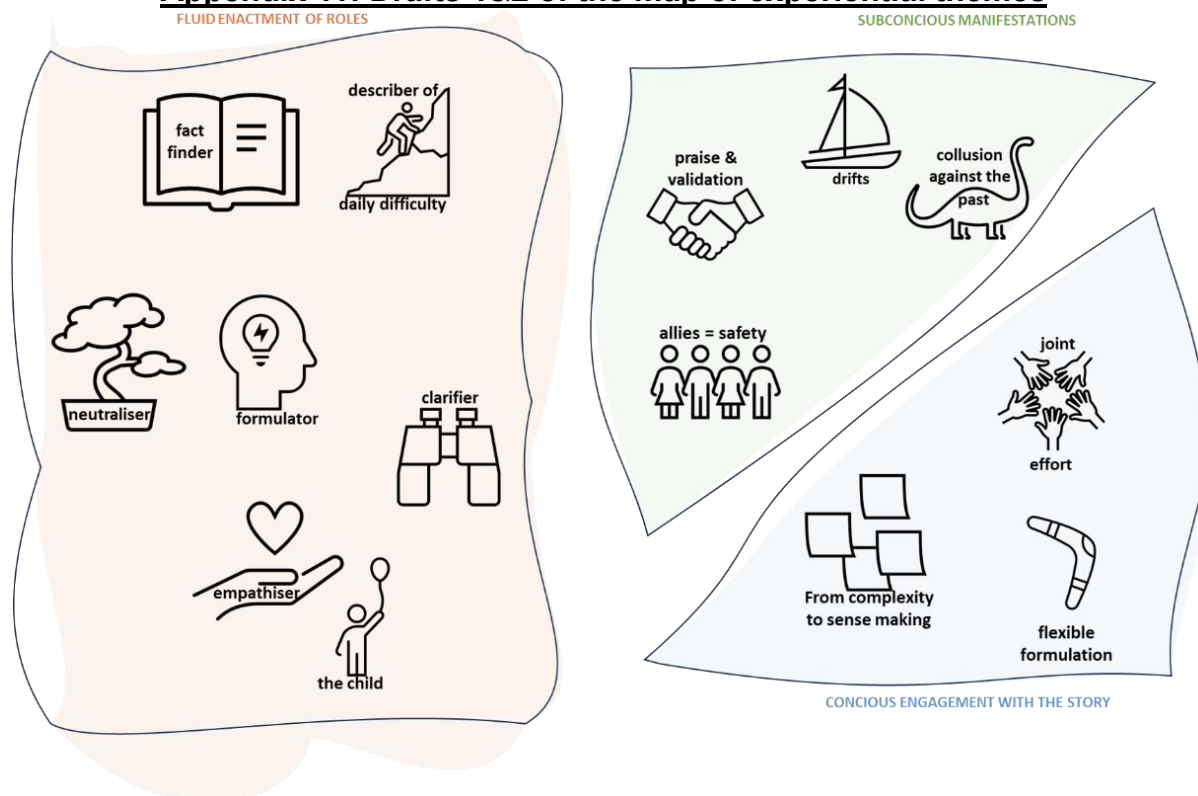


Appendix 10: Raw notes from an excerpt of transcript read through
(typed to aid legibility – transcript removed for anonymity)

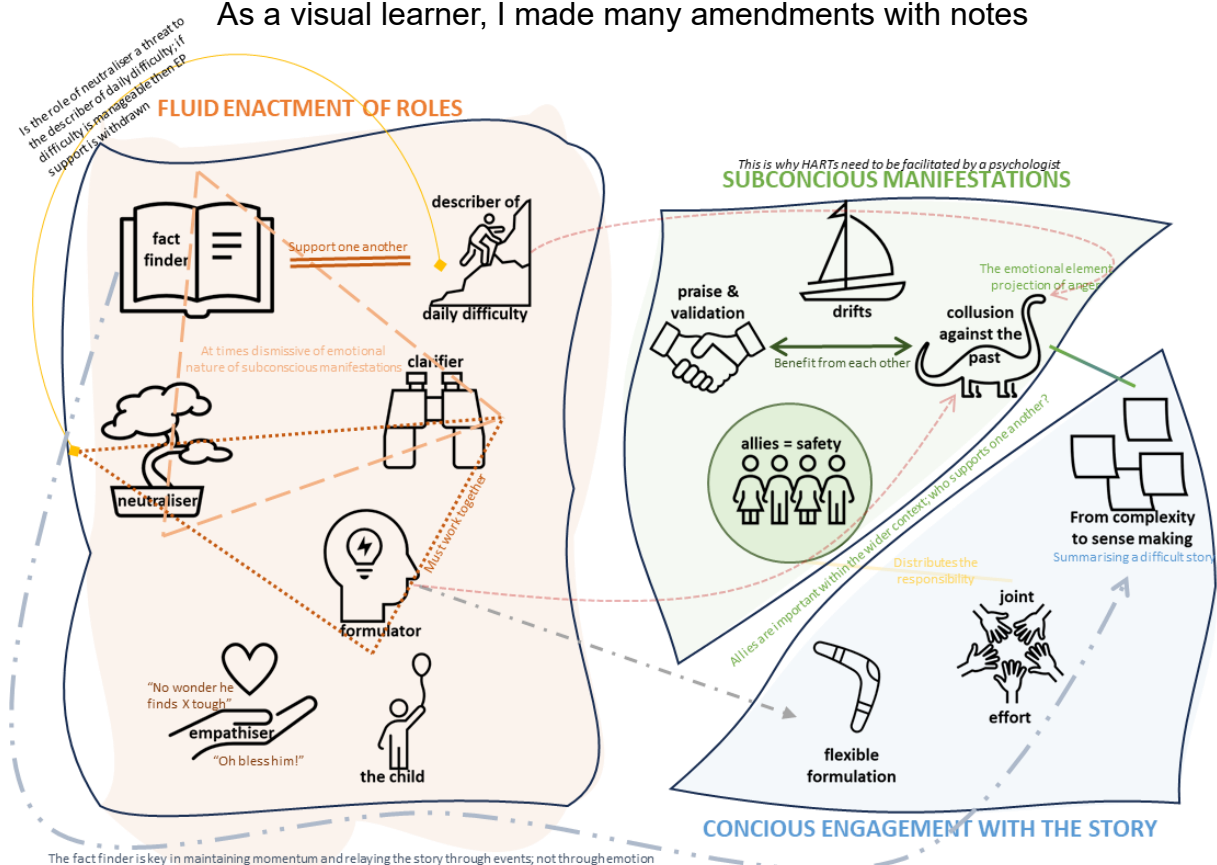
Exploratory notes	Label generation/Coding – inspired by experiential statements
<p>Introductions Explanation of the process and rationale</p> <p>Readdressing power through the use of ‘we’ ‘We’ embodies the systemic element throughout; distances the EP from expert and shifts closer to facilitator and collaborator For this to work, the EP must trust in the system.</p> <p>A descriptive account of the process</p> <p>‘Erm’ the EP isn’t reading from a script. The HART provides a framework but the specific act of facilitation is likely unique to each EP. Within this HART there is an element of spontaneity in the EP contribution and description.</p> <p>‘Will’ an element of certainty even though typically HARTs are planned to develop the systemic understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information sharing - Piecing the story together <p>Introducing key terms to be used during the HART</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EP has leadership of the process • EP seeks to invite participation of the system: <i>through the use of pronouns such as ‘we’.</i> • EP seeking to distribute power amongst all parties, <i>perhaps the EP’s use of erm reinforces the idea that this is not a scripted process and its okay to stumble on your words.</i> <p>Permission to be unclear/muddled: <i>erm</i></p>
Chatter unrelated: talking about EP2 staying seated to contribute	<p>Conversation drifts, buffers in the formality?</p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p> <p> </p>
<p>EP explaining additional element of their leadership role but linking it to wider literature base. Supports a development of trust in educational psychologists whilst reaffirming the element of a shared responsibility. Communicating a respect for the system by granting permission for emotional responses through a health warning about hearing a difficult story</p>	<p>Linking theory to practice Sharing evidence base Sharing responsibility of parenting through literature base Drawing similarities between parenting in the typical sense but also in the corporate way Justification for decision to make parenting links Active observer position? Participatory facilitation</p> <p>A shared responsibility I wonder how this sounds to the school I wonder if the FC and SW already have a strong affiliation to the phrase “we are parents”</p>

	<p>Connecting to the system, acknowledging their hard work is there a desire to not add more onto the systems to do list?</p> <p>The communal we – a shared responsibility?</p> <p>A health warning</p> <p>Use of laughter to deformatize</p> <p>‘Erm’ False starts ahead of acknowledging it may be difficult to hear child’s story</p> <p>EP shares other previous HART feedback to normalise and potential emotional response to child’s experience</p>
<p>Inadequately resourced SW; a feeling of resentment or guilt which metaphorically relates to the idea that as a system, around the child, there is a need to develop an understanding of the lived experienced</p> <p>“if you know what I mean?” Am I alone in my confusion? Please relate to me</p>	<p>The social worker feels vulnerable: <i>Does the reliance on knowledge of a chronology lead to a sense of vulnerability? What is it like to recognise that the child’s life story is not clear and easy to communicate</i></p> <p>Social worker looking for allies: ‘if you know what I mean’</p>
<p>Making sense of facts</p>	<p>New experience of process, power and responsibility: <i>How often are social workers able to say they don’t know things? Does the HART offer a space and break from the weight of sole responsibility; element of the HART may initially feel too unusual</i></p> <p>Some attendees join the HART in a defensive stance, I can’t be alone in supporting this story it has to be teamwork. Explaining how and they they cannot be a sole contributor of knowledge</p>

Appendix 11: Drafts 1&2 of the map of experiential themes



As a visual learner, I made many amendments with notes



Appendix 12: Reflexive account

I was nervous about feeding back my working themes to the participants today. Despite feeling connected to my data and analysis, primarily, it felt scary to share how I had interpreted their words. However, I also felt worried about articulating an overview of my findings in enough detail without overwhelming the participants. Perhaps, in the conceptualisation of the research, I had not paid enough consideration to the potential volume of the information that I could present; maybe I had not anticipated learning as much as I had learnt. I wanted to provide a clear overview, but time constraints meant I had not completed my diagram maps ahead of the session – I wonder if this A) contributed to my worry and B) meant I had not embodied my value base. In my opinion, the visual maps provide an accessible visual aid to see the themes. Despite my frustrations, I still strongly believe that research needs to be accessible to non-researchers if it is to have real-world value. *This is something to consider in greater detail in the final dissemination.*

As per the research design, I sat alongside the participants as they engaged in the HART consultation review meeting. Whilst I had re-introduced myself and shared that people were free to leave immediately after the review (if they didn't want to participate in the feedback session), I had not been quite so diligent in defining my observer position. Instead, I was invited into the discussion and called upon for support with recalling details from the HART consultation. I felt a little uneasy about this participation but also acknowledged the added utility of my familiarity with the transcript. I did not contribute any research-related feedback during the HART review; I felt strongly that my research should change as little about the typical HART process as possible.

Headlines from the review:

- The Virtual School Education Co-Ordinator was not in attendance
- The foster carer was not in attendance. The foster placement broke down recently, with the caregiver's health being cited as the primary reason. The notice period was short, and the Child's ongoing care plan is evolving; he does not have a short-term plan. He is currently moving between emergency and respite placements.
- The social worker was emotional during the review and shared that they do not know where the Child will be staying for the following night. The plan for the evening ahead is tentative but not yet confirmed.
- The review meeting seemed to act as supervision for the social worker and the SENCo, who are both finding the uncertainty challenging and have concerns about the Child's wellbeing.
- The Social worker shared that they found revisiting the internal working model valuable; they rarely have time in their diary to consider the ongoing emotional implications and often get stuck in doing mode and being reactive
- The SENCo's participation seemed grounded in a desire to be helpful "whatever it takes," perhaps feeling powerless in the system of what is happening beyond their school day.

I had anticipated a pause or some sort of formal acknowledgement that the HART review had ended. Instead, the review flowed into the feedback session.

The end of the review closed with a question from the social worker about the typical framework of HART review meetings. The facilitating EPs shared how reviews are typically more organic and fluid, led by the need of the system in the moment. The discussion of topics not being confined to a strict process led to the discussion of my analysis. Fluidity was spoken about in the practical application of the framework; fluid roles were characterised as the fact finder, empathiser, etc. Fluidity was also discussed in terms of how participants engaged relationally, starting off perhaps feeling a need to justify their involvement before settling into the relationships in the group – this is now conceptualised as seeking allies (sub-theme: allies = safety). Settling into the process did not mean settling into a single fixed role in the HART; instead, different people took on different roles at different times as a group.

The social worker's eyes lit up, and she interjected my summary, stating, "You know... you're right, you're absolutely right". At that moment, it is as if the social worker was transported back to the start of the HART, engaging in a similar vulnerable yet justifying position about how they had attended the HART feeling underprepared: "I wish I could come prepared, but I just don't have the time resources to do that" ... "It's not that I don't care". I wondered whether the social worker had felt out of their depth initially and whether this was what underpinned their allies' seeking interactions.

In further discussion with the social worker about roles in the HART, the subconscious manifestations were present again; praise and validation were awarded to participants for stepping in as the fact finder as if to reaffirm that despite the ongoing uncertainty surrounding the child's placement, professionals are still keeping the child in mind and doing their best. I wondered if social worker often feels they need to defend themselves and their actions – I know their documentation often gets shared in court hearings, and in that sense, much of their practice is driven by an ability to justify decision-making. Is the concept of a space that just allows people 'to be' too unusual for the social worker? Is it too difficult to shift away from the defensive stance?

The conversation returned to an overview of other roles and how some roles joined the HART later as if the speaker's perspective had changed. Discussion amongst the participants focused on how the group aligns with undefined roles, with one person questioning if the HART would have been different had the roles been defined and allocated at the start of the consultation. Would asking an individual to act as the child and someone else to act as a fact-finder be limiting? How does the process make space for the roles to be enacted?

The EPs reflected on how they had set the scene by introducing the HART as a process that requires joint work, with others interjecting to agree that everyone had a role to play in telling the child's story.

When discussing the theme 'subconscious manifestations', I spoke about the sub-themes individually as I had not yet finalised a name for the main theme. As a group, there had already been some discussion about 'allies=safety', and this was re-enacted within the feedback session. Reflecting on my summary, I confidently described the 'drifts' and the

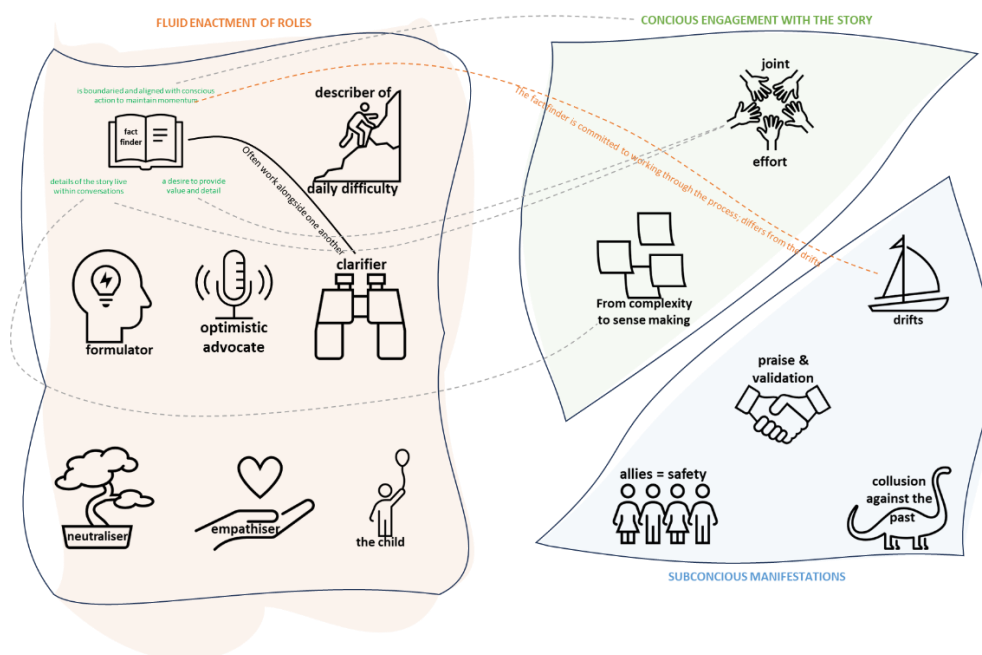
different meanings I had interpreted from this. This was discussed amongst the group; there was mutual agreement across the group that drifts occur; the social worker shared additional suggestions about why drifts may occur - drifts might occur to soften and caveat the difficulty. The group was amused to hear about the 'bless him' use in the transcript. I had conceptualised such interjections in the transcript as the presence of an empathiser or optimistic advocate, but it did not resonate with how the social worker remembered those moments. Did it feel too indulgent for the participants to openly identify with socially 'good' roles that empathise and advocate? Why was it difficult for the non-EP participants in the review to consider that they might have been an optimistic advocate in the HART (I did not share who had said what when elaborating on points with excerpts of dialogue from the transcript).

I had wondered aloud about 'drifts' sharing ideas about drifts acting as a space for emotional containment, drifts as a space to step away from difficulty and instead engage in chatter that softened the emotional tension and whether drifts supported catharsis.

The EPs showed the most interest in the drifts, likening the process to supervision within EP practice. When things become too emotional or too unusual, a typical human response is to detract from the discussion. We need to feel safe to engage in tricky conversations, and there needs to be a space to discuss tricky things to optimise our emotional availability when working with others. In psychology, supervision is a requirement; perhaps the EP's familiarity with supervision as a concept and their exposure to opportunities to meet their own needs situates them in a prime position to consider subconscious happenings. Are HARTs supervision? Is that what systemic consultation is about... meeting the adults' emotional needs so they can be emotionally available for the child? This conversation in itself was a drift from talking about drifts. Why was the contemplation of subconscious happenings so difficult for the non-EP participants to engage with? And am I interested in this because of my profession, or is it actually relevant? Perhaps further investigation of the subconscious happenings is *the* psychological contribution to this research. In a wave of self-doubt about my unique contribution, I am contemplating whether the first analysis chapter is a formal description of what is already known to happen and whether a non-psychologist researcher may have reached similar conclusions. I had not anticipated this reflection before the feedback discussion.

Appendix 13: Additional information for the sub-theme 'Fact Finder'

Theme Map with links between the Fact Finder and other themes and sub-themes



Excerpts of the transcript demonstrating an example of the Education Coordinators enactment of Fact Finder as means to maintain momentum whilst remaining emotionally distanced. Remaining aligned with the conscious act of storytelling was possibly a subconscious strategy to remain professional and contain their emotional engagement whilst summarising the difficult life story.

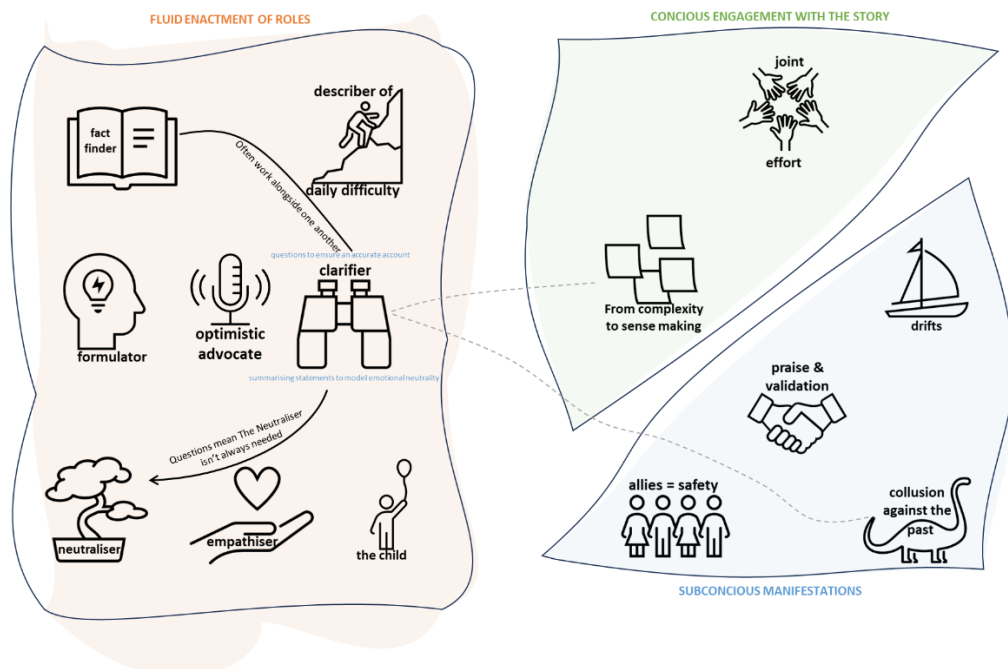
Summary of the likely emotional journey that occurs alongside the timeline	EP2: He doesn't know whether he's coming or going does he? At that <u>point</u> , and being so young and not being able to, kind of, talk about, or process that just	FORMULATOR: noticing patterns
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: yeah	PRAISE & VALIDATION: appealing to one another
	EP2: Really inconsistent, unpredictable. What's happening next? I need to	FORMULATOR: noticing patterns
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: <u>mmm</u>	
	EP2: <u>probably just rely on myself because none of the adults are consistent around me</u>	THE CHILD: as a participant EMPATHISER: overt description of child's likely feelings
Agreement with EP; acceptance of the EP's suggestion without curiosity or opposition	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: yeah	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of <u>others</u>
	SOCIAL WORKER: yeah	
	FOSTER CARER: <u>mmm</u>	
Aunties requests to nursery suggest a level of care, but do they also describe a narrative that the child is difficult? What is not being said here?	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: and then when (Child), I found this in [month file] so it's (Auntie) that's contributing to this. Erm. She feels that he's doing much better now he's in her care because he's starting to say more words, in 20XX. He's seeming to enjoy nursery, but there's issues around his sleeping.	FACT FINDER: is <u>boundary</u> ed and aligned with <u>conscious action</u> to maintain <u>momentum</u>

	Erm, there's issues around him swearing. So he's not saying a lot, but there's... It's bad swear words, that he is saying. And she's asked nursery not to let him have a sleep in the day, erm because he was, he was having quite long sleeps at nursery and then not sleeping during the night. Erm, he's waking up at midnight one thirty, two AM,	
Carer concurs that the difficulty <u>remains</u> . The others laugh?! Is the laugh <u>dismissive</u> ? FC tentative shares things might not be as easy as she had first set out to portray – is this where the defensive certainty at the beginning of the HART begins to manifest in alternate ways?	FOSTER CARER: still the same (laughter)	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is <u>needed</u> PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of <u>others</u>

	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah,	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others
EP making links from big experiences to daily action	EP2: and then that shame gets internalised, doesn't it? And then that control increases and it's that it's just a vicious circle I guess from?	FORMULATOR: EP formulations link theory and literature
Agreement	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah.	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others
Empathetic realisation from the FC	FOSTER CARER: And he's only seven and it's awful.	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: interjections of additional information
EC returns to sharing factual account in contribution to the timeline How was the EP's formulation received? Some agreement? Is there a need to get through the whole story? At this point the child is age 3 or 4 on the timeline but timestamp is 38.14 Advocating/protecting narrative of the child – this feels different to when facts shared from computer notes	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: I know, he's been through so much, erm I'm at this time, he's at (Village) nursery and they're just sort of flagging up a few concerns, but the giving him a period of settling in, in terms of his ability. To. Erm To attend to the little group sessions, the carpet times, those sorts of things, he's really struggling with that sort of aspect of nursery. And so they're kind of just giving him the space and he's much more off timetable than the other children. But at that time, I remember we were sort of saying its very early days he's had an awful lot of change. He'd had a lot of trauma that's gone on, so we need to give him that period of settling really And, there's foetal alcohol testing going on at this point, by the looks of it. He's having a follow-up appointment because genetic testing came back normal. And carer feels that actually, it's the focus and attention. But at this time, in terms of his age, He's making good progress from where he's come to her from with that	EMPATHISER: recentres discussion around the child FACT FINDER: is boundary and aligned with conscious action to maintain momentum
	sort of more minimal speech.	
	EP2: It's almost like isn't it? That when you look at his timeline developmentally, he's had so many things that have like, sort of, almost stopped his development.	FORMULATOR: noticing patterns
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah,	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others
EP reinforces the importance of the timeline in the HART – EP believe in the HART process as helpful	EP2: you have to go right back to the beginning and start all of that again don't you.	
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah, yeah,	
AMKng sense of the story, making links Sparked a link to the present day child	FOSTER CARER: He can be very baby-like at home as well, a lot but we enjoy doing it like,	FACT FINDER: a desire to provide value and detail
Affirming FC developmental practice;	EP2: And that's what he needs	ALLIES = SAFETY: putting others at ease

Appendix 14: Additional information for the sub-theme 'Clarifier'

Theme map with links between the Clarifier and other theme and sub-themes



Excerpts of the transcript demonstrating examples of The Clarifier's roles alongside other sub-themes

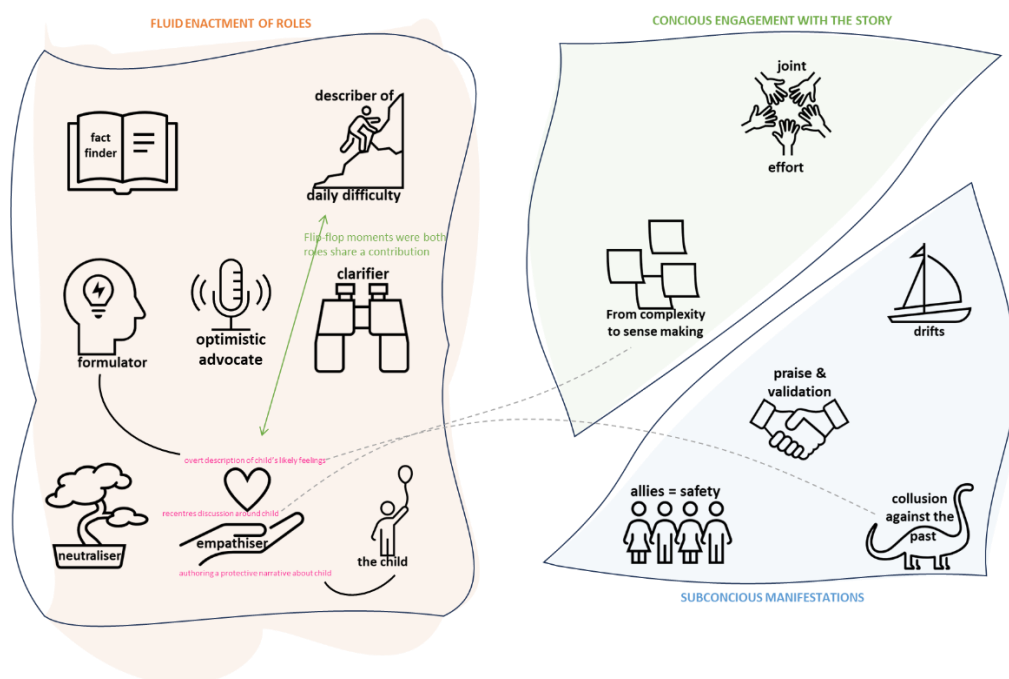
Why didn't the social worker share information about the drugs? Who is this information important to? Is this an insight into FC's opinion/beliefs about birth family – drugs are illegal	FOSTER CARER: and drugs,	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: interjections of additional information
Point restated – emphasising?	SOCIAL WORKER: drugs and alcohol	JOINT EFFORT: ping ponging
Point restated again – emphasizing? Statements are repeated aloud by multiple parties; does this amplify the significance? How does it feel to hear the story multiple times? <i>Link this back to the EP's earlier health warning</i> Does repetition help people to process the information? Hammering the message home?	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: drink and drugs mmm	
	SENCo: was mum involved in a fire before (Child) was born?	CLARIFIER: questions to ensure accurate account
	SOCIAL WORKER: yes	
	SENCo: Whilst she was pregnant with (Child) as well?	
It seems important to have detail although EP said earlier that themes and ideas are okay	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: I'm gonna try and find the date for the that 'cause that's quite significant.	FACT FINDER: non-emotional participation
	SENCo: <u>yeah</u> isn't it!	

The foster carer is the owner of some <u>facts</u> ?	FOSTER CARER: It was the XXXX... and then he was born in the [**following month].	CLARIFIER: questions to ensure accurate account
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: <u>yeah</u> when she was carrying him.	
Why is it important for the FC to share this detail? Whilst it seems useful context is this a message about the foster <u>carers</u> beliefs about the birth family as it was FC who shared about the drugs also. Is the HART acting as supervision? Is there a safe space to vent anger?	FOSTER CARER: yeah, <u>she</u> set the house on fire	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: tone and inflection to suggest <u>blame</u>
	EP1: Okay, so this was pre	CLARIFIER: questions to ensure accurate account

	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah		
Social worker defensiveness/protect of their profession – professional justification	SOCIAL WORKER: So without anybody knowing	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: interjections of additional information	
Acknowledges that the situation is not ideal and is not what social care would have anticipated	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: There was a lot of concerns, confusion, I think, wasn't there,	COMPLEXITY to SENSE MAKING: thought is needed to join the dots between documented knowledge and memory	
	SOCIAL WORKER: mmm		
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: and because previous social worker was really confused as to how they could do that? Why they've done that?	FACT FINDER: details of the story live within conversations	
	EP2: Did they say why?	CLARIFIER: questions to ensure an accurate account	
Things have happened in child's life; feels out of the control of the child and services	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Um, because they felt that they could meet (Brother 2)'s needs, but they weren't sure that they could meet (Child)'s but obviously as a local authority. Usually (Social worker)'s Team, you would look at keeping the siblings together, erm but that was sort of taken out of the <u>authorities</u> hands.	FACT FINDER: is bounded and aligned with conscious action to maintain momentum	
	EP2: because they didn't want to do that?	CLARIFIER: questions to ensure an accurate account	
Do HART attendees recognise the similarity in their perception regarding the lack of control?	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Because they'd yeah. But they hadn't informed the local authority that they'd not submitted (Child)'s paperwork,	FACT FINDER: a desire to provide value and detail	
A harsh hypothesis; bringing the unsaid into consciousness	EP2: I guess, (Brother 2) was easier to look after.	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: semantic tone suggests blame	
	SOCIAL WORKER: Yes.	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others	

Appendix 15: Additional information for the sub-theme 'Empathiser'

Theme map with links between Empathiser and other themes and sub-themes



Excerpt of the transcripts demonstrating an example of 'flip-flop' moments where the empathiser is present alongside descriptions of difficulty:

Giving context to expand the point	SENCo: Exactly. And you know when something does happen, particularly if he's hurt a member of staff, we'll say let's go somewhere calm and he won't reflect on it immediately. But as soon as he's gone, 'do you know why we're here?' And then he'll say, <i>because I hit Miss So-and-So</i> , yeah. And he goes. <i>I think I've made them I'm sad. I think you maybe have?</i> So what we're going to do next and then he'll say, <i>I'm going to go back in and I'm going to say, sorry, I'm going to do this work. Or I'm going to do that</i> and he will. And then we just, that's it, it's done. Nobody brings it back up. He will, we tried to <i>very</i> .	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is <u>needed</u> EMPATHISER: authoring a protective narrative about the child	
	<u>much focus on sort of the primary behaviour so say</u> he's done something. And then he'll go on and he'll try and do something else. And then he'll swear and then yeah, you know, we ignore all of that. We just focus on the first thing that happened and, and how he's overcome, that one. We do go back to <u>right</u> , well it's dealt with now.		
	EP2: And it sounds like those restorative type conversations that he's able to engage with, because a lot of children like (Child) can't even do that because the level of shame.	PRAISE & VALIDATION: appealing to <u>one</u> , <u>another</u> EMPATHISER: authoring a protective narrative about the child	
	FOSTER CARER: He doesn't like doing it with me.	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is <u>needed</u> ALLIES = SAFETY: space for vulnerability	

Excerpt of the transcript with example of empathiser adding emotion alongside story:

Amplifies the significance and impact of wider context	SOCIAL WORKER: At the beginning yeah!		
Empathetic perspective	SENCo: Right at the beginning! so you move to a new foster placement, and then, lockdown with them. You're with complete strangers	THE CHILD: as a listener	
Giving language to experience	EP1: That must be totally bizarre	EMPATHISER: overt description of child's likely feelings	
	SOCIAL WORKER: yeah	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others	

Excerpt were the empathiser and formulator share contributions:

	EP2: it's kind of like that's what he's learnt hasn't he?	FORMULATOR: noticing patterns	
	FOSTER CARER: Yes	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others	
Making links with others description of the 'problem' – making sense of child's need for control; sharing a developing hypothesis	EP2: This is what a male does, and this is how you, but also that like level of control that if he's had such an unpredictable <u>life</u> he's going to want to control everything.	FORMULATOR: noticing patterns EMPATHISER: overt description of child's likely feelings	
FC seems invested in this narrative; are they on the same page as the EP Is it important to side with the EP?	FOSTER CARER: <u>yes</u> because he's had no control	FORMULATOR: is a communal role COMPLEXITY to SENSE MAKING: story telling is a communal effort	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of <u>others</u>

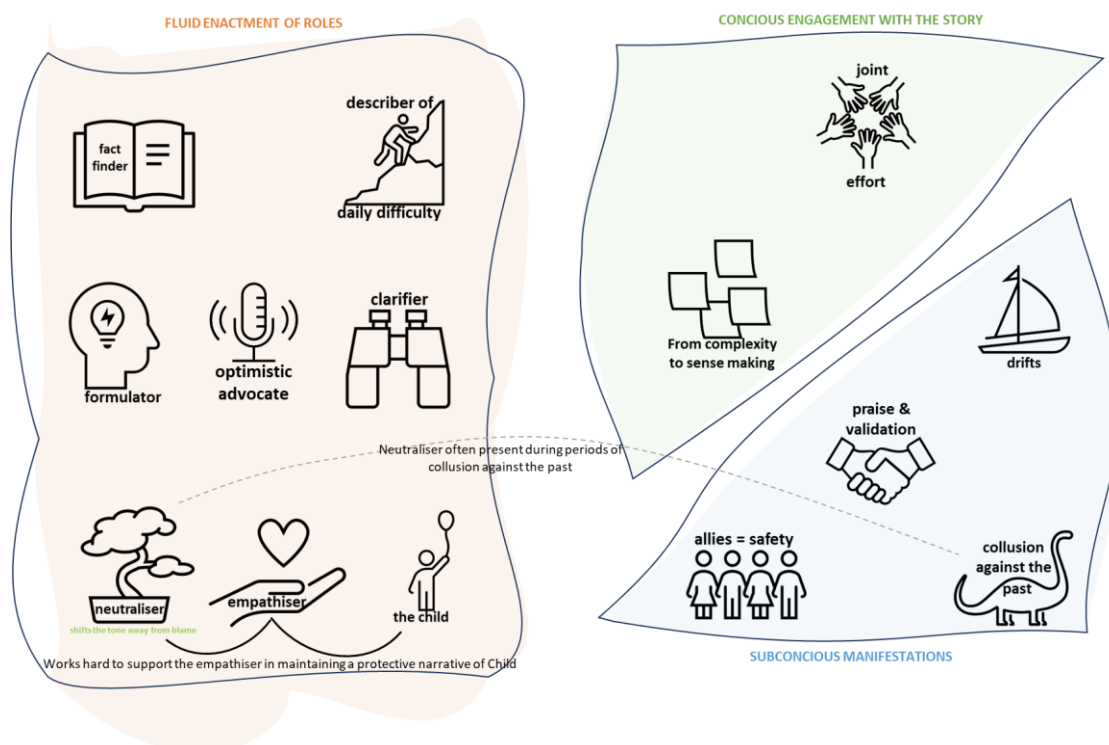
Sharing a reframed story of the child	EP2: so his anxiety is like managed a little bit, and <u>actually</u> if he can control everything, then that's going to make him feel less anxious, but it's not safe for him and it's not containing him either, is it?	EMPATHISER: recentres discussion around the child FORMULATOR: noticing patterns	
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah.		
Applying psychology and theory about children widely but correcting themselves to add a personal connection to the child. Offering a <u>long term</u> outcome/solution? Oversimplified?	EP2: <u>its</u> like that awful catch 22. Like, is that children needing to be in control because of those survival instincts, <u>And actually, they</u> , he just needs someone <u>He needs to let go of that control.</u>	FORMULATOR: EP formulations link theory and literature	
	FOSTER CARER: Yeah.		
Linking solution to the role of the system – reinforcing child perhaps doesn't trust... Acknowledges it may have been an oversimplification – empathising with system/managing expectation? Permission for the system to acknowledge struggle	EP2: and let someone put those boundaries in place and keep him safe. But <u>at the moment</u> , he perhaps doesn't trust that any adult can do that for him.	FORMULATOR: EP formulations link theory and literature EMPATHISER: overt description of child's likely feelings	
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah.	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others	FORMULATOR: is a communal role

An interim formulation which, although rejects the hypothesis of the previous school (he is a <u>problem</u>) it does exemplify how the previous school may have come to develop their understanding. The narrative becomes scary = not the child Models narrative therapy – externalisation – it's not his fault but he was never given a chance because the story preceded him	EP2: And the narrative around him becomes a particular narrative that <u>actually he's</u> difficult. He's hard to place it you know <u>all of these things and then that becomes scary for people, doesn't it?</u> But it also becomes quite a safe thing to think of because then <u>problem is with him. Not the people</u> looking after him and	FORMULATOR: noticing patterns NEUTRALISER: shifts the tone away from blame	
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: yeah,		
A moment of change in the <u>childs</u> life Giving feeling to child's experience – having a new sibling is tricky but <u>its</u> really tricky when they're born and your entire world changes and you <u>lose</u> everyone you know	EP2: that's sort of bit of the timeline <u>where (Brother 3) comes along, everything changes for him. Must be really hard</u> for him to process, do you <u>know?</u> And his attachment and feelings towards his little brother and this has happened and	EMPATHISER: overt description of child's likely feelings FORMULATOR: EP formulations link theory and literature	

Fc applying the prior formulation about the child; seeking to make the child seem less different? FC drawing upon neurodevelopmental knowledge – linking theory to <u>practice</u> - this is a shift in how the FC has been participating; no longer solely opinion based but drawing upon shared knowledge pools to reinforce her suggestion – an assimilation to the role of professional? Professional <u>carer</u> ?	FOSTER CARER: (Brother 3) will end being the same as him though <u>wont</u> he? If you think about it in the womb, I'm sure Mum was still doing drugs and still drinking	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: interjections of additional information	
Challenging FC's input whilst reinforcing that child has experienced the worst of the worst – child faced the brunt of the <u>storm</u> SW refusing to let child's story be <u>minimised</u> Protecting child?	SOCIAL WORKER: but he hasn't been exposed to the severity.	FACT FINDER: a desire to provide value and <u>detail</u>	
	FOSTER CARER: Yeah.		
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah.	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others	
	SOCIAL WORKER: Of the Life home experiences has he	EMPATHISER: authoring a protective narrative about the child	
	FOSTER CARER: yeah.	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others	
Is this <u>narrative</u> a space to vent frustration to the non-adopters? An unsaid language with meaning <u>implied</u> IFC: I'm not going to reject the brother even if he has the same needs as 'child'? A very emotive statement but perhaps a little defensive; overtly stating that carer is A) better than the non-adopters and B) she is coping well with Child...	SOCIAL WORKER: of what (Child) has	EMPATHISER: authoring a protective narrative about the child	

Appendix 16: Additional information for the sub-theme 'Neutraliser'

Theme map with links between empathiser and other themes and sub-themes

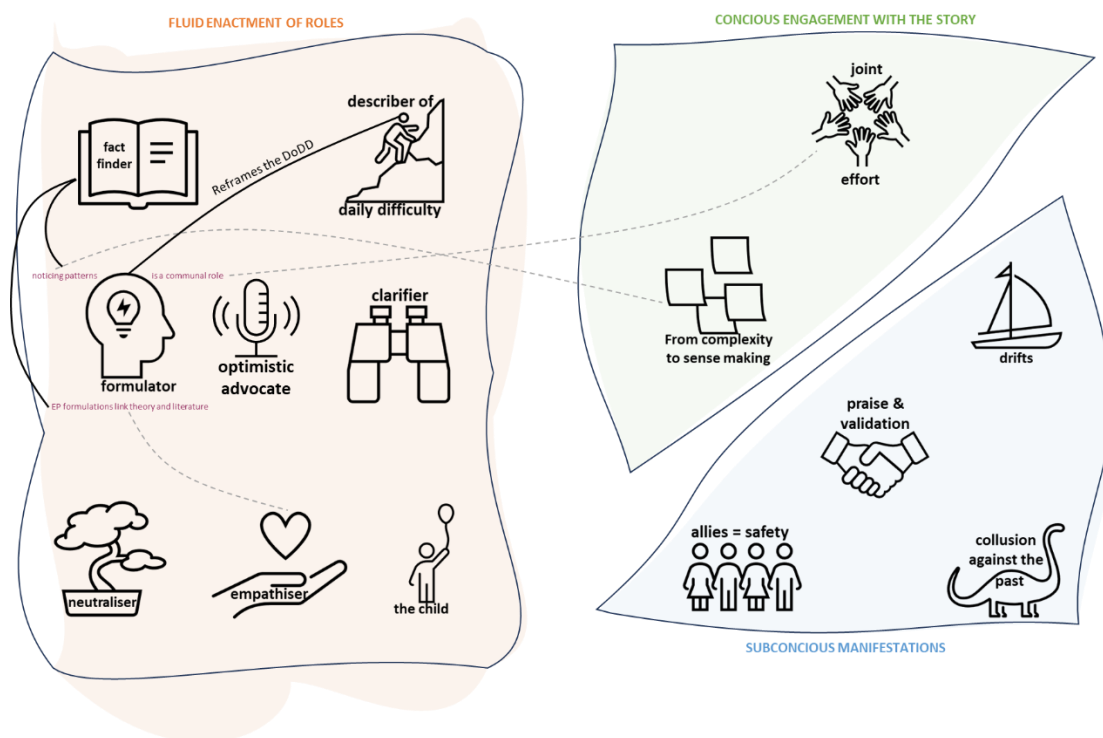


Excerpts of the transcript that demonstrate how the neutraliser is present during periods of collusion against the past

EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: but then he would be wearing like an outfit worth like £200	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: interjections of additional information	
SOCIAL WORKER: <u>Mmm</u>		
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: so it was all around like material possessions...	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: interjections of additional information	
SOCIAL WORKER: was it (Social worker 1)? (Social worker 1) was it her?	CLARIFIER: questions to ensure an accurate account	
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeas yeah it was.		
EP1: So there's basic, kind of, physical health needs	NEUTRALISER: shifts the tone away from blame	
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah. But in terms of like material goods	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: interjections of additional information	
EP1: Yeah		
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: He wanted for nothing. Anything he wanted he got	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: professional façade dropped	
EP1: Yeah		
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: But there was no kind of that good enough care	FORMULATOR: is a communal role	

Appendix 17: Additional information for the sub-theme 'Formulator'

Theme map with links between formulator and other themes and sub-themes

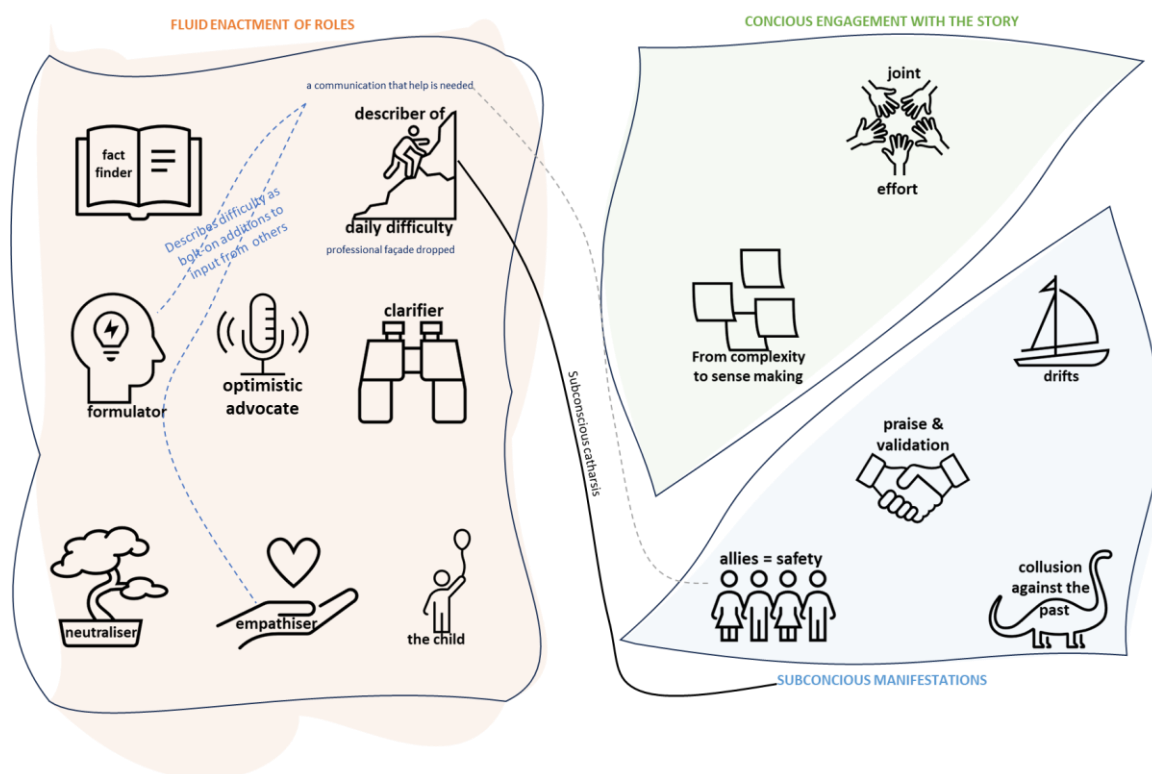


Reinforces the need for adults to capture the story and make sense on behalf of the child; they were too young then and likely still too young at the time of the HART. Adults feeling responsible to make sense of what has happened. Echoing <u>sisters</u> responsibility to share the story	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: It's not just Dad perpetrating against Mum, but (Sister 1)'s saying both ways. erm (<i>Child</i>) <i>seen, but too young to provide thoughts and feelings</i> . (Brother 1)'s not really telling them <u>much</u> so it sounds like a lot of its pinning on (Sister 1) sort of speaking out. erm,	COMPLEXITY to SENSE MAKING: thought is needed to join to dots between documented knowledge and memory	
	FOSTER CARER: (Child) <u>definitely remember</u> s doesn't he. He knows <u>something, because</u> the way he portrays...	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: A communication that help is needed	

	SOCIAL WORKER: yeah, absolutely		
	FOSTER CARER: around violence, he's very violent.		
	EP1: okay		
	EP2: So I guess when he was sorry (EP1)		
	EP1, no, no you go		
	EP2: It's what you just said (Education Co-ordinator) about him not obviously being able to talk about his feelings at that time because he was only two, but all of those will be stored as	FORMULATOR: EP formulation brings in theory and literature	

Appendix 18: Additional information for the sub-theme ‘Describer of daily difficulty’

Theme map with links between describer of daily difficulty and other themes and sub-themes



Remaining the neutral empathetic professional can be difficult; the DoDD enables catharsis which sometimes meant the professional façade slipped momentarily – likely a subconscious manifestation

EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: But he knows that doesn't he	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others
SENCo: that will be more challenging	DESCRIPTOR OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is needed
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Like you said, so he'll stand up and walk around as he's not getting the attachment that he wants from the adults. So then he'll throw something. And if you ignore that, but he knows if I come out with the big guns and start using that language,	DESCRIPTOR OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: professional façade dropped
SENCo: We are getting to that stage where its him or the others...	
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: then yeah, I've got to get their attention. Then there's no other option for them	THE CHILD: as a participant EMPATHISER: authoring a protective narrative about the child
SENCo: and this is a conversation I've had with this teacher. She was saying, you know, I don't know what to do in that situation and, it is tricky because we know he's doing that for that big reaction.	ALLIES = SAFETY: space for vulnerability DESCRIPTOR OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: professional façade dropped
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah.	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others
SENCo: But, there has to be a reaction, for the other children's sake. So it's either he is removed or they are removed and then that causes a huge reaction.	DESCRIPTOR OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is needed
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah,	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others

Emphasis from the SW: does the SW feel heard unless things are emphasised? – modelling to FC it's okay to find things tricky – this is hard work!	SOCIAL WORKER: Very	ALLIES = SAFETY: space for vulnerability	
FC talking about difficulties within daily interactions with Child following the example set by SW	FOSTER CARER: (Child)'s very much like that though, so say, oh I don't know if he was brushing his teeth if I'm not helping <u>him</u> I'm mean... If helping him	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is needed	
	SOCIAL WORKER: hmmm	ALLIES = SAFETY: space for vulnerability	
	FOSTER CARER: why? Why am I helping him? Do you know what I mean?	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is needed	
	SOCIAL WORKER: yeah	ALLIES = SAFETY: space for vulnerability	
A cry for help! FC is not completely opposed to the narrative that "child is <u>difficult</u> " FC gives a quick response; what does the FC hope the gain from sharing this view?	FOSTER CARER: I can't win!	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is needed	
EP formulates to reframe the narrative – not rescuing the FC but rescuing the child It's as if the EP says "I hear you but it's not child's fault" does this feel dismissive to the FC? The EP did not give any practical solution	EP2: And often children who have had that inconsistent care giving their attachment style, is either they'll push you away, or they'll pull you in and it's like that <u>all of</u> the time because they're just so not sure whether you're <u>good</u> be around consistently.	FORMULATOR: EP formulations link theory and literature EMPATHISER: authoring a protective narrative about the child	ALLIES = SAFETY: putting others at ease
A buffer to suggest that there is <i>some</i> fluctuation	FOSTER CARER: Yeah, every day is different with (Child)	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is needed	
EP uses 'they' instead of him/child's name to exemplify that this is an experience typical of many children who are in <u>care</u> – it's not just child... you haven't got a particularly difficult	EP2: And like, yeah, one day, they sort of push carers and everyone away. And then the next, they're like seeking that connection, because it's just so confusing for them.	FORMULATOR: EP formulations link theory and literature	ALLIES = SAFETY: putting others at ease

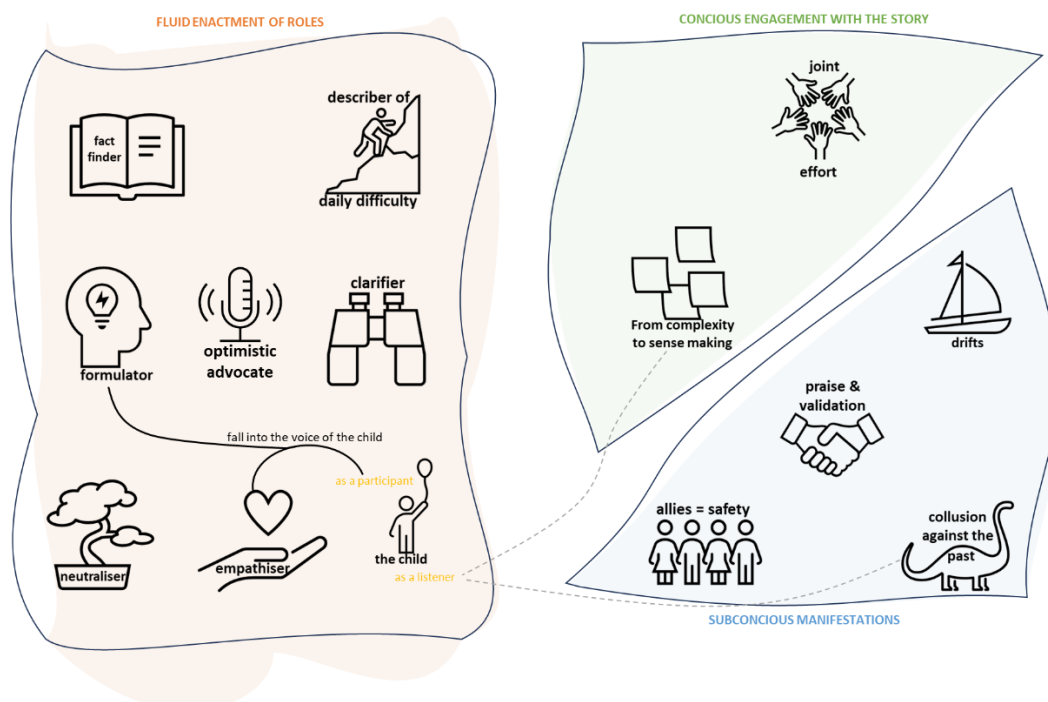
Certainty of earlier statement reinforced with a story of observed behaviour	SENCo: That's his sort of go too mechanism is that? Whether that be his peers or adults.	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is <u>needed</u>	
	SOCIAL WORKER: mmm		
"Instinct" it's not his fault = cautious to not be aligned with an anti-child identity; wants to maintain position as the child's Allie	SENCo: his <u>instinct</u> is to push them away.	EMPATHISER: authoring a protective narrative about the child	
	SOCIAL WORKER: Yeah. And I think he, (Child) says things... almost in his own mind. Pre-empting that that's what that person's thinking, and he's going to <u>action</u> . For example, he'll say things to (Foster Carer), like, I want a new family. I want a new house and that's either has happened after he's behaved in a certain way towards her... <u>And that he maybe. This is me thinking that maybe</u> he's pre-empting that I behave like this. I'm going to say this and it's kind of testing to see what response I get here.	FORMULATOR: noticing patterns DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is <u>needed</u> ALLIES = SAFETY: space for vulnerability	FORMULATOR: is a communal role

Fleeting between empathiser and describer of daily difficulty; at times it is as if the empathiser is the professional façade that is aligned with conscious action, but the describer of daily difficulty is a subconscious manifestation; a need to share how tough this is to reinforce that even though adults are doing their best, progress is still slow and hard to notice

	SENCo: concern, yeah... Yeah. Erm. It's Very attention sort of needing behaviour. It's constant. Out of chair, if then we ignore that behaviour. And then it's <u>well I'll stand and swear until somebody will react or I'll throw something until somebody reacts</u> . Erm, expectations where we have an <u>expectations</u> , are very, very low of what we expect of him.	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is <u>needed</u> THE CHILD: as a participant	
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah.		
Empathetic depiction of difficulty	SENCo: In the classroom and it's very <u>much</u> right? Oh brilliant. You've chosen to come and join us, even if you're sitting on the table. Brilliant, that's fine! <u>We'd rather have you here, you've made a great choice.</u>	EMPATHISER: authoring a protective narrative about the child	
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah,	ALLIES = SAFETY: putting others at ease	
	SENCo: Now would you like something of your choosing?		
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Okay.	ALLIES = SAFETY: putting others at ease	
Despite all that 'we' (the school) do, supporting him is difficult	SENCo: <u>But</u> , It is very much him <u>wanting that control</u> over what that looks like all of the time. Erm. He... As I say, <u>swearing is his favourite thing at the moment</u> . Erm. and his sort of aggression towards... staff. Particularly.	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: professional façade <u>dropped</u>	
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah,	ALLIES = SAFETY: putting others at ease	
	SENCo: has become daily, you know, hitting, kicking.	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is needed	
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Is that one-to-one? Is that staff he doesn't know? Is that anybody?	CLARIFIER: questions to ensure an accurate account	
	SENCo: Anybody	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is needed	

Appendix 19: Additional information for the sub-theme 'The Child'

Theme map with links between The Child and other themes and sub-themes

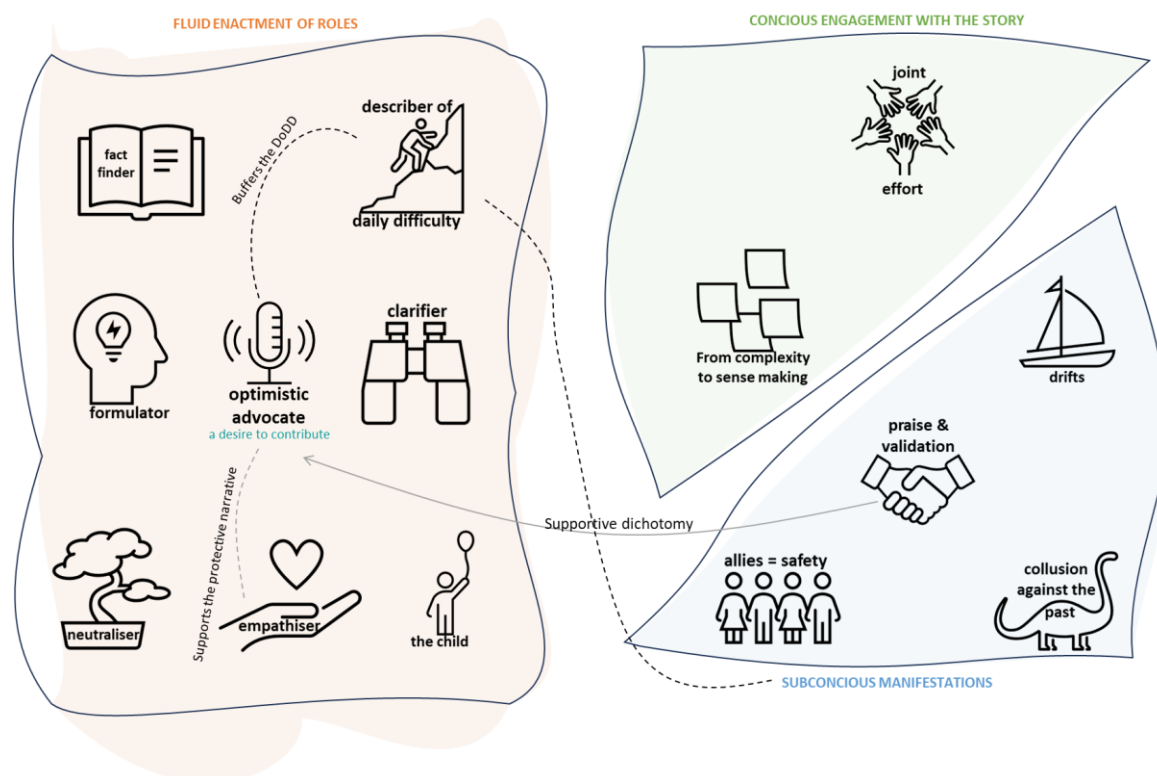


Is the SW surprised by the end of the story?	SOCIAL WORKER: <u>yeah</u> there is!		
Is it HIS failed adoption?	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: <u>let down from adults around him as well, because of his failed adoption</u>	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: interjections of additional information	
	SENCO yeah		
Hypothesizing about child's IWM	EP2: And if that happens over and over again, then it can't be the adults, can it? It's got to be you!	FORMULATOR: noticing patterns	
	FOSTER CARER: Yeah.	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others	
As a researcher this reads as a <u>gut wrenching</u> moment of realisation – I wonder how I would feel if I was the child and I heard adults making sense of my life in this way? Why is it important to voice ideas that otherwise remain unsaid?	EP2: If that keeps happening... Do you know that rejection? That this is how all adults? Do, you know? Like, they <u>come</u> and they go and this is how I'm treated. <u>Obviously, it's me.</u>	FORMULATOR: noticing patterns EMPATHISER: overt description of child's likely feelings	THE CHILD: as a participant
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah,	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others	
EP making links from big experiences to daily action	EP2: and then that shame gets internalised, doesn't it? And then that control increases and it's that it's just a vicious circle I guess from?	FORMULATOR: EP formulations link theory and literature	
Agreement	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah.	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others	
Empathetic realisation from the FC	FOSTER CARER: And he's only seven and it's awful.	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: interjections of additional information	

EP has heard the challenges within the classroom and acknowledges that ignoring the behaviour grants it more power and permission	EP2: and actually children like (Child) need that you, whatever. It's not to say that there aren't consequences. It's just about that do you know. We want you to be here, no matter what	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of <u>others</u> THE CHILD: as a listener	
	SENCo: Yeah.	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others	JOINT EFFORT: the communal we
Powerful use of 'we'	FOSTER CARER: yeah! We accept you	THE CHILD: as a listener EMPATHISER: overt description of child's likely feelings	
It is as if the discussion is being heard by the child – is there a role of the child that doesn't always need to actively embodied? What does <u>speaking</u> in this way do? Perhaps it models how the system could/should <u>speak</u> to the child	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: absolutely.	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others	
	EP2: Yeah. We know you've had a really tricky time basically	THE CHILD: as a listener	
	FOSTER CARER: yeah.		
	EP2: And we get that, and we understand you, and we're not going to punish you for that.	THE CHILD: as a listener	

Appendix 20: Additional information for the sub-theme 'Optimistic Advocate'

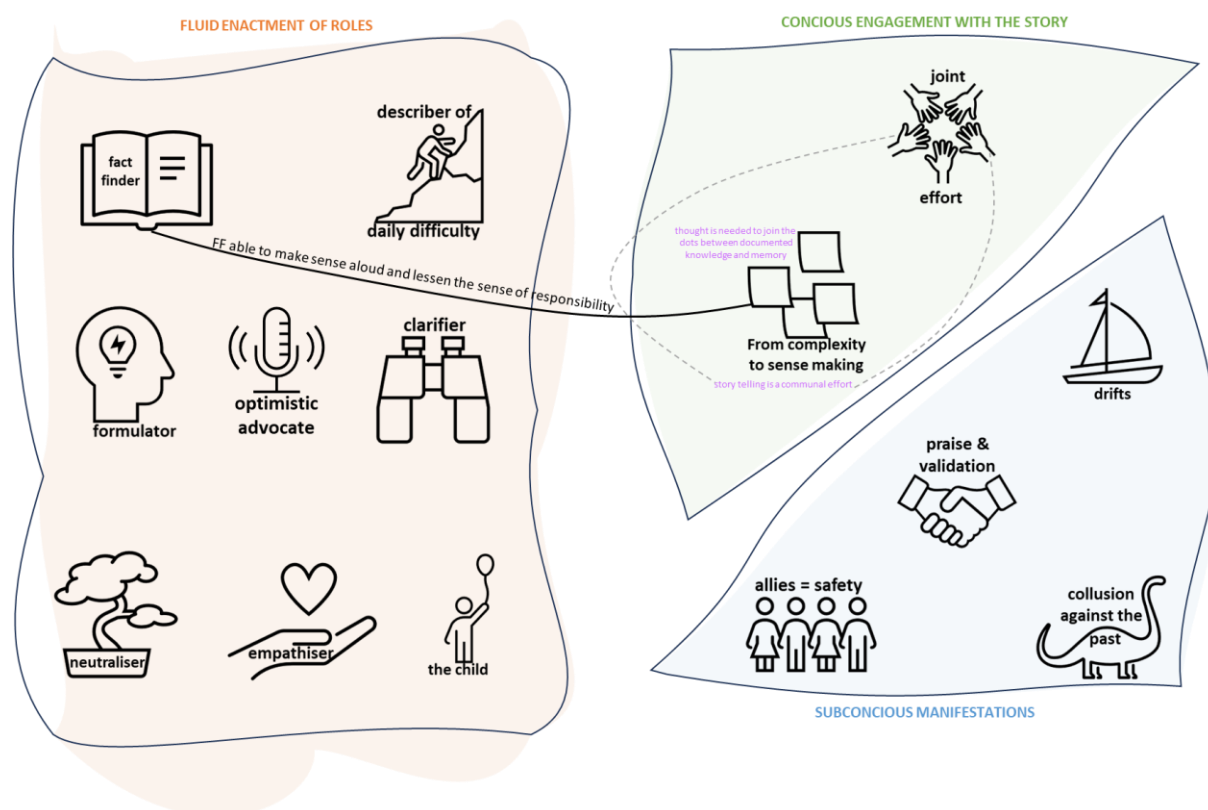
Theme map with links between Optimistic advocate and other theme and sub-themes



SOCIAL WORKER: I think that, you know, 'people like me' {a suggested I statement}	OPTIMISTIC ADVOCATE: a desire to <u>contribute</u>	
SENCo: Yeah,	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others	
FOSTER CARER: Yeah, because he really doesn't think that people like him		
EP1: And how would that be reflected to in terms of what that would look like? But how would we know he holds that?	CLARIFIER: questions to ensure an accurate account	
SENCo: initiate play and conversation?	OPTIMISTIC ADVOCATE: a desire to <u>contribute</u>	
SOCIAL WORKER: Not push people away.		
SENCo: Yeah.	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of <u>others</u>	
FOSTER CARER: He is very reluctant isn't he,		
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: I think maybe something around I can say what I'm good at, or I can, I can say what I'm proud of about myself, because at the moment, He doesn't really identify any of <u>his.. positives</u> does he? It's just worry around getting it wrong all the time.	OPTIMISTIC ADVOCATE: a desire to <u>contribute</u>	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is needed
SOCIAL WORKER: Yeah.	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others	
EP2: Yeah, the consequence for (Child) of getting things wrong is massive, isn't it. His perception of that is massive compared to other children in school perhaps	EMPATHISER: authoring a protective narrative about the child	FORMULATOR: EP formulations link theory and literature
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: really loses everything doesn't he	EMPATHISER: authoring a	JOINT EFFORT: ping-ponging

Appendix 21: Additional information for the sub-theme 'From complexity to sense making'

Theme map with links between 'from complexity to sense making' and other theme and sub-themes



EP1: no that's fine don't worry. So then we're in XXX of [20]XX?	NEUTRALISER: shifts the tone away from blame	
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah. This is where the adopters have only put forward adoption paperwork for (Brother 3), and they've not filed it for (Child).	FACT FINDER: is boundaried and aligned with conscious action to maintain momentum	COMPLEXITY to SENSE MAKING: story telling is a communal <u>effort</u>
SOCIAL WORKER: They made their own private application, didn't they?	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: interjections of additional information	

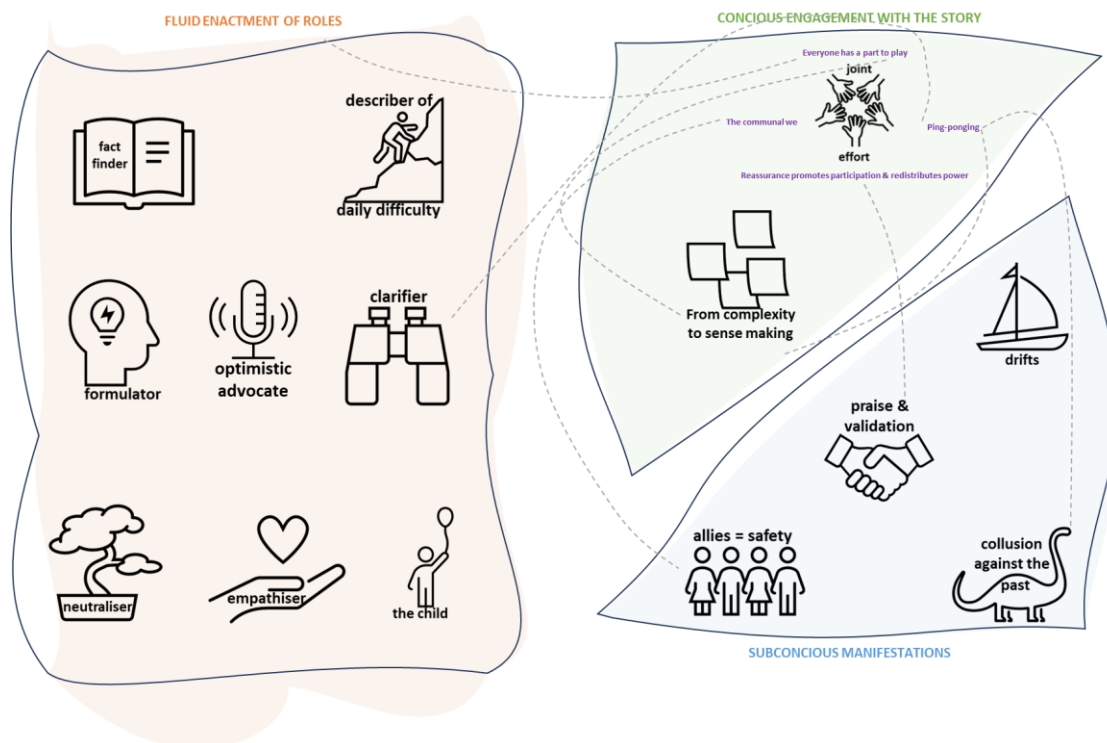
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah		
SOCIAL WORKER: So without anybody knowing	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: interjections of additional information	
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: There was a lot of concerns, confusion, I think, wasn't there,	COMPLEXITY to SENSE MAKING: thought is needed to join the dots between documented knowledge and memory	
SOCIAL WORKER: mmmmm		
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: and because previous social worker was really confused as to how they could do that? Why they've done that?	FACT FINDER: details of the story live within conversations	
EP2: Did they say why?	CLARIFIER: questions to ensure an accurate account	

SOCIAL WORKER: And then (unknown person) Yeah.		
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: erm, Probation workers are working with Mum, (drug support <u>service</u>) are working with Mum. XXX [20]XX. Child protection visits ongoing...core group 20XX information shared around mum's potential, relapse.	FACT FINDER: is boundaried and aligned with conscious action	
EP2: It sounds perhaps, then that over those, sort of two, three years it kind of dipped a bit and then	COMPLEXITY to SENSE MAKING: thought is needed to join to dots between documented knowledge and <u>memory</u>	
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: yeah		
EP2: <u>yeah</u> that sort of pattern of then... And then it's okay enough to kind of try again	FORMULATOR: noticing patterns	
SOCIAL WORKER: mmm		

EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: And then children are <u>self isolating</u> due to coronavirus on the <u>XXth XXX</u> And then (Child)'s moved <u>XXst XXX</u> , so another 4 weeks.	COMPLEXITY to SENSE MAKING: story telling is a communal <u>effort</u>	
EP2: gosh yeah! so all this is happening.	COMPLEXITY to SENSE MAKING:	
SENCo: you forget about Covid!	thought is needed to	
SOCIAL WORKER: At the beginning yeah!	join the dots between documented knowledge and memory	
SENCo: Right at the beginning! so you move to a new foster placement, and then, lockdown with them. You're with complete strangers	THE CHILD: as a listener	

Appendix 22: Additional information for the sub-theme 'Joint effort'

Theme map with links between 'Joint effort' and other theme and sub-themes

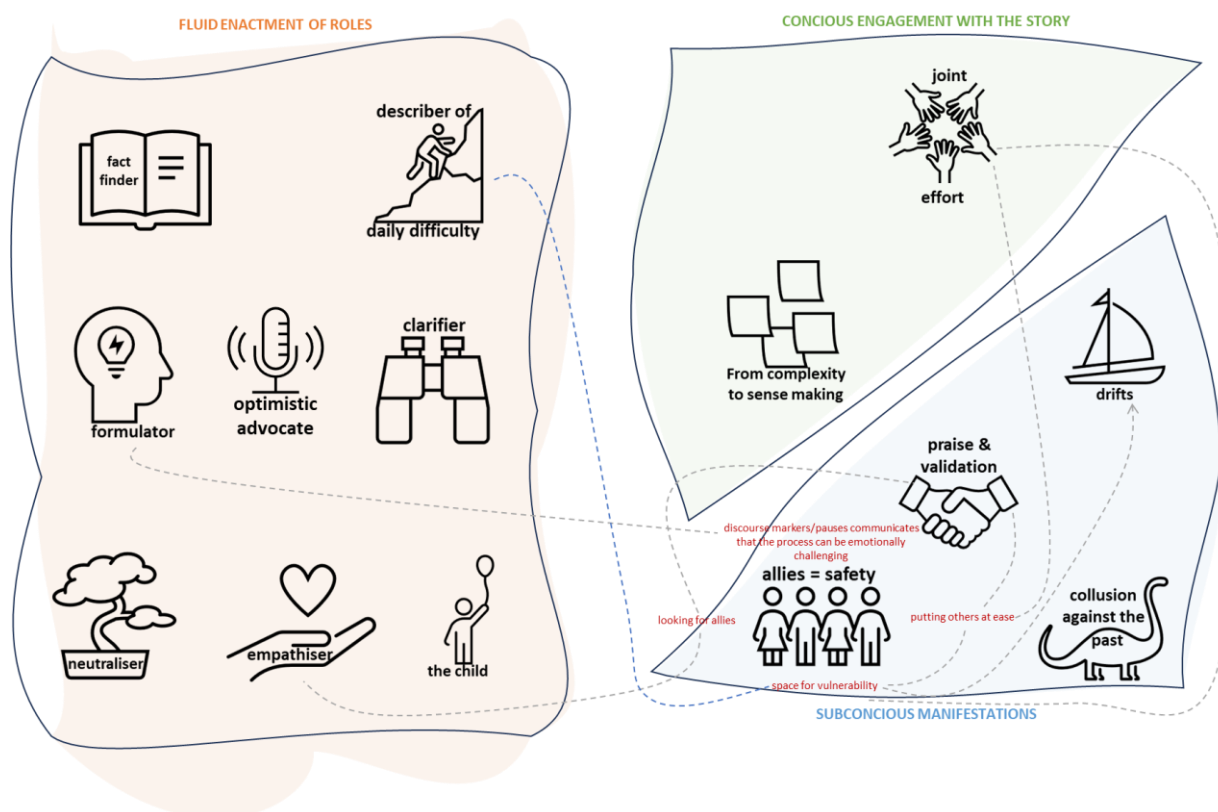


SENCo: Yeah.	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others	
EP2: And that I'm going to reject you before you reject me.	FORMULATOR: noticing patterns	
SENCo: Yeah,	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others	
SOCIAL WORKER: yeah. Oh definitely. I was just saying, (Foster Carer), with (Child) that I think that sometimes he does that kind he pre-empts what he thinks going to happen	JOINT EFFORT: reassurance promotes participation and redistributes <u>power</u> FORMULATOR: noticing patterns	
FOSTER CARER: Yeah		
SOCIAL WORKER: For example he'll say to you won't say oh I want a new Mum and Dad	FACT FINDER: details of the story live within <u>conversations</u>	
FOSTER CARER: Oh all that a time	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is <u>needed</u>	
SOCIAL WORKER: A new family. And that's sometimes after something's happened	EMPATHISER: authoring a protective narrative about the child	
FOSTER CARER: Yeah	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others	
SOCIAL WORKER: and he thinks that that's going to be consequence	EMPATHISER: overt description of child's likely feelings	
FOSTER CARER: <u>Yeah</u> :	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others	
SOCIAL WORKER: of his behaviour	EMPATHISER: overt description of child's likely feelings	
FOSTER CARER: Like sometimes he'll say oh you you're going to kick me out	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is <u>needed</u>	

SOCIAL WORKER: unless there was another brother... I <u>cant</u> ?... was there another brother that lived there?	COMPLEXITY to SENSE MAKING: the clarifier is needed to join the dots	
FOSTER CARER: No there's two	FACT FINDER: a desire to provide value and detail	
SOCIAL WORKER: (Brother 2) and (Brother 1)?		JOINT EFFORT: ping ponging
FOSTER CARER: (Brother 1)		
SOCIAL WORKER: (Sister 1)? Yeah,		
FOSTER CARER: yeah.		
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: yeah		
EP1: Okay. There were all living together in the family home at that time?	CLARIFIER: questions to ensure accurate account	

Appendix 23: Additional information for the sub-theme 'Allies = safety'

Theme map with links between 'Allies = safety' and other theme and sub-themes



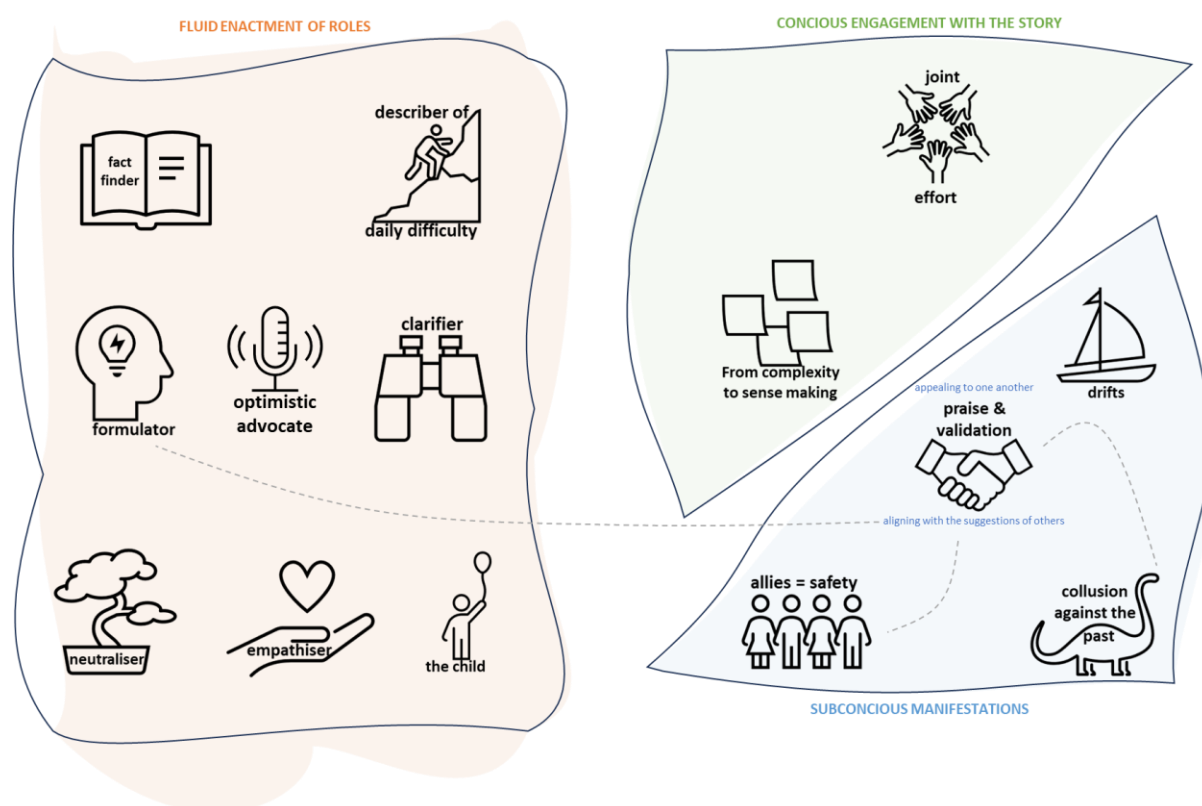
SOCIAL WORKER: yeah	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of others
FOSTER CARER: Massively!	
EP2: I'm assuming here, but I guess that he's missed out on a lot of that	FORMULATOR: EP formulations link theory and literature
FOSTER CARER: he has but he has got an early development delay.	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: interjections of additional information
EP2: And that. Yeah, so those things are completely	ALLIES = SAFETY: putting others at ease
FOSTER CARER: and he loves it!	FACT FINDER: a desire to provide value and detail
EP2: what he needs So yeah.	ALLIES = SAFETY: putting others at ease PRAISE & VALIDATION: appealing to one another
FOSTER CARER: Oh god! I'm gonna start crying	ALLIES = SAFETY: space for vulnerability
EP2: oh! And he's got you to do <u>them..</u>	PRAISE & VALIDATION: appealing to one another
FOSTER CARER: I do everything for him. Absolutely everything. If his <u>drinks</u> there and he's like Mum can you pass me my drink I'm just like yeah here you are {Group laughter}	ALLIES = SAFETY: space for vulnerability FACT FINDER: a desire to provide value and <u>detail</u>
EP1: I think we have got some tissues if you do want anything	DRIFTS: as formality buffers

FOSTER CARER: I'll be fine		
SOCIAL WORKER: We're used to it aren't we!	ALLIES = SAFETY: space for vulnerability JOINT EFFORT: reassurance promotes participation and redistributes <u>power</u>	
FOSTER CARER: What?		
SOCIAL WORKER: I said we're used to it aren't we!		
FOSTER CARER: We're terrible aren't we!		
SOCIAL WORKER: we set each other off.		
FOSTER CARER: bless him!	DRIFTS: as empty emotional discourse markers – <i>the bless <u>hims</u></i>	
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: erm, so then he continues so his next PEP is when he's just started in September in foundation 2	FACT FINDER: is boundaried and aligned with conscious action to maintain momentum	JOINT EFFORT: ping-ponging
EP1: Is that September 20XX?	CLARIFIER: questions to ensure an accurate account	
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: 20XX	FACT FINDER: a desire to provide value and detail	

SENCo: That is amazing!	PRAISE & VALIDATION: appealing to one another	
FOSTER CARER: it's a really small little things, but they're extremely positive. I feel like.	EMPATHISER: authoring a protective narrative about the child	
EP2: <u>Yeah</u> they are! and he's not been with you that long has he really?	PRAISE & VALIDATION: appealing to one another	
FOSTER CARER: No eight months.	FACT FINDER: a desire to provide value and detail	
EP2: Yeah, it's not a <u>long long</u> time. It might feel like it. {laughter}	ALLIES = SAFETY: discourse markers/pauses communicates that the process can be emotionally challenging	
SOCIAL WORKER: Yes, well there's been a lot of blood, sweat and tears hasn't there.	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is <u>needed</u>	
FOSTER CARER :A lot of tears!! Oh yeah!	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is <u>needed</u> ALLIES = SAFETY: space for vulnerability	
EP1: He sounds lovely! He sounds really fun! Are there any other strengths that we want to add there? So we've got caring, a great sense of humour...	FACT FINDER: is boundaried and aligned with conscious action to maintain <u>momentum</u>	

Appendix 24: Additional information for the sub-theme 'Praise & Validation'

Theme map with links between 'Praise & Validation' and other theme and sub-themes



FOSTER CARER: He <u>wont</u> speak...	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is <u>needed</u>
EP2: But the level of shame that they feel because of their behaviour is so like they have to. It's so painful for them to feel that they have to push it onto other people. Maybe that's what he does with you (Foster Carer) because you're his <u>carer</u> . You know, you're the consistent person	<p>FORMULATOR: EP formulations link theory and literature</p> <p>PRAISE & VALIDATION: appealing to <u>one another</u></p> <p>ALLIES = SAFETY: putting others at ease</p>
SENCo: yeah.	
FOSTER CARER: Sometimes he will reflect with me, if it's something like, oh I don't know, like what's happened at school? When he's hit someone or done	<p>EMPATHISER: authoring a protective narrative about the child</p> <p>DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is <u>needed</u></p>

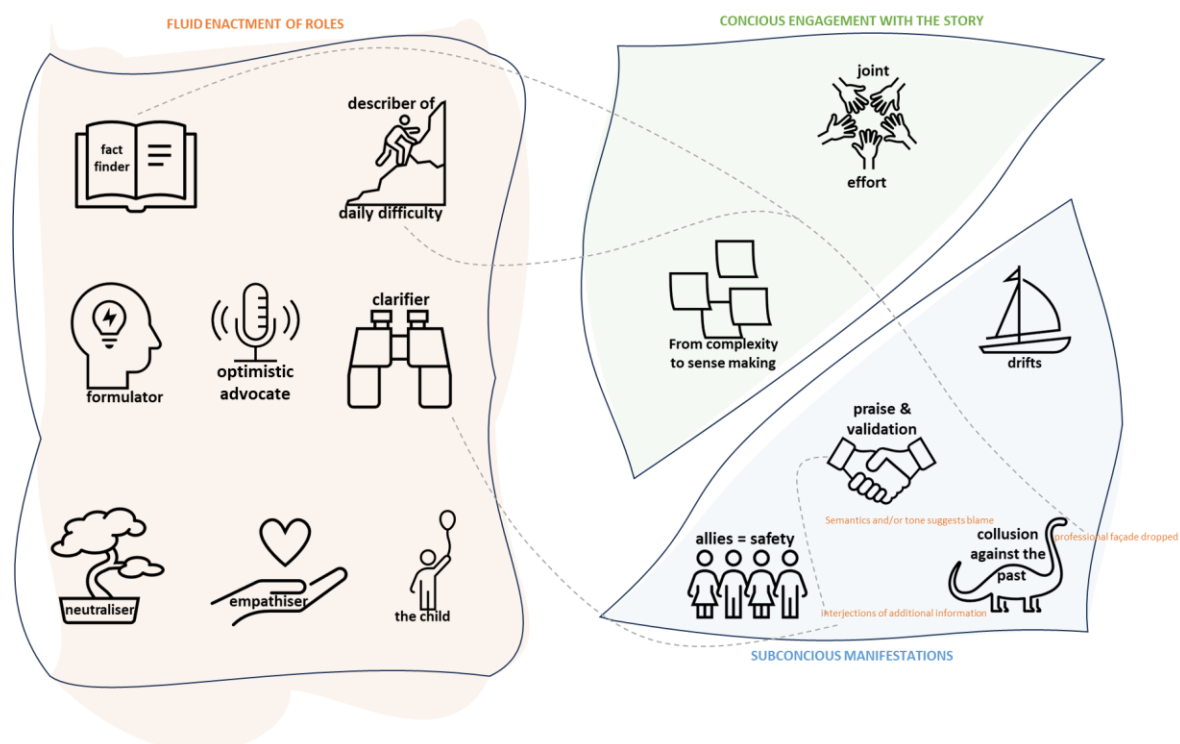
FOSTER CARER: yeah		
SOCIAL WORKER: not just my decision because everybody's been really kind of, you know, partial to that including the, the IRO, CAMHS consultant. You know, [SENCo] you've been kind of on board haven't you, was well, always meeting with monthly support meetings.	PRAISE & VALIDATION: appealing to <u>one</u> <u>another</u>	JOINT EFFORT: everyone has a part to <u>play</u>
SENCo: yeah		
SOCIAL WORKER: And <u>so</u> you know to kind of look at that support network around (Child) and try and make the best decisions for him and it's been so difficult because we've just felt haven't we, that we've been in a damned if you do damned if you don't situation	ALLIES = SAFETY: space for vulnerability	
FOSTER CARER: <u>and</u> that is how it is with (Child)	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is needed	
SOCIAL WORKER: It is yeah		
FOSTER CARER: You can't do right for doing wrong		

EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: He wanted for nothing. Anything he wanted he got	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: professional façade dropped	
EP1: Yeah		
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: But there was no kind of that good enough care going on	FORMULATOR: is a communal role	
EP1: Yeah		
FOSTER CARER: With you saying about Alpha male as well, so when we recently just had family time, erm so they bought him like presents for Christmas and <u>and</u> birthday and what have you. But they also gave him... Dad gave him 3 easter eggs so he ate one whilst he was there and there's 2 at home and he's not even asked for them because Dads told him he's only allowed them at easter. Whereas if I'd bought <u>them</u> he'd be nagging and nagging.	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of <u>others</u> COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: interjections of additional information	JOINT EFFORT: ping-ponging
SENCo: it'd be <u>push</u> <u>push</u> <u>push</u>	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of <u>others</u>	
SOCIAL WORKER: yeah		
FOSTER CARER: <u>yeah</u> <u>yeah</u> <u>yeah</u> So that just shows you how much like he respects that or thinks of his Dad.	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of <u>others</u>	
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah		

EP2: and at that age you wouldn't even know what that is?	FORMULATOR: EP formulations link theory and literature	
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: no, but its swearing in context, isn't it? He's become frustrated. So, yeah,	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of <u>others</u>	
EP2: He's copied sort of he's learning this is how you regulate This, how you respond when you're feeling frustrated or angry	FORMULATOR: noticing patterns	
SENCo: yeah	PRAISE & VALIDATION: aligning with the suggestions of <u>others</u>	
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: mmm		
SENCo: He's seen other people do this? If he's seen bits?	FORMULATOR: is a communal role	
EP2: like shouting		
FOSTER CARER: It's learnt behaviour isn't it		
SOCIAL WORKER: it is		

Appendix 25: Additional information for the sub-theme ‘Collusion against the past’

Theme map with links between ‘collusion against the past’ and other theme and sub-themes

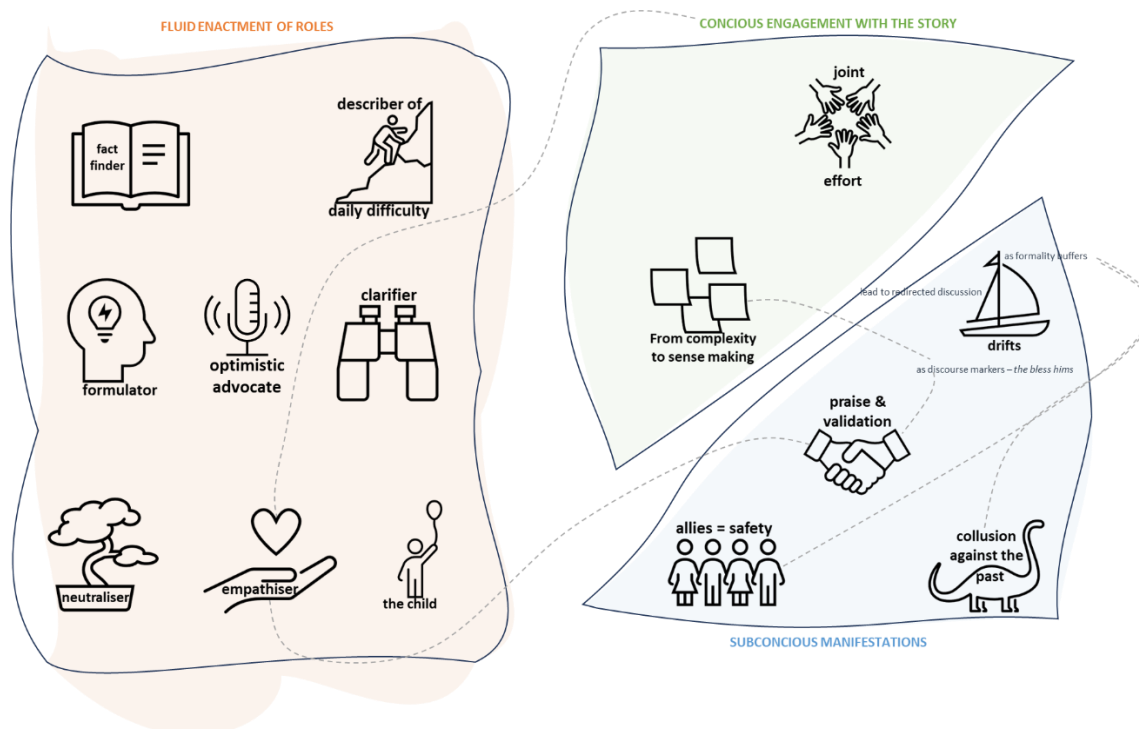


FOSTER CARER: yeah, <u>she</u> set the house on fire	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: tone and inflection to suggest <u>blame</u>	
EP1: Okay, so this was pre	CLARIFIER: questions to ensure accurate account	
FOSTER CARER: whilst heavily pregnant with (Child)	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: interjections of additional information	
EP1: okay this was before he was born?	CLARIFIER: questions to ensure accurate account	
EP2: was that by accident?		
FOSTER CARER: no on purpose	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: semantic tone suggests blame	
EP2: right okay		
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: she was trying to end her life and obviously was pregnant with (Child) at the time	CLARIFIER: summarising statements that model emotional neutrality	

	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: but then he would be wearing like an outfit worth like £200	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: interjections of additional information
	SOCIAL WORKER: Mmm	
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: so it was all around like material possessions...	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: interjections of additional information
	SOCIAL WORKER: was it (Social worker 1)? (Social worker 1) was it her?	CLARIFIER: questions to ensure an accurate account
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeas yeah it was.	
How do EP's word a summary without colluding with judgement?	EP1: So there's basic, kind of, physical health needs	NEUTRALISER: shifts the tone away from blame
	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah. But in terms of like material goods	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: interjections of additional information
	EP1: Yeah	
Why is this significant for the EC?	EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: He wanted for nothing. Anything he wanted he got	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: professional façade dropped

Appendix 26: Additional information for the sub-theme 'Drifts'

Theme map with links between 'Drifts' and other theme and sub-themes



SENCo: and literally we had to just like, let him sit with it on because he wouldn't take it off. He didn't, <i>well, in our perception he didn't trust that he'd get it back</i> if we put it on his peg. We had a box next to him with his name on, <i>we'll put a lid on it, and it can be yours.</i>	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is <u>needed</u> THE CHILD: as a listener	FORMULATOR: is a communal role
EP1: Yeah.		
SENCo: Nobody else will touch it. It can be in a place you can see still it	THE CHILD: as a listener	
EP2: Yeah. Because that's never happened before	FORMULATOR: noticing patterns	
SENCo: yeah, exactly. Yeah. We just had to just leave him sweating. Bless him! In September with a coat on {laughter}	DRIFTS: as empty emotional discourse markers – <i>the bless hims</i>	
FOSTER CARER: <u>yeah</u> for ages he had a coat on	FACT FINDER: a desire to provide value and detail	JOINT EFFORT: ping-ponging
SENCo: but now it's yeah because yeah, he does take it off now		
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: bless him!	DRIFTS: as empty emotional discourse markers – <i>the bless hims</i>	
SENCo: we got there, but it did literally it took weeks	DESCRIBER OF DAILY DIFFICULTY: a communication that help is <u>needed</u>	
EP2: It just <u>shows</u> doesn't it? Like when you said it takes <u>weeks</u> ? These kind of, like pathways that have been built up, take such a long time to rewire	FORMULATOR: noticing patterns FORMULATOR: EP formulations link theory and literature	FORMULATOR: is a communal role

EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: So there's a plan for them for adoption, but they're going to a placement together,		
SOCIAL WORKER: which will be (Carer 1)'s wont it?		
FOSTER CARER: mm-hmm		
EP2: is (Carer 1) out of (City)		
SOCIAL WORKER: (Village)		
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: Yeah, (Village) just [describing geographical location]. So (Child) moved to a foster placement XXXX XX 20XX. So carers (Carer 1) and (Carer 2) and they're carers for (Child) and (Brother 2). And this was due to (Auntie) ending the family placement. <i>It doesn't say why, but for whatever reason, she's decided, she can't care for him.</i>	COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: semantic tone suggests <u>blame</u> COLLUSION AGAINST THE PAST: professional façade <u>dropped</u>	
EP1: okay		
EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR: erm		
FOSTER CARER: Am I alright to have another coffee?	DRIFTS: as formality buffers Drifted <u>chatter</u> : energy levels depleting = the process is exhausting for the FC	

Appendix 27: Excerpts from supervision notes – discourse analysis decision making

Supervision session	Concerns/Agenda	Outcomes/actions
5	<p>Methodology plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will I keep phase 1/phase 2 separate? • Is it possible to complete two processes in their entirety? • Can I reduce the intensity of phase 2? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep the phases separate: “one step at a time” – might have delegated a lead for each phase if in a research team but as a soloist protective factors are key • Might be too much to complete a “full” discourse analysis as a secondary element... park that worry and focus on phase 1 – decisions to be made at a later date about what DA will look like for me
14	<p>Phase 1 complete; reflexive period in process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accomplishment; halfway there!!! • Overwhelmed: discourse analysis is a huge undertaking and I’m tired but determined • Can I complete “little d”? • How do I choose an element of the transcript to focus on without going against my value base. By including the participants in a discussion about phase 1’s findings I now feel conflicted; snippet of reflexive log <p><i>“Why was the contemplation of subconscious happenings so difficult for the non-EP participants to engage with? And am I interested in this because of my profession, or is it actually relevant? Perhaps further investigation of the subconscious happenings is the psychological contribution to this research. In a wave of self-doubt about my unique contribution, I am contemplating whether the first analysis chapter is a formal description of what is already known to happen and whether a non-psychologist researcher may have</i></p>	<p>Notes about what DA is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps understand <i>how</i> language is used ‘to do’ something... Use a ‘light touch’ of little d and Big D elements as a pre-discussion? • Little d: language in action/the use of language • Big D: impact of wider system stuff; culture, history/wider narratives <p>Justification – “anything goes in qualitative analysis” (Hepburn and Potter, 2003) – this feels freeing but scary... what if it lack integrity or what if it over complicates things</p> <p>Return to value base and research aims, catch up next week for more supervision</p>

	<i>reached similar conclusions. I had not anticipated this reflection before the feedback discussion"</i>	
15	<p>Structuring the DA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on power? Do I need to pick a certain part of the transcript - Explicitly discuss subject positioning? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No; power as a whole with reference to some excerpts which support my argument that power is 'juggled' – how does the language embody power etc etc how does power with the wider system have influence (a nod to Big D) - Excerpts selection influenced by feedback discussion with the participants. <p>Separate each of the intended discussion points into sections – try to keep the chapter succinct and approach it as 'pre-discussion'... it should "warm up the reader" ahead of the main thesis discussion chapter.</p> <p>-</p>