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***Young People's Narratives on Their
Experiences of Attending a School With an
Isolation Space***

Rachel Mallon

Supervised by Claire-Marie Whiting

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Abstract

In this research, I explored young people's experiences in mainstream secondary schools that use isolation practices. I draw upon a relational ontology and social constructionist epistemology (Burr, 2003; Gergen, 2009) to understand how participants co-construct meaning around isolation, both as users and as witnesses. I used a qualitative narrative methodology and the Listening Guide to gather rich narratives and analyse the layers of voice, identity, and meaning in the participants' stories (McKenzie et al., 2021).

My literature review explored the historical roots of isolation practices in punitive traditions and behaviourist paradigms (Slee, 1995; Smith, 1981). These practices emphasise control over fostering learning or emotional growth (Barker, 2019; Foucault, 1975). Recent guidance advises that isolation should be proportionate and considerate of the young person's welfare (Department for Education, 2024a). However, I found that this remains poorly defined, unmonitored, and lacks evaluation from those affected, the young people themselves (Power & Taylor, 2018; Sealy et al., 2023).

The narratives I heard constructed isolation as consistently punitive, restrictive and emotionally distressing, for those who were placed in isolation and those who witnessed it. All participants used the simile of a prison to describe isolation spaces and explored emotional dysregulation, stigma, and power within their narratives. Whilst some shared relief that isolation existed to deter their peers from being disruptive, its fairness, consistency and emotional impact were questioned. One participant expressed a desire to comfort those in isolation, demonstrating a capacity for co-regulation that is currently being prevented by isolation and punitive measures (Emerson & Frosh, 2009).

Through this research, I share the voices of young people and urge schools, educational psychologists, and policymakers to reconsider punitive approaches. I advocate for emotionally attuned, psychologically informed, evidence-based relational practices that promote regulation, inclusion, and dignity (Siegel & Bryson, 2018; Taylor & Scorer, 2025).

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Chapter 1: Introduction

My interest in isolation spaces began when a friend, who was teaching at a secondary school, first described them to me. In a school setting, isolation spaces are designated areas where a young person is separated from their peers, usually as a disciplinary response to behaviour that is considered disruptive or non-compliant. These spaces aim to ensure pupil safety, manage disruption to support learning, and provide a safe environment for the young person to calm down (Department for Education (DfE), 2024b). Such rooms or areas act as disciplinary measures by removing the young person from their learning environment and cohort. These spaces are also known by various alternative names, such as seclusion rooms, reflection rooms, time-out rooms, or reset rooms, though their specific terms vary depending on institutional policies and regional terminology (McDonnell & McDermott, 2022). When my friend described them to me at the time, I was a primary school teacher and initially viewed the idea positively. I particularly liked the thought of a young person being able to retreat from the classroom with a trusted adult, as this seemed supportive. However, my perspective began to change after watching a television documentary showing isolation booths being used in a secondary school. This experience coincided with my own children being toddlers.

My professional background includes working as a primary school teacher, educational welfare officer, and content creator specialising in wellbeing for an education publishing company. I have, therefore, developed a diverse understanding of educational environments and disciplinary methods. At that time, behaviourist strategies like “time out” and “the naughty step” were widely used with young

children. I tried these with my children, but felt uncomfortable implementing them. These behaviourist methods felt to have limits in terms of supportiveness and instead escalated their emotional distress instead of fostering calm, leaving me feeling disconnected from my children rather than connected. I researched ideas of control and punishment but was instead drawn to relational, emotionally attuned approaches prioritising connection and co-regulation (Siegel & Bryson, 2018). This change supported our wellbeing and our authentic relationships, and this ignited a passion in understanding the role of relationships.

When I returned to teaching, I noticed the rise of “zero tolerance” approaches in primary schools, my school’s ‘behaviour’ policy, and the increasing use of isolation practices in secondary schools. These contrasted with the relational approaches I had found effective in my parenting. Following this, as a content creator for an educational publishing company, I wondered about the link between punitive approaches and low staff wellbeing.

Isolation practices have gained media attention, often reflecting political influences. For instance, after Labour came to power in 2024, headlines varied from “English schools to phase out ‘cruel’ behaviour rules as Labour plans major education changes” (Fazackerley, 2024) to warnings like, “Labour is about to wreck your child’s education,” asserting that “Parents should be afraid” (Stanley, 2024). In early 2025, the DfE launched a public consultation on restrictive measures and reasonable force in schools (DfE, 2025). This consultation does not explicitly seek input from children

and young people (YP), although an “other” category is available for online survey participants.

In this thesis, I reflect on my positionality and how my experiences shaped my research (Holmes, 2020). I am a White British woman, a former primary school teacher, and a current trainee Educational Psychologist (EP). My experiences at school were mostly positive, but I remember times when disciplinary actions, such as asking a peer to stand in front of the class, working outside the classroom, or being taken outside to be spoken to, created feelings of shame and exclusion, alongside a fear of experiencing such treatment myself. This fear made me compliant to the point where I no longer felt comfortable expressing my voice within the school environment. As a female researcher, I recognise that my interpretations may be influenced by societal expectations relating to gendered behaviour and conformity in schools. My professional background has provided me with insight into how YP often experience anxiety during their transitions to secondary school, affecting their wellbeing, attendance, and engagement with learning. I have questioned whether using isolation as a form of punishment contributes to this issue. Additionally, I have been mindful, as a parent, of how YP’s actions and behaviour are perceived, responded to, and described. I recognise that my racial and cultural background may influence how I interpret YP’s narratives, especially since disciplinary practices can disproportionately affect YP from racialised and minority groups (Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, 2021; Noguera, 2003; Skiba et al., 2002). Through this research, I aim to hear the narratives of YP who attend a school that uses isolation practices. Having noticed my own reactions and unease when observing these

practices, I have been keen to learn from those who witness their use as well as those who are sent to isolation.

My research methodology combines psychodynamic and feminist perspectives. Feminist perspectives support this research by emphasising the significance of voice, power dynamics, and the social, cultural, and historical context of knowledge (Brown & Gilligan, 1993; Gilligan, 1982). In particular, I draw on feminist epistemologies that challenge hierarchical and objectivist approaches to knowledge, instead highlighting participants' subjective experiences and stories. My psychodynamic framework is based on the idea that unconscious processes, including defences, transference, and projection, influence both participants' narratives and the research relationship (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). This careful approach enables me to focus on what resonates as unspoken or emotionally intense within the data.

Throughout this thesis, acronyms are used, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Acronym Table

| Acronym | Definition |
|----------------|--|
| YP | A child/children or a young person/young people. |

| | |
|--------|--|
| SENDCo | Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator |
| EP | Educational Psychologist(s). |
| C4 | 'Consequence 4' (which is a common school behaviour system sanction leading to isolation). |
| EHCP | Education, Health, and Care Plan. |
| DfE | Department for Education |

Additionally, 'school' refers to any mainstream educational establishment.

Chapter 2: Critical Literature Review

2.1 Background and Overview

This literature review provides a backdrop to current research by examining the historical, political, and policy aspects of isolation practices. It explores isolation's definition, purpose, implementation, and impact on YP in education.

I began my literature review by carrying out keyword searches in Google Scholar, APA PsycInfo, the University of Sheffield's StarPlus library, and ERIC academic databases. Search terms included isolation, isolation rooms, seclusion, seclusion rooms, time-out rooms, restraint, and seclusion in education. Additional terms covered were impact on children, psychological and emotional impact, mental health, social isolation, stigmatisation, othering, discrimination, and social exclusion. After identifying a limited base of literature relevant to the research question, I used a 'snowballing' process to explore further literature through references in these results.

2.1.1 Historical Contexts

Education has historically been linked to punitive approaches (Skinner, 1979; Slee, 1995). The public spectacle of discipline, historically through torture and public punishment, is reflected in current media narratives and headlines focused on school behaviour and ideas of control (Foucault, 1975; McCluskey et al., 2011; Stanforth & Rose, 2020). However, despite mainstream media reporting high levels of school violence, the actual number of exclusions due to violence is low (McCluskey et al., 2011).

Historically, discipline seems to have been more closely associated with punishment than with learning. Whilst the term “discipline” originates from the Latin “discipulus”, meaning “pupil” (Slee, 1995), discipline practices have often emphasised control over education. Isolation approaches, for example, were considered by Smith (1981) to be a “mild punisher” which reinforced power dynamics within an environment with low stimulation (Smith, 1981).

Narrative practitioners White and Epston (1990) argued that knowledge empowers those who possess it. In this context, it might be argued that school staff have the power to shape the narratives of YP by assigning labels such as “naughty” to those who are sent to isolation. These labels potentially oversimplify YP’s complex experiences and reinforce biases within the school system. This view would align with Young-Bruehl’s (2012) term ‘Childism’, in which YP are problematised, normalising harm that would not be considered acceptable to other groups within the population (Young-Bruehl, 2012).

With corporal punishment banned in England and Wales in 1986, an increased level of surveillance took its place (Slee, 1995). The use of isolation spaces reflects this shift, emphasising punishment and control through surveillance rather than learning (Slee, 1995). Foucault’s (1975) concept of the ‘panopticon’ conveys that if individuals do not know whether they are being watched, they behave as though they are always being observed, which ensures that they effectively ‘guard’ and self-police themselves based on control through fear (Sealy et al., 2023; Thomson & Pennacchia, 2015). This arguably connects with the design of isolation rooms for

maximum potential surveillance and minimal interaction (Barker et al., 2010; Condcliffe, 2023), positioning staff in a restrictive and authoritarian role with high levels of control and dominance. However, a teacher recently leaving an authoritarian school reflected:

You are not ‘creating respect’, you’re not teaching children how to work in society, you’re saying: “You will do well and if you do not you will be punished” (Casey, 2024).

This shift towards control through surveillance and the use of isolation has influenced school practices and is reinforced through policy. Considering how isolation rooms are positioned within policy frameworks enables exploration of how these disciplinary approaches have become systemically normalised.

Understanding these historical and disciplinary backgrounds encourages reflection on the wider philosophical debates about the role of schools as socialising institutions. Schools have traditionally been seen as essential in shaping individuals and promoting social cohesion (Dewey, 1916/2018). Dewey (1916/2018) saw schools as democratic spaces that highlight the importance of experience in education and empowerment, preparing YP for active citizenship within the wider community. In contrast, Foucault (1975) emphasised the disciplinary aspects of schools, focusing on their roles in surveillance, normalisation, and social control. This Foucauldian perspective demonstrates how schools can use mechanisms such as isolation rooms to uphold exclusionary practices.

2.1.2 Isolation Rooms in Policy

Since 1997, government approaches to inclusion have shifted from Labour's full inclusion agenda with the intention of all YP being enabled to attend their local mainstream school with appropriate support (Carlile, 2011; Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019), to more punitive, zero-tolerance policies under successive Conservative governments focused on restoring traditional values and cultures through zero-tolerance policies and strict discipline approaches (Condliffe, 2023; Fraser-Andrew & Condliffe, 2023). This shift seemed to be further reinforced by the academisation of schools, which reduced local authority oversight and increased school autonomy, potentially undermining inclusive practices by limiting professional collaboration and community engagement (Condliffe, 2023; Power & Taylor, 2018).

Isolation spaces are known by many names, including isolation rooms, seclusion rooms, time-out rooms, reflective spaces, and hubs. In the same way, these spaces lack a consistent definition; they vary widely in design and use (McDonnell & McDermott, 2022). Isolation practices are intended to enable YP to stay in school with increased supervision whilst still accessing education (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2009; Jones et al., 2023). Despite their potential as an alternative to external exclusion (Barker, 2019; Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019), internal exclusions through isolation are not required to be reported or monitored (Barker, 2019), meaning the impact of the isolation approach is not thoroughly researched (Stanforth & Rose, 2020). This creates an unclear, unchallenged view of isolation use due to a lack of data on attendance, frequency, and duration (Power & Taylor, 2018; Sealy et al., 2021; Stanforth & Rose, 2020; Staufenberg, 2019). This has led

to inconsistent practices arising in how schools interpret and implement isolation (Jones et al., 2023). This has been shown to affect the level of care from staff, reducing empathy modelling, and limiting peer co-regulation opportunities (Condliffe, 2023; Perry-Hazan & Lambrozo, 2018).

The techniques and responses associated with isolation practices are believed to address perceived misbehaviour through extrinsic motivators generally rooted in the behaviourist paradigm (Sealy et al., 2021). However, there is limited evidence in the UK to support these methods (Condliffe, 2023). Research suggests that the fairness of these techniques is influenced by the YP's relationship with the teacher and co-constructed behaviour narratives (Condliffe, 2023). Bandura's social learning theory indicates that behaviours and social norms are learned through observation and imitation, affected by rewards, punishments and individuals' self-efficacy, their belief in their own ability to succeed in specific situations (Bandura, 1977). This theory highlights the importance of staff behaviour modelling on YP (McDonnell & McDermott, 2022). Additionally, due to empathy bias, where it is argued that decisions are shaped more by emotion than fairness, staff may feel more empathy for those they relate to or see as part of their 'ingroup'. Individuals tend to exhibit greater empathy and prosocial behaviour towards YP with perceived similarities (Vanman, 2016). This can result in varied experiences for YP, as staff adjust their approach in the isolation room based on their relationship with the YP (Barker, 2019). This bias can contribute to differences in how exclusionary practices are applied, particularly impacting YP of colour and those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, who are disproportionately represented in such settings (Commission

on Race and Ethnic Disparities, 2021; Noguera, 2003; Skiba et al., 2002). Class differences also intersect with exclusionary practices, as private and state school systems use different approaches to behaviour management and discipline (Casey, 2024). Additionally, male YP are statistically more likely to experience exclusion (DfE, 2023b), suggesting that gender further deepens these disparities. These intersecting factors illustrate how systemic inequalities influence who is most vulnerable to isolation and exclusion in schools. Whilst this research aims to gather detailed narratives from YP with and without experiences of isolation, a deeper understanding of this would benefit from further exploration of how race, class, and gender shape both the experiences of isolation and staff responses within school settings.

Ofsted guidelines, such as removing YP from class for a limited amount of time if they display perceived disruptive behaviours (DfE, 2022), reinforce an approach focused on correcting behaviour. Due to reduced funding, resources and local authority support, together with increasing demands on schools, reactive rather than proactive responses are likely (Power & Taylor, 2018). This creates challenges for YP who experience regulation difficulties and would benefit from a more proactive and evaluated approach (Condliffe, 2023; Nash et al., 2016). Government guidance on isolation practices remains vague, stating that YP can be placed “away from other pupils for a limited period” and that schools must act “reasonably” (DfE, 2014, p. 12). More recent guidance states that staff should consider the questions, “Is it necessary?”, “Is it proportionate?”, and “Have you considered the pupil’s welfare?” (DfE, 2024a, pp. 6-7) when assessing whether a restrictive practice is reasonable in

a given situation. Within the final question, considering a student's welfare, the guidance states that "Staff should seek to understand how the pupil is feeling" (DfE, 2024a, p. 7). This would then impact whether the restrictive intervention "should be, or continue to be, applied, reduced or stopped" (DfE, 2024a, p. 7). Whilst non-verbal strategies are advised before implementing a restrictive practice, this is only recommended to support those with identified speech, language, and communication needs. It is not specified that these strategies need to be used when assessing how the YP feels during a restrictive practice to determine whether the intervention is appropriate to continue; therefore, the impact of distress on the YP's ability to process language is not acknowledged (Siegel & Bryson, 2012). The guidance suggests that recording restrictive interventions is best practice, but this is not statutory.

Whilst inclusion agendas aim to keep YP within the school community (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2009), increasing isolation practices arguably expand the physical boundaries of the school, effectively excluding those sent to isolation. Internal exclusions through isolation spaces are regarded as a way to avoid external exclusion (Barker, 2019; Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019). From September 2025, there will be a new statutory requirement to record and report incidents involving the use of force (DfE, 2024a), following a call for evidence regarding the reasonable use of force and restrictive practices in schools (DfE, 2023a). Nevertheless, there is still no statutory obligation to collate data on isolation practices, which is only advised as best practice.

2.1.3 The Wider Context of Isolation and Social Exclusion

Isolation spaces in schools do not function independently of wider societal influences. They mirror and can even reinforce larger social patterns of exclusion and marginalisation (Foucault, 1975). Social exclusion happens when individuals or groups are systematically denied access to rights, opportunities, and resources typically available to others in society (Levitas et al., 2007). In educational settings, exclusionary practices such as isolation, fixed-term suspensions, or exclusion disproportionately affect marginalised YP, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, lower socioeconomic backgrounds, and those with special educational needs (Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, 2021; DfE, 2023b; Gillborn, 2014; Tillson & Oxley, 2020).

Often, exclusionary practices are motivated more by maintaining existing social norms and power dynamics than by genuinely supporting YP's needs (Skiba et al., 2014). Creating isolation spaces can contribute to the process of othering, where YP's actions are seen as within-child challenges rather than understandable responses to their environment or broader systemic issues (Stanforth & Rose, 2020). This perspective tends to normalise punitive reactions and can obscure the social inequalities that may influence behaviours that are seen as challenging (Losen & Martinez, 2013).

Using isolation as a disciplinary measure can sometimes lead to feelings of alienation that extend beyond the individual, impacting the entire community. This can create an atmosphere filled with fear, anxiety, and mistrust (Skiba & Peterson,

2000). Such environments can undermine the sense of belonging and inclusion that are so important for positive educational experiences and emotional wellbeing (Osterman, 2000).

Understanding isolation practices within this wider social and systemic context is necessary in order to explore punitive approaches and consider alternative strategies focused on understanding and addressing underlying needs (Jones et al., 2023).

2.1.4 Reflection

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child emphasises inclusive education for YP with disabilities, discipline aligned with human dignity, and ensuring YP's views are considered in areas affecting them (Knight et al., 2022; Tillson & Oxley, 2020; UNICEF, 1989). Exclusionary practices in England have raised growing concerns (Power & Taylor, 2018), and despite more punitive measures, student misbehaviour remains unchanged (Gomez et al., 2021). The ever-changing terms and definitions surrounding perceived challenging behaviour (Stanforth & Rose, 2020) may impact what is perceived as misbehaviour and reduce recognition of the support required. Arguably, this lack of clarity contributes to framing behaviour as solely within a teacher's control and neglects the idea of support, hence the term behaviour management. Increased teacher control may lead staff to neglect building engaging lessons through individual relationships with YP, reducing their role to that of rule enforcers. Maintaining a child's dignity means valuing, respecting, and treating them ethically (Baumann & Bleisch, 2014). This raises questions about the psychological

impact of isolation practices, challenging whether isolation is educationally beneficial or punitive (Barker, 2019; Gilmore, 2013).

The current focus on behaviour management over teaching skills and building unique relationships may lead to teachers feeling less skilled and motivated (Skinner et al., 2019). When school staff's autonomy and diverse skills are limited, relationship opportunities decrease, leading to increased stress and demoralisation (Skinner et al., 2019). This suggests that chances for relational repair and connection reduce when compliance and conformity are prioritised for both staff and YP. Skinner et al.'s (2019) research involved qualitative data from 39 teachers and six school leaders in England and Wales, but did not include YP's narratives about isolation spaces.

Although historical and policy contexts recognise isolation rooms as tools for control, they are often framed differently in educational discussions. The next section considers their stated purposes against actual practice.

2.2 The Espoused Purpose of Isolation Rooms

2.2.1 To Support the YP's Emotional Regulation and Learning

An espoused purpose of isolation rooms is to support YP with emotional regulation and learning, recognising the need for supervised education without rewarding undesired behaviour (Barker, 2019). This justification aims to maintain education, providing a space for YP to transition from an anxiety-inducing environment to a safe space to regulate emotions (Department for Health and Social Care and DfE, 2019;

Gilmore, 2013). It is framed as non-disciplinary and non-punitive. It states that it should only be used if a YP displays “severely disturbed behaviour, including that which is likely to cause harm to others, and for the minimum time necessary” (Department for Health and Social Care & DfE, 2019, p. 44).

Whilst in isolation, YP should be enabled to access learning and support whilst distanced from distractions and peers (Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019). A behaviourist approach focused on rewards and consequences may deter others and promote conformity. It has been suggested that isolation rooms support YP to remain within the overall school system (Gilmore, 2013) and enable nurturing opportunities (Nash et al., 2016).

However, it can be argued that this view neglects co-regulation or self-regulation. Isolation rooms are often perceived as a punishment (Barker, 2019) due to the lack of clarity in their purpose, rather than being seen as a space for nurture (Sealy et al., 2023). Punitive strategies risk escalating behaviours, leading to exclusion (Armstrong, 2018; Barker, 2019). Acknowledging the emotions expressed through behaviour is considered essential for supporting the YP (Taylor & Scorer, 2025). Viewing behaviour as communication emphasises the need to understand the messages behind these actions (Geddes, 2017) whereas punishment may silence rather than explore this communication (Sheppard, 2020).

Reflecting on Dr Stephen Shore's quote, "If you've met one person with autism, you've met one person with autism" (Flannery & Wisner-Carlson, 2020), there seems to be an absence of consideration of individual differences and the holistic understanding needed to offer appropriate support in responses to behaviour deemed as challenging from YP (Rainer et al., 2023). Without such individualised responses, it might be contended that behaviour may lack the same level of differentiation and personalisation as other areas of learning. Concerns around the inconsistent application of school rules and disciplinary methods present an opportunity to explore relationships and teacher discretion within school behaviour policies (Jones et al., 2020; Perry-Hazan & Lambrozo, 2018). Alongside the differences in how isolation is implemented, there is significant variation in the isolation space itself, further impacting its effects (Power & Taylor, 2018).

Research suggests that YP view punitive approaches as ineffective and harmful (Condliffe, 2023; Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019; Perry-Hazan & Lambrozo, 2018; Quinn, 2024) and that they may misunderstand the cause-and-effect relationship that leads to isolation (Nash et al., 2016). Condliffe (2023) emphasised the need for more research into restrictive practices and their effects on YP's wellbeing. However, her study faced limitations, including a small sample size and online qualitative interviews due to COVID-19, leading to possible bias from those with negative views on isolation. It only represented YP sent to isolation as punishment. Similarly, Quinn's research (2024) involved only a small sample of YP in Alternative Provisions. Although this research offers valuable insights, it reflects only isolation

users, reinforcing the idea that only isolated students are affected, and lacks generalisability by focusing solely on Alternative Provision students.

Interestingly, Jean-Pierre and Parris (2019) suggest that incidents regarded as misbehaviour are found to decrease when students are engaged in and enjoy their learning, and that punitive measures are counterproductive. However, their review lacks the perspective of YP on these measures or alternatives.

Whilst some schools' use of isolation may support a nurturing approach, this raises questions about why this is limited to designated isolation spaces rather than being an approach applied more broadly across the school. For nurture to be effective, YP would need to trust that the adult's intention for isolation is to provide a safe space. Otherwise, shame responses may increase distress and lead to heightened emotional dysregulation (Elison et al., 2006; Sealy et al., 2023). Taylor (2022) challenges the notion that YP being moved away from their peers is supportive, as those placed within isolation are predominantly the most vulnerable children. The hidden nature of isolation means it has the potential to function as exclusion disguised as inclusion (Jones et al., 2020) and perpetuate othering (Waterhouse, 2007).

Louise Bombèr (2007), a specialist in trauma-informed and attachment-aware approaches, suggests that when a system lacks non-shaming techniques, YP may seek control to meet their emotional needs. Poor staff-student connections correlate

with behaviours often perceived as disruptive, which aligns with attachment theory. Bombèr and others suggest that secure relationships are crucial for emotional regulation, emphasising the importance of relationships in schools (Bombèr, 2007; Forde, 2025; Nash et al., 2016; Willis et al., 2021). In stressful situations, both the YP's and the staff members' potential to be reflexive may be reduced, limiting their ability to interpret and process each other's mental states. Control-seeking behaviours may therefore operate unconsciously at an affective level (Fonagy & Target, 1997).

According to self-determination theory, YP are most motivated and engaged when they have autonomy, competence and relatedness in a task (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The lack of autonomy in enforced isolation could therefore prevent growth and change, affecting emotional connections (Condliffe, 2023; Quinn, 2024; Willis et al., 2021). Karen Treisman (2017), a clinical psychologist and expert in trauma-informed care, defines safety as multi-dimensional, encompassing inner, emotional, physical, and perceived safety. She also emphasises an intrinsic sense of security, in which safety is experienced regardless of external circumstances. This perspective raises questions about whether isolation spaces in schools can support a sense of safety, especially for YP with complex emotional needs, where meaningful connections and relationships are denied. Evidence from solitary confinement in prisons shows serious psychological impacts, including anxiety, depression, and cognitive issues, which can impact learning (Shalev & Edgar, 2015). This comparison raises questions about the impact of school isolation on emotional regulation and learning, perhaps emphasised by the lack of YP's voices in current research.

2.2.2 To Maintain Control and Order

Isolation rooms are often justified as a tool to maintain control and order in schools. This includes removing YP who are perceived as disruptive to deter others and preserve a positive learning environment (Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019; Taylor, 2022). This frames YP's behaviour as a threat, making isolation a tool for restoring order.

Reports suggest that student behaviour is a significant stressor for teachers, impacting their wellbeing, and contributes to them leaving the profession (DfE, 2015; Nash et al., 2016). Teacher wellbeing is closely linked to student outcomes (Madigan & Kim, 2021), meaning that behaviour that is felt to challenge is additionally perceived as a threat to school performance and to how teacher performance is perceived (Madigan & Kim, 2021).

In practice, isolation is often regarded as necessary for maintaining discipline for school functioning. YP may acknowledge punishments as part of a teacher's role and not necessarily harmful to the relationship (Willis et al., 2021). However, staff report a lack of training, resources, and support as key barriers to effective behaviour management (Knight et al., 2022). This leads to a reliance on restrictive, reactive measures (Armstrong, 2018; Stanforth & Rose, 2020). Barker et al. (2010) found that the main reasons given for use of isolation were 'verbal abuse' (40%), perceived "persistent disruptive behaviour" (19%), and "failure to follow staff instructions" (18%) (Barker et al., 2010, p. 380). However, apart from persistent disruption, these reasons seem to indicate reactive responses to singular events rather than evidence-informed or personalised support (Condliffe, 2023), or the use of low-

arousal approaches (McDonnell, 2019). Although isolation is often justified as being beneficial to the overall school environment, its effectiveness in addressing the isolated YP's needs is debatable (Noguera, 2003; Willis et al., 2021).

When isolation rooms fail to be effective at reducing behaviours perceived as disruptive (Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019; Taylor, 2022), it could be argued that the primary purpose may be less about supporting the individual and more about maintaining control and order through fear in the remaining cohort. Staff often view themselves as responsible for both preventing and responding to behaviour perceived as disruptive, and when control is “lost”, blame is directed at both YP and staff (Armstrong, 2018; Stanforth & Rose, 2020). This blaming, often focused on embarrassment and shame, may trigger threat responses in both YP and staff, impacting relationships and cohesion (Taylor, 2022).

A critique of isolation rooms is that their alignment with punitive and behaviourist models prioritises control over support (Barker, 2019; Condliffe, 2023) and overlooks individual context and relational factors (Condliffe, 2023). Teachers rarely have access to regular supervision or reflective spaces (Lawrence, 2020), which may result in instinctive and counterproductive responses that increase stress (McDonnell & McDermott, 2022; Nash et al., 2016). However, these approaches risk overlooking inclusion, equity, and social justice principles (Gilmore, 2013). Whilst teachers emphasise equity and the inclusion of separate provisions for students through isolation (Knight et al., 2022), the rationale behind this social exclusion, its equitable purpose and the overarching goals remain questionable. Additionally, the punitive

strategy of emotionally isolating YP may affect not only the YP themselves but also staff and peer observers. It can shape internalised beliefs and behaviour through fear (Çeven et al., 2021; Duarah, 2018).

Interestingly, McCluskey et al. (2011) found that EPs proposing alternatives to punitive measures, such as restorative approaches, may face resistance from teachers who view these methods as a loss of authority. Even in schools with restorative practices, punitive measures have been found to continue due to a belief in a need for power and control through discipline (McCluskey et al., 2011).

Conversely, it is postulated that this power hierarchy in school silences YP and limits their autonomy (Barker et al., 2010; Sealy et al., 2021). It enforces control, requiring YP to apologise and accept punishment without being heard (Sealy et al., 2023).

This acceptance of punishment and modelling of exclusion raises important questions about its wider impact, highlighting the benefit of gathering more perspectives from YP (Willis et al., 2021) and the importance of the broader school community sharing their perspectives to gain an understanding of the impact of school staff maintaining control in this way.

2.2.3 For the Benefit of Others

Following the logic of maintaining control and order, behaviour policies often advise teachers to remove students perceived as challenging to preserve the learning environment (Stanforth & Rose, 2020). This risk management approach is especially

relevant for YP with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, where individual removal is believed to create calm (Willis et al., 2021). In support of this approach, Perry-Hazan and Lambrozo (2018) held focus groups with 70 primary-aged YP. They found that participants prioritised 'fairness' and had a perception of being treated equally (Perry-Hazan & Lambrozo, 2018). However, this perception can overlook equity and the concept of individual need, contributing to systemic inequity (Sheppard, 2020). YP may form their beliefs by observing adult responses.

Whilst this research was based in Israel, it provides key insights into primary school discipline and perspective formation. However, differences in educational systems and cultures may also limit the transferability of these ideas to the UK. Similarly, research by Hampton and Ramoutar (2021), conducted in a UK secondary school, found that YP did not necessarily oppose removal approaches. Instead, they valued clarity and fairness in how rules were enforced. Perry-Hazan and Lambrozo's (2018) and Hampton and Ramoutar's (2021) findings suggest that YP value transparency, structure and fairness in behaviour management approaches.

This raises questions about how behaviour is conceptualised in schools. Specifically, whether it is viewed as communication needing relational support or as a disruption requiring control. If control is the focus, it can be argued that individual needs may be overlooked, influencing how YP perceive justice, inclusion, and who is 'deserving' of support.

It is apparent, therefore, that further research is needed to capture how YP internalise and interpret control-based responses. A better understanding of YP's perspectives would help develop a more nuanced understanding of behaviour policies and exclusionary practices.

2.2.4 Reflection

The marketisation of education, which prioritises test results and league tables over wellbeing, seems to undermine the moral purpose of education and affect inclusion, exclusion, motivations, and relationships within schools (Armstrong, 2018; Thomson & Pennacchia, 2015). Casey (2024) highlights how a results-driven approach is used to justify high salaries for Multi-Academy Trust leaders, valuing performance over student development. In this context, compliance becomes a measure of success, and exclusionary practices, such as isolation, can be seen as tools to maintain order.

In contrast, the private education sector is noted for adopting a different approach, where YP are actively engaged, confident, and autonomous in their learning, and these skills are prioritised over compliance (Casey, 2024). This difference reinforces privilege within society, as those with access to private education are supported in developing the skills necessary to maintain their advantageous position (Casey, 2024; Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019). Meanwhile, the most vulnerable YP, and those most at risk of isolation and exclusion, are often those subjected to punitive discipline methods to ensure compliance and control (Gomez et al., 2021; Jones et al., 2020; McDonnell & McDermott, 2022; Noguera, 2003; Power & Taylor, 2018; Sealy et al., 2021; Taylor, 2022). Isolation practices may encourage ridicule, rejection, and

humiliation, aligned with historical public spectacles of punishment (Foucault, 1975; Willis et al., 2021). Publicly removing certain “vilified” individuals to alternative spaces raises questions about the level of inclusion possible (Carlile, 2011). Arguably, as long as the isolation space maintains elements of hidden, solitary confinement, it symbolises a broader societal expectation to remove those who are not conforming, rather than addressing systemic barriers to success. This suggests isolation approaches prioritise school efficiency over individual wellbeing.

Within existing research, there is a significant lack of insight from YP and a particular gap for those witnessing isolation of their interpretation of its function and impact. This limits our understanding of whether the espoused purposes align with how isolation is experienced. Without these perspectives, the emotional, relational, and cultural impacts of isolation across the wider school community remain underexplored.

2.3 The Impact of the Isolation Space

2.3.1 Disruption to Learning and Engagement

Whilst internal isolation is often positioned as a means of maintaining access to education (Gilmore, 2013; Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019), the reality for many YP is that they are removed from meaningful learning opportunities and are often placed under the supervision of unqualified or lower-paid teaching staff (Gilmore, 2013), impacting the quality of teaching and resources (Fraser-Andrew & Condliffe, 2023). This is

particularly concerning for YP with additional needs who may require more specialised teaching to access the curriculum effectively.

School staff have also expressed concerns about the impact of isolation on learning (Power & Taylor, 2018), which suggests a recognition that YP's compliance is often prioritised over their learning and development (Slee, 1995). Noguera (2003) reported that peers often replicate the same behaviour even when YP are removed. This indicates that exclusionary approaches may not be effective in creating a productive learning environment. Isolation may even increase the likelihood of behaviour perceived as challenging (Stanforth & Rose, 2020). With isolation causing YP to miss lessons, there could then be gaps in learning, potentially leading to YP feeling less engaged and experiencing shame around their academic abilities. Recognising that punitive measures disproportionately affect disadvantaged YP, isolation processes further harm their learning opportunities (Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019).

YP themselves have shared this impact. In Sealy et al.'s (2021) qualitative study, eight YP shared their isolation room experiences, sharing that isolation took away their education. Additionally, isolation arguably removes teachers' responsibility for learning, limiting their ability to support regulation, emotional development, and engagement. Therefore, isolation can hinder academic progress and the relationships for learning.

2.3.2 Emotional, Psychological, and Relational Impacts of Isolation

In a punitive environment, reactions to behaviour are often prioritised over the core need underlying the behaviour, leading to physical and emotional distress (Condliffe, 2023; Fraser-Andrew & Condliffe, 2023). Rather than support YP's emotional growth, isolation practices often promote compliance without understanding, which prevents processing emotions or developing co-regulation skills (Lakin et al., 2008). The isolation space symbolically removes YP from being kept in mind (Condliffe, 2023), which conflicts with trauma-informed principles that emphasise psychological presence and relational safety. Condliffe's (2023) qualitative study utilised unstructured interviews and suggested that isolation negatively impacted wider aspects of life in school and wellbeing due to the ostracism brought about through isolation. However, only the views of those directly experiencing isolation were heard, and therefore, the wider emotional, psychological, and relational impact of isolation within the school community is currently lacking.

The ideas of co-regulation, shame, and emotional dysregulation discussed here are grounded in established developmental and relational theories. Attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) states that YP need consistent, responsive relationships to feel safe, valued, and capable of managing their emotions. Bombèr and Hughes (2013) argue that disconnection, through processes such as isolation, can trigger feelings of rejection and threat, disrupting their ability to self-regulate. Trevarthen (2001) highlights that humans are naturally social beings who develop understanding and meaning through connecting with others. From the earliest stages of development, our brains are designed to engage in social interactions, helping us regulate

emotions, form bonds, and develop a shared view of the world (Bowlby, 1969; Trevarthen, 2001). Research by Trevarthen and Malloch (2000) on communicative musicality shows how emotional growth happens through shared rhythms, interactions, and exchanges with trusted adults. It emphasises the importance of embodied, interactive rhythms in nurturing and maintaining healthy relationships, especially in education (Trevarthen & Malloch, 2000). Methods like Intensive Interaction, originally developed to support YP with communication difficulties, build on these ideas by highlighting the value of tuned-in, reciprocal communication to help YP develop trust, self-regulation, and emotional wellbeing (Kellett, 2004). When schools withdraw relational support and instead rely on punitive measures, it can increase shame through experiences of rejection, humiliation, and disconnection (Nathanson, 1992). This approach can also hinder YP from learning how to safely process difficult emotions with others, through shared understanding and relational trust, and consider alternative ways of being (Vasilic, 2022). From this perspective, isolation does not simply remove a YP from a space; it also deprives them of vital relational experiences that are essential for emotional growth, identity development, and repair after conflicts.

Building on this theoretical foundation, the punitive nature of the isolation approach leaves YP maintaining a sense of guilt and fear (Fraser-Andrew & Condliffe, 2023). Experiencing rejection from a social group triggers sensations aligned with physical pain, impacting connections and leading to insecure attachment behaviours (Bombèr, 2007; Bombèr & Hughes, 2013). Using relationship withdrawal as a form of

punishment can prevent the learning, safety, stability, and security needed for healing (Bombèr & Hughes, 2013).

Developmental psychology highlights that YP's brain structures are still developing, which raises concerns about the effectiveness and supportiveness of isolation rooms as a tool for behaviour change (American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force, 2008; Noguera, 2003; Quinn, 2024; Sealy et al., 2021). Current neuroscientific understanding highlights how restrictive and exclusionary practices may negatively impact emotional wellbeing (Novotney, 2019) and physical health (Holt-Lunstad et al., 2015), raising concerns around relational functioning and potential links to the criminal justice systems (Perry-Hazan & Lambrozo, 2018; Sealy et al., 2021).

Daily interactions, particularly with school staff, significantly influence a YP's behaviour and emotional growth (Armstrong, 2018; Munn et al., 2000). Strong staff-pupil relationships can increase engagement, promote positive behaviours, and enhance learning opportunities (Munn et al., 2000; Willis et al., 2021). Connections and attachments formed through 'time in' are valued over 'time out' (Yaholkoski et al., 2016). However, actions viewed as disruptive can create tension in these connections (Willis et al., 2021). Whilst some studies suggest isolation does not always damage relationships (Willis et al., 2021), the depth and necessary repair work post-isolation are arguably often overlooked.

The school climate is also impacted by isolation approaches, creating feelings of worthlessness and reduced self-esteem (Sealy et al., 2023). Such approaches directly affect YP and indirectly affect their peers, school staff, and parents, potentially obstructing the safe and supportive atmosphere schools should provide (DfE, 2023a). The threat of isolation can create a constant state of anxiety in the school community, including those complying with school rules (Taylor, 2022). Some YP have expressed fear around punitive measures, particularly those adhering to school rules (Perry-Hazan & Lambrozo, 2018). This suggests that even those who do not experience isolation directly may be emotionally and psychologically affected by its existence.

This is particularly concerning considering the increasing difficulties schools are facing related to attendance and engagement (Adams & García, 2023; Eyles et al., 2023), and SEMH challenges (Jones et al., 2023) amongst YP. Punitive strategies, which are led by accountability and policy instead of being psychologically informed, prompt questions about the ethical implications of viewing YP as commodities instead of individuals. Healthy relationships are essential for inclusive education, especially for students with special educational needs (Knight et al., 2022). However, the commercialisation of education, focusing on performance and outcomes, can lead to relational aspects, such as care and individual understanding, being overlooked. This raises more moral questions around the role of isolation and its influence on interactions within the school system (Gilmore, 2018; Power & Taylor, 2018). Whilst positive relationships significantly influence educational outcomes

(Nash et al., 2016), punitive approaches may undermine these opportunities (McCluskey et al., 2011).

Further research is therefore needed to explore the impact of isolation on self-perceptions and group dynamics, as limited research explores how the school community internalises and normalises these practices. This potentially reinforces exclusion narratives and contributes to the othering of YP.

2.3.3 The Sensory Experience of Isolation

Restrictive practices are defined as actions limiting movement, liberty, or freedom (DfE, 2023a). Isolation rooms are, therefore, considered to be a restrictive practice. Whilst isolation rooms can be viewed as helpful for regulation and learning without a peer audience (Barker, 2019; McDonnell & McDermott, 2022), they often enforce silence and require YP to remain seated in an environment purposefully restricting movement and interaction. This arrangement reinforces power dynamics that may leave YP feeling trapped and without control (Barker, 2019; Barker et al., 2010; Condliffe, 2023; Fraser-Andrew & Condliffe, 2023; Foucault, 1975).

Lack of movement is linked to physical and mental health issues (Sealy et al., 2023). Barrett (2017) wrote about body budgets, which relate to how the brain manages and allocates the body's energy resources to maintain health and wellbeing. The brain predicts and balances energy use, adjusting for factors such as physical activity, stress, and environmental demands to support the body (Barrett, 2017). Emotional

regulation, physical movement, connections, and co-regulation are considered crucial for maintaining the body budget (Barrett, 2017). Isolation practices, often characterised by restricted movement, separation from peers and a punitive mindset, may, as a result, prevent the emotional regulation required for learning.

Even when not physically restricted, the fear and awareness of the space may prevent YP from leaving (Fraser-Andrew & Condliffe, 2023) or moving. In one account, a YP compared the experience to being "almost a dog in a cage" (Sealy et al., 2023, p. 1346). Even when used for animal training, restrictive practices such as crates are recommended to be used as spaces of calm rather than for punishment, recognising that fear of the space would prevent any future regulation from being enabled there (McConnell, 2003).

Despite official claims that isolation is not intended to be punitive (Sealy et al., 2023), the design, sensory environment, and hidden nature potentially communicate otherwise. The planning and consideration given to isolation spaces significantly impact how they are designed, created, perceived and experienced (Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019). There is typically limited planning around these spaces and little involvement from the wider community (Sealy et al., 2023). Parents have expressed surprise that the practice of isolation occurs in their YP's school (Martin-Denham, 2020), suggesting a lack of awareness or understanding among parents and a disconnect between policy, practice, and perception. The isolation space is described as feeling cramped, and the design is noted for its bright, white features (Quinn, 2024).

This raises key questions about why the conditions necessary for supporting emotional development, such as movement, sensory integration, and co-regulation, are prevented within the system in response to behaviour, and further questions about the degree to which sensory needs are considered when designing interventions for YP experiencing distress. Research on YP's perception of isolation spaces and their sensory messages is limited, and perceptions of the broader school community and witnesses are lacking in research (Barker, 2019). YP's insights are crucial for understanding the emotional and sensory aspects of isolation.

2.3.4 Isolation's Impact on Belonging, Identity, and Community

It is argued that within environments where punitive behaviour management and within-child approaches are used, narratives of othering are reinforced, positioning certain YP as problematic and needing control (Stanforth & Rose, 2020; Waterhouse, 2007). This framing affects cognitive engagement (Taylor, 2022) and reflects broader meritocratic ideals, where conformity is rewarded and non-conformity is punished (Casey, 2024).

A punitive approach to behaviour, reliant on shame and control, does not support the development of empathetic, self-aware, and responsible individuals for future society (Gomez et al., 2021; Noguera, 2003). As shame and blame increase, accountability decreases (RSA, 2015), limiting autonomy, repair, and growth (Bombèr, 2007; Fraser-Andrew & Condliffe, 2023; Gomez et al., 2021; Quinn, 2024). This ongoing othering through shame and blame widens the divide between isolated YP and their future communities (Gomez et al., 2021; Waterhouse, 2007). Whilst schools may

aspire to inclusivity, language and practices around isolation may, possibly unintentionally, perpetuate an 'othering' narrative (Knight et al., 2022; Waterhouse, 2007). Additionally, teachers under emotional stress may reactively use shaming strategies, escalating situations (Fraser-Andrew & Condliffe, 2023; Taylor, 2022), negatively affecting school climate and staff morale (Barker, 2019).

When isolation is used as a visibly punitive measure, it reinforces a culture of collective control based on fear rather than support, further embedding othering amongst peers (Knight et al., 2022; Waterhouse, 2007). The emotional consequences of being separated from peers can reduce YP's self-esteem and reinforce feelings of difference (Jones et al., 2020; Sealy et al., 2021). Relational impacts can extend into the wider community, with isolation practices placing strain on parent-child relationships (Power & Taylor, 2018). Following isolation, it is the relational repair that is often overlooked (Bombèr & Hughes, 2013; Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019). YP rely on stable, relational connections similar to parent-child bonds (Bennathan, 1997). Whilst schools have the potential to foster emotional development and regulation (Pratt, 2023), this is not always reflected in practice (McDonnell & McDermott, 2022). Isolation approaches may, therefore, undermine a school's ability to support identity and wellbeing.

Whilst the literature emphasises the emotional and relational harms caused by isolation, it is also important to recognise how the language, visibility, and methods of implementing isolation can often make its punitive effect feel even stronger. The term "in" isolation suggests separation and confinement, presenting it as a space of

exclusion rather than an opportunity for relational repair (Barker et al., 2010; Sealy et al., 2021). Isolation is often kept hidden from the wider school community, with limited transparency about who is placed there and for what reasons, and policies are frequently not openly communicated to parents or carers (Condliffe, 2023; Knight et al., 2022; Martin-Denham, 2020). This lack of visibility can normalise exclusion as a common disciplinary measure whilst hiding its potentially stigmatising effects (Clarke et al., 2021). McCluskey et al. (2013) argue that the secrecy surrounding these practices mirrors wider trends in punitive education methods, where punishments are kept hidden and used to manage behaviour without accountability or open discussion. This approach to concealment is quite different from restorative approaches, which emphasise openness, shared understanding, and collective responsibility (Morrison & Vaandering, 2012). These methods make behaviour support more transparent and collaborative, fostering a sense of trust and teamwork.

Humans typically categorise themselves based on similarities and differences, and belonging to a group can enhance survival chances as a species (De Dreu et al., 2023). The need to belong is a fundamental human requirement that is evident in the identity construction of YP (Jones et al., 2020). However, isolation spaces contribute to feelings of exclusion, even when these spaces are described as supportive (Condliffe, 2023). According to social identity theory, self-concept is shaped through group affiliations, which affect behaviour and belonging (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Social identity is fluid and is shaped by peer interactions, encouraging performative behaviour to align with group norms (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Although some YP may imitate the behaviour of isolated peers to gain in-group acceptance and approval

(Lakin et al., 2008), isolation practices can disrupt this by triggering feelings of rejection, which prevents regulation, negatively impacts attachment (Barker, 2019; Bombèr & Hughes, 2013; Power & Taylor, 2018), and leads to physical and emotional distress (Condliffe, 2023; Fraser-Andrew & Condliffe, 2023; Williams, 2009).

Additionally, it is also important to recognise the ability of schools to serve as communities of connection, care, and mutual learning. Dewey (1916/2018) believed that education ought to actively foster curiosity about academic subjects, as well as about other people, perspectives, and lived experiences, serving as a basis for mutual respect and civil engagement. When this curiosity becomes a part of school culture, it fosters a sense of social connection through shared experiences and an openness to different perspectives (Kashdan et al., 2004). To effectively care for YP and build relational trust, staff need to be attentive and responsive to needs whilst also showing respect (Jackson, 2024), which involves a willingness to encourage curiosity about each other and the wider world to create inclusive communities. Jackson (2024) criticises the failure of many schools to implement genuine care ethics in practice and calls for a re-evaluation of educational priorities, focusing meaningful relationships and attention to YP's lived experiences. Promoting a culture of curiosity, both towards each other and the wider world, not only reduces the marginalising effects of exclusionary practices such as isolation but also can improve YP's engagement, wellbeing, and sense of purpose (Fredericks et al., 2004; Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019; Pratt, 2023).

A restorative approach based on dialogue, empathy, and shared problem-solving offers an alternative to punitive measures, helping YP reflect on their actions through curious and relational engagement, whilst maintaining their connection to the school community (McCluskey et al., 2011; Morrison & Vaandering, 2012).

In settings that prioritise control, it can be challenging for YP to maintain a stable self-identity, with some developing a criminalised self-image (Armstrong, 2018; Perry-Hazan & Lambrozo, 2018; Taylor, 2022). More research is therefore needed to understand whether this shift is consciously adopted and how it shapes peer relationships beyond isolation (Fraser-Andrew & Condliffe, 2023; Sealy et al., 2021).

Further understanding is needed regarding how isolation practices influence community dynamics and shape identity, belonging, and difference within school culture. EP work can align with this by fostering connection and community whilst working with schools to reduce exclusions and enhance engagement with learning (McCluskey et al., 2011).

This research takes a critical approach based on Foucauldian theory, viewing schools as spaces of power relations and disciplinary practices. Whilst acknowledging Deweyan ideals of education that promote democratic and inclusive learning, existing literature (including Condliffe, 2023; Knight et al., 2022; Sealy et al., 2023) demonstrates how institutional practices like isolation can lead to exclusion and marginalisation.

2.4 Research Overview

Through this research, I aim to navigate the tension between the school system's desire to address behaviour perceived as challenging through isolation practices and the process of othering that these practices can create.

I will explore the purpose and effectiveness of isolation approaches from YP's perspectives. The transition from primary to secondary school is increasingly punitive, which is challenging for YP with complex behaviours and needs (Sheppard, 2020). Therefore, I will seek a secondary school perspective.

Existing literature acknowledges limited research on schools' role in societal belonging (Jones et al., 2020). Within this study, I intend to explore the community impact of attending a school where isolation exists, focusing on its effect on YP's wellbeing. I aim to gather narratives from YP who may or may not have faced isolation directly, as they remain aware of the possibility of being sent there.

Existing literature on school disciplinary approaches predominantly focuses on staff narratives, demonstrating a significant absence of YP's perspectives in shaping societal narratives (Condliffe, 2023; Gilmore, 2012; Gordon, 2001). The disconnect between policy intentions and experiences of isolation indicates a need for further research into its use in schools. Specifically, further research is required to consider the narratives of YP who are subjected to isolation and those who witness its use. I therefore aim to explore YP's views on attending a school using isolation strategies,

recognising that those not isolated may still be impacted. This novel approach addresses the gap in research by including YP's voices who have not directly experienced isolation (Condliffe, 2023), assessing how the threat and presence of isolation shape the school community. Therefore, I start with the YP themselves, who seem, so far, to be limited and disempowered within research narratives in this area.

When selecting literature for this research, I prioritised studies that directly captured the perspectives of YP, rather than those of staff, parents, or other adults. This choice aligned with my emancipatory aims to amplify YP's voices and minimise adult-centred interpretations of experiences. However, due to the limited peer-reviewed research specifically addressing YP's views on isolation practices, this critical review also includes grey literature that documents YP's perspectives. This grey literature offers valuable insights into lived experiences and highlights issues often underrepresented in academic research, such as YP's opinions on isolation. I recognise that grey literature is not subject to the same rigorous peer review process, so I have carefully evaluated the credibility, relevance, and consistency of these sources alongside peer-reviewed studies. Including this literature enhances understanding of YP's experiences and supports the emancipatory aim of centring their voices in discussions about isolation practices.

This study also aligns with the Call to Action (DfE, 2023a) and the ongoing consultation on reasonable force and restrictive measures in schools (DfE, 2025),

which acknowledges the absence of YP perspectives in discussions on restrictive practices.

Additionally, this research will explore whether greater autonomy results in more positive participation, consistent with empowerment theory. I will also examine self-determination theory to consider whether providing YP with greater autonomy, power, and freedom leads to more positive outcomes, particularly regarding their identity in the school and wider community (Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019; Quinn, 2024).

In summary, this research aims to provide valuable insights by exploring YP's own narratives regarding isolation practices within their school system. I intend to provide a distinct perspective by exploring the views of those YP experiencing isolation practices, and those witnessing them. The research has an emancipatory aim, which is to attempt to balance unequal power dynamics within the research by promoting collaboration and amplifying the YP's voices to empower them (Oliver, 1997). I believe this collaborative approach and understanding can potentially inform the entire school community, enhance EP practice, and highlight the systemic changes needed to change current isolation practices in some schools.

The main research question for this study is:

- What does it feel like to be a YP within a school that utilises isolation spaces?

Alongside this main research question, the accompanying sub-questions are:

- What are the narratives of the isolation space and those who occupy it?
- How do YP perceive the impact of isolation practices on their school community?
- What are the experiences of YP who witness the use of isolation on their peers?
- How is language used when constructing the concept of isolation, and how does this play out within relationships and discourses in the school community?

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Methodology Overview

Within this chapter, I have explored my ontological and epistemological position and considered the implications of these perspectives. I have examined the processes and decisions involved within the methodology and explained the rationale behind the research approach taken.

3.2 Positionality

In reflecting on my epistemological stance, I considered the four questions proposed by Crotty (1998). These are:

“What methods do we propose to use?

What methodology governs our choice and use of methods?

What theoretical perspective lies behind the methodology in question?

What epistemology informs this theoretical perspective?”

(Crotty, 1998, p2).

Recognising that ontology is key to these questions, I embraced a relational lens where identities and realities are co-constructed through interactions with the social and material world (Gergen, 2009). This perspective highlights the interconnectedness of people, experiences, and contexts, supporting my belief that knowledge is fluid, shaped by relationships (Gergen, 2015). I acknowledged that

identity and knowledge emerge from interactions and shared experiences, with reality being context-dependent and dynamic (Gergen, 2009).

My epistemological stance is therefore grounded in social constructionism, which suggests that knowledge and meaning are co-created through social interactions (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Burr, 2003) and cultural and environment contexts (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2002). I view reality and knowledge not as objective truths but as co-constructed through language, cultural norms, and shared meanings (Gergen, 1985). This approach emphasises understanding human experiences through the meanings people attach to their actions and social worlds (Schwandt, 1994) whilst critically reflecting on assumptions (Burr, 2003). This theoretical stance recognises that knowledge is subjective and influenced by culture, context, and perceptions. Whilst my approach is rooted in social constructionism, I have also drawn upon psychodynamic theory to develop a psychosocial perspective within which knowledge is understood to be influenced by social structures, discourse, and unconscious processes (Emerson & Frosh, 2009). This lens allows for exploration of how social structures, emotions, and unconscious processes shape narratives (Emerson & Frosh, 2009).

As a researcher working within a social constructionist epistemology, I see meaning-making as a collaborative and context-dependent process. My interpretations of participants' stories are shaped not only by their words but also by my own experiences, responses, and the relational dynamics involved in engaging with their narratives. To enhance transparency in this interpretative process, I have included

‘Personal Reflection’ boxes throughout the thesis. These reflections illustrate how my thoughts and emotions influence the analysis and, therefore, make visible this layer of the co-construction. Although these reflections are visually separated from the main text, this design aims to improve clarity and the quality criteria of coherence, correspondence, and persuasiveness (Riessman, 2008). These separate boxes are not meant to imply they are disconnected from the meaning-making process itself. Instead, they sit alongside the analysis as part of the ongoing dialogue between participants’ voices, my interpretations, and the research context.

However, I also recognise that separating reflections from the main body of the thesis has implications. Whilst supporting transparency for the reader in distinguishing between my personal reflections and the research findings, it may also inadvertently suggest that reflexivity is something done separately from the research, rather than being an essential part of the research process and the co-construction of knowledge (Etherington, 2004; Finlay, 2002). Given the social constructionist epistemological stance of my research, separating reflection from analysis might be seen as creating an artificial divide between subjective and objective accounts. I chose to keep this separation as a practical way to enhance clarity for the reader and maintain coherence in the research (Riessman, 1993), whilst recognising that reflexivity is not outside the analysis but a central element, as supported by the steps of the Listening Guide (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Tolman & Head, 2021; Woodcock, 2016).

3.3 Method

Due to my ontological and epistemological stance, I adopted a qualitative methodology to explore how individuals narrate their experiences. This approach aimed for a deeper understanding of participants' experiences, making it more suitable than quantitative methods (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016; Patton, 2015). It aligned with my epistemological position and allowed a nuanced exploration of my research questions and the complex interactions of personal, relational, and social influences (Holloway & Todres, 2003).

3.4 A Narrative Approach

A narrative approach was chosen for my interviews, with the underlying premise of allowing stories to be co-constructed between researcher and participant, therefore supporting shared meaning-making (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). I considered that this approach would enable participants to share their experiences openly, enabling their control over the aspects of their stories they wanted to reveal (Billington, 2012; Bold, 2012; Riessman, 2008). Grounded in my epistemological stance, this method aligns with a postmodern, narrative-based systemic paradigm within which reality is viewed as subjective and enriched by diverse perspectives (Bold, 2012).

Narrative interviews tend to be open-ended, starting with broad questions that let participants shape the conversation (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). Even structured interviews can provide the space for exploration beyond pre-planned questions, resulting in richer responses (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Parker, 2005). I believed a

narrative approach would prioritise storytelling over brief answers, allowing participants to interpret their experiences (Bold, 2012; Riessman, 2008). Due to the sensitive nature of isolation practices, narrative interviews provided a flexible framework for exploration, moving beyond hypothesis-driven methods (Bold, 2012). I was particularly interested in personal stories and stories heard from others about isolation practices, and how individual and shared narratives intersect (Murray, 2007), regardless of whether these narratives are based on real events, imagined scenarios, or everyday versus extraordinary experiences (Bruner, 1986).

I decided to use Carol Gilligan's Listening Guide to analyse the narratives created within the interviews. The Listening Guide is a feminist, relational methodology that emphasises the multiplicity of voices within individuals, the importance of context in meaning-making, and the need to capture the often-overlooked experiences of those traditionally marginalised in research (Gilligan, 1982; Gilligan, 2015). It intends to create trust within research and replace judgment with curiosity (Gilligan & Eddy, 2017), offering a systemic way to explore voice, silences, tone, and pronouns to explore layers of meaning within participants' narratives (Hutton & Lystor, 2021).

I felt a strong personal connection to the core principle of the Listening Guide: the experience of having something to say but feeling unable to share it (Gilligan, 1982). This reinforced my belief that the Listening Guide would enable a nuanced exploration of personal and social narratives within this research. Its emphasis on reflexivity also aligned with my commitment to examine my role, context, and the

power dynamics within the interview process (Bold, 2012; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

The detailed steps of the Listening Guide are explained later in this chapter.

3.5 Emancipatory Endeavour

Emancipatory research seeks to challenge social inequalities by empowering marginalised groups (Oliver, 1997). Its goal is not just to gather knowledge but to contribute to the freedom and empowerment of participants (Oliver, 1997). This approach challenges traditional methods that objectify participants and maintain unequal power dynamics, instead emphasising collaboration and the inclusion of the voices of those studied (Oliver, 1997).

My understanding of narrative research is that it can be liberating and empowering, aiming to let marginalised individuals voice their experiences (Oliver, 1997). Few articles explore the perspective of YP experiencing isolation, and I found no research capturing the voices of YP witnessing or feeling the ‘threat’ of isolation in schools. Consequently, YP facing isolation are excluded from research that affects their lives. By enabling YP to share their stories about isolation practices, this research aims to provide deeper accounts of their experiences (Walther & Fox, 2012), shifting the narrative to reflect their perspectives and emotions. This centres participants’ voices and enables YP to share their stories on their terms and challenge traditional power imbalances (Kiegelmann, 2021). As Luke Rodgers, founder of Foster Focus, states, “If we can change the way society thinks about YP, we will empower YP to change the world.” (YouthActionNet, 2015).

In this research, I understood power as the ability to influence decisions, control the flow of information, and shape how experiences are framed and interpreted (Oliver, 1997). Within educational and research settings, adults, especially professionals, hold authority over YP, which can strengthen hierarchical dynamics and silence or marginalise YP's voices (Kiegelmann, 2021; Oliver, 1997). Emancipatory approaches aim to challenge this imbalance by prioritising autonomy, voice, and lived experiences of participants, and recognising research relationships as respectful collaborations (Kiegelmann, 2021; Oliver, 1997). However, I also recognised the challenge of fully transferring power within this research. As a researcher, stranger, and trainee EP, I acknowledge that I brought authority into our interactions. I also maintained control over the research design, question framing, and interpretation of narratives. Whilst I used reflexive strategies and focused on participant agency where possible, I recognise that participants may have still perceived me as aligned with adults in their school system (Gilligan, 2015; Parker, 2005). Therefore, I accept that completely eliminating power imbalances was not possible. However, the research design aimed to be as collaborative and respectful as possible, supporting participants' agency and following ethical principles.

Personal Reflection:

I recognise the importance of trust, respect, collaboration, and reciprocity in emancipatory research. However, I acknowledge the power imbalance between

myself, as an adult researcher, and my participants. As adults are often seen as authority figures in YP's lives, my participants might have felt compelled to please me or felt obligated to participate, despite my assurances that participation was voluntary and that assent was an ongoing process (Parker, 2005).

To address these dynamics and improve participants' agency whenever possible, I took several measures. These are discussed at relevant points within the thesis, but in summary, they were:

- I gave participants control over meeting timing, location (online or in-person), and setting to address the imbalance.*
- I suggested locations outside their schools and proposed pre-interview meetings to build rapport and encourage a sense of collaboration before the interview started.*
- Participants were supported in their communication and control during the interview. I provided cards and online tools to help participants indicate when they wanted to pause, move to the next question, take a break, or stop completely. They were reminded of their right to withdraw, that participation was voluntary, and my lack of connection to their schools. I explained the research purpose and my role to help them share their stories.*
- The interview question was given as a pre-written question or pasted into the online chat to help reduce anxiety around recall and to prevent participants from feeling tested.*

- *The information sheets, consent, and assent forms were prepared in accessible formats to support participants in making informed decisions and giving their assent in ways that felt meaningful to them.*
- *Participants were invited to choose their own pseudonyms to further support their ownership of their narratives.*
- *Interviews were transcribed verbatim to preserve the authenticity of participants' speech.*

These efforts were designed to help achieve the research's goals by building trust, respect, collaboration, and reciprocity, which I felt were essential to supporting the emancipatory aims. Reflexivity helped me balance power dynamics during the interviews and was central to my use of the Listening Guide. It kept me aware of my emotional responses, fuelled my curiosity, and enhanced my understanding of my privileged position in interpreting another's story. This awareness helped me avoid projecting my thoughts and feelings (Brown & Gilligan, 1993; Gilligan, 2015; McKenzie et al., 2011; Tolman & Head, 2021; Woodcock, 2016).

3.6 Rejecting Methods

In selecting a method, I initially considered Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), a qualitative approach that explores how individuals make sense of their personal and social worlds (Willig, 2013). However, IPA's emphasis on the researcher's interpretation of participants' accounts seemed more aligned with naïve realism, treating narratives as empirical truths (Parker, 2005). This conflicted with my epistemological stance. I sought a method that acknowledged stories as

interpretations (Riessman, 2008), shaped by and negotiated with the stories of others (Crossley, 2002).

Grounded Theory also involves line-by-line analysis but focuses on extracting meaning from data. Therefore, I chose to adopt a narrative-based approach and the Listening Guide instead, which was more aligned with my focus on individual experiences and the emancipatory aims of my research (Hutton & Lystor, 2021), instead of IPA or Grounded Theory.

3.7 The Process

3.7.1 Recruitment

My recruitment criteria initially involved participants in Year Seven, Eight, or Nine in a mainstream secondary school where isolation practices are utilised.

These year groups were chosen as I felt participants may be fairly new to the system of isolation within their school and still able to reflect on their primary education, where I assumed isolation practices were less likely to have occurred. Upon initiating the research, I learned that many primary schools are beginning to utilise isolation practices, which would be an important area for further study.

I chose to research isolation practices in mainstream schools because these settings affected a larger and more diverse student population than special schools.

Mainstream schools have students with a wide range of needs and differing abilities, including those with special educational needs, which might make the use of isolation practices more complex. Several behaviour management strategies may also be utilised within a mainstream secondary school. I felt it important to explore where isolation fits within these systems and how the student population experiences it.

It was imperative that the participants' school utilised isolation practices. This would enable participants to tell their own stories instead of sharing someone else's story or an imagined scenario of attending a school with isolation practices. Two versions of the research poster and information leaflet were created to support participation: one standard version and one accessible version that used easy-read approaches (see Appendix A). This was planned to ensure that both YP and their parents or carers could easily understand and access the information.

A small sample size was sought within this research to facilitate a deep, individualised analysis of each participant's experience and narrative. This approach felt suited to exploring the experiences of YP and their perceptions of isolation rooms. I recognised this as a sensitive topic, where voices may be in harmony and conflict. A smaller sample would enable a thicker reflection of these perspectives

without making the analysis overwhelming and would hopefully allow me to engage in more nuanced interpretations (Patton, 2015).

I used purposeful sampling, where participants are intentionally selected because they meet specific characteristics and have had particular experiences relevant to the research (Patton, 2015), to support recruiting participants for this study. I contacted settings and organisations where YP meeting the criteria for the research, and their parents or carers, would have the potential to see the research poster. Purposeful sampling was chosen to support generating narratives that might offer deep insights into isolation practices (Patton, 2015). Within my initial recruitment drive, the research posters and information leaflets were shared with one secondary school interested in moving to a more restorative approach, a charity supporting children's voice, and a parent carer forum. Unfortunately, initial communication with all three organisations was difficult to establish, and telephone calls and emails resulted in no response.

I contacted the school's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo), the charity, and the parent carer forum multiple times to share the recruitment posters. After receiving limited interest, I expanded my recruitment by emailing parent carer forums nationally and asked all my placement colleagues to share the posters with their link schools. These efforts increased distribution, and a parent of a participant contacted me directly. I then shared participant information sheets, consent and assent forms, and offered a pre-interview meeting. After

obtaining consent and assent, I arranged interviews based on participants' preferences for online or in-person settings.

I intentionally chose not to rely solely on school-based recruitment because of concerns about professional relationships and power dynamics within schools that use isolation practices. I was aware that recruiting from one school might prevent participants from being open or could compromise anonymity, especially considering potential links between participants and staff. Therefore, I expanded recruitment to settings prioritising YP's voice, selecting a charity focused on this. The school I initially approached was interested in adopting a more relational approach and evaluating their current practices.

I selected the charity for recruitment because it was within driving distance, allowing me to offer both in-person and online interviews based on participants' preferences, aligning with the charity's aim of amplifying YP's voices. However, I recognise that this approach might have limited recruitment to YP who already felt empowered and motivated to share their stories, potentially excluding those who are less confident or less able to voice their experiences.

The parent carer forum was chosen partly because it was local, but also because engaging through parents and carers helped overcome potential barriers to initial contact and consent. However, I acknowledge that recruiting via parents and carers

has implications as, for example, the parent or carer might show interest without their YP sharing the same enthusiasm for the research, or they might wish for their YP to participate even if their YP is hesitant.

I opted for a small sample size because the Listening Guide methodology I used requires multiple detailed listenings of each interview (Brown & Gilligan, 1993; Gilligan et al., 2003). This intensive analysis process is best suited for fewer participants and therefore enables a detailed and nuanced exploration of each narrative (Guest et al., 2006; Patton, 2015) within the time constraints of my research and trainee EP commitments.

Personal Reflection:

I was frustrated that, while I expected delays in responses from potential participants, I did not anticipate the difficulty in sharing my posters through the setting and two organisations. I was relieved when my recruitment poster (see Appendix A) was finally distributed through the children's charity's channels. Watching the Year Three research presentations at the University triggered panic about completing my thesis and securing participants. However, communication with my thesis supervisor offered reassurance and practical steps, helping me focus and move forward.

I decided to use alternative communication strategies to contact the children's charity, school, and parent carer forum, which led to responses from each organisation. I emailed various staff members within the charity and parent carer forum, and I contacted the school SENDCo. I called before sending further emails to build rapport and answer questions. The charity informed me that a YP in Year 11 had expressed interest, so I adjusted my recruitment criteria through the University ethics process to include secondary-aged YP through to Year 11, receiving ethical approval to recruit my first participant.

3.7.2 Anonymity

I anonymised all data during transcription to protect participant identity, knowing that narrative research could lead to potentially identifiable stories (Riessman, 2008). My first and fourth participants chose the pseudonyms 'Angel' and 'Rico', and both expressed excitement over being able to select their names, the first sharing that they had always wanted to be called Angel. Rico enjoyed advising me on how to spell his pseudonym. Enabling participants to choose their own pseudonyms also gave them a sense of autonomy, which has been shown to increase their engagement and authenticity in research and is consistent with my emancipatory aims (Allen, 2015). My second and third participants asked me to select their names, and I chose the pseudonyms Daisy and Fenton. The participants will be referred to by their pseudonyms throughout this research. Given the sensitive nature of the topic and the participants' vulnerability within the education system, protecting their identities was crucial.

3.7.3 The Participants

Angel had attended a mainstream secondary school since Year Seven, was 15 years old, and was in Year 11 at the time of the interview. Whilst she had never been placed in isolation herself, she had witnessed other students being sent to, or within, isolation when she was in a nearby part of the school.

After the first interview, three other participants contacted me through their parents to express interest in the study. After discussions with their parents, they consented to their YP's participation. I wondered if there was a barrier with the assent and consent forms due to delays in return despite expressed interest. I considered whether providing a downloadable Word document would be better, as requiring participants to print or navigate technology to edit the form could have made the process inaccessible. I tried to address this by embedding the forms within the email for easy editing. This barrier caused a delay in scheduling the interviews. Eventually, the interviews were booked, but one participant's sibling also wanted to be interviewed. Unfortunately, this was not possible as I had reached the study's capacity given the time constraints for completing the thesis.

Personal Reflection:

Turning away a participant left me with mixed emotions. I initially struggled with recruitment, as three individuals expressed interest but then stopped responding, raising questions about barriers to engagement. While later interest was encouraging, denying a YP the chance to share their story was difficult.

The three further participants, Daisy, Fenton, and Rico, had all attended their secondary schools since Year Seven. At the time of the interview, Daisy was 14 and in Year 10, Fenton was 13 and in Year Nine, and Rico was 12 and in Year Eight. Whilst Daisy had never experienced isolation, both Fenton and Rico had been placed in isolation multiple times.

The table below provides an overview of the participants who took part in this research.

Table 2

Table of Participants

| Participant Pseudonym | Age | Gender | Ethnicity | Year Group | School Context | Notes |
|------------------------------|------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Angel | 15 | Female | White British | 11 | Mainstream Secondary | Never been to isolation |
| Daisy | 14 | Female | White British | 10 | Mainstream Secondary | Never been to isolation |
| Fenton | 13 | Male | White British | 9 | Mainstream Secondary | Been to isolation multiple times |
| Rico | 12 | Male | White British | 8 | Mainstream Secondary | Been to isolation multiple times |

3.7.4 Ethics

As this study was asking YP to share their stories about experiences and feelings around isolation, there was the potential that the recount could be distressing or unsettling for them. To address this, I implemented several ethical safeguards. Ethical approval was obtained from the University of Sheffield's Ethics Board, and participant recruitment only proceeded after participants and their parents received an information sheet (Appendix B), returned signed assent (Appendix C) and consent forms (Appendix D), ensuring informed consent and confidentiality. I decided that if more participants offered to take part than I had capacity to interview, I would signpost them to charities to offer support and an outlet for them to share their story. As this happened with the sibling of one participant, I emailed the parent to express gratitude and explained that the study had reached capacity. To offer further support, I signposted the parent to national charities to ensure there was an outlet for what the YP wanted to say.

Through information sheets, consent forms, and reminders, participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any time until data analysis was completed.

Respecting their agency and fostering their decision-making to reduce power imbalances, again consistent with my emancipatory aims, I gave them the opportunity to choose their interview setting, either in-person or online. Angel chose an in-person interview, whilst all other participants chose online.

Each interview began with an explanation of the cards the YP could use for “pause,” “next question,” and “withdraw”, whilst online emoji options were discussed beforehand with online participants. This approach allowed participants to navigate the interview at their own pace to reduce any anxiety. Using flexible ways to communicate discomfort through visual prompts reinforced my commitment to emancipation by creating an inclusive environment.

After each interview, I debriefed participants and addressed any of their questions to ensure they each felt heard and valued by enabling space for being reflective together. This went well, and, having prepared each participant at the beginning of the interview about being able to choose their pseudonym if they wished, we came back to this discussion within the debrief. This felt like a particularly positive part of the interview. Following one participant’s interview, their parent emailed me afterwards to express gratitude for my approach during the interview and my interest in the research topic area. I felt incredibly moved to read this email, and a sense of relief that the interview approach I had adopted had felt beneficial for the participant.

The participants were briefed on the research aims, reporting process, and contact details of my research supervisor. A distress support sheet was available for those needing assistance (Appendix E). I offered to share the I Poem and Voice Poem produced through application of the stages of the Listening Guide with each participant following the analysis of their narratives, and provided the option of a follow-up meeting.

Interview data was securely stored on a password-protected Google Drive accessible only by me.

3.7.5 Interview Questions and Prompts

I collected narratives from the four participants through flexible, open interviews that empowered them to shape the agenda (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). When considering the interview and preparing the questions and prompts, I reflected on how much communication often follows a set script in interactions and therefore moved away from the concept of a structured interview (Parker, 2005). However, as a researcher, I also considered the importance of having an idea around the conversation and that providing an initial question might support the participant in ordering their conversation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

I opted to use Hollway and Jefferson's (2000) free association narrative interviewing approach, a qualitative method that relies on open-ended conversations and reflective listening to let participants' voices and subjective experiences emerge naturally. This approach has been critiqued for relying on psychoanalytic assumptions, such as the idea that narratives are shaped by unconscious forces, an overemphasis on transference, and the researcher having authority over the interpretation, potentially resulting in interpretative bias (Parker, 2005). Nevertheless, I felt this approach aligned with the research focus on participants' narratives and their sense of self being rooted in a psychosocial paradigm, recognising the interaction between individual subjectivity and social structures whilst acknowledging the role of unconscious processes, defence mechanisms and emotions within

narratives (Emerson & Frosh, 2009). Reflexivity was key in the Listening Guide process, which would help reduce interpretative bias.

I reviewed my topic knowledge to prepare for the interview, planned the start and end, and ensured clear communication using simple language and avoiding jargon (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018; Nathan et al., 2019). Guided by Brinkmann and Kvale (2018), I created an open introductory question to encourage storytelling, using probing techniques like continuation, elaboration, clarification, and steering for in-depth conversations (Nathan et al., 2019). I considered both questions and silences to help participants elaborate uninterrupted, fostering richer narratives (Riessman, 2008).

Before each interview, I offered introductory meetings to build rapport (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018; Nathan et al., 2019), but no participants accepted. I also encouraged participants to bring notes or drawings for storytelling (Nathan et al., 2019) and started with simple factual questions to help them feel comfortable (Nathan et al., 2019). I intended to ask a genuine, open-ended question, following the Listening Guide's focus on curiosity and empathy (Gilligan & Eddy, 2017; Gilligan & Eddy, 2021; Tolman & Head, 2021). I used non-verbal cues, such as nodding and phrases like "tell me more," to support storytelling (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013). I avoided "why" questions to maintain an open, non-judgmental space where participants could share their stories. Using participants' phrasing for follow-up questions encouraged attentive listening and focused on their narratives, respecting their stories and encouraging deeper exploration (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013; Nathan et al., 2019).

I therefore attempted to establish a genuine, open-minded presence to foster empathy and rapport (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013; Nathan et al., 2019) to encourage my participants to share their narratives freely, especially as narrative interviews can be more emotionally demanding for participants than structured interviews (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016).

Following my initial questions, the interview then moved into the only open-ended planned question, which was:

- Can you tell me about your experiences and feelings about being in a school with isolation?

The prompt consideration areas were:

- Experiences and stories of isolation.
- How staff, peers or parents talk about isolation.
- Community impact.

3.7.6 The Pilot

I conducted my pilot study with a former colleague who is also a parent of a student at a mainstream secondary school that uses isolation practices. I chose an adult for ethical reasons, as asking a YP to share their experiences without contributing to the final research, even with full consent, felt unethical. My colleague was experienced in working with YP in educational settings and had a strong understanding of behaviour management approaches. They felt suited to participate in the pilot, enabling me to

test my interview techniques and reflect on how a YP might receive my approach.

Feedback from the pilot participant and the changes made are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3

Pilot Study Feedback

| Feedback | Reflection and Action |
|--|--|
| My pilot participant suggested sharing the initial question in writing or via chat when online, noting this would be reassuring and help maintain focus on the question. | I decided to take this action. By providing the question for reference, I hoped they would feel supported rather than tested on their memory. |
| My pilot participant reflected that having the initial closed questions to start the interview had been helpful, which helped them ease into it and settle nerves. | I reflected that I also found these questions reassuring and supportive for easing into the interview and starting off with a focus on being present. Knowing that these questions were set and pre-planned, I felt it supported beginning the interview with the ability to focus on the responses rather than thinking about the next question or areas to explore further. I sensed my ability to |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>demonstrate active listening skills and believed that this was beneficial for the more in-depth opening question that followed.</p> |
| <p>The pilot participant reflected that they found the interview process 'nice'. They described uninterrupted listening as "therapeutic," noting it helped explore previously unconsidered thoughts. They commented, 'I think I learned some stuff actually because I think some of the things that I said, I'm not necessarily sure that I knew that I thought them before I said them'.</p> | <p>Hearing this felt positive and left me hopeful that the YP involved might feel empowered and deepen their narrative through sharing their stories. I recognised the significant impact of working with YP instead of adults, emphasising the need to transfer power regarding the interview's time, date, and location. This redistribution of power was vital for enabling autonomy and agency, which supports the collection of authentic narratives.</p> |
| <p>The pilot participant reflected that they were pleased I explained my note-taking during the interview and that, had I not done this, they might have felt they were being assessed or categorised.</p> | <p>I intended to continue this explanation for transparency and to show listening (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016) in future interviews. I planned to ensure my notebook page would be visible to reassure that my notes consisted of words or phrases for our common understanding.</p> |

Personal Reflection:

I found the pilot interview encouraging as a researcher and interviewer. I felt enthusiastic about the participant's storytelling and was able to facilitate these stories without needing a back-and-forth exchange. I was reassured by how present I could be in the narratives and felt more confident about the upcoming interviews.

Feedback from the pilot participant about having the interview question written down made me reflect on my own interview experience to join my university course. The university provided each candidate with written questions and time to prepare. This support helped me feel at ease, showing that their intent was to assist rather than to trick me. I decided that writing the question down might give my participants a similar sense of support, rather than them feeling tested.

3.7.7 The Interviews

The interviews for this study were conducted in a mix of in-person and online settings. The in-person setting was used where the participant's location was within an hour's driving distance, whereas the online option was used for the interviews where the location was several hours' drive away or where the participant opted for this setting. The in-person setting was within the children's charity meeting space in a private room. For participants located further away or who chose to meet online, interviews were conducted via Google Meet. During these interviews, participants joined from a location of their choice, and all three who selected the online option joined from their own homes. I took part in the online interviews from a private, quiet

room within my own home. All interviews were audio-recorded using a digital voice recorder, while the online recordings were recorded using Google software for the meeting.

I chose to transcribe each interview myself rather than use transcription software. This initial listening allowed me to engage authentically with the content without worrying about software accuracy, keeping my focus on the participants' narratives. I adapted Jefferson's symbols and conventions (Jefferson, 2004) for transcription, preserving pauses, overlaps, intonations, and hesitations (Appendix F), which deepened my understanding of how something was said instead of only what was said. I felt that this approach facilitated a richer analysis of underlying thoughts, emotions, and unconscious associations, whilst preserving the authenticity of the participants' speech, consistent with my emancipatory aims. Each interview lasted between thirty minutes and an hour.

My ideal situation would have been to hold every interview in person so that I could understand and interpret emotional expression through non-verbal cues and feel that continued assent could be achieved and monitored throughout the interview (Bold, 2012). In-person interviews are often seen as supportive of building rapport and facilitating richer communication through shared presence and non-verbal cues (Irvine, 2011; Lobe et al., 2020; Opdenakker, 2006). However, I recognised the limitations of driving long distances for my thesis alongside my placement commitments as a trainee EP. Online interviews can provide greater accessibility and reduce logistical challenges such as travel and distance, whilst also supporting

time efficiency (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014; Janghorban et al., 2014; Vindrola-Padros et al., 2020). Additionally, online interviews allow participants to select a familiar environment, where they may feel more comfortable sharing their experiences (Archibald et al., 2019; Gray et al., 2020). This could potentially reduce power imbalances and promote inclusion and autonomy (Lobe et al., 2020; Vindrola-Padros et al., 2020) by making the process more convenient and less intrusive (Archibald et al., 2019). However, I also recognised that building rapport and relational connection can be more challenging during online interviews (Janghorban et al., 2014). Therefore, instead of offering only one interview format, I aimed to be responsive and respectful of my participants' preferences, whilst balancing the practical aspects of time and travel limitations in my trainee role.

Within the initial informal discussion at the start of the interview, a focus was given to building rapport, as described, the research purpose was explained, and participants were enabled to ask questions before the recorded interview began (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018). This offered the opportunity to discuss any technological challenges and ensured participants felt comfortable using controls such as emoji expression and turning their camera and microphone off and on, should they wish. I recognised that being online enabled empowerment, with Fenton requesting, prior to the interview, to have his camera off for the interview. He kept his camera on when we met, even though I shared that he could switch it off. I believed this online functionality supported him in establishing trust with me and the research. With an awareness that online interviews would reduce the non-verbal communication to each participant's upper body (Lobe et al., 2022), I maintained engagement with the

camera to support connection and utilised reflexivity within the questioning to support follow-up responses.

I facilitated a discussion with each participant about the information sheet, assent being an ongoing process, and their right to withdraw at any point during the interview. I informed them that the interview would be recorded, transcribed, and anonymised. I explained that the initial recording would be deleted after completing the analysis. Each participant confirmed continued assent and shared that they were ready for me to record. I ensured the digital voice recorder was visible to the participants to reduce any feelings of apprehension.

Personal Reflection:

During the pilot interview, I noticed the participant shared their story comfortably and voiced appreciation of the open platform. However, in my first two interviews with younger participants, I observed that their narratives were shorter, and I found myself asking more questions, slipping into a question-answer format. As a relatively new interviewer, I realised I had drifted from my intended approach, even asking a “why” question and missing opportunities to say “tell me more” to encourage depth. With a gap between these interviews and my third, I could reflect, grow, adapt, and apply these insights moving forward. Following my final interview, I reflected in my diary upon the growth I felt I had experienced as an interviewer.

At the end of the interview, I ensured the recording was not turned off prematurely (Nathan et al., 2019) and asked if there was anything else the YP wanted to share. I thanked them for their time and stories (Nathan et al., 2019).

3.7.8 Analysis

As indicated, I used the Listening Guide for this analysis, which explores the multiple layers of voice in a participant's story (Brown & Gilligan, 1993; Gilligan et al., 2003; Hutton, 2019; Kiegelmann, 2021). The Listening Guide prioritises active listening and empathy, fostering a safe space in which participants can share their stories (Gilligan & Eddy, 2017; Gilligan & Eddy, 2021; Tolman & Head, 2021). It also refrains from quickly categorising words, instead focusing on truly hearing the participant's voice (Gilligan & Eddy, 2017; Hutton & Lystor, 2021; Woodcock, 2016).

I chose the Listening Guide as my analysis method because it aligned with my research aims, values, and experiences. I was immediately drawn to its emphasis on voice, relationality, and power, which all felt relevant to exploring YP's experiences of being a student in a school that uses isolation practices. I personally connected with this approach, having experienced feelings of disempowerment and being silenced during my own education. The layered and reflexive nature of the Listening Guide enabled me to listen to participants' narratives in a way that was both respectful and empowering. It highlighted the multiplicity of voices within each participant's story and recognised that individuals may speak from different positions across various times and contexts (Brown & Gilligan, 1993). This method seemed particularly suitable for understanding the complexities of YP's narratives, where their voices

might be in tension or conflict. The Listening Guide analysis also supported a reflexive stance, positioning me as a researcher in relation to the participants, acknowledging the co-creation of meaning, and fostering care and responsibility during interpretation (Gilligan et al., 2003).

However, I also recognise that focusing on inner voices can potentially overlook broader social or cultural influences (Riessman, 2008). This consideration felt important when researching isolation practices, as these are embedded within a wider social, educational, and policy context. In considering alternative narrative methods, Thematic Narrative Analysis (Riessman, 2008) and Discourse Analysis (Potter & Wetherell, 1987) offer valuable approaches for exploring stories within social settings. Whilst Thematic Narrative Analysis can provide clear thematic categorisation, it may also risk oversimplifying the complexity of participants' narratives (Riessman, 2008). Although Discourse Analysis investigates power relations and cultural narratives, it can sometimes overlook individual subjective experience and emotional nuance (Potter & Wetherell, 1987).

Therefore, although these alternative narrative approaches might offer more structure or socially embedded insights, they may overlook some of the psychological depth, including emotional nuance, inner conflicts, and relational dynamics, that the Listening Guide provides. Given my psychosocial epistemology and focus on co-constructed identity, the Listening Guide's balance between subjectivity, voice, and social context felt most appropriate to support my research aims (Emerson & Frosh, 2009; McKenzie et al., 2021).

As a researcher, I understood that I was an observer and a co-creator of the narratives shared in the interviews (Hutton & Lystor, 2021; Kiegelmann, 2021). My identity and interactions influenced the shared stories (Brown & Gilligan, 1993). The Listening Guide helped me recognise the co-constructed nature of the data, acknowledging how my assumptions and engagement shaped the research process (Brown & Gilligan, 1993; Hutton & Lystor, 2021; Kiegelmann, 2021). Viewing the interviews as a shared event shaped by social norms (Mishler, 1991) allowed me to reflect on my influence. I aimed to be transparent about my role and the impact of my background through active engagement and reflexivity, including through the use of a reflective diary (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Tolman & Head, 2021; Woodcock, 2016) (see Appendix G). This approach supported me in considering my language and recognising the power dynamics in data collection, highlighting the participant-researcher relationship (Parker, 2005).

Personal Reflection:

I felt immediately drawn to the Listening Guide as I recognised and related to the concept of people presenting a sense of self within an interview setting (McKenzie et al, 2021). I was passionate about utilising this analytical approach and recognised that it would be supportive of my participants, who may have experienced within their school system the feeling of their voice being silenced due to the power dynamics at play.

Throughout the research, I kept a reflective diary (see Appendix G) where I recorded my thoughts, feelings, and observations. When writing this thesis, I reviewed these

diary entries to identify relevant reflections on the research process and the interpretation of the analysis. These reflections are interspersed within the thesis as 'Personal Reflection' boxes, like this one. This aims to establish a clear and distinct format to differentiate my subjective experience and personal voice from the main analytical narrative and the voice of my participants (Etherington, 2004). This approach was chosen to emphasise that reflexivity should be an explicit and visible process, rather than implicit (Finlay, 2002).

Whilst there is no explicit how-to-guide for utilising the Listening Guide (Woodcock, 2016), there are a variety of sources which provide an approach to the steps (Brown & Gilligan, 1993; Gilligan, 2015; Gilligan & Eddy, 2021; Gilligan et al., 2003; Hutton & Lystor, 2021; Kiegelmann, 2021; McKenzie et al, 2021; Tolman & Head, 2021; Van Puyenbroeck et al, 2013; Woodcock, 2016). Within each guide, the number of steps and the focus for each step vary, and, as such, I read through all the articles and books for guidance and made a table of notes (see Appendix H).

Following this, I focused on using the steps described by McKenzie et al. (2021). McKenzie et al. (2021) use a methodological approach that aligns with my epistemological stance within the psychosocial paradigm. This paradigm emphasises the interactions of individual subjectivity and the social environment, focusing on how identity is constructed in relation to others and shaped by social structures and cultural narratives (Emerson & Frosh, 2009). This aligned with my research aim to provide a nuanced understanding of the voices of YP within school institutions, recognising the impact of social and institutional structures on the formation of

identity and the presented self. McKenzie et al. (2021) emphasise the importance of understanding how the self is presented in narratives, exploring the pronouns used. This became particularly relevant when examining the transcript as participants moved between pronouns. The steps described by McKenzie et al. (2021) also focus on tracing the self in relation to others, constructing identity through social dynamics, and exploring the influence of culturally dominant narratives. These elements felt significant when hearing narratives from YP within school institutions, where institutional forces and societal narratives are likely to shape identities.

Step 1: Exploring “Who is telling what story?” and “Who is listening?”

(McKenzie et al., 2021)

McKenzie et al. (2021) propose that within the first listening of each transcript, there is a focus on understanding the main story or content of the narrative. This requires looking at what is being said and identifying different plots, events and contexts whilst noting the overarching ‘plot’.

In the first listening, I focused on identifying the plot, main events, recurring words, subplots, and key characters in the narrative (Brown & Gilligan, 1993; Gilligan et al., 2003; Hutton & Lystor, 2021). I also paid attention to the context, metaphors, and images used, and considered the relational world the participant was sharing (Gilligan & Eddy, 2017; Gilligan et al., 2003; Tolman & Head, 2021).

As part of the first step, I attended closely to silences, pauses, shifts in tone, and moments where something seemed missing from the narrative (Brown & Gilligan, 1993; Gilligan, 2015; Hutton & Lystor, 2021; Woodcock, 2016). Building on the active listening approach established earlier, I remained curious, clarified meanings, and allowed for reflective silences (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018). I also noted my emotional responses, recognising that my positionality shaped my engagement with the narrative and that neutrality was neither possible nor desirable (Gilligan et al., 2003). These responses were recorded in a separate column to the original interview transcripts (Appendices I, J, K, and L), forming a new transcript with this additional column added (Appendices M, N, O, and P) which allowed me to stay attuned to both the participant and myself, and consider how the relationship influenced the narratives (Gilligan, 2015; Hutton & Lystor, 2021; McKenzie et al., 2021; Tolman & Head, 2021). I also reflected on intrigue, conflict, or dissonance moments, consciously resisting categorising and maintaining curiosity about the participant's meaning-making (Brown & Gilligan, 1993; Hutton & Lystor, 2021; Woodcock, 2016).

Within this initial listening, I used a **green highlight** to indicate key words, repeated phrases, images or metaphors within the transcript. This allowed me to capture participants' emphasis through repetition, ensuring their narratives were central to the analysis. Noting the images and metaphors used enabled me to explore underlying emotions, challenges, or perspectives that were not explicitly stated. Colour coding made the process visible and systematic for the next steps. Within the column for notes and reflections, I ensured these were written in **green text** to indicate the stage of analysis in which these were generated. The reflexivity here is

intended to reduce researcher bias. This step has been presented within the body of the thesis by synthesising its key elements and highlighting the ‘wow’ moments experienced when listening to each participant. Reflective boxes have been included to capture my responses.

Step 2: Exploring the Self-Voice (McKenzie et al., 2021)

McKenzie et al (2021) propose that within the second listening, the self-voice is explored. This step requires hearing how the participants speak about themselves and the use of verbs in relation to self by creating what Elizabeth Debold (1990) termed I Poems (Gilligan et al., 2003) (see Appendices M, N, O, and P). This involved me reading the original interview transcript and noticing and highlighting in **yellow** pronouns to identify that personal voice: ‘I’ (Gilligan, 2015; McKenzie, 2021) and ‘me’ and ‘my’ (McKenzie et al., 2021; Sorsoli & Tolman, 2008) together with the verb and accompanying words (Brown & Gilligan, 1993; McKenzie et al., 2021; Puyenbroeck et al., 2013; Tolman & Head, 2021; Woodcock, 2016) (Appendices Q, R, S, and T).

These phrases were then written out sequentially (Gilligan, 2015; Hutton & Lystor, 2021; McKenzie et al., 2021) to form an I Poem, with each phrase placed on a new line to reflect the natural flow of the participant’s voice (Gilligan et al., 2003). I started a new stanza where there was a noticeable pause, shift in emotion or change in direction (Gilligan, 2015; Gilligan et al., 2003; Tolman & Head, 2021; Van Puyenbroeck et al., 2013). I felt that this process supported a deeper connection with

participants' underlying thoughts and feelings, allowing me to pay attention to the associative stream of consciousness embedded in their narratives (Brown & Gilligan, 1993; Gilligan, 2015; Gilligan & Eddy, 2017; Gilligan et al., 2003).

This step has been presented in my analysis by incorporating elements of the I Poems together with commentary. The approach was used to enable an exploration of each participant's construction of self (see the full I Poems in Appendices U, V, W, and X).

Step 3: Listening for the Contrapuntal Voices (McKenzie et al., 2021)

Within the third listening, McKenzie et al. (2021) encourage the exploration of contrapuntal voices in relation to experiences, in this case, of isolation at school. In the Listening Guide method, "contrapuntal voices" refer to distinct, often contrasting perspectives within a single person's narrative. Inspired by musical counterpoint where lines of melody produce a polyphonic texture rather than a single main tune with accompaniment, these voices represent the intersection of sometimes conflicting thoughts, emotions, and aspects of a participant's identity, felt to expose inner tensions and complexities (Gilligan et al., 2003). Within this step, I concentrated on the different voices across the participant's story that spoke to my research focus (Gilligan, 2015; Gilligan & Eddy, 2017; Gilligan et al., 2003; Woodcock, 2016) alongside considering the language and tone used by the participant (Hutton & Lystor, 2021; McKenzie et al., 2021).

I reflected that these voices could be in tension, harmony or dissonance with each other (Gilligan, 2015; McKenzie et al., 2021) within the multi-layered, nuanced nature of my participants' experiences (Woodcock, 2016). I focused on remaining curious during this step, continuing to resist judgement or categorisation whilst noting where words or phrases felt to present a psychological process (Tolman & Head, 2021). This was supported by tracking each voice at a time within the narrative and interrogating it for consistency whilst withholding from creating a description until the end of this process, when a selection of textual examples had been gained (Gilligan et al., 2003; Tolman & Head, 2021).

Whilst some researchers listen for silences, self-silencing, and where 'I' turns to 'you' within this step (Brown & Gilligan, 1993; Gilligan, 2015; Gilligan & Eddy, 2017), I decided to conduct this within a separate step (see Step 4), as demonstrated by McKenzie et al. (2021). When listening, I changed the format of the text for each voice I tracked through the narrative to include **voice one**, voice two, *voice three* and *voice four* (McKenzie et al., 2021). I purposefully chose to present the voices in this way as this allowed for two or more voices to have their own melody whilst visibly showing when they were simultaneously being heard or moved together at a contrapuntal point (Gilligan & Eddy, 2021; Gilligan et al., 2003; Woodcock, 2016). This recognises that one sentence may include multiple voices (Gilligan et al., 2003). I then plotted the voices across the narratives, tracking the movement between different voices throughout the interview to create 'Plotting the Landscape' maps for each participant (Appendices Y, Z, AA, and AB). This draws on White and Epston's (1990) conceptualisation of narrative as a multi-storied process, where identity is

constructed and evolves through stories. Visualising this movement illustrates the flexible and active constructions of meaning derived from experiences. This is explored further in my Discussion Chapter.

My analysis presents this step as an exploration of each voice, with quotes from the transcripts within brackets (see full transcripts with steps 1-5 in Appendices AC, AD, AE, and AF).

Step 4: Exploring Voices in Relation to Others (McKenzie et al., 2021)

Within the fourth listening, McKenzie et al. (2021) spoke about Douchet and Mauthner's (2008) exploration of identity and how social interactions and cultural narratives shape identity construction. This step involved listening to how participants narrated their interactions with others and how others spoke about them, leading to the creation of a voice poem (Appendices AG, AH, AI, and AJ). A Voice Poem builds on the I Poems created by including diverse voices and perspectives within the narrative, addressing identity, emotions, and relationships (McKenzie et al., 2021). This, therefore, expanded on the previous I Poem by adding a column for other pronouns like 'we', 'they', 'you', 'she', and 'he', as noted by McKenzie et al. (2021) and Woodcock (2016). I felt that this approach was fitting for this research as it examined how participants shifted between self-representation and third-person pronouns, reflecting their relationship with self and others, and potential changes in this representation (McKenzie et al., 2021; Sorsoli & Tolman, 2008; Woodcock, 2016). Whilst Woodcock (2016) applied this in Step 2, I felt separating the steps

allowed for an initial exploration of self-voice before considering the contrapuntal voices and their relationship to others. Through the narratives within this research, there were plural pronouns such as 'us' and 'our' together with distanced pronouns, such as 'it', 'people' and 'teachers'. This step incorporated these to support understanding where the participants created distance between self and voice.

My analysis presents this step by incorporating elements of the Voice Poems along with commentary. The approach explores the relationship between self and others by exploring the movement between pronouns.

Step 5: Exploring Voices in Relation to Cultural Narratives (McKenzie et al., 2021)

Within the fifth listening, I explored how participants' voices reflected culturally dominant narratives, particularly around perceptions of children, teenagers and students within secondary school systems (McKenzie et al., 2021). Following McKenzie et al.'s (2021) suggestion to conduct a discrete listening for this purpose, I attended to moral or prescriptive language, such as the use of 'should,' to identify how broader societal discourses shaped the participants' narratives (Hutton & Lystor, 2021; McKenzie et al., 2021; Mauthner & Doucet, 1998). To make this stage of analysis visible, I ensured the references to cultural norms and expectations were blue within the transcripts. Whilst other researchers included exploring political, social, and cultural narratives within previous steps (Brown & Gilligan, 1993), I particularly liked how McKenzie et al. (2021) proposed a discrete listening. I felt this

was important when working with YP attending a school institution where norms were likely to be evident in the narratives experienced, potentially shaping their voices.

This step has been presented in the body of my analysis as a commentary on each voice, drawing on key quotes from the transcript to attend to the influence of dominant cultural narratives.

Step 6: Composing an Analysis (McKenzie et al., 2021)

Within the final listening, McKenzie et al (2021) propose a summary where the results of the listening are formed into a written interpretation. Whilst many researchers using the Listening Guide do not include this analysis as a formal step (Brown & Gilligan, 1993; Gilligan, 2015; Hutton & Lystor, 2021; Kiegelmann, 2021; Woodcock, 2016), I used the earlier steps to construct this by drawing on evidence from the participants' narratives (McKenzie et al., 2021; Todd, 2023; Tolman & Head, 2021) and presenting it in the Analysis of Narratives Chapter. The process began by identifying key "wow" moments in the narratives (Gilligan & Eddy, 2021) and considering the research questions, with interpretations supported by a table of voices, as shown by Van Puyenbroeck et al. (2013) (Appendices AK, AL, AM, and AN). This approach supports the voice being described whilst also recognising shifts in pronoun and tense choices, allowing for deeper consideration of these transitions. The analysis included an overview summary with illustrative quotes, ensuring my

interpretative process was audible and visible (Tolman & Head, 2021). I also considered the reflective questions posed by Gilligan et al. (2003):

- “What have you learned about this question through this process and how have you come to know this?
- What is the evidence on which you are basing your interpretations?” (p. 168)

The Analysis of Narratives chapter guides the reader through the multiple steps of the Listening Guide before reaching a final concluding step for each participant. This then transitions into the Discussion chapter.

My interpretations were based on multiple interviews, so I also compared analyses across them (Gilligan et al., 2003). My ongoing reflections are documented in the raw data (Appendices AC, AD, AE and AF), the Analysis of Narratives Chapter, and the Discussion Chapter.

3.7.9 Quality Considerations in Research

Lincoln and Guba's (1985) quality criteria for qualitative research include credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These were developed to establish rigorous standards that mirror the requirements of reliability and validity offered within quantitative research. Whilst these criteria have been foundational, other qualitative researchers have critiqued and expanded upon Lincoln and Guba's

framework, especially as qualitative research has evolved (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013; Riessman, 1993; Riessman, 2008).

Riessman (1993), a leading narrative researcher, went on to develop a framework to evaluate qualitative research quality, particularly narrative analysis. She proposed quality criteria focusing on interpretive rigour and narrative coherence, acknowledging that narratives change and are influenced by power and social discourses (Riessman, 1993). Riessman critiqued the rigid use of standards like validity and reliability, which were meant for quantitative research, instead offering criteria suited for the interpretive nature of narrative work. She examined validity in narrative through four approaches, which were considered in this research to assess research quality.

Persuasiveness

Riessman (1993) suggests that the trustworthiness of narrative research should be evaluated based on how persuasive and convincing the narrative interpretation is for the reader. Persuasiveness relies on whether the interpretations make sense to others and are well-supported by the evidence within the interview data (Riessman, 1993). I hoped this research would provide rich, detailed accounts of narratives, with YP's voices preserved by utilising the Listening Guide (Gilligan, 2015). This would enable the depth of the interpretations to be seen through the different analysis stages.

Correspondence:

Riessman (1993) proposes correspondence as a quality criterion. This involves checking with participants to ensure the interpretation resonates with their experiences. However, Riessman (1993) also recognises the complexity of this process, given that participants may have evolving perspectives or may interpret their narratives differently with reflection. Within this research, I decided to offer a follow-up meeting to all participants to share and explore together the I Poems and Voice Poems created. I also ensured my interpretations were clearly differentiated in my analysis and thesis writing. Whilst confirming that the interpretation aligns with participants' views may enhance quality, it is not the only measure. In narrative research, and within the Listening Guide, the researcher acknowledges their co-construction of narratives with each participant, offering an analysis that recognises and values researcher interpretation (Gilligan, 2015).

Coherence:

This refers to the internal consistency of the narrative interpretation to provide global, local and themal coherence (Riessman, 1993). Global coherence examines overall consistency in respect of how a narrative is constructed and makes sense. Local coherence focuses on how segments of the narrative fit together logically, with attention paid to the sequencing and transitions in the narrative. Themal coherence focuses on content and where particular areas of content are repeated or of importance (Riessman, 1993). This criterion was used to assess whether the narrative flowed logically and whether the analysis was coherent in the way it linked parts of the story to larger patterns or narratives (Bold, 2012). Jefferson (2004)'s

approach to transcribing, which was utilised within this research, requires highly detailed transcription in conversation analysis, capturing details like pauses and tone to ensure a thorough exploration of the interpretations. I felt that this detailed documentation would enable the in-depth analysis to be made visible.

Pragmatic Use:

Riessman (1993) suggests that research should be evaluated on its usefulness, practical relevance, and potential to inspire further studies. This criterion looks at whether the findings offer meaningful insights or practical applications that can address broader social, cultural, or psychological issues. High-quality narrative research should do more than just tell a story; it should resonate with readers, inspire action, or shed light on similar situations (Riessman, 1993). In this research, the stories and interpretations analysed provide valuable insights for future research by amplifying the voices of YP in mainstream schools around their experiences with isolation practices specifically. This topic remains relatively underexplored in the literature, particularly when considering isolation as a punitive measure in secondary schools.

Riessman's (1993) criteria for narrative analysis provided helpful guidance for this research. However, her framework has been critiqued for focusing on coherence and the researcher's interpretation, which relies heavily on personal judgment (Polkinghorne, 2007) and could be applied inconsistently. Whilst Polkinghorne (2007) acknowledges that these judgments are important in interpreting qualitative

data, he also suggests that researchers must reflect on how their perspectives influence the process.

In this study, using narrative approaches and the Listening Guide, I aimed to prioritise reflexivity. This meant I actively considered my role in shaping the research and tried to recognise my biases and assumptions (McKenzie et al., 2021; Riessman, 1993). This approach aligned with Riessman's emphasis on transparency in qualitative research by making my analytical processes visible. Reflexivity enabled me to critically reflect upon, and share, my interpretive choices, illustrating the development of my analysis and enhancing the study's coherence and trustworthiness. The Listening Guide steps and my reflexive diary helped me stay aware of my perspectives and emotions and their influence on data collection and analysis (Bold, 2012; Yardley, 2000).

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter discusses my research methodology, framed within a social constructionist perspective and guided by a relational and psychodynamic ontology. A narrative approach was used for interviews, in conjunction with the Listening Guide, emphasising reflexivity and the co-constructed nature of the data. This methodology allowed the voices of YP who attended schools employing isolation practices as a punitive measure to be heard, a perspective underrepresented in existing literature. The next chapter will analyse the stories shared by these YP, together with my reflections and interpretations.

Chapter 4: Analysis of Narratives

4.1 Analysis of Narratives Overview

In this chapter, I present the analysis of the narratives of the four participants. Recognising that Angel, Daisy, Fenton, and Rico's experiences are socially constructed and unique, I analyse and present their narratives separately. Each section begins with an introductory summary, followed by the steps from the Listening Guide analysis using McKenzie et al.'s (2021) six steps:

1. Exploring "Who is telling what story?" and "Who is listening?"

In this step, I identified the narrative context by examining how the participant and I co-constructed the story through our interaction. I considered how the participant positioned themselves as the narrator, and how my role as listener and researcher influenced what was shared.

2. Exploring the Self-Voice

I reflected on how participants constructed and narrated their sense of self within the interview setting. By creating an I Poem, I highlighted how their identity was conveyed through self-positioning, emotional tone, and any tensions or shifts in their narratives.

3. Listening for the Contrapuntal voices

In this step, I traced the multiple voices, sometimes harmonious and sometimes conflicting, within the narrative. Creating visual plots of the Landscape maps (see Appendices Y, Z, AA, and AB) helped me to visually follow these voices and observe moments of conflict, tension, and harmony. I explored how the voices interacted and how they influenced the participants' meaning-making and areas of tension. .

4. Exploring Voices in Relation to Others

I analysed how the participant positioned themselves in relation to others and to me as the researcher. In this step, I focused on how pronoun shifts and perspectives helped explore relational and discursive aspects of meaning-making, emphasising the co-construction of experience through creating a Voice Poem to illustrate these relationships and dynamics.

5. Exploring Voices in Relation to Cultural Narratives

I reflected on how broader cultural, social, and moral narratives shaped the participants' experiences, reflections, and understanding. Here, I focused on expressions of norms, expectations, and moral assumptions.

6. Composing an Analysis

Finally, I combined insights from each step to develop a contextual understanding of the participants' narrative as a co-constructed product of our interaction. I reflected on how my interpretations and position influenced this analysis, recognising meaning as relational and embedded within specific social and cultural contexts.

Each step is presented based on the process shared within the Methodology chapter. Where an asterisk is used (*), this is from the transcription stage where I have altered the word used to ensure the participant and their school are not identifiable within this research (see Appendix F for transcription symbols).

Personal Reflection: *Initially, I structured this chapter by presenting each participant's voice one at a time within each stage of the Listening Guide. However, I revised this to present the participant's voices for each step instead, which felt more*

aligned with the analysis process and captured the depth and authenticity of these steps for the individual participants. This felt to work better as it preserved the layered meaning-making from the analysis process for each participant, and it supported transparency in the interpretative process as each step was shared explicitly.

Each step provides a distinct perspective, enhancing the understanding of how participants constructed their narratives and the influence of broader social structures. Rather than viewing voices as emerging, I recognise meaning to be co-constructed through relationships, discourse, and power. In alignment with a constructionist approach, I prioritised participants' voices over existing literature. However, I acknowledge that narratives are co-constructed and shaped by my responses, affirmations, and questions during the interviews. Throughout this chapter, I will include personal reflections to illustrate how I engaged with the voices and shaped these stories.

See Appendices I, J, K, and L for the original transcripts.

4.2 Angel's Story (see Appendix I for the full transcript)

4.2.1 Introduction

Angel, aged 15, is the youngest of three sisters. She is in Year 11 at her mainstream secondary school, having attended since Year Seven. Angel has never been to the isolation space within her school but, due to mental health challenges, she is

permitted to access a supportive area within school for those who “struggle with ... lessons” or have “special needs” (24-25). From there, Angel can “see everything that happens in the isolation space” (27) as the rooms are next to each other.

Angel told me that she enjoys English and history in school because she likes writing and talking but finds science and maths more challenging. She plans further study in psychology, philosophy and English literature.

4.2.2 Step 1: Exploring “Who is telling what story?” and “Who is listening?”

Angel’s narrative seemed to focus on witnessing isolation and her emotional responses. She did not position herself as someone who has directly experienced isolation but described being affected as an observer. I felt that her descriptions framed the space as punitive and restrictive.

Angel repeatedly compared isolation to a prison, describing it as “quite prison like” (51), “very like restrictive” (52), and “almost a cell” (170). The repetition reinforced isolation as enclosed and segregated, with it explicitly described as “secluded” (170), and “very isolating” (170). However, before Angel made this comparison, she stated, “It’s not personally to me” (51), suggesting uncertainty over the legitimacy of having an opinion. Angel used the metaphor of a curtain separating the supportive space and isolation, which constructed for me a contrast between these physical environments and the approaches used within them.

Power dynamics appeared central to Angel's narrative as she described the rigid nature of isolation, "Don't follow the rules, it's isolation" (53). Her phrase "set up" reinforced her awareness of control imposed by the space. Angel expressed disapproval, stating, "I'm very against the idea" (60), "I would really hate it" (102), and also conveyed distrust. She shared, "They're quite aware that it's not good but they kind of do it anyway" (192).

I listened to Angel's narrative both as a former primary teacher and a researcher completing an educational psychology doctorate. Her insights challenged my assumptions about the extent to which adults control YP's views, as well as the role the design of isolation spaces plays in reinforcing authority and shaping students' experiences. A "wow" moment for me in Angel's narrative was her recognition that students in isolation need comfort, which is available in her supportive space but not in isolation. She also acknowledged her desire to offer co-regulation, to support her peers' emotions and thoughts by soothing and calming them within their distress, despite segregation preventing this. Whilst I had wondered whether students are best placed to co-regulate within a secondary system, I was surprised Angel recognised and sought to do this.

4.2.3 Step 2: Exploring the Self-Voice

Angel's construction of self was explored through her I Poem, which I perceived to be reflecting of a fluid self, responsive to relationships and school dynamics. Her narrative explored tensions between her detachment and the emotional impact of the existence of the isolation space:

I mean it doesn't

affect me

when I hear about

just when I'm up there

I like

I get really quite upset

I feel quite sad

when I see them

I mean

I always think that

I think definitely

like me

(Appendix U – Angel's I Poem)

Here, Angel's self-positioning shifts from detachment to recognising emotional distress. Her use of "just" appears to soften this tension or justify this shift.

Personal Reflection: *I wondered whether my question "... does it affect you when someone is sent or when people talk about isolation" (249-250) prompted this change, as Angel moved from vague detachment to a specific scenario. I asked*

myself if the nature of the interview meant that Angel was recollecting and reconstructing past emotions. My questioning of the emotional impact of the space may have guided her towards deeper emotional engagement.

When considering how Angel positioned herself in relation to staff in school, she shared:

I've seen quite a few times

I mean there's a mix of stuff

I mean

I can think of so many other ways

It makes me quite like annoyed

I think

I think

I can tell

I can think

one of my teachers

other teachers I can think of

reminds me of like a drunk father

(Appendix U – Angel's I Poem)

Angel's repeated use of "I think" seemed to frame a firm yet cautious attempt to express disapproval through opinion rather than fact. The simile, "like a drunk father," heightened this critique, revealing a sense of loss of control or misuse of power.

Personal Reflection: *I was impacted by Angel's simile of a drunk father and felt this resonated with me and memories of specific teachers within my secondary education, shaping my avoidance of conflict and silencing of voice. I wondered if my own response, "Right", may have produced agreement or shared experience.*

Angel's tone softened when discussing positive staff approaches:

I find that when the nice teachers work

I hardly hear anyone screaming

I think that's really important

I don't think proud's the right word

I'm glad you hired someone like that

(Appendix U – Angel's I Poem)

Compared to her critique, her language here became gentler, reinforcing her understanding and sensitivity. Her phrase, "I don't think proud's the right word" (382),

constructed what seemed to be an internal negotiation between expressing appreciation and preserving her identity within the school.

Personal Reflection: *Angel's insight into more relational approaches prompted in me a sense of awe at her reflections. When responding, "I can totally relate to that feeling", I wondered if I conveyed my view and reinforced this perspective.*

4.2.4 Step 3: Listening for the Contrapuntal Voices

Within the third step of the Listening Guide, Angel's multiple voices of witnessing, psychological understanding, restrictions, and disapproval were tracked (see Appendix Y). Each voice was explored in relation to self-voice and meaning-making (see Appendix AK).

Angel's voice of witnessing positioned her as both active ("I see") and passive ("it's not personally to me"). She used the present tense, which I felt created immediacy and engagement ("I see everything") whilst distancing herself emotionally when reflecting through a plural passive self-voice ("you can tell").

Angel's voice of psychological understanding expressed personal engagement and empathy ("I get it"), indicating an emotional response to isolation. She spoke hypothetically ("It definitely would make me feel") with sensitivity, and her tone of sadness aligned with her empathy ("I get really quite upset").

Angel's voice of restriction critiqued control and power dynamics within her school, moving between plural and singular pronouns ("you get sent", "reminds me of a prison"), which felt depersonalised.

Angel's voice of disapproval varied from strong critiques ("I'm very against") to more tentative reflections ("I think"). Her use of descriptive and emotive language continued to critique isolation's effectiveness ("how horrible it is") alongside her frustrated tone ("no, what do you not realise", "that's making the cycle worse").

These voices interacted, speaking in harmony and tension, to shape Angel's complex narrative (see Appendix Y).

I felt Angel's voices of restriction and psychological understanding were in harmony, recognising the emotional weight of isolation. Her critique of control and restriction ("they just have to sit there", "I think it's deliberate") connected with her emotions ("it just makes me disappointed").

Personal Reflection: Angel's frustration with school restrictions moved from observation to critique, with school limitations deepening this emotional impact. I wondered if, within our interaction, she felt supported to re-evaluate her stance.

Angel's voice of psychological understanding expressed emotional concern ("I wonder how they're doing") whilst her voice of restriction acknowledged this ("you can't comfort them"). I felt this produced tension between Angel's instinct to connect, empathise and co-regulate, and the school barrier of seclusion.

I experienced the tension expressed when Angel initially considered whether she was impacted by isolation ("it's not personally to me", "I mean it doesn't exactly like affect me") within her voice of witnessing, whilst expressing emotional distress ("I get quite upset"). This tension reinforced a growing awareness of witnessing isolation impacting her own wellbeing.

Personal Reflection: *I wondered if Angel's initial detachment came from her perception of the interview's purpose. My non-committal responses ("hmm"), allowed her stance to evolve, whilst I affirmed her emotional engagement ("Yeah, I can imagine"), possibly encouraging a shift.*

Angel reflected on the physical isolation space, demonstrating interactions between the voices. Her voice of restriction critiqued its deliberate design ("not as big as it should be"), aligned with her voices of witnessing and psychological understanding. I felt Angel's comparison of the space to a prison cell emphasised the seclusion from the school community, reinforcing the dehumanising effect of isolation.

Personal Reflection: *I was intrigued by Angel's narrative of how schools shape relational engagement and emotional responses through punitive systems. Her view of isolation as restrictive and aggravating left me wondering who designs isolation spaces, what research informs this, and whether their effects on observers and participants are fully evaluated.*

4.2.5 Step 4: Exploring Voices in Relation to Others

This step involved listening to Angel's interview and exploring how her identity was constructed within social interactions by creating a Voice Poem (Appendix AG).

Within this, Angel expressed solidarity and detachment through shifting pronouns, using 'we / us' to create a collective self, 'you' for a more detached collective perspective, and 'they / he / she / teacher' to position others at a distance.

When using her voice of witnessing, Angel used the singular pronouns, 'I' and 'me', except when recounting past experiences, where she shifted to a more detached, collective self. This positioned her as both an active observer and a passive bystander, navigating the tension between witnessing and detachment. In the following excerpt from Angel's Voice Poem, she whispered:

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/He/She/Teacher</u> | <u>We / Us</u> |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|

I see
everything that
happens

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/He/She/Teacher</u> | <u>We / Us</u> |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|

I'd say it feels

it's not
personally

to me

I don't get in
trouble

(Appendix AG – Angel's Voice Poem)

This reflected Angel's apprehension and uncertainty over whether she was permitted to acknowledge what she had witnessed. Her identity as a witness felt complex, shaped by a tension between observation and detachment from its impact.

Within Angel's voice of restrictions, she primarily used detached collective pronouns, positioning herself as separate from those in isolation.

Personal Reflection: *I wondered whether this distancing reflected a cultural narrative instilled by the school, discouraging students from recognising their experience as a witness and reinforcing the idea that if they are not direct users of the space, they are unaffected and not entitled to a view.*

When describing emotional experiences, Angel continued using detached pronouns. She initially stated, “I mean it doesn’t like affect me when I hear about it” (251), but then transitioned to describing her emotional response. The detached pronoun ‘it’ appeared to me to reinforce the tension between witnessing and psychological understanding. However, Angel committed to the singular ‘I’ when reflecting on her emotions, which I felt positioned her direct recounts as allowing personal engagement, whilst detached pronouns distanced her from others’ experiences.

Within her voices of psychological understanding and disapproval, Angel positioned herself as personally engaged, predominantly using ‘I’. When expressing opinions rather than descriptions, she seemed more comfortable taking ownership of her views. She occasionally used ‘they’ to refer to school staff, reinforcing her distance from them.

Personal Reflection: *I wondered whether this distancing was reinforced by my position as separate from the school system, and if Angel’s language was trying to support my connection as someone more removed from it.*

Angel acknowledged that isolation might have short-term effectiveness, but stated, “they just get used to it and it doesn’t work anymore” (196). At this moment, within her voice of psychological understanding, she also distanced herself from other students, shifting to the collective pronoun. Similarly, when discussing the punitive

nature of isolation, she used detached phrasing, “almost scaring them”, rather than personally relating to their experience.

Personal Reflection: *I was curious whether Angel’s distancing conveyed a more profound emotional impact than she openly recognised.*

4.2.6 Step 5: Exploring Voices in Relation to Cultural Narratives

Within this step, I listened to Angel’s voices in relation to culturally dominant narratives, attending to terms like ‘should’ and expressions of morals (see Appendix AC).

Within Angel’s voice of restrictions, she spoke of clear expectations: “if you refuse to go, you have to be excluded” (58). She also described assumptions sharing, “obviously they get ... lunch” (77).

In her voice of psychological understanding, Angel reflected on the normalisation of isolation: “it’s sort of like, yeah, normal” (151), “It’s not abnormal” (154), and “they are so used to shouting” (341). Angel also acknowledged how isolation is perceived, sharing that some believe, “she kind of deserves isolation” (441).

In her voice of disapproval, Angel considered school expectations and teacher responses embedded in cultural narratives. She shared, “usually they should give a

detention” (22) but criticised isolation being used instead. Angel’s view that staff “only really care about following the rules” (240) constructed a lack of care for students’ wellbeing.

Angel used her voice of psychological understanding to challenge misconceptions, stating that YP within isolation are, “clearly not trying to be angry” (263-264). Morally, she recognised that the supportive space she accessed would “do so much more good” (273) than isolation, which is “aggravating them in the room” (270) when they “need comforting” (488).

Within her voice of disapproval, Angel critiqued the isolation practices, stating, “It’s just so obvious, like, don’t do it, don’t do that. But then they’re doing it” (326), and “they don’t deserve that” (494).

4.2.7 Step 6: A Summary of the Analysis

Angel’s narrative offered a powerful account of the emotional and psychological impact of witnessing isolation, despite not experiencing it firsthand. She constructed isolation as a restrictive, punitive space, contrasting support and punishment in school. Through her voices of witnessing, restrictions, psychological understanding, and disapproval, Angel navigated the tension between empathy and detachment whilst highlighting control within the system and the unmet need for emotional support. Her reflections challenged assumptions about who is affected, emphasising its emotional impact beyond those within the space.

4.3 Daisy's Story (see Appendix J for the full transcript)

4.3.1 Introduction

Daisy, 14, is the eldest of two sisters. Daisy is in Year 10 at her mainstream secondary school, having attended since Year Seven. Daisy and her friendship group have never been to isolation. She has “been in the room” but “only to drop things off” (14), concluding that she knows “what it looks like” (16).

Daisy's favourite subjects are “probably art or history” (24). She shared that art enables her to “wind down” (26). She said she enjoys learning “the stuff that happened in the olden days” (28-29) in history.

Personal Reflection: *I was fascinated by Daisy's recognition of art being a creative outlet and a way to unwind. I reflected on how subjects that promote flow and positive emotions might impact self-regulation and wondered if all students experienced this in school.*

4.3.2 Step 1: Exploring “Who is telling what story?” and “Who is listening?”

Daisy's narrative focused on her interactions with the isolation space and her perceptions of those sent there. She did not position herself as someone who has directly experienced isolation, but instead as an observer. Daisy reflected on the relationships enabled within isolation and her emotional response to the thought of being sent there.

Whilst Daisy perceived isolation as “horrible”, she noted that some students no longer feared it. I sensed a tension being described between the emotional impact for students of fearing isolation and its normalisation and desensitisation.

Personal Reflection: *I wondered at what point this normalisation enabled fear to turn to acceptance, and I felt a sense of sadness about this change.*

Daisy repeatedly mentioned control and power within her narrative, using words like “threatened” and “sent”. She also shared that some students “mistreat” the system to access isolation to “get their own way”. Her comment, “I guess”, suggested to me that this could be a dominant narrative within the school, but she was uncertain about fully committing to this view.

Listening to Daisy challenged my assumptions about how students view non-compliance and the lack of discussion around an isolation room’s purpose. A “wow” moment for me was in her recognition that a supportive space existed. However, this was only accessible to those whose parents had advocated this need, or who had a formal diagnosis. I felt shocked that students without this home support were less likely to access school support and instead were more likely to be placed within the punitive process of isolation.

4.3.3 Step 2: Exploring the Self-Voice

By exploring Daisy's self-construction in relation to isolation, I created an I Poem (Appendix V). I felt that the I Poem reflected a fluid self, responding to emotions, control, and normalisation. These excerpts explored tensions in Daisy's narratives around fear and justice:

Like I

I hated going in

I had to go in

when I was *specific title* student

I just hated doing it

I kept trying to make whoever I was ... with go in there

instead of me

I don't really know

I don't really think that's much of a punishment

I don't really think it's doing that much

I think detentions after school are doing more

(Appendix V – Daisy's I Poem)

Initially, Daisy positioned herself as fearful of isolation, describing a deep emotional response, actively seeking to avoid it. However, she later questioned its effectiveness, positioning isolation as not truly a punishment, distancing herself from

those sent there. I felt that this shift hinted at normalisation and desensitisation for students repeatedly sent to isolation. I wondered whether emotional disengagement from punitive measures developed through repetition.

Personal Reflection: *Daisy's desire for isolation to do "more" and seeing detentions as harsher left me questioning the school's explanation of isolation's purpose. Was there a deliberate lack of clarity, and did this intensify fear by leaving students to construct their own narratives?*

When considering a time when Daisy had seen the isolation space, she hesitated, sharing that she had only been there once, and I sensed that she did not want to be grouped with those in isolation, as shared in this excerpt from her I Poem:

I've only been in there

like I said previously

I guess

say I got one

which I haven't

I would then get moved

I think

I think

(Appendix V – Daisy's I Poem)

Daisy's repeated use of "I think" appeared to convey caution, framing her statements as opinion rather than personal experience.

Personal Reflection: *I wondered whether Daisy was positioning herself as an outsider, aligning with the school's dominant narratives on power and punishment, or if my response influenced her need to clarify her statements.*

4.3.4 Step 3: Listening for the Contrapuntal voices

Having listened to the multiple voices in Daisy's narrative (see Appendix Z), the voices of witnessing, control, fear, and, normalisation were tracked. These voices were explored in relation to self-voice and meaning-making (Appendix AL).

Daisy's voice of witnessing seemed active yet detached, as she described observations in a neutral tone ("I know a lot of people"), and positioned herself as separate from isolation by using singular pronouns ("I've never been"). She used past and present tenses ("there's no windows", "I've seen"), which I felt situated Daisy as having observed isolation whilst remaining distant. When reflecting on broader experiences, she moved to a plural passive self-voice ("you don't see them", "all the people") which emphasised her detachment from those in isolation.

Daisy's voice of control considered power dynamics between students and staff. She positioned herself as active and analytical but then shifted to a plural self-voice when considering collective behaviours ("some people, they'd rather", "tests teachers").

Personal Reflection: *I wondered if Daisy had specific individuals in mind when discussing these collective behaviours.*

Daisy's tone was evaluative and assertive ("some people decide", "can't be bothered" and "decided to leave"). She frequently shifted between past and present tense, illustrating both past events and current behaviour patterns.

Daisy's voice of fear positioned her as passive, emphasising the emotional impact of isolation and its perceived power. She constructed fear as imposed ("I've never been threatened", "they've embedded it in our heads"). Daisy used strong imagery ("like out of prison", "it's a really bad place") and expressed relief at isolation existing as a punishment ("It's nice that ... people who are doing bad things ... get the punishment"), reinforcing her internal conflict. Whilst Daisy feared isolation, she also seemed to accept it as necessary.

Personal Reflection: *I wondered whether Daisy's relief came from trusting the system or whether she feared a shift of control from staff to students, and therefore saw isolation as re-establishing control and order.*

Daisy's voice of normalisation was calm and reasoned ("it tends to be"), and suggested that isolation was consciously accepted. I felt her phrasing ("I think", "they don't really", "just kind of") indicated an awareness of alternative viewpoints, although she still felt able to express her stance.

These voices interacted in tension and harmony, which reflected the complexity in Daisy's positioning. Their interactions were also visually mapped (see Appendix Z).

I felt that Daisy's voices of normalisation and control aligned. Daisy accepted isolation as necessary, which reinforced a belief in power and control struggles in school. Control seemed connected with ensuring behaviour compliance, which supported Daisy's confidence in this normalisation. However, in tension with this, Daisy predicted that if she received isolation, her Mum would challenge it, positioning herself as not considering it to be a safe space.

Daisy's voice of witnessing and control spoke in harmony with her observations and evaluations of school discipline, which offered objective descriptions and critiques. However, her voice of fear and normalisation seemed to be in tension, reinforcing unease around isolation within her voice of fear whilst also complying with its routine within her voice of normalisation. Similarly, Daisy's voice of witnessing and fear seemed to be in tension; whilst witnessing felt detached, fear conveyed a deep emotional impact.

Personal Reflection: *I was interested that I felt a further tension to be present around privilege and access to support. Daisy noted that if she received isolation, her Mum would advocate for her. This positioned parental advocacy as altering discipline processes. She also observed that students with diagnoses or parental support could access alternative supportive spaces. This left me wondering about students who lack such support and whether they received less empathy and support in school.*

I wondered whether the movement between voices and positions aligned with the experience of students within a school with an isolation space, and whether they are simultaneously internalising, questioning and justifying the isolation processes within their school.

4.3.5 Step 4: Exploring Voices in Relation to Others

Daisy's voice poem explored how her identity was shaped through social interactions (Appendix AH). Daisy moved between personal and detached experiences, using singular pronouns 'I'/'she' and more distanced ones 'they', 'some people', 'teachers'. I felt this created separation and a collective 'other'. When describing isolation, she further distanced herself by using 'it'. Daisy's Voice Poem reflected this detachment:

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/He/She/Teacher</u> | <u>We / Us /</u> |
| | | | | <u>Our /</u> |
| | | | | <u>Everyone</u> |

it's just

it's like

it just is a
horrible place

it looks almost
sort of like out
of a prison

I guess

there's no
windows

(Appendix AH – Daisy's Voice Poem)

This shift reinforced her stance on isolation, with a slight tension in "I guess". Her identity as a witness seemed shaped by a balance between observation, justification, and distancing.

Personal Reflection: *I observed that when Daisy first mentioned isolation, “seemed like a horrible place, ” I later asked, “what makes it a horrible place?” This made me reflect on whether my clearer, more definitive question, compared to Daisy’s hesitant phrasing and use of the word “seemed”, prompted her to shift to a firmer stance, stating that “it is a horrible place”.*

Daisy’s voice of control appeared throughout this narrative. She moved between detached singular pronouns ‘he’/‘she’ and collective detached plural pronouns ‘teachers’, ‘they’, ‘some people’, and subtly moved between individual and group references. This movement in pronouns seemed to reflect her awareness of power dynamics and allowed Daisy to position herself in control.

Personal Reflection: *I was curious about whether students manipulated isolation processes for autonomy. I also wondered whether isolation was intended to control individuals or to reinforce compliance across the wider school community.*

When considering hypothetical scenarios, I felt Daisy distanced herself using ‘you’, but asserted opinions with ‘I’, softened by, “I think” or “I don’t really think”. This created a tension between Daisy’s strong beliefs and her uncertainty regarding them.

Within Daisy’s Voice Poem, I was interested in the movement of the pronouns:

| | | | | |
|----------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| I | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/He/She/Teacher</u> | <u>We / Us /</u> <u>Our /</u> <u>Everyone</u> |
|----------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|--|

it's nice that

people who are doing
bad things get the
punishment

I feel like

it could be
better

if they had other
punishments

people are now

I don't know
what the word
is

get their own way

(Appendix AH – Daisy's Voice Poem)

Personal Reflection: *I felt this movement between pronouns represented how Daisy perceived the movement of control within her school. I found the phrase "bad things" interesting. I wondered how "bad" was categorised, and who defined this*

distinction between doing something wrong and a need for support. Did students internalise judgement, or did the school reinforce it? The idea of control being sought to escape lessons interested me, with the escape from learning being considered a reward by Daisy.

Within Daisy's voice of fear, she predominantly used the singular pronoun 'I', which reflected a personal response to isolation. She moved to 'it' when describing the space, which seemed to create distance whilst maintaining fear. She reflected the shaping of her perception of isolation within this excerpt from her Voice Poem:

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/He/She/Teacher</u> | <u>We / Us /</u> |
| | | | | <u>Our /</u> |
| | | | | <u>Everyone</u> |

I think it's
more to kind of
influence

the younger like Year

7

they don't really talk

about it

they are just like

it's isolation

I think

they've embedded it

(Appendix AH – Daisy's Voice Poem)

Within Daisy's voice of normalisation, she positioned herself as an observer, detached from others' experiences. Whilst acknowledging fears, she described desensitisation amongst those frequently in isolation. She positioned them as seeing isolation as a symbol of status, shared in this excerpt:

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/He/She/Teacher</u> | <u>We / Us /</u> |
| | | | | <u>Our /</u> |
| | | | | <u>Everyone</u> |

but that person gets a
lot of detentions and
goes to isolation quite
often

so I don't

think

they really minded

there's some people

it tends to be

people that think

think they're more
popular

think they're higher up

kind of push the
teacher

to their limits

they get sent there

they think it makes

them seem more cool

the people I
tend to hang
out with

they're too scared

Like I

I would never
want to get
told off

it kind of
scares me

it also seems
really
embarrassing

for some people

they just think

people will find it

nothing can really
bother them

(Appendix AH – Daisy's Voice Poem)

4.3.6 Step 5: Exploring Voices in Relation to Cultural Narratives

I listened to Daisy's voices in relation to culturally dominant narratives. Here, school norms seemed to shape her moral values and perceptions of isolation (see Appendix AD).

Within Daisy's voice of witnessing, she recalled an incident where a student and staff member were uncertain whether another student should be in isolation. She shared, "everyone was convinced he'd skipped a C4" (151). She explained how being placed in isolation was debated and aligned with notions of control. Daisy expressed appreciation of isolation, stating it was "nice" that peers doing "bad things" received punishment. This perhaps aligned with broader societal views on crime and punishment.

Personal Reflection: *I noticed that my question before Daisy's recognition that it is "nice" that isolation exists was quite leading. I had asked, "...are you pleased that it's there sometimes?" I wondered if I had related to Daisy's narrative of continual disruption to learning, and considered that isolation could be seen as offering students a break from this.*

I found it interesting that Daisy linked isolation with fairness, which reinforced the idea that punishment maintains order. This made me wonder if isolation reassured students by reinforcing staff control and reducing student autonomy.

In her voice of control, Daisy described how some students preferred isolation over lessons or detention. She positioned its role as an expected consequence in line with normalisation. She acknowledged that some students needed support but believed they “ought” to advocate for it, with parental intervention sometimes being necessary to access the supportive space instead of isolation.

Daisy’s voice of fear explored how a cultural narrative was formed in Year Seven, when isolation was framed as somewhere “you shouldn’t want to go” (207-208). Daisy noted that normalisation of the isolation narrative reduced fear and discussion as students aged, highlighted by the direct instruction, “it’s isolation” (215).

In her voice of normalisation, Daisy shared a cultural narrative of certain students going to isolation regularly and therefore this being expected. She explained, “...that person gets a lot of detentions and goes to isolation quite often, so I don’t think they really minded” (161-162). She added, “nothing can really bother them” (190-191), which constructed repeated exposure to isolation desensitising students. Daisy observed that “more popular” students “push the teachers”, which leads to isolation. The cultural expectation of control shifting between students and staff felt reinforced by Daisy sharing that this “tends to” happen. I perceived that this voice spoke in

harmony with a voice of fear, in that those students familiar with isolation accepted it as part of school culture.

Daisy observed that narratives shared around isolation had been purposeful, “they’ve embedded it in our heads that it’s a really bad place” (216). This resonated with her voice of fear and the broader cultural narrative.

4.3.7 Step 6: A Summary of the Analysis

With isolation being both feared and accepted, I felt that Daisy’s reflections on isolation explored how cultural narratives of control, witnessing, fear, and normalisation shaped perceptions. I wondered if Daisy’s internalisation of these narratives reflected a wider system of social regulation around discipline and justice. This illustrated to me the complex relationship between authority, autonomy, and behaviour.

4.4 Fenton’s Story (see Appendix K for the full transcript)

4.4.1 Introduction

Fenton, aged 13, is the eldest of two siblings. He has a younger sister. Fenton is in Year Nine in a mainstream secondary school he has attended since Year Seven. Fenton has been to isolation before, but “More in Year Eight” (25) and his friends have also attended isolation. Fenton told me that his favourite subject is construction, and he aspires to become “an architect” (17).

4.4.2 Step 1: Exploring “Who is telling what story?” and “Who is listening?”

Fenton’s narrative focused on his experiences of isolation. He contrasted the more relational approach he had experienced the previous year with his current experience of a more punitive system. He spoke about inconsistencies in the application of the isolation space and questioned its psychological impact. He repeatedly dismissed the rules around it as “silly” and “stupid” and concluded at the end of the interview, “I blame it on *name school” (315), laughing as he said this. This seemed to reinforce his frustration and the lack of value he placed in the current school system.

Fenton’s account challenged my assumptions that students fear isolation. Instead, he described the previous year’s isolation system as an opportunity for connection, although he recognised a more rigid structure had replaced this. A “wow” moment for me was when Fenton recalled nearly facing isolation for not wearing a blazer beneath his coat. He acknowledged that whether the blazer was worn or not was not visible in regard to compliance, but its potential enforcement could impose physical constraints on students. This made me consider the interplay of power, control, and physical limitations within school discipline systems.

4.4.3 Step 2: Exploring the Self-Voice

Fenton’s construction of self was explored through his I Poem (see Appendix W). He seemed fluid and responsive to school rule changes and comparisons with peers.

Initially, he appeared actively resistant to isolation, as shared in this excerpt from his

I Poem:

I think it's so stupid

Yeah, I think

I've been near to the two minutes

I don't think it is

I don't think it's that necessary

I think detentions are enough

*room is unneeded, I think

(Appendix W – Fenton's I Poem)

He later distanced himself from this level of emotion, sharing, "you just have to sit ... you just have to get on with your work" (71-72). His shift from 'I' to 'you' constructed detachment and normalisation of the experience. I perceived the use of "just" to express the limited variety of activities available to students during isolation, as they are either sitting or working. However, this could be alternatively constructed as a softening of the experience of isolation, where sitting and working are considered a high level of punishment.

Within this excerpt from his I Poem, Fenton shared:

I think there's ... different levels of misbehaving

I've been

I've been once

I don't think

I don't ever really get *removed from the lesson as such

(Appendix W – Fenton's I Poem)

To me, this implied that uniform violations were regarded as less severe than disrespecting teachers. This seemed to separate Fenton from those he described as being rude to teachers. I was also interested in Fenton's description of the rudeness of others, where he repeatedly used the word "like". I felt this suggested his discomfort or uncertainty in sharing this information or categorising these students. Interestingly, Fenton used "like" repeatedly at other points within his narrative, each time aligning with recounts of his own experiences of being within isolation.

Personal Reflection: *I wondered whether Fenton felt tension between identifying with others in isolation and maintaining a sense of difference. His hesitation could also have been shaped by my earlier questions about how the school is attempting to present isolation as a "good place" now. This left me querying whether his uncertainty about the fairness of isolation influenced his self-perception and use of language.*

4.4.4 Step 3: Listening for the Contrapuntal Voices

Fenton's multiple voices were tracked (see Appendix AA), and his voices of restriction, relationship, pretence, and unfairness were explored in relation to self-voice and meaning-making (see Appendix AM).

Fenton's voice of restriction alternated between 'we' and 'I', which reflected both collective and personal feelings of restrictions. He aligned himself with others ("we just had to sit"), whilst also expressing being personally detached and passive ("if it's not right, then you just have to go"). Fenton's use of prescriptive language ("you have to") felt to me to be both detached and aligned with set expectations and dominant cultural narratives. Fenton's voice of restriction positioned the internalisation of these restrictions as ongoing by using both past and present tense.

Within Fenton's voice of relationships, he used a plural self-voice. He demonstrated movement between shared experiences ('we', 'we've') and detachment ('they', 'you'). His voice of restrictions seemed to explore the social dynamics within isolation whilst emphasising control. His use of past, present, and future tenses aligned with the shifting social dynamics, reflecting the school's systemic changes concerning isolation.

Personal Reflection: When Fenton shared how relationships were supported in the previous isolation process, and reflected that this could no longer happen, I

responded “No, no”. I wondered if this response positioned me as disappointed that this no longer happened.

Fenton’s voice of pretence appeared to create a more active and critical self-voice, which shifted between singular and plural pronouns. I noted agency and resistance within this voice (“I think”, “I don’t get why it’s necessary”), which critiqued the school’s attempt to present isolation as positive.

In contrast, Fenton’s voice of unfairness considered the rigidity and inconsistency of the school’s isolation process. Fenton used the plural pronoun to align with others when considering the unfairness of isolation (“like if you misbehave”, “you’re two minutes late”, “you should be allowed to be two minutes late”). His use of the present tense constructed a current frustration, and his use of strong language (“It’s so severe”, “It completely drags you down”) reflected the emotional impact of the experience for Fenton.

Fenton’s voices of relationships, restrictions, and pretence seemed to speak in harmony around isolation being previously utilised to support connection and escape from specific lessons.

Personal Reflection: *I was curious about whether there is a reduction in students in isolation from Year 10 upwards, and if this could be due to the element of autonomy*

over subjects being studied, meaning there is less need to attempt to “escape” disliked lessons.

Fenton’s voice of pretence and relationship appeared to speak in tension around how isolation is perceived and spoken about. Whilst his voice of pretence shared “You just meet up with all your friends and .. talk about how bad it was really” (122-123), his voice of relationships shared, “they all said it was great because you’d be with your tutor and you didn’t have to go to your lesson and stuff” (160-161). This felt to align with Fenton’s narrative around the change in approach and how relationships and connections that previously occurred made isolation more manageable, even beneficial. I felt this indicated the conflict between Fenton’s feelings and experiences, shaped by expectations and external narratives around isolation.

Personal Reflection: *I wondered if the tension between the voices could align with the complexity of isolation itself; that it could be a negative experience whilst also fostering connections, and be normalised to enable this.*

4.4.5 Step 4: Exploring Voices in Relation to Others

When exploring Fenton’s voice in relation to others, his Voice Poem (see Appendix A1) indicated movement between pronouns, and shaped a collective self through the use of ‘we’, ‘we’re’, ‘we’ve’. His use of ‘you’ also positioned a more detached

collective perspective. Based on the fluidity of the pronouns used, I also wondered if Fenton was including me as a listener, constructing a shared sense of reality.

Fenton's voice of restrictions reinforced a collective experience of restrictions by predominantly using plural pronouns 'we'/'you'. However, he also used the more impersonal pronoun 'it' when comparing isolation to a prison. His use of 'it' within this simile, "it's like a prison", emphasised the confinement and lack of autonomy.

Fenton's voice of relationships utilised plural collective pronouns such as 'our' and more detached collective pronouns like 'you' and 'they'. This framed movement between a sense of belonging within the experience and Fenton positioning himself as an observer. The comparison of isolation approaches across different timeframes, which considered the changing experience of connections, was shared in this excerpt from his voice poem:

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/ He/ She/</u> | <u>We/ Us/ Our/</u> |
| | | | <u>Teacher</u> | <u>Everyone</u> |

last year it
was just

with your
tutor

it was a lot
quieter

now ... it's the
whole *area

there's lots of children

(Appendix AI – Fenton's Voice Poem)

This excerpt examines the difficulty of having larger groups of students in a single isolation space, which tends to be noisier and less supportive of productive work.

Fenton's voice of pretence was quite firmly established and was critical early within his voice poem:

| | | | | |
|----------|-------------------|------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| I | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/ He/ She/</u> | <u>We/ Us/ Our/</u> |
| | | | <u>Teacher</u> | <u>Everyone</u> |

I think
the

school's

trying

to make it

sound like a

good place

but it's not

(Appendix AI – Fenton's Voice Poem)

Fenton shared how narratives following time in isolation focused on how “bad” it was in there compared to the previous year's approach. His use of the singular first-person pronoun ‘I’ strengthened his tone. Fenton considered being punished with isolation for uniform reasons and shared how he had previously utilised this to purposefully gain time in isolation to be with a tutor, or away from a lesson.

Personal Reflection: *I thought more about uniform rules and this being the reason many students within Fenton's school were in isolation. I wondered whether the reasons for the rules were communicated or evaluated with students, or if the passivity expected in respect of uniform created an ‘us’ versus ‘them’ narrative, potentially perpetuating the use of isolation.*

Fenton's voice of unfairness was shaped by movement between singular and plural pronouns. He initially spoke from a personal perspective using the singular 'I' pronoun to reflect his opinions and experiences, before moving to 'you' and 'staff'. This positioned Fenton as both a participant in isolation with others whilst also speaking about others as a more distanced observer, as shared in this excerpt from his voice poem:

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/ He/ She/</u> | <u>We/ Us/ Our/</u> |
| | | | <u>Teacher</u> | <u>Everyone</u> |

I
think's
silly

you can't
see the
bottom

there's two
members of
staff

if it's not
right

you have

to go

(Appendix AI – Fenton’s Voice Poem)

Personal Reflection: *I was interested in my response to his mention of “two members of staff” and how I perceived this to be representative of prison guards at the school entrance. I wondered if my response, “Right”, after Fenton shared this offered support to his critique of the uniform check that was then described.*

I felt that Fenton’s reference to staff members demonstrated an awareness of the power dynamics when arriving at school. The staff stopping students to check uniforms under coats, ensuring shoes adhered to policy and inspecting school bags for missing uniform items reflected a system of strict monitoring and control. This enforcement painted a picture of the hierarchy between staff and students, with those who failed to comply facing the immediate consequence of isolation.

4.4.6 Step 5: Exploring Voices in Relation to Cultural Narratives

By listening to Fenton’s voices, I considered expressions of culturally dominant narratives and morals (Appendix AE).

Fenton's scepticism towards institutional narratives felt present within his voice of pretence, particularly in how the school presents itself compared to students' lived experiences. He utilised evaluative language, stating, "I think the school's trying to make it sound like a good place, but it's, it's not" (41). Fenton also described cultural norms within friendship groups placed in isolation, explaining, "You just meet up with all your friends and just, yeah, just talk about how bad it was really" (122-123).

Within his voice of restrictions, Fenton noted that lateness was culturally acceptable, but "You do have to have a note" (190). He critiqued the uniform policies, stating "if the bottom of your shoe isn't 90 degrees, I can't get over how stupid that is" (239-240). Fenton recalled an incident when his bag was searched, and it was insisted his blazer was worn as, "if you say it's in your bag, they'll make you" (257). Fenton's words framed control and power as reinforcing the hierarchical authority within the school.

Within his voice of unfairness, Fenton explored shifting disciplinary expectations. He stated, "if it's not right, then you have to go straight to the room" (60). He contrasted this with the previous year, when lateness did not result in immediate isolation. He also noted inconsistencies in the punishment, "teachers can add on how many, like, periods they want" (104-105). He critiqued this inconsistency by highlighting perceived unfairness in staff decisions, "you should be allowed to be two minutes late" (188), sharing how some students are told to "hurry up" if they are late, whilst others are sent straight to isolation. Fenton concluded, "It's so severe" (196).

Fenton reflected within the voice of relationships on past isolation practices. He recalled, “they all said it was great because you’d be with your tutor and you didn’t have to go to your lesson” (160-161). He was describing how, previously, students joined their tutor’s lesson. Comparing past and present isolation practices, Fenton concluded, “as bad as it may seem, like, isolation last year was a lot more fun than it is this year” (133-134).

Fenton’s narrative provided a critical perspective on isolation, sharing shifting expectations, inconsistencies in rules and how they are enforced, and the power dynamics within the system.

Personal Reflection: When Fenton shared that being late for a lesson, which then resulted in isolation, was “so stupid”, my response, “Yeah”, could have offered agreement with this view as Fenton then went on to reiterate this, sharing, “Yeah. It’s so bad”.

4.4.7 Step 6: A Summary of the Analysis

Through his voices of pretence, restrictions, unfairness, and relationships, I felt that Fenton explored tensions between compliance and resistance, highlighting rigid school policies and shifting expectations. His reflections challenged fairness within the system and how discipline is used to reinforce control, the hierarchy, and therefore disempower students.

4.5 Rico's Story (see Appendix L for the full transcript)

4.5.1 Introduction

Rico, aged 12, has an older sister who is 15. Rico is currently in Year Eight and has attended his school since Year Seven. Rico told me that his favourite subjects are “food tech or PE” (20), explaining “there’s not a lot of writing” (22) and he can “get to do stuff, make stuff, [and play]” (26). Rico has had frequent experiences of isolation before, as have his friends.

4.5.2 Step 1: Exploring “Who is telling what story?” and “Who is listening?”

Rico shared his experiences of attending a school with an isolation space, focusing on restricted movement, the reasons for being sent to isolation, the sense of “othering”, and the physical and psychological impact of the space. He also reflected on how others perceived him and the inconsistent application of isolation.

Throughout Rico’s narrative, he repeatedly spoke about the distress caused by the physically restrictive nature of isolation, using vivid imagery to illustrate its impact. He described isolation as “claustrophobic” (165), explaining, “you’re just stuck there ... Your legs are cramping up” (215), and “you kind of use the toilet as a moving break” (222). I felt that these descriptions emphasised discomfort and entrapment.

Rico utilised imagery to immerse me in the physical experience of isolation, describing a hypothetical scenario where he asked me to imagine being trapped in

my chair and the room for eight hours. This created a “wow” moment for me within Rico’s narrative.

Personal Reflection: *I noted that ahead of this vivid description, I had asked Rico, “... you said it feels quite claustrophobic and quite closed in. Can you kind of help me sort of see what that’s like for you?” and wondered if this led to the imagery and expressive language used.*

As Rico described sitting for hours, legs cramping, unable to move, I experienced a rising panic, and my legs felt heavier. Rico slowed his voice to state “time goes slowly”, punctuating each word clearly and leaving a slight pause between words. Through Rico’s description, I was struck by how drawn-out and draining the experience must be. His narrative of boredom and the need to stay awake to avoid further punishment left me unsettled, highlighting an aspect of isolation I had not fully considered.

Listening to Rico challenged my assumptions about isolation. Having never experienced isolation, I had expected separation from peers to be the most difficult aspect and had not considered just how challenging the lack of movement would be.

4.5.3 Step 2: Exploring the Self-Voice

When reflecting upon Rico's construction of self, his I Poem was explored (Appendix X), which, to me, indicated shifts between active and passive self-construction:

I haven't been kicked out

I remember

when I

when I went to a different school

I knew everyone

'Why am I in here?'

I almost got thrown out

(Appendix X – Rico's I Poem)

Rico's use of "kicked out" and "thrown out" seemed to reinforce exclusion, powerlessness, and injustice. Rico appeared to be positioning himself as passive. In contrast, "I went to a different school" in the following line had less emotion and felt neutral. I wondered if this shift could have indicated a distancing from the emotional weight of this experience of isolation as exclusion.

Personal Reflection: *I felt these words created a sense of shame and rejection. They conjured an image of being discarded, which left me wondering about Rico's sense of belonging. His passive voice reinforced a lack of control over his situation.*

Within another excerpt from Rico's I Poem, he explored the purpose of isolation:

I got isolation

why did I get this?

I get why it's there

I don't think

I think you should only

I'd say it's not the nicest one

(Appendix X – Rico's I Poem)

I felt that this reflected tensions in Rico's self-voice, particularly around his understanding and negotiation of isolation being used. By sharing, "I get why it's there", I felt Rico aligned with the dominant school narrative of justifying isolation as necessary. However, this led to a counter voice of hesitation: "I don't think". Rico offered a level of negotiation when he said, "I think you should only" before concluding with an evaluation of the space. This evaluation was tentatively said, from which I constructed Rico's reluctance and discomfort in challenging authority.

Personal Reflection: *I noticed within my response to Rico sharing that he could be in isolation for up to three weeks that, for the only time in the interview, I paused to respond before commenting "Okay" followed by another pause and then again "Okay". I recall being shocked by a YP spending this amount of time in isolation, and*

I wonder if my shock was expressed through these pauses in response, which could have also shaped Rico's narrative.

4.5.4 Step 3: Listening for the Contrapuntal voices

Rico's multiple voices were tracked (Appendix AB), and his voices of psychological impact, normalising othering, lack of movement and freedom, and injustice were explored in connection to self-voice and meaning-making (Appendix AN).

Rico's voice of psychological impact considered the emotional strain experienced in isolation. He positioned himself as passive and emphasised his lack of control ("they tell you to go"). He reinforced his sense of exclusion by situating himself as separate from others ("you're almost treated as a prisoner"). He expressed ongoing distress and frustrations ("my god, why did I get this?") with his emotive tone shifting between past and present tense.

His voice of normalising othering reflected acceptance of systemic control and dominant narratives. Rico moved between active and passive expressions, at times asserting his agency ("I think you're used to the layout") and then submission to the rules ("they tell you to go"). The plural self-voice ("you're") reinforced his internalised acceptance of isolation processes. Statements such as ("if you're naughty you get chances") seemed to indicate the normalisation of these restrictions for Rico. This voice was predominantly in the past tense, which I felt demonstrated his expectations being shaped over time.

Personal Reflection: *I noticed, when Rico was describing the complexities in the isolation and disciplinary processes in school, that I had a sense of not fully understanding, and my response, “Right, okay, okay”, an attempt to process the information.*

Rico’s voice of lack of movement and freedom used a plural self-voice, expressing shared restriction, frustration, and loss of autonomy (“you don’t normally get to move”). His voice appeared frustrated and carried a tone of conviction (“you’re basically not allowed”, “it feels claustrophobic”) and utilised strong imagery of the space and confinement. Rico’s exploration of the senses (“you just hear the outside world moving on”) conveyed distress and again emphasised his exclusion.

Rico’s voice of injustice seemed a commentary on the unfairness of isolation. He used active constructions (“if you’re more naughty, you’re more likely to get one”) to critique the process and questioned its subjectivity (“Why am I in here?”). This voice moved between past and present tense, reflecting ongoing frustrations.

Rico’s voices of injustice and normalising othering spoke in harmony when he considered the end of the day in isolation. Rico’s voice of injustice shared (“if you go out at three, you’re still going out with the normal people”) whilst his voice of normalising othering emphasised (“it feels like you’re really different. Different. Really”). These voices worked together to once again construct a narrative of exclusion and difference. Although the unfairness was explained, his internalisation

of this narrative was felt within Rico's voice through his use of the term ("normal people") for those not in isolation. Rico's repetition of the term ("different") reinforced the emotional impact of his sense of separation.

I felt that Rico's voice of normalising othering spoke in tension with his voice of psychological impact. Whilst he showed acceptance ("if you go in there a lot ... you're used to the layout and what happens"), he also described isolation as distressing ("Feels quite bad. Feels not nice because you're just stuck there and not be able to move. Your legs are cramping up"). This tension reinforced acceptance of the system despite his physical discomfort and distress.

Personal Reflection: *I wondered whether the conflict and tension between these voices were connected to an acceptance of the external system of isolation, whilst his psychological and physical experience was one of suffering. I felt saddened that the narrative of isolation might be acceptance and routine, whilst internally, the experience has not necessarily become any easier.*

4.5.5 Step 4: Exploring Voices in Relation to Others

Rico's voice poem explored how his identity was shaped in relation to others (see Appendix AJ). Rico moved between personal singular pronouns 'I'/'my'/'me', connected plural pronouns 'you' and more distanced plural pronouns 'they', 'normal people'. The movement between pronouns seemed to position Rico as separate,

reinforcing dominant narratives of 'normal' instead of those generated by students in isolation.

When reflecting on past incidents, Rico constructed his voice of injustice, as presented in this excerpt from his voice poem:

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/ He/ She/</u> | <u>We/ Us/ Our/</u> |
| | | | <u>Teacher</u> | <u>Everyone</u> |

It was three
days

I was

it was for
apparently

but I was
swearing

at my mate

he was

annoying me

(Appendix AJ – Rico’s Voice Poem)

I felt Rico’s movement between the singular pronoun ‘I’ and the impersonal pronoun ‘it’ positioned the isolation process as an external, institutional force that was imposed on him. His phrase “it was for apparently” seemed indicative of uncertainty or a challenge to the justification given for his punishment. I felt this constructed the school discipline process as rigid and unquestionable, whilst Rico’s narrative of the event had been dismissed or unheard.

Another excerpt from Rico’s voice poem interested me due to his consistent use of the second-person pronoun ‘you’. This appeared to shape the experience as something that is applied widely, as opposed to it being about him personally:

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/ He/ She/</u> | <u>We/ Us/ Our/</u> |
| | | | <u>Teacher</u> | <u>Everyone</u> |

you do

another one

you're not
allowed to
talk

you're
basically not
allowed

You're not
allowed

you don't do
enough

you get
another day

(Appendix AJ – Rico's Voice Poem)

As a listener, I felt Rico's repeated use of 'you' drew me into the narrative. The emphasis on "you're not allowed" constructed for me the power of discipline in school, asserted through consequences rather than staff offering curiosity or exploration.

Rico's voice of lack of movement and freedom constructed staff as enforcers of control:

| | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/ He/ She/</u> | <u>We/ Us/ Our/</u> |
| | | | <u>Teacher</u> | <u>Everyone</u> |

you just sit

they don't give

they barely give

anyone

movement

breaks

they they do

you go to

lunch

you don't get
to move

(Appendix AJ – Rico's Voice Poem)

The lack of movement and freedom appeared to be part of the isolation punishment. I felt that Rico understood his need for movement to support regulation, based on his focus on this area and power being removed from him. Rico positioned students in opposition to the staff, constructing a 'you' and 'they' division. Rico's narrative conveyed to me the social construction of discipline within the school, emphasising restriction and stillness symbolising control and compliance.

Rico's voice of normalising othering seemed to reinforce his sense of exclusion. His descriptions of non-isolated students as "kids having fun" reinforced his exclusion both from this fun and from being part of the same community. His reference to "everyone" being able to leave emphasised his position as an outsider through the isolation process.

4.5.6 Step 5: Exploring Voices in Relation to Cultural Narratives

Within Rico's voices, he engaged with cultural narratives and morals (see Appendix AF).

His voice of psychological impact acknowledged and demonstrated acceptance of the “naughty” label and varying levels of misbehaviour and discipline, “if you’re naughty you get *chances” (69-70). He described isolation’s punitive structure, with longer school hours for those in isolation or detention. He described the physical movement to another school’s isolation, explaining, “They normally just like throw you outside. Not throw, like they tell you to go” (139). Rico expressed feelings of confinement, “it feels claustrophobic” (165) and highlighted the psychological impact of losing phone access, which prevents communication with his parents about “how it’s going” (305). He also recognised the wider psychological impact of this experience and dislike, stating, “I think most people don’t enjoy it really” (362).

Rico’s voice of normalising othering positioned isolation as separating him from “normal” students. He recognised cultural narratives of exclusion and belonging by describing the detachment, “you just hear the outside world moving on” (249-250). Rico acknowledged the normalisation of punishment for those in isolation, sharing, “If you’re naughty, you’re more likely to get one” (354). Rico also considered how, through repeated exposure, isolation became familiar, “if it’s your first time it’s quite nerving, nervous” (46-47), but once you’ve been a lot “you’re used to the layout and what happens in there” (48).

His voice of lack of movement and freedom reflected on power dynamics creating restricted movement, “they barely give anyone movement breaks” (75). He described the only movement occurring through toilet breaks and repeatedly expressed a cultural norm of not being permitted to move. Rico shared that even lunchtime lacked

movement or autonomy, as staff brought them food instead of enabling the students to move from their seats. He repeatedly likened isolation to prison, “it’s basically prison basically” (345).

Rico’s voice of injustice explored the inequities in the isolation process and shared the absence of student voice in disciplinary decisions. He recalled being sent to isolation for “apparently swearing at a teacher” (64) when he was actually swearing at a friend. Rico stated that if lunch money was forgotten, “there’s no lunch” (79), but for those outside isolation, “normally they give out free meals” (286-287). This highlighted insecurity around food, which was reinforced by Rico sharing that “lunch is the most exciting bit of the day” (292). Rico critiqued the inconsistency of why punishments are given, calling them “stupid reasons” (171). He explained, “if you’re more naughty, you’re more likely to get one” (354). He questioned the fairness of an extended school day in isolation, arguing, “I don’t think you should stay until three thirty” (266-267).

4.5.7 Step 6: A Summary of the Analysis

Rico’s narrative explored intense relationships between cultural norms, discipline, power and exclusion within his school. His reflections considered how isolation functions as a punishment and a social tool, reinforcing hierarchies of behaviour and belonging. Through his voices, Rico shared the emotional and psychological impact of isolation and perceptions of fairness. His experiences highlighted the normalisation of isolation, where repeated exposure increased acceptance and compliance. Rico described the severe restrictions on movement imposed within

isolation, reinforcing the narrative of control whilst also intensifying the distress and suffering introduced by the experience. His narratives presented isolation as a system that increased disengagement, powerlessness and a sense of injustice, as opposed to a necessary discipline process.

The analysis of the narratives raised questions for me about the role of isolation in shaping student identity, culture, and school climate. It also generated ideas for more inclusive approaches to behaviour management and relationships.

Personal Reflection:

When reflecting on the cultural aspects of this research, I recognise that all four participants were white British YP. I have wondered about the various factors that might have influenced this demographic outcome. Firstly, my own positionality as a white woman may have affected who felt comfortable participating in the research process. My research poster, as an introduction to the research, included a photograph of me, which may have unintentionally suggested to potential participants that the research was predominantly from a white cultural perspective. Additionally, my recruitment methods, which needed parent/carer consent, might have unintentionally excluded some already marginalised participants, as this process may create barriers for families facing challenges such as language difficulties, mistrust of institutions, or limited time to engage in consent procedures.

Although I did not initially view race as a central part of participants' narratives, my analysis led me to understand how racial dynamics could be involved, particularly in

the disproportionate use of isolation practices (Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, 2021; DfE, 2023b; Gillborn, 2014; Noguera, 2003; Skiba et al., 2002; Tillson & Oxley, 2020). Reflecting on this, my cultural competence, shaped by my background, experiences, and social position, along with possible blind spots, influenced not only how I engaged with and interpreted these narratives but also how I understood and conceptualised culture itself within the research setting. I recognise that my perspective might have limited my awareness of more subtle or contrasting cultural dynamics within the school community. Although I did not explicitly explore culture and identity in my analysis, I acknowledge that assumptions about these concepts influenced the research process.

This reflection emphasises the importance of situating the findings within the wider cultural context of the school community, where whiteness may be regarded as the norm. Future research should take further steps to ensure that diverse voices are heard and that cultural dynamics are explicitly included in the analysis.

Chapter 5: Discussion

In this chapter, I summarise the analysis of Angel, Daisy, Fenton and Rico's narratives. The participants' stories centre on isolation, discipline, and identity, shaped by their interactions, language, and reflections, and highlight how institutional norms, relational dynamics, and personal interpretation influence experiences of isolation. I explore how Angel, Daisy, Fenton, and Rico navigated their experiences, focusing on isolation's psychological and emotional effects, the power dynamics within disciplinary actions, and how YP can demonstrate agency and resistance. I will refer to my analysis from the previous chapter and literature from earlier in the thesis. I will address my research questions, the limitations of my study, and the implications of this research.

5.1 Aims and Research Questions

The main aim of this research was to explore the experience of YP attending a mainstream school that utilises isolation spaces. Currently, limited research on isolation captures the voices of YP. Existing studies on isolation practices typically focus on individuals sent to the isolation space. However, the wider school community in schools with isolation areas are aware of their existence and may potentially feel the 'threat' of these spaces being used to maintain control and order. Therefore, another aim of this research was to amplify the voices of YP who are sent to isolation and those who are not but who witness the experience.

In the interviews, a narrative approach was used to empower the participants to share their stories and create shared meaning (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). This approach has the potential to be emancipatory (Oliver, 1997) as it positions the YP as experts of their own experience, giving them agency over how their narratives were told and interpreted, therefore supporting ownership over the research process.

The research question for this study was:

- What does it feel like to be a YP within a school that utilises isolation spaces?

Alongside this, there were accompanying sub-questions:

- What are the narratives of the isolation space and those who occupy it?
- How do YP perceive the impact of isolation practices on their school community?
- What are the experiences of YP who witness the use of isolation on their peers?
- How is language used when constructing the concept of isolation, and how does this play out within relationships and discourses in the school community?

I considered the reflective questions shared by Gilligan et al. (2003) throughout writing this discussion chapter:

“What have you learned about this question [these questions] through this process, and how have you come to know this?

What is the evidence upon which you are basing your interpretations?”

(p.168).

5.2 Overarching Narratives

Whilst the analysis acknowledged the individuality of each participant, overarching narratives resonated with me as I worked my way through the stages of the Listening Guide. This process was enhanced by creating a ‘Plotting the Landscape’ file for each participant to examine the movement of voice across the transcript and the moments of tension and harmony (see Appendices Y, Z, AA, and AB). These overarching narratives were constructed through a systematic process following the six steps of the Listening Guide outlined by McKenzie et al. (2021). For each narrative, I identified and mapped contrapuntal voices, which helped visualise how my participants constructed and interpreted their experiences of isolation within their school experiences, and how these resonated with me. The Plotting the Landscape documents (see Appendices Y, Z, AA, and AB) supported this process by enabling me to see where different voices spoke in harmony, tension, or dissonance both within and across individual narratives. This mapping helped me reflect on meaning-making in relation to the experiences and narratives of isolation. A moment that challenged my interpretive process was noticing, through the stages of the Listening Guide, shifts in pronoun use, particularly in Daisy and Fenton’s transcripts. The transition from first-person to second-person pronouns appeared to indicate moments of emotional detachment, discomfort, or disassociation. These shifts led to

reflections on how language subtly expressed emotional defence and distancing, reinforcing the importance of the Listening Guide's focus on voice and nuance (see Appendices AK, AL, AM, and AN for each participant's tables of voices).

At first, I listened carefully to each transcript through the multiple steps of the Listening Guide and traced the movement of key voices that resonated with me across each participant's narrative. I used the 'Plotting the Landscape' documents to visually follow the contrapuntal voices, and this process helped me recognise connections across participants' narratives that resonated with me. Through this process, I began to develop the four overarching narratives.

I recognise that by constructing these overarching narratives, I might have limited alternative analysis paths and that framing the data within four broad areas risks oversimplifying each participant's complex story. More subtle or conflicting voices may have been underexplored because they did not align with these overarching narratives. In seeking coherence across participants' stories, there was a tension with potentially losing the complexity and uniqueness of each story (Riessman, 2008). To address this, I deliberately avoided categorising voice or making comparisons early on in the Listening Guide and revisited the transcripts multiple times to consider alternative interpretations. Through this ongoing process of listening, visually mapping, reflecting, and engaging with these voices in dialogue with my positionality and the aims of this research, I developed these four overarching narratives to support reflection on how isolation was understood and experienced.

Personal Reflection:

The overarching narratives among the participants supported reflection on the research sub-questions. To support this reflection, the section has been reorganised according to the sub-questions and main research question. Whilst the section was initially structured around the overarching narratives, I chose to restructure it under the research questions to enhance transparency in my research process and to ensure that these questions were also considered.

5.2.1 What Are the Narratives of the Isolation Space and Those Who Occupy It?

Psychological and Emotional Effects of Isolation

The participants' narratives framed isolation as an experience shaped by emotional distress. Rico described the effects of isolation, particularly the discomfort from the length of time in isolation. Although staff did not inflict physical harm, the expectations of isolation led to pain, cramping, and fatigue, with Rico recognising that any movement or falling asleep would result in extended time in isolation. This punitive approach mirrors experiences of isolated spaces being cramped (Quinn, 2024) and experiences in the criminal justice system, where Crewe (2011) describes the experience of prison as becoming 'deeper'. This is where movement is more restricted, and the loss of liberty and autonomy within confinement causes psychological pain that is believed to be capable of causing as much harm as physical punishment (Crewe, 2011). This idea seemed to resonate strongly within Rico's narrative, suggesting that isolation may also lead to a similar increase in psychological harm.

The social rejection enabled by isolation practices is also associated with physical pain (Condliffe, 2023; Fraser-Andrew & Condliffe, 2023; Williams, 2009). This physical pain was present within Rico's narrative.

In contrast, Fenton's narrative suggested a tension between identifying with those in isolation, whilst also maintaining a distance through his shift in pronoun use. Additionally, Fenton offered a comparison between the varying approaches; one offering connection with other YP within isolation and the other preventing connection, suggesting connection-seeking from the YP (Bombèr & Hughes, 2013). This process of seeking connection is seen as a way to avoid feelings of shame and rejection (Nathanson, 1992; Williams, 2009). At the same time, it can create tension in YP's relationships (Willis et al., 2021). Additionally, Fenton's narrative highlights the inconsistent nature of isolation practices and the discretion applied by teachers (Jones et al., 2020; Perry-Hazan & Lambrozo, 2018), which may introduce bias in their use. This bias can negatively affect the most vulnerable YP (Noguera, 2003; Skiba et al., 2002).

Power Dynamics and Control

The narratives from Angel, Daisy, Rico, and Fenton highlighted how isolation enforces school hierarchies and control. Fenton pointed out inconsistent rule enforcement, criticising its fairness and reinforcing the perception of power being used to respond inconsistently. Angel considered the rigid nature of isolation, and all four participants used the simile of a prison to describe isolation, emphasising the

lack of autonomy and demonstrating how institutional practices become ingrained in YP's behaviours as their autonomy decreases, resulting in silencing (Barker et al., 2010; Sealy et al., 2021). These narratives align with both attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), as experiences of disconnection, distress, and emotional harm reflect how broken relationships and a lack of support undermine YP's independence, sense of belonging, and emotional safety within school. Before the analysis, I had not fully anticipated the depth of psychological distress conveyed through the metaphors of being trapped and the similes of prison. This challenged my prior assumption that isolation was primarily a disciplinary response to behaviour, recognising how isolation practices can trigger trauma-like responses.

Daisy reflected on staff-student power dynamics, whilst Rico noted the normalisation of discipline narratives. These accounts align with literature which suggests that exclusionary discipline practices intensify power imbalances (Gomez et al., 2021; Noguera, 2003) and demonstrate inconsistencies (Jones et al., 2023). The YP constructed institutional control being maintained through selective communication and concealment around isolation (Power & Taylor, 2018). This reduced autonomy links to self-determination theory, where limited choice negatively affects motivation and engagement (Deci & Ryan, 2000), and which contributes to disengagement (Condliffe, 2023), impacting the YP's constructed identity (Jones et al., 2020).

Institutional control functions on multiple levels. In addition to physical restrictions, it also operates through processes of normalisation. Normalisation is the process by

which certain behaviours and restrictions become accepted as 'normal' and inevitable within institutions (Foucault, 1975). This process keeps the control mechanisms mostly invisible and unchallenged, shaping how YP perceive their environment and the limitations within it.

Another way institutional control is maintained is through internalisation. This involves YP absorbing these norms and expectations within the institution and then regulating their own behaviour and feelings to conform to them (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). This control then becomes embedded not only in YP's external behaviour but also in their sense of self and agency.

In Rico's narrative, the inability to move freely highlights both the physical constraints of isolation and the internalised acceptance of limited autonomy. This could increase feelings of dehumanisation and helplessness, as presented within Rico's narrative.

Another unexpected insight was the realisation that isolation sometimes served staff's needs more than YP's needs. Daisy and Angel both reflected on how isolation appeared to give adults a tool to manage the environment, themselves, or regain authority. This challenged my assumption that isolation was always a reactive behavioural strategy and instead suggested that it can be proactively used to reinforce and reclaim adult control. This also provides valuable insight into how these normalised practices help reinforce institutional control, ultimately sustaining power dynamics through both clear restrictions and more subtle psychological influences.

Resistance, Agency, and Meaning-Making

Resistance and agency were key narratives, with YP's identities negotiated in response to isolation. Fenton categorised the rules as "silly" and "stupid", asserting his agency by resisting the imposed authority and expressing frustration in relation to its rigidity and inconsistency. Angel expressed disapproval and distrust, whilst Rico noted that repeated exposure led to desensitisation, suggesting some students normalised the experience. As witnesses, Daisy shared the desensitisation of those experiencing isolation, and Angel voiced that the normalisation of the experience prevented further discussions as YP progress through school. Rico recognised the lack of student voice in disciplinary procedures and questioned fairness while accepting the process. This aligns with literature on normalisation and acceptance (Williams, 2009) suggesting wider resistance patterns to institutional control, where non-compliance helps YP preserve a sense of self (Condliffe, 2023; Sealy et al., 2023).

Unmet Need

Rico reflected on how movement restrictions, food insecurity, and limited interactions increased his distress, leading him to use toilet breaks as a coping strategy. Approaches that require YP to stay still, seated, or indoors can make it harder for them to manage their emotional and physical regulation (Barrett, 2017). This can lead to feelings of isolation, with limited opportunities for staff to offer co-regulation, empathy, or compassion (Condliffe, 2023; Perry-Hazan & Lambrozo, 2018). This focus on behaviour and increased isolation is recognised to be "harmful" to YP's mental health (Martin-Denham, 2020), which can lead to feelings of "frustration,

needing to escape, or challenging behaviours” (Day, 2025, p. 195). Rico’s understanding that this approach harms his wellbeing indicates a need for more supportive strategies. Research supports this, showing that YP often see punitive methods as ineffective and even damaging (Condliffe, 2023; Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019).

Fenton reflected that isolation can make learning more difficult and noted that the academic needs of those in isolation are often overlooked (Martin-Denham, 2020; Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019). His comparison of different isolation approaches implied a desire for more human connection and predictability, reflecting the idea that those affected by isolation may be re-traumatised when relationships are withheld (Bombèr & Hughes, 2013). Overall, Fenton’s perspective appeared to view isolation as a process that can lead to disengagement and feelings of frustration (Day, 2025).

Angel voiced distrust towards the system, its unfairness, and inconsistent approach. Her narrative of the space seemed to construct an inconsistent approach where the needs of the YP were not always fully addressed within the staff-student relationship. It also seemed that the importance of empathy and co-regulation was recognised, leaving YP’s voices unheard (Perry-Hazan & Lambrozo, 2018).

Daisy’s narrative appeared to portray isolation as a way to meet staff needs rather than those of YP. She acknowledged that a supportive space within school would benefit some pupils sent to isolation and highlighted the unfairness of accessing

support versus punishment (Gillborn, 2014; Losen & Martinez, 2013; Sheppard, 2020; Skiba et al., 2014; Weale, 2023).

Descriptions of surveillance, physical restriction, and behaviour control reflect these wider systemic influences and Foucauldian models of school (Foucault, 1975). This narrative challenged my assumptions by considering not just abstract or emotional aspects of control, but the embodied experience of it and the depth of that experience. Rico's description of not being able to move resonated strongly with the physicality of institutional control, highlighting the physical restrictions placed on YP's bodies in isolation spaces. This confinement within isolation spaces felt to represent an embodied form of power and can intensify feelings of dehumanisation and helplessness by physically restricting autonomy and agency.

Summary

The narratives depicted isolation as emotionally and physically distressing, reinforcing power imbalances, limiting autonomy, and failing to meet YP's needs. Participants described the space as punitive, disempowering, and shaped by inconsistent relationship-influenced rules. Despite this, they demonstrated resistance and agency when negotiating their meaning and experiences within the system.

These narratives strongly reflect the theoretical underpinnings of relational and trauma-informed approaches, where inconsistent connection, emotional disconnection and punitive environments can retraumatise rather than support YP (Bombèr & Hughes, 2013). The repeated references to isolation as "prison like"

metaphorically and physically highlight how the space functions as a site of surveillance and disciplinary power (Foucault, 1975), and how institutional norms are internalised and normalised YP (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

The psychological impact of isolation aligns with existing research on the harm of exclusionary practices (Condliffe, 2023; Martin-Denham, 2020), but participants' accounts go further, describing not just emotional distress but physical pain, suggesting that the harm is not only psychological but also experienced by the body. In this way, the narratives support but also expand on the existing research by showing how institutional practices are expressed through the body, creating a deeper level of harm than is often captured in policy debates.

The inconsistency in how isolation is applied, as described by participants, indicates that staff discretion and relational dynamics greatly influence who is isolated and in what manner, reinforcing critiques of bias and inequity in school discipline (Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, 2021; Noguera, 2003; Skiba et al., 2002). YP's resistance, meanwhile, suggests attempts to reclaim agency and create meaning in response to experiences of marginalisation, Supporting Condliffe's (2023) and Sealy et al.'s (2023) research on resistance as a way for YP to preserve their identities.

5.2.2 How Do YP Perceive the Impact of Isolation Practices on Their School Community?

Psychological and Emotional Effects of Isolation

Angel, Rico, and Fenton discussed how isolation influenced their school relationships. Angel showed empathy and a desire to co-regulate, relating to the emotional challenge of isolation (“I get it”). However, her reluctance to share openly indicated a conflict between internalising and critiquing institutional narratives.

All four participants expressed the normalisation of isolation’s community impact. Rico described those outside isolation as “normal,” while Daisy referred to those in isolation as “doing bad things”.

Daisy recognised that narratives around isolation from staff had become “embedded” and constructed negative community perceptions of the space. Additionally, Rico conceptualised isolation as segregating him from “normal” YP, suggesting isolation creates a disconnect between those in the space and the school community.

Power Dynamics and Control

All the participants considered the power dynamics within isolation processes. Angel, Daisy, Fenton, and Rico reflected on isolation’s authoritative and hierarchical nature. They expressed a level of doubt about how and why some of their peers were sent there. Isolation was viewed as a tool to achieve and assert control, whilst Rico suggested accepting and normalising this (“I get why it’s there”), constructing the process as rigid.

Fenton's recognition of the power dynamics being applied around uniform illustrated a hierarchy between staff and students, which isolation is being utilised to enforce and strengthen.

These narratives illustrate the effects of isolation practices on school culture, connecting impacts on relationships and narratives of deviance and punishment to 'othering' and divisions among YP (Knight et al., 2022). Angel's narrative highlights how staff interactions and relationships with YP in isolation impact the space's perceived effects, emphasising the difference made by individualised responses (Condliffe, 2023). This suggests that when others do not perceive behaviour that does not comply with school expectations as rewarded, isolation affects witnesses and those directly involved (Barker, 2019). This closely aligns with Foucauldian views of schools as disciplinary institutions (Foucault, 1975). The use of isolation spaces reflects control and exclusion, emphasising the power dynamics within educational environments. This contrasts with Dewey's (1916/2018) idea of schools as democratic and inclusive places, suggesting a tension between educational ideals and the realities experienced by YP in the school setting. This narrative aligns with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory, which explains how YP's daily experiences are shaped by the complex systems around them, such as schools, that influence their sense of belonging, safety, and agency.

Resistance, Agency, and Meaning-Making

Although isolation was framed as a form of control, the participants' narratives also revealed moments of resistance and agency. Fenton's critique of inconsistency in the application of the school's discipline system challenged the belief that YP might passively accept this narrative. By questioning the system's legitimacy, he positioned himself as an active participant, opposing the framing of isolation as punishment. Rico's reflection on isolation among YP also challenged the notion of discipline as neutral or objective.

A powerful example of how personal meaning is constructed that challenged my expectations was Angel's desire to co-regulate other YP's emotions. Instead of focusing solely on her distress as a witness, she described trying to stay calm and expressed wanting to help and empathise. This felt to demonstrate a level of emotional awareness and relational care I had not anticipated, highlighting how YP may adopt caring and nurturing roles within emotionally charged school environments, even when these behaviours are not necessarily modelled in that context. This suggested that our sense of identity and control is shaped through narratives and beliefs within institutional environments. This negotiation involves YP navigating complex social expectations and power relations whilst engaging in what Goffman (1959) described as 'identity work'. This is where performances are intentionally strategic and carefully coordinated 'backstage' to maintain a consistent sense of self within constraints. This approach challenges simple categorisations and asserting YP's agency within restrictive environments. This aligns with self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), which states that individuals have innate psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. When these

needs are challenged or limited, participants often find ways to negotiate meaning as a means of preserving their sense of independence and connection, even in challenging situations.

Unmet Need

Across all four narratives, there was a shared sense that isolation often fails to meet YP's deeper emotional, relational, or academic needs. Daisy's narrative suggested that isolation is systematically inequitable, with access to supportive spaces dependent on parental advocacy or a formal diagnosis. Without these, YP's needs might be mistaken for challenging behaviour, which can lead to further isolation. This aligns with the literature on educational inequality, which indicates that discipline systems often mirror broader social disparities and tend to impact vulnerable students more (Adams & García, 2023; Jones et al., 2020).

Rico's narrative further considered these gaps, as he described feeling emotionally and physically undervalued in isolation, with his needs, such as food, movement, and interaction, unmet. As previously noted, Rico used a toilet break to cope emotionally and meet his own movement needs. This appears to be part of a broader system that emphasises control over care, which seems to remove rather than support YP experiencing distress (Power & Taylor, 2018).

Fenton's narrative seemed to view isolation as an ineffective space for learning, suggesting that the punishment not only socially excluded YP but also denied them

education. His account felt to construct isolation as exclusion from the classroom with peers, as well as from opportunities to learn, leading to disengagement and potential underachievement (Skiba et al., 2014).

Angel reflected on unmet relational needs through isolation practices, affecting both those in isolation and those witnessing the behaviour, with her desire to co-regulate being prevented within institutional norms (Condliffe, 2023). This implies that the impact of isolation on the wider school community resulted in fractured relationships with limited opportunities for empathy, support, or care among peers (Bombèr & Hughes, 2013).

School systems often promote narratives of fairness focused on responses to behaviour incidents instead of addressing underlying needs (Gilmore, 2013; Perry-Hazan & Lambrozo, 2018). Participants' reflections suggest that isolation removes access to care and support rather than providing it, reinforcing the perception that control is prioritised over wellbeing within the system (Adams & García, 2023; Gilmore, 2013; Perry-Hazan & Lambrozo, 2018).

Summary

Participants viewed isolation as emotionally distressing, socially divisive, and a reinforcement of power imbalances. They suggested it is ineffective in changing behaviour whilst fostering shame, disengagement, and othering. Experiences of isolation appeared to describe an inequitable responding to unmet needs, often

feeling more like punishment than support. Participants reflected on how isolation was applied in inconsistent ways, influenced by access to support. From a critical point of view, this suggests it disproportionately impacts those who are already marginalised within the school community.

Whilst some participants, like Angel, showed empathy and relational concern, others, such as Rico and Fenton, revealed internalised acceptance or direct critique, suggesting a spectrum of engagement with institutional narratives. This variability highlights how YP's positioning within the school ecology (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and their access to supportive relationships shape their interpretation of isolation's meaning and impact.

These perceptions align with existing research that highlights how exclusionary practices can mirror and reinforce broader social inequalities and dominant power structures (Gillborn, 2014; Skiba et al., 2014). However, the participants' narratives provide additional insight by sharing how these inequalities are experienced in daily life through feelings of surveillance, invisibility, and unmet emotional needs. For many, isolation was not just about being physically separated from a space; it also involves feeling disconnected from relationships, learning, and a sense of belonging. These experiences echo trauma-informed perspectives and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), which suggest that autonomy, relatedness, and competence are essential for wellbeing.

From a Foucauldian perspective, these practices illustrate how schools act as disciplinary institutions that uphold power not just through surveillance and control, but also through internalised norms that shape identities. This suggests that isolation is not just about individual discipline, but is also part of a broader system of social and political influences that decide who is included or excluded in educational settings.

The findings also suggest a disconnect between how institutions often view isolation as just a neutral behavioural tool, and the lived experiences of YP who feel it actually increases their sense of control, silences their voices, and creates a more punitive school environment. When behaviour is regarded as a problem within the individual rather than a response to broader environmental or systemic factors, isolation can contribute to the othering of YP and may normalise punishments that conceal deeper social inequalities (Losen & Martinez, 2013).

5.2.3 What Are the Experiences of YP Who Witness the Use of Isolation on Their Peers?

Psychological and Emotional Effects of Isolation

The narratives highlight the impact of isolation on both those who experience it and those who witness it. Angel's account of feeling distressed despite never experiencing isolation firsthand reflects its broader emotional impact, and Daisy shared fear around isolation, sharing that she did not perceive the isolation space to be safe. This aligns with research on school climate, which suggests that

exclusionary practices raise anxiety and uncertainty amongst all students (Voight & Nation, 2016), therefore undermining the emotional safety of the school community.

Power Dynamics and Control

Fenton viewed the previous year's approach positively, noting YP's control in navigating rules to access isolation and specific staff. Whilst stressful situations can reduce reflexivity and lead to reactive behaviour (Fonagy & Target, 1997), in Fenton's case, this navigation appeared intentional, with the aim of engaging with a trusted adult and supporting connection-seeking. This aligns with Bombèr's (2007) view that YP try to meet their own emotional needs. In Angel's narrative, her apprehension and uncertainty about being allowed to express her viewpoint seemed connected to the power and control asserted regarding her role as a witness in the process. Daisy's narrative explored the power struggles within the school, suggesting that isolation was necessary to reestablish control.

Resistance, Agency, and Meaning-Making

Daisy and Rico's narratives reflected a normalisation of isolation occurring over time. Whilst Daisy initially viewed isolation as "horrible", she acknowledged that frequent exposure reduced how severely it was perceived amongst YP in school. Similarly, Rico shared that repeatedly being placed in isolation had created a feeling of familiarity, which gave the experience a level of routineness instead of supporting behaviour change. Although Angel initially adopted a clear stance against isolation, her reflections following this suggested internal conflict.

These perspectives aligned with literature on the desensitisation effect, where punitive environments become embedded and accepted within school culture (Fraser-Andrew & Condliffe, 2023). The lack of clarity or communication around the space arguably supports the institution's narrative of it being associated with punishment and collective control rather than support (Knight et al., 2022; Sealy et al., 2023; Waterhouse, 2007).

In contrast, Angel and Daisy demonstrated internalised compliance, sometimes sharing institutional narratives while critiquing and questioning them, reflecting the complexity of negotiating identity in school and research contexts (Meiners, 2015).

These narratives seemed to present participants as negotiating compliance whilst constructing personal feelings of isolation. This aligns with social constructivist theory (Bruner, 1990), which suggests that even in restrictive environments, YP find ways to create meaning through language, relationships, and social connections.

Unmet Need

Angel's narrative suggested a lack of safety within the isolation space. Daisy shared that individuals involved in a physical altercation were both required to go to the same isolation space together. Daisy believed that students might benefit from support rather than isolation, whilst Angel shared that trusted staff made the space feel safer, reflecting the importance of relationships in supporting behaviour (Nash et

al., 2016). However, this was inconsistent due to staff timetables and varying staff approaches.

These narratives raise questions regarding how various safety types, such as inner safety, emotional safety, physical safety, perceived safety, and an intrinsic sense of safety (Treisman, 2017), affect individuals in isolation and witnesses, who are also aware that they might be at risk of being sent there. This unmet need for safety might also reinforce the system's power dynamics. In prison system research, prisoners were often treated poorly and deliberately placed in cells with those they had conflicts with (Crewe, 2011).

Fenton shared moments of narrative as a witness and recognised inconsistencies in how the rules of isolation were applied to different YP within his learning cohort. These inconsistencies affected his perceptions of fairness and legitimacy within the school's disciplinary processes, demonstrating that such inconsistencies undermine perceptions of fairness (Skiba et al., 2014). He challenged the idea that isolation was a neutral or deserved consequence and also suggested that witnessing these inconsistencies might contribute to disengagement, tension, and a negative impact on the student community. This illustrates that isolation practices can harm school climate and peer relationships (Noguera, 2003).

Since Rico's narrative did not include reflections on witnessing isolation practices, he is therefore not represented in this section, which specifically focuses on the perceptions of those observing isolation used on their peers.

Summary

The narratives emphasised that isolation practices affect those directly within isolation but also those who witness it, creating emotional distress and fostering a school climate of fear, uncertainty, normalisation, and social division. Participants shared feelings of emotional discomfort and concerns about safety, suggesting that observing isolation could impact both physical and psychological security (Treisman, 2017). These narratives seem to show how isolation can become a shared experience among YP. The process communicates what is considered acceptable behaviour and reinforces the authority of institutions, not just through punishment but also by making social signals visible. This enables isolation to subtly reinforce a hidden curriculum. This aligns with Foucault's (1975) theory of disciplinary institutions, where surveillance and the public display of discipline regulate and influence how YP behave. However, participants' experiences suggest that the emotional and relational effects of witnessing such discipline, like anxiety and peer disconnection, may not be fully captured by Foucauldian models (Voight & Nation, 2016).

The internalisation of school narratives about discipline, as reflected in Angel and Daisy's shifting positions, demonstrates the complexity of identity negotiation within

institutional settings. Their narratives mirror what Bruner (1990) describes as creating meaning in social settings, where YP actively interpret and sometimes question common cultural ideas. This challenge felt to be evident when Fenton pointed out the inconsistency, highlighting that seeing unequal enforcement of isolation policies can harm perceptions of fairness. It may also lead them to question if the rules are really legitimate and can weaken trust in the school's authority (Skiba et al., 2014; Noguera, 2003).

The participants' narratives also challenged the idea that witnessing discipline encourages compliance. Whilst some initially expressed fear or conformity with school practices, others began to question or reject those practices, especially when isolation was perceived as inconsistent or unjust. This supports Fraser-Andrew and Condliffe's (2023) research on desensitisation but extends it by demonstrating how desensitisation can occur alongside critical awareness and emotional ambivalence.

Ultimately, these findings suggest that witnessing isolation is not a passive experience. YP engage in identity work as they interpret what isolation means for themselves and their peers, thoughtfully balancing emotional safety, loyalty to their school, and their values. The effects on the school climate, peer relationships, and feelings of safety suggest that isolation is not just a disciplinary tool; it also deeply influences relationships and carries symbolic meaning, shaping the moral and emotional atmosphere of the school environment.

5.2.4 How Is Language Used When Constructing the Concept of Isolation, and How Does This Play Out Within Relationships and Discourses in the School Community?

Psychological and Emotional Effects of Isolation

Participants' narratives constructed meaning-making around isolation as being relational. Daisy's shift in language and Angel's whispered tone suggested discomfort and an internalised sense of stigma or restriction around discussing isolation. This aligns with research by Perry-Hazan & Lambrozo (2018), who found that YP expressed fear when communicating around punitive measures.

Power Dynamics and Control

Daisy's narrative incorporated power-based words such as "threatened" and "sent" around isolation processes, whilst Rico used phrases including "kicked out" and "thrown out". Daisy reflected on how isolation was necessary for YP who "push the teachers to their limits". Language construction around the necessity of isolation aligns with the notion that class outcomes judge teacher performance, so removing the individual threatening this is supportive (Madigan & Kim, 2021). This act by the teacher is perceived to serve as a deterrent, restoring control (Jean-Pierre Parris, 2019; Taylor, 2022). However, narratives within this research also suggest that isolation is associated with a loss of control for staff rather than linked with them regaining control, with Angel likening a member of staff within isolation to a "drunk father". This suggests that power and control can be exercised in harmful and unpredictable ways.

Resistance, Agency, and Meaning-Making

When addressing isolation, Fenton and Rico's use of the second-person pronoun ("you") presented it as a collective experience rather than an individual punishment. This shared viewpoint encouraged a discourse of othering, emphasising that specific YP, particularly those who diverge from institutional norms, are marginalised. Removing specific individuals distances them from their peers, which is perceived as necessary to help the rest of their class succeed without distraction, aligning with research (Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019). Participants' narratives suggested themes of stigma as they described YP in isolation being viewed as deviant within school, with Rico himself labelling those outside of isolation as "normal". This othering is reinforced by the narratives of specific YP as problematic and requiring control (Stanforth & Rose, 2020; Waterhouse, 2007).

All four participants noted that isolation spaces were not formally shared, and discussions about isolation decreased as YP progressed through school. This hidden nature of isolation practices, combined with the lack of a requirement to record attendees, allows narratives to shift away from isolation being a supportive environment. School staff's ability to conceal isolation means they potentially control its perceived meaning, silencing YP's perspectives on the practice.

Unmet Need

The participants' narratives also explored the concept of unmet needs, especially regarding safety, emotional regulation, physical movement, and relational support.

These unmet needs were often shaped and reinforced by the language used to describe isolation, which presented it as punishment, exclusion, or containment rather than care, support, or restoration.

Daisy reflected on the perception of the YP within isolation, initially viewing a punitive approach as necessary rather than a supportive space, but later changing this perspective and recognising that a supportive environment might be what some YP need. Angel observed that the supportive space in her school would be more effective for those in isolation and described the contrast between the two areas. Angel's desire to co-regulate suggests that peer support mechanisms might be more beneficial than punitive practices, assisting with emotional regulation and building connections (Barrett, 2017; Darling-Hammond & DePaoli, 2020; Thepa et al., 2013; Voight & Nation, 2016; Willis et al., 2021), aligning with restorative justice theories in education. This narrative suggests the potential for alternative relational or compassion-focused strategies that promote respect and encourage responsibility, all while valuing the need for time, space, and meaningful connections (McCluskey et al., 2011).

Fenton's narrative challenged the idea that isolation acts in a neutral way. He pointed out how inconsistent application of isolation can undermine the credibility of disciplinary system less credible. His narratrive highlighted an unmet academic need and showed that the term 'consequence' might hide that YP are being removed from valuable learning opportunities to participate in and feel a sense of connection and belonging (Skiba et al., 2014; Noguera, 2003).

Rico's vivid account of his unmet needs recognised how YP may seek to regain a sense of agency when basic needs are unmet. His narrative indicates that isolation can feel dehumanising, with control prioritised over support (Power & Taylor, 2018).

These narratives appeared to present a gap between the stated aims of isolation practices and the actual experiences of YP, emphasising the importance of relationally-focused, trauma-informed approaches that are attentive to YP's needs (Bombèr & Hughes, 2013; Treisman, 2017).

Summary

Participants indicated that isolation is not simply a behavioural tool but a socially and discursively constructed practice that positions YP within school hierarchies, using relational and symbolic language. According to social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), these isolation practices can strengthen in-group and out-group distinctions within the school community, shaping social identity and affecting the sense of belonging for those who experience repeated isolation. Their narratives reflected a shared understanding that isolation feels like punishment and exclusion, often accompanied by silences, euphemisms, or coded words. These signals show discomfort, stigma, or an internalisation of institutional power. This aligns with Perry-Hazan and Lambrozo's (2018) findings but also adds a new perspective by showing how discomfort in speech is a social process, expressed through tone, pronouns, and silence. This suggests a deeper socialisation process that influences how YP interpret, share, or hide their experiences.

Language about isolation often emphasises adult authority and portrays students as deviant, using words like “thrown out” or “kicked out” that suggest force, shame, and control. This reflects Foucauldian ideas of disciplinary language as a means of social regulation (Foucault, 1975). However, the findings go beyond this by showing how YP themselves sometimes adopt, undermine, or challenge this language as they interpret their experiences. For instance, Rico and Fenton’s use of “you” to describe isolation as a shared experience subtly felt to question the school’s view of isolation as simply an individual consequence.

Participants also suggested that the invisibility and inconsistent recording of isolation helped sustain institutional control over how the practice was perceived. This aligns with Stanforth and Rose (2020), but their narratives offer a richer understanding by showing how silence acts as a powerful discursive act. It not only hides the practice itself but also the unmet emotional and relational needs that come with it.

Importantly, participants did not accept what institutions told them. Whilst Rico shared dominant narratives about ‘deserving’ isolation, the participants also challenged these ideas, expressing mixed feelings or reinterpreting them as a response to unmet needs. This aligns with Bruner’s (1990) theory that YP are not just passive recipients of meaning but active creators of it, using their relationships and emotions to find their place within school culture. Angel, Fenton, and Daisy’s appreciation for the emotional support from trusted staff demonstrated how language and relationships come together to resist viewing isolation simply as punishment. This aligns with research by Kashdan et al. (2004), which emphasises how curiosity

and genuine interest from adults help build stronger social bonds and connections. When staff approach students with curiosity instead of control, they help foster a supportive environment that encourages belonging and reduces the need for exclusionary practices.

The analysis of the narratives also seemed to highlight how the institutional discourse of 'consequence' can sometimes conceal underlying inequalities and prevent people from accessing support. Fenton and Rico's narrative felt to share that what is framed as discipline might actually mask deeper issues, such as academic or relational exclusions. This relates to the work of Noguera (2003) and Skiba et al. (2014), but it also introduces a new perspective by emphasising how language plays a key role in maintaining exclusion.

Ultimately, these narratives seemed to suggest a disconnect between the stated intentions of isolation practices and the actual experiences of YP. Participants challenged the idea that isolation is a neutral consequence. Instead, their descriptions framed it as a means of maintaining adult control whilst silencing or pathologising YP's emotions and need for connection. This emphasises the importance of trauma-informed, relational approaches (Bombèr & Hughes, 2013; Treisman, 2017), but it also encourages a critical analysis of how language and silence influence these approaches.

5.2.5 What Does It Feel Like to Be a YP Within a School That Utilises Isolation Spaces?

The overarching narratives shared by Angel, Daisy, Fenton, and Rico offered constructed accounts of what it means to be a YP within a school context that uses isolation as a punitive measure. Participants did not describe isolation as a neutral or isolated act, but rather as a socially constructed, relational practice shaped by institutional norms, adult-student power relations, and broader cultural discourses around behaviour and compliance. This reflects a social constructivist perspective (Bruner, 1990), where meaning is co-created through language, relationships, and school systems. The accounts indicated that isolation was emotionally and physically distressing, producing feelings of shame, powerlessness, and exclusion.

The collective narratives of the participants suggested that isolation is a practice recognised as reinforcing the power dynamics within school, framing discipline as a means of control (Smith, 1981). Whilst control is necessary for managing large numbers of YP, participants suggested that the way isolation is used creates a school climate shaped by fear, anxiety, and disconnection (Skiba & Peterson, 2000). Whilst some literature positions isolation as a practical alternative to external exclusion (Barker, 2019), participants' narratives shared how these strategies can cause emotional and relational harm. The concept of control contrasts with research emphasising that healthy school relationships are nurtured through attuned, embodied interactions that foster social cohesion (Trevarthen & Malloch, 2000) and create a sense of belonging and relational safety (Munn et al., 2000). It is indicated that when YP experience a sense of belonging, they are more likely to interact

positively with school systems, aligning with self-determination theory, which suggests that when a YP experiences a sense of belonging, they are more likely to engage positively with the school system (Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019; Vasilic, 2022). However, this was challenged by participants' narratives about how isolation practices reduced the sense of connection and engagement. This then raises questions about the potentially negative effects of isolation practices on learning and cognitive engagement (Taylor, 2022).

Despite these challenges, the participants also expressed agency. Through resistance, reflection and critical questioning around the fairness of the school systems, they asserted meaning over their experiences. Rico and Daisy viewed isolation practices as routine or embedded, seeing them as an expected aspect of school life. This normalisation suggests that specific YP become both discursively and behaviourally positioned as 'the ones who get sent out', which perpetuates patterns of shame, othering, and dysregulation (Elison et al., 2006; Sealy et al., 2023).

This normalisation might also risk minimising the harm of repeated exclusion, particularly when YP may seek control over their experiences by resisting authority to protect their identities and avoid feelings of fear, embarrassment, and humiliation (Çeven et al., 2021; Duarah, 2018), or by forming selective relationships with trusted staff. Often misinterpreted by schools as attention-seeking or defiant, behaviours such as seeking out specific staff, manipulating placement in isolation, or withdrawing from peers, can all be seen as attempts to regain a sense of control and

safety. These actions align with the temporal model of ostracism (Williams, 2009), which describes three phases. Initially, a YP feels reflexive pain from threats to one of four fundamental needs: belonging, self-esteem, control, and meaningful existence. This leads the YP to use coping strategies through reflection to reconnect or regain control. After repeated ostracism, the motivation to protect these needs decreases, resulting in resignation, leaving the YP feeling alienated, helpless, and depressed. Recognising these processes as responses to ostracism suggests that Daisy's narrative, where YP seek specific staff and manage their attendance in isolation, aligns with the potential misinterpretation of their behaviour by staff as attention-seeking or non-compliant.

The application of trauma-informed approaches (Treisman, 2017; Perry & Szalavitz, 2017) and psychological models of adolescent needs (Maslow, 1943) supports the interpretation that behaviours linked to isolation are often misunderstood and pathologised. When viewed through these lenses, it becomes clear that punitive systems might miss or even worsen the unmet needs underlying these behaviours, particularly around regulation, safety, and connection. This suggests that the school system might unintentionally recreate the very dysregulation it aims to resolve, aligning with critiques found in relational and restorative justice literature (McCluskey et al., 2011). This is further supported by Baumann and Bleisch (2014), who emphasise the importance of treating YP with dignity, something that isolation practices can undermine.

Participants did not construct isolation as neutral or isolated acts of discipline, but rather as a socially constructed experience shaped by the school system, relationships, and cultural narratives around behaviour. Access to the alternative support, including compassionate or relational interventions, within school was experienced as unfair, potentially dependent on having a formal diagnosis or parental advocacy. This reflected socially constructed understandings of fairness, aligning with literature that suggests school discipline practices can reproduce patterns of social inequality (Weale, 2023). This supports Losen and Martinez's (2013) findings that social inequities contribute to perceived challenging behaviour and can be increased by discipline which excludes.

The experience of being a YP within a school that uses isolation is not just about disciplinary measures but about navigating a system that often normalises exclusion, silences, constrains, and shapes identity construction. Isolation is shared as part of a school structure that constructs and maintains narratives about who belongs, who disrupts, and who deserves care or exclusion, affecting lives long after the moment of discipline. These lived experiences of isolation in school suggest a need to move beyond behaviourist frameworks towards relationally responsive, trauma-informed, and inclusive practices that recognise and respond to YP's social, emotional, and psychological needs (Bombèr & Hughes, 2013; Bruner, 1990; Treisman, 2017). Supporting this, Sheppard's (2020) critique of isolation as a silencing punishment, and Waterhouse's (2007) recognition of how isolation can lead to othering, reinforce the need for relational approaches.

Whilst contrasting perspectives on isolation practices remain (Jones et al., 2020; Willis et al., 2021), they raise the need for critical reflection on the complexity of these practices and their relational consequences. These narratives suggest that school staff need to critically consider how exclusionary measures like isolation can become a routine part of school culture. Recognising the potential harm caused by such practices encourages us to move towards more relational, trauma-informed approaches that prioritise connection, empathy, and listening to the voices of YP.

5.3 Limitations of this Study and Evaluation of the Quality of the Research

Within this research, the sample was rich in depth due to the qualitative design; however, it was small, consisting of only four participants. Whilst there were two male and two female participants, only the two male participants had been in isolation as a punitive measure, and the two female participants had never been sent to isolation. All four participants were White British, and all came from families where a parent/carer supported their participation, suggesting that their family believed that their YP's voice was important to share. Although these factors may be seen as limitations in terms of sample diversity and the range of experiences, they do not necessarily reduce the trustworthiness of the study, which was assessed using narrative criteria rather than quantitative measures of validity or reliability. Therefore, the findings are not generalisable across all school contexts. However, the aim of this research was not to produce generalisable claims or objective 'truth', but to explore participants' meanings and experiences in depth. Instead of generalisability, the quality criteria I considered relevant to my research were persuasiveness, correspondence, coherence, and pragmatic use (Riessman, 1993). These criteria

reflect an understanding of trustworthiness, which Riessman (2008) describes as being more appropriate than an emphasis on 'truth' in narrative research.

5.3.1 Persuasiveness

By transcribing verbatim and using the Listening Guide as my method of analysis, I felt that the voice of the YP within the research was maintained throughout, strengthening the persuasiveness of the arguments generated (Riessman, 1993). However, a possible limitation is that the small number of participants may cause some readers to see the narratives as less representative of wider experiences, making them seem less convincing. To improve persuasiveness, the transparency of the analysis process and the inclusion of detailed excerpts aimed to enable readers to assess the credibility of the interpretations themselves. Additionally, although efforts were made to empower participants and facilitate genuine sharing, I recognised that the sensitive nature of the topic and existing power imbalances may have influenced how openly participants expressed themselves. Whilst multiple strategies were used to support sharing narratives, such as flexible interview options, visual prompts to pause, and providing a written version of the opening question, these could not eliminate the potential discomfort associated with the topic. As a researcher, I ultimately maintained control over the research focus, question framing, and data interpretation, which inevitably shaped how participants' narratives were constructed and presented. Although the Listening Guide encouraged ongoing reflexivity and highlighted these interpretive dynamics, the extent to which the findings reflected participants' meanings rather than my own interpretation remains a limitation.

5.3.2 Correspondence

The narratives in my research were co-constructed during the interviews and through my analysis, influenced by my positionality as a researcher, my responses, and the questions I posed. I have therefore been active within the stories participants shared with me, and possibly aspects of stories that were not being shared. This active role inevitably introduced the potential for bias in how the narratives were interpreted. My interpretations were influenced by my own assumptions, values, and experiences, which may have affected how the data was both analysed and presented. To address this limitation, in the first step of the Listening Guide analysis, I reflected on my thoughts and my interactions as the interviewer. I also recognised that the interpretations from the narratives could differ from someone else's when reading the transcripts.

Although information sheets, consent and assent forms, and interview options were adapted to support accessibility and understanding, some participants might still have felt uncertain or perceived pressure to take part, especially given their experiences with adults in authority within their school system. This could have affected how they engaged with the process and what they felt able to share. I tried to support this by offering a pre-meet for all participants and suggesting that each bring notes or drawings before the interview.

Following the analysis steps within the Listening Guide, I contacted the parents of all my participants to offer to share with Angel, Daisy, Fenton and Rico the I Poem and Voice Poem created, as I stated that I would do during their interview. Daisy

requested to have the poems emailed, together with an explanation of how they were created. I did not hear back from the parents of Angel, Fenton, or Rico. I wanted to empower my participants to feel comfortable receiving these poems in their preferred method, rather than dictating that they needed to meet me again. I also wanted to ensure the YP chose whether these were received, to ensure my commitment to enabling autonomy and empowerment. This member checking was intended to support correspondence. Although only one participant responded, this process was an important step towards member checking and enhancing correspondence by demonstrating respect and transparency.

5.3.3 Coherence

An additional limitation is that the interviews were conducted during September and October 2024, which may reflect contextual factors, as this is the start of a new academic year. This is a time within the school year linked to transition and adaptation challenges, as well as the development of new relationships. Although participants did not explicitly mention the timing of the interviews, these times of transition might influence how they shared their experiences. These narratives, at the beginning of the academic year, may differ from their experiences at other points in the school year when routines, expectations, and relationships have become more established.

Another challenge relates to whether my interpretations acknowledged the complexity of participants' accounts without oversimplifying them. To support coherence, the presentation of the analysis of the narratives section was

restructured to follow the steps of the Listening Guide to support coherence. In addition, detailed transcription was included, paying close attention to pauses, intonation, and the pace of speech. This built coherence within the research (Riessman, 1993).

I hope that the reflexivity within the Listening Guide will also have added the strength of transparency to my research. Taking a narrative approach and utilising the Listening Guide analysis added honesty to the process, demonstrating how the interpretations were formed, and I felt this was beneficial for a richer analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Parker, 2005; Riessman, 2008). Adopting narrative techniques was important in guiding and structuring the interview (Hollway & Jefferson, 2013), highlighting the ethical aspects of my methodology and providing an opportunity for agency.

5.3.4 Pragmatic Use

A further limitation is that the research relied on self-reported data, which may have been influenced by participants' desire to present themselves in a positive light and their reluctance to share certain experiences. Additionally, the research did not include the perspectives of staff or parents/carers, which could have provided a more nuanced understanding. This focus solely on YP's voices, though intentional, meant that the findings might not fully reflect the systemic or institutional factors that influence isolation practices.

However, I believe that my analysis will add weight to further research in this area and to the ongoing conversations and consultations around restrictive practices in schools, and isolation more specifically. The relevance of my research for the wider student population, with YP such as Angel seeking to offer co-regulation and feeling empathy for their peers, demonstrates that research in this area reaches more widely than current research explores. Offering narratives from the YP who themselves have experienced isolation within their schools adds integrity to the intention of the research having pragmatic use (Riessman, 1993).

The various steps completed within the Listening Guide process also support reflexivity. This approach to my analysis felt appropriate for the research, acknowledging the co-constructed nature of my interpretations. I include the use of personal reflection boxes throughout the analysis, making this transparent.

To further support my emancipatory aim, the research ensured a safe space for each participant to share their narratives, as they chose whether this was in person or online. However, it might be considered a limitation that Daisy, Fenton, and Rico's interviews could only be held online. Nevertheless, I continued to use active listening and sensitive responding to create a safe environment, with participants being equipped with visual prompts that enabled them to stop the interview at any point. Whilst practical limitations such as access to technology or transport may have made it more difficult for participants to fully exercise choice at times, care was taken to minimise these limitations wherever possible, for example, by offering online

interviews and practising with the different communication cards or online buttons to assert choice.

5.4 Implications for Practice

This research brings the potential for narratives around the topic of isolation to reach a wider audience. I intend to disseminate my findings to my current educational psychology service, my new educational psychology service, other relevant services, and potentially a broader audience through publication.

5.4.1 Implications for School Staff

The findings from Angel, Daisy, Fenton, and Rico's narratives suggest a need for an approach to school discipline that prioritises psychological wellbeing and relational, compassionate or restorative justice approaches, as opposed to punitive measures such as isolation. The emotional impact shared by all four participants, regardless of their attendance within isolation, constructed isolation practices as being potentially harmful, whereas research suggests that trauma-informed approaches could be more beneficial instead (McDonnell & McDermott, 2022; Treisman, 2017). Trauma-informed, restorative, or relational strategies offer an alternative approach that supports movement away from discipline, which increases exclusion, toward recognising the need for emotional and behavioural support (McDonnell & McDermott, 2022; Treisman, 2017). Angel actively recognised the varied approaches within isolation and reflected on the impact of these on those within the space and those witnessing. Regular reviews and evaluations with staff, YP, and parents/carers

would support further exploration of these approaches and enable a more consistent approach which effectively supports change. Such reviews could foster connection through the collaborative process itself, providing emotional support and engagement (Bennathan, 1997).

This research suggests that reliance on isolation practices could be diminished by recognising a YP's need for co-regulation and understanding the dysregulation curve, alongside strategies to support individuals at various points through tailored plans. School staff could use their relationships and expertise with YP to empathise, co-regulate, and adopt the roles of supporter and helper, rather than the distanced role of rule and policy enforcer. Educating YP about conflict resolution and peer mediation may also enhance peer relationships and create opportunities for co-regulation, fostering more cohesive communities and positive school climates (Darling-Hammond & Depaoli, 2020).

This research suggests that the removal of the ability to move or interact is mirrored within the criminal justice system as a punishment entitled solitary confinement and is given to individuals in prison who break prison rules (The Howard League for Penal Reform, 2025). This punishment is believed to create severe psychological and physical effects (Shalev, 2008), including anxiety, depression, and cognitive disturbances (Shalev & Edgar, 2015). It is regarded as one of the most damaging and harsh punishments in prison practices, raising significant concerns in relation to human rights (Shalev, 2008). Dr. Shalev suggests that it should only be applied with safeguards in place to minimise the potential harm it can cause (Shalev, 2008).

Rico's narrative of feeling "trapped" in isolation aligns with literature on restrictive practices, suggesting that limited movement and interaction heighten psychological distress through the loss of control and autonomy (Barker, 2009; Barker, 2019; Condliffe, 2023; Fraser-Andrew & Condliffe, 2023; Foucault, 1975; McDonnell & McDermott, 2022). The connection between movement and emotional regulation suggests that movement-based interventions might be more beneficial for behaviour by supporting a YP's dysregulated nervous system, rather than requiring individuals to be still and confined, which increases dysregulation and hinders co-regulation (Barrett, 2017; Barrett, 2020; Treisman, 2017). Rico's description of YP in isolation, concealing the need to move whilst tolerating restricted movement to avoid further punishment, could also be linked to psychological harm (The Howard League for Penal Reform, 2025; Williams, 2009).

Acknowledging the role of movement in promoting regulation and connection (Barrett, 2017, 2020) could, instead, encourage co-regulation and recognise the importance of regulating and relating before reasoning to support growth and learning (Day, 2025; Perry & Winfrey, 2021; Williams, 2009). By employing more nurturing strategies, school staff could collaborate with, and gather the voices of, YP, which would support regular evaluations and reviews of the approach.

Additionally, school staff could implement consistent data collection systems to monitor the use of isolation spaces. This might include recording the frequency and duration of isolation for each YP, the stated reason for its use, and demographic information such as age, gender, SEND status, and ethnicity. This data could then

inform regular evaluations of the fairness, effectiveness, and appropriateness of isolation practices. By providing transparent reports and analysis, schools would be better equipped to critically reflect on patterns over time, engage in evidence-based development of practices, and demonstrate accountability to parents, carers, governors, local authorities, and academy trusts.

Alongside this systemic reflection, school staff might also learn from this research and recognise and critically reflect on the power dynamics within student experiences and narratives. By hearing perspectives from YP, consideration might be given to the broader impact of isolation practices and empower YP to share their voices and see actions taken based on their views, as opposed to school staff who are already empowered within the system. Furthermore, reflecting on the description of isolation spaces available to YP in the school and on the narratives shared among students and staff about individuals using those spaces could help identify the power dynamics influencing their experiences.

5.4.2 Implications for EPs

This research supports arguments for a systemic shift towards inclusive, strength-based discipline approaches that prioritise emotional wellbeing (Gomez et al., 2021; Pratt, 2023). EPs are well-positioned to advocate for such change, supporting schools in developing reflexive and proactive strategies (Hampton & Ramoutar, 2020; Nash et al., 2016).

EPs can work systematically with schools to evaluate existing policies and practices. Developing a positive relationship between the EP, SENDCo, and senior leadership team to create supportive systems could involve training, strategies for change, and staff support such as supervision (McDonnell & McDermott, 2022; Pellegrini, 2009). This research acknowledges that reactive behaviour approaches are linked to increased stress for school staff (Nash et al., 2016; McDonnell & McDermott, 2022) without reflexivity enabled by supervision processes (Lawrence, 2020).

Whilst being a separate space, the process of being sent to isolation, combined with the awareness of peers and staff regarding the YP's absence from class and discussions about where a YP is, makes the punishment public. This aligns with historical intentions to encourage humiliation and increase the rejection of those punished (Foucault, 1975). EPs can instead support schools in designing a proactively responsive approach to enhancing the school climate, utilising psychological insight (Nash et al., 2016) with a focus on relationships (Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019) rather than a within-child understanding of behaviour that can create notions of blame (Whiting, 2025) and shame, potentially making the situation more challenging (Fraser-Andrew & Condliffe, 2023; Taylor, 2022).

In this context, behaviour can be understood as communication within a relationship, with a relational approach providing tools for listening and alternative communication methods. Such an approach would enable acknowledgement of the emotion being expressed to support the YP (Taylor & Scorer, 2025) and ensure the communication is not missed (Sheppard, 2020). EPs can support the development of relationship

policies, offer related staff training, engage in natural and non-threatening conversations during consultations where narrative reframing can occur, and ensure that YP are involved in regularly evaluating any approach introduced.

The importance of student voice can be supported by EPs, who have the training and tools to gather YP's views. EPs often work across various schools, including local authority schools and academy trusts, at different key stages, enabling them to promote shared learning and skill development among professionals. It might be beneficial for EPs to consider with school staff and other groups how *they* might feel if isolation practices were introduced into their daily lives.

As Day (2025) suggests, YP with SEND and neurodivergence may be disproportionately harmed by strict behaviour policies like isolation, particularly when such practices stem from rules that may be unnecessarily punitive. This raises concerns about whether the welfare of YP, especially those with additional needs, is adequately considered within the current isolation guidance. Angel's narrative suggests that staff approaches significantly influence experiences of isolation. Supportive, proactive staff can help YP use isolation for self-regulation or co-regulation. This emphasises the important role of EPs in fostering inclusive, wellbeing-focused practices for both staff and YP (Roffey, 2012).

When the Labour Party came to power in 2024, newspaper articles presented varied views on isolation practices. I would argue that EP work in this area will need to

consider these concepts of control and behaviour across society through a political lens, collaboratively exploring notions of control and childhood through psychoeducation. This could enhance understanding of threat responses and acknowledge how autonomy, motivation, and wellbeing affect YP and their learning.

At the same time, it might be important to raise awareness when working with school staff and other groups of the similarities and differences between state and public schools, including the extent to which compliance or autonomy is encouraged or enabled, and the resulting impact on outcomes and societal position (Casey, 2024; Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019). With compliance and conformity recognised as unsupportive of developing regulation skills or the ability to process and manage challenging emotions (Lakin et al., 2008), leaving YP to function in a survival mode focused on self-preservation (McCluskey et al., 2011; McDonnell & McDermott, 2022), EPs can promote the wider evaluation of isolation practices by stakeholders, including parents and carers.

In addition, the impact shared in both Daisy and Angel's narratives of being within a school utilising isolation, even though they had never attended an isolation space, seems to open a potential rationale for EPs to further explore the impact of their school climate on all children. A focus on results and outcomes as opposed to wellbeing and motivation can impact the mental health of YP, and reduced autonomy can affect motivation and the level of stress experienced (Fisher, 2023). By conducting a school evaluation of approaches to behaviour that involve the whole school community, including students, parents, and staff, everyone would be empowered to share their perspectives on different approaches concerning all

students and school culture. For example, how a climate of fear might perpetuate non-engagement with learning for emotionally-based reasons.

In 2020, there were 1.4 million schoolchildren with special educational needs in England and Wales, but only 300,000 had a legal entitlement to support through an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) (Day, 2025). After exclusion, YP were more likely to receive a SEND assessment as other agencies became involved (Day, 2025), raising questions about whether exclusion could have been avoided had the needs of these YP been understood and addressed earlier. This suggests the need for a different approach to supporting unmet needs, potentially reducing overall costs, allowing more funding to be used proactively rather than reactively through panels, tribunals, and EHCPs. In this area, EPs can assist schools, parents, carers, and YP by advising on the proactive implementation of reasonable adjustments and supportive strategies for all YP when needed.

While isolation practices continue, I believe that it would be beneficial to begin collating information on the demographics of YP sent to the space and the reasons for their time there, as this data is currently not required or monitored (Barker, 2019; Power & Taylor, 2018; Stanforth & Rose, 2020; Staufenberg, 2019). It would also be interesting to begin evaluating various approaches within isolation, recognising that the initial design of isolation spaces was not for punishment. However, due to a lack of clarity about their purpose, they are often associated with punishment rather than support (Sealy et al., 2023). EPs could provide organisational development support, such as an appreciative inquiry, to start considering the purpose of, and narratives

around, the space, gathering data on those attending, and establishing regular evaluations and reviews of its use.

However, it is also important to recognise the context in which EPs are currently working. Lyonette et al. (2019) highlight challenges within the EP workforce, including increasing demand, limited capacity, and variability in service delivery models. These pressures may influence the extent to which EPs can consistently engage in systemic work, such as reviewing behaviour policies or supporting organisational change. Despite these challenges, this research suggests that even when time is limited, EPs can still make an impact by modelling reflective practice, facilitating consultation that recognises relational and trauma-informed perspectives, and providing signposting to evidence-based resources and training. EPs might also advocate for system-wide evaluation of isolation practices across multi-academy trusts or local authorities, where capacity allows.

As a trainee EP, conducting and reflecting on this research has influenced how I question and listen to YP. I ensure that I use more open-ended questions, enabling families and YP to steer the conversation. I also approach consultations and discussions with curiosity and empathy, recognising that a “wow” moment will shape my work and understanding.

5.4.3 Implications for Policy Makers and Education Leaders

The findings of this research highlight the importance for policy makers and education leaders to critically assess the role of isolation spaces within school behaviour management frameworks and policies. Despite their widespread use, there is currently no statutory requirement to monitor or report on how isolation is implemented or who it affects (Barker, 2019; Stanforth & Rose, 2020). This lack of oversight raises important ethical and safeguarding concerns, particularly given the potential psychological harm and the disproportionate impact on YP with SEND or from marginalised backgrounds.

Future policy guidance could set clear expectations for data collection, reporting, and external oversight of isolation practices. National and local policies might emphasise relational and trauma-informed approaches and establish minimum standards for the use of any separate spaces to ensure they are genuinely supportive rather than punitive. Additionally, policymakers could invest in training and resources to support schools' capacity to implement evidence-informed alternatives to exclusion and isolation, along with ongoing support for reflection, such as supervision.

The similarities between school isolation and solitary confinement in the criminal justice system open opportunities for public debate and consultation on whether isolation respects children's rights and current perspectives on mental health, inclusion, and emotionally based reasons for non-attendance at school (Tillson & Oxley, 2020). A key step in ensuring interventions uphold YP's dignity, promote

wellbeing, and support learning is to involve their voices in the development and review of policies.

5.5 Concluding Statement

I hope this thesis provides insight into the experiences of YP within mainstream secondary schools with isolation practices. The voices of YP themselves are limited in this area, and there is no known existing research on the wider impact felt by the student community. This research contributes to this gap by exploring how isolation is experienced, understood, and resisted by YP within the school community.

The narratives shared suggest that isolation is not just a response to behaviour but part of a wider system that shapes how YP see themselves and others within their school community. Despite this, the participants offered resistance to this construction, a strong sense of agency, and a desire for a more supportive and relational approach. These insights question the effectiveness of isolation in promoting behaviour change and advocate for approaches that enhance connection, emotional regulation, and equity. This research suggests that schools need to reconsider the use of isolation and create instead an environment where all YP can thrive. Additionally, it provides a basis that has the potential to support school practices and further research.

5.5.1 Implications for Future Research

This research shared the narratives of four YP who attend schools that use isolation practices. However, it also raised questions that could be explored in future studies. Conducting narrative interviews with the parents and carers of YP attending schools that use isolation practices would provide their perspectives and help recognise the wider impact of isolation beyond the student community (Willis et al., 2021).

Additionally, interviewing students in schools without isolation and with a more relational approach would generate alternative, valuable insights. It would be beneficial to hear the narratives of YP experiencing this approach and consider whether the othering constructed in Rico and Daisy's narratives also occurs within these school systems (Fraser-Andrew & Condliffe, 2023; Sealy et al., 2021).

Whilst this research included both male and female participants, only male participants had experienced being in the isolation room as a punitive measure, whilst none of the female participants had. Future research might consider how isolation practices affect YP of all genders, regardless of whether they have experienced isolation.

Finally, it would be useful to explore data concerning YP who are not currently engaged with learning for emotionally based reasons and to examine the potential impact of school culture and policies regarding relationships, belonging, behaviour, and discipline on this disengagement.

This thesis aims to raise critical questions about whether the lack of clarity around isolation practices is a deliberate strategy to create fear, reinforce control, and sustain narratives of deviance and punishment in schools rather than promote equity, social justice, and compassionate support. The sense of relief felt by those witnessing isolation practices, with notions of being grateful that it is not them experiencing the punishment, may contribute to furthering the othering experienced by marginalised YP (Waterhouse, 2017). It is essential that the broader societal implications of these dynamics, such as their impact on community cohesion and the persistence of practices that exclude (Gomez et al., 2021; Waterhouse, 2007), are considered. I feel that recognising our shared responsibility for one another's wellbeing is vital in shaping more empathetic and inclusive future societies (Gomez et al., 2021; Noguera, 2003).

To conclude, when considering and reflecting on isolation use, it would be beneficial to reflect on the following questions:

- What is the purpose and intention of the space?
- What psychology informs the use of the space?
- How are the spaces being communicated to YP, staff, and parents/carers, and how are they planned to be perceived?
- What language is being used by staff and the school community around the space, and how does this impact how it is perceived and how those within the space are perceived?
- How are the spaces being experienced, and how is this being evaluated?

I would like to end this thesis by thanking Angel, Daisy, Fenton, and Rico. I hope their narratives will inspire readers to reflect on isolation practices in schools and bring about collaborative change.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Recruitment Posters

Are you the parent or carer of a young person who attends a school with an isolation space (consequence room)? I would like to hear their views and experiences.

What is the Research About?

This study is about what it feels like to be a young person within a school that uses isolation spaces.

Who Can Participate?

Anyone who:

- Is in Y7, Y8 or Y9.
- Attends a mainstream school with an isolation space.

What is Involved?

If your child wishes to take part in the research, there are 4 stages.

1

Introduction: We will meet and introduce ourselves.

2

Check-In: I will check if your child is still wanting to take part in the research and then arrange the interview.

3

Interview: This will take approximately 45 minutes. I will ask your child about what it feels like to be a young person in their school.

4

Check-In: I will meet with your child again after the interview to share my analysis with your child.

Who Am I?

I'm Rachel, a Trainee Educational Psychologist at the University of Sheffield.



Interested or Want More Information?

For further information, email Rachel Mallon – Trainee Educational Psychologist.
Email: ramallon1@sheffield.ac.uk

Does your school have an isolation space (consequence room)?

What is the Research About?

This study is about what it feels like to be a young person within a school that uses isolation spaces.



What is Involved?

If you want to take part in the research, there are 4 stages.

1

Introduction: We will meet and introduce ourselves. Here you can ask any questions you have about the research.

2

Check-In: I will check if you are still wanting to take part in the research and then arrange the interview.

3

Interview: This will take approximately 45 minutes. I will ask you about what it feels like to be a young person in your school.

4

Check-In: I will meet with you again after the interview to share my analysis with you.

Who Am I?

I'm Rachel, a Trainee Educational Psychologist at the University of Sheffield.

Who Can Participate?

Anyone who:

- Is in Y7, Y8 or Y9.
- Attends a mainstream school with an isolation space.

Interested or Want More Information?

For further information, ask your parent/carer to email Rachel Mallon - Trainee Educational Psychologist.
Email: ramallon1@sheffield.ac.uk

Appendix B

Information Sheets



Research Information Sheet

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Research project title: *Exploring the experiences of young people attending a school which utilises isolation*

Hello! My name is Rachel and I am training to be an Educational Psychologist at the University of Sheffield. As part of my training, I am carrying out some research about what it feels like to be a young person within a school which has an isolation room or space.

I want to invite your child to take part in my research. Before you decide whether your child would like to, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. I have tried to answer any questions that you might have in this information sheet to help you make your decision. If you have any more questions or want any further information about the research, please do get in touch. Take your time to decide whether you wish your child to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

Rachel



What is the project's purpose?

This research project seeks to explore how young people feel about isolation spaces within their mainstream secondary school. It is hoped that this project will provide a space in which young people can share their experiences around isolation practices. This project also hopes to give educational professionals a greater understanding of what experiencing a school with isolation feels like and how they can better support all students.

I am carrying out the research as a Trainee Educational Psychologist at the University of Sheffield. This research is being completed as part of a Doctor of Educational and Child Psychology (DEdCPsy).

Why has your child been chosen?

- They are in Year 7, Year 8 or Year 9.
- They are on roll at a mainstream secondary school.
- Their school has an isolation space or room.

The research project will be a small-scale study.

What will happen if your child takes part?

Initially, there will be an introductory meeting where the project can be discussed further with me. This meeting will be at a time and place that suits your child. This meeting is intended as a way to get to know each other and is not going to be an exploration of their feelings or experiences.



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Within this initial meeting, we will discuss if you are still happy for your child to participate in the research and the interview. Providing you are still happy for your child to participate, a date, time and location will be agreed for the interview.

The interview will be 1:1 and in person in a setting where your child feels comfortable and which is private. It is absolutely fine for them to bring a friend, parent, or member of staff with them if they prefer. If someone is taken, they will need to remain quiet throughout the interview. The interview will start with me asking them about their feelings and experiences around isolation rooms and there will then be some follow-up questions about isolation.

The interview will be audio-recorded and I will then transcribe what was said. I will then look at the transcription for any themes. Once analysed, I will contact your child to share the analysis in the form of a poem which supports reflections and transparency of the project (this is likely to be around November/December 2024).

Does my child have to take part?

It is totally up to you and your child to decide if you wish to take part in this project. If you and your child do wish to take part in this research project or require more information, please contact me:

ramallon1@sheffield.ac.uk.

You and your child can withdraw at any time from the research project by contacting me. You and your child do not need to have an explanation for your reason to withdraw. You and your child can withdraw at any point until the information from the interview has been transcribed and anonymised (this is likely to be December 2024).

What are the possible benefits of my child taking part?

Whilst there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in the project, it is hoped that it will be a chance for them to share their experiences and feelings and to contribute to a research project that aims to provide educational professionals with greater insight into the experiences of isolation spaces. The research has been designed to be enjoyable and to be led by the young person.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of my child taking part?

Participating in the research is not felt to have any serious disadvantages or risk. However, reflecting on experiences and feelings can be distressing or difficult to talk about. You and your child will be provided with contact details for both the researcher and a range of external organisations who can provide support, should your child become distressed or upset. The interview will be a supportive space, they can take time out whenever they need or want to, skip any questions or stop the interview at any point. During the interview, they will be given traffic light cards to support them to indicate how they are feeling throughout the interview. A green card indicates they are feeling OK, Orange indicates that they do not wish to answer the question and Red indicates they want the interview to stop (this can either be for a break or to withdraw).

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

Data collected from the interview will be anonymised and any potentially identifying details (people, places, etc.) will be changed before being analysed. This means that other people will not know who has participated



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in the research and your child will not be identifiable in any reports or publications. All raw data (the interview recordings and the interview transcripts) will be kept securely on a password-protected University Drive which is only accessible to the researcher. Once anonymised, the data will only be accessible to the researcher and their university supervisor.

What will happen to the data collected?

The audio recording of the interview will only be used for transcription and no one outside the project will be allowed access to the original recordings. The interview recordings and transcripts will be saved securely on a password-protected University Drive in separate secure folders. Once the audio recordings have been transcribed, they will be destroyed.

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

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

Who is the Data Controller?

The University of Sheffield will act as the Data Controller for this study. This means that the University is responsible for looking after your child's information and using it properly. Due to the nature of this research, other researchers may likely find the data collected to be useful in answering future research questions and potential publication of research. If the research is published, we would ask for you and your child's explicit consent for your child's anonymised data to be shared in this way through the consent form you and your child will complete, if you choose to participate.

If your child is able and willing to participate, you will both be asked to complete a consent form that acknowledges consent to the project. Please keep this Information Sheet for you to refer to if needed.

Who has ethically reviewed the project?

This research has been ethically approved via the University of Sheffield's Ethical Review Procedures administered by the School of Education department.

What if something goes wrong and I wish to complain about the research or report a concern or incident?

If you are concerned or worried that anything has gone wrong with any aspect of the research and wish to make a complaint, please contact Claire Whiting (supervisor of this research project) – ed4cmw@sheffield.ac.uk. If you feel your complaint has not been handled in a satisfactory way you can contact the Programme Directors of DEdCPsy, Dr. Penny Fogg – p.fogg@sheffield.ac.uk or Dr. Sahaja Davis – T.S.Davis@sheffield.ac.uk. If the complaint relates to how your personal data has been handled, you can find information about how to raise a complaint in the University's Privacy Notice: <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/govern/data-protection/privacy/general>

If you wish to make a report of a concern or incident relating to potential exploitation, abuse or harm resulting from your involvement in this project, please contact the project's Designated Safeguarding Contact, Professor Rebecca Lawthorn, r.lawthorn@sheffield.ac.uk. If the concern or incident relates to the Designated Safeguarding Contact, or if you feel a report you have made to this Contact has not been handled in a satisfactory way, please contact the University's Research Ethics & Integrity Manager (Lindsay Unwin; l.v.unwin@sheffield.ac.uk).



Contact for further information**Researcher:**

Rachel Mallon

School of Education, Floor D, The Wave, 2 Whitham Road, Broomhall, Sheffield, S10 2AH.

Email: ramallon1@sheffield.ac.uk

Project Supervisor:

Dr Claire Whiting

School of Education, Floor D, The Wave, 2 Whitham Road, Broomhall, Sheffield, S10 2AH.

Email: ed4cmw@sheffield.ac.uk

Telephone: 0114 222 8177

Alternative Contact:

Professor Rebecca Lawthorn

School of Education, Floor D, The Wave, 2 Whitham Road, Broomhall, Sheffield, S10 2AH.

Email: r.lawthorn@sheffield.ac.uk

Telephone: 0114 222 8172

Thank you for your time and consideration

If your child wishes to participate in this research, please email me, ramallon1@sheffield.ac.uk.



Research project title: *Exploring the experiences of young people attending a school which utilises isolation*

Hello! My name is Rachel and I am training to be an Educational Psychologist at the University of Sheffield. As part of my training, I am carrying out some research about what it feels like to be a young person within a school which has an isolation room or space.

I want to invite you to take part in my research. Before you decide whether you would like to, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve.

I have tried to answer any questions that you might have in this information sheet to help you make your decision. If you have any more questions or want any more information about the research, please do get in touch. Take your time to decide whether you wish to take part.

Thank you for reading this.
Rachel



What is the project about?



This project is looking into how young people feel about isolation rooms at their school. The project wants to hear young people's experiences and thoughts and wants to help schools understand how to support young people better.

Who is doing this?

I am doing the research as a student with the University of Sheffield. This research project is part of the training course.

Why have I been chosen?

- You are in Year 7, Year 8 or Year 9.
- You go to a mainstream secondary school.
- Your school has an isolation space or room.



The research project will have a small number of young people participating in total.



What will happen if I take part?



First, you will need to ask a parent or carer to email me to say you want to take part. Next, we will meet to chat about the project. If you still want to take part, we will arrange the interview. The interview will be just with you and me at a place and time that suits you. You can bring someone along if you want. If you choose to bring someone with you, they will need to stay quiet during the interview. The interview will be about your thoughts on isolation rooms.



The interview will be recorded on an audio device and this recording will then be typed out. This will be anonymised, meaning no one will know your actual name other than me. After typing out the interviews, I will create a poem based on what you have said and will share this with you.

Do I have to take part?



It is totally up to you to decide if you wish to take part in this project. If you do wish to take part in this research project or would like more information, please ask your parent or carer to contact me: ramallon1@sheffield.ac.uk.

You can withdraw at any time from the research project by contacting me. This means stopping taking part in the project. You do not need to have an explanation for your reason to withdraw. You can withdraw at any point until the information from the interview has been transcribed and anonymised (this is likely to be December 2024).



What are the possible benefits of taking part?

It is a chance to share your thoughts and help make schools better. The interview will be friendly and focused on you.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

Talking about experiences and feelings might be hard. I will be there throughout and your parents or carers will have my contact details and the details of other organisations which can be supportive. The interview will be supportive and you can take time out whenever you need or want to. You can also skip any questions or stop the interview at any point.

During the interview, you will be given traffic light cards to help you show how you are feeling during the interview.



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- A Green card means you are feeling OK,
- Orange means that you do not wish to answer the question, and
- Red means you want the interview to stop (this can either be for a break or to withdraw).



Will my taking part in this project be kept confidential?

Data collected from the interview will be confidential and anonymised by changing names and places to ensure no one can tell who has participated. The recordings of the interview and the transcript (the interview typed up) will be kept on a password-protected University Drive. I will be the only person able to access this. Once the typed-up interview has been made anonymous with new names, only me and my university supervisor for the project will be able to see this.



What will happen to the data collected?



The audio recording of the interview will only be used for transcription (typing up of the interview). No one outside the project will be allowed access to the original recordings. The interview recordings and transcriptions will be saved on a secure University Drive which is protected with a password. Once the audio recordings have been transcribed, they will be destroyed.

What is the legal basis for processing my personal data?

According to data protection legislation, we are required to inform you that the legal basis we are 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)).

This means that your personal data is being processed and legally you need to know this. This is happening because it is necessary to carry out the task in the public's interest. If you would like to find out more, please look at this website:

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



Who is the Data Controller?

The University of Sheffield will act as the Data Controller for this study. This means that the University is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. Other researchers might find the data useful for future research or publications related to the project's topic. If the research is published, your permission will be checked for sharing the anonymised data through a consent form. You will complete a consent form if you are able and willing to participate. Please keep this Information Sheet for you to look at for reference.

**Who has ethically reviewed the project?**

This research has been ethically approved via the University of Sheffield's Ethical Review Procedures administered by the School of Education department.

What if something goes wrong and I wish to complain about the research or report a concern or incident?

If you are concerned or worried that anything has gone wrong with any part of the research and wish to make a complaint, please contact:

Claire Whiting (supervisor of this research project)

Email: ed4cmw@sheffield.ac.uk.

If you feel your complaint has not been handled in a satisfactory way you can contact the Programme Directors of DEdCPsy:

Dr. Penny Fogg – p.fogg@sheffield.ac.uk or

Dr. Sahaja Davis – T.S.Davis@sheffield.ac.uk.

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

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

If you wish to make a report of a concern or incident relating to potential exploitation, abuse or harm resulting from your involvement in this project, please contact the project's Designated Safeguarding Contact:

Professor Rebecca Lawthom,

Email: r.lawthom@sheffield.ac.uk.

If the concern or incident relates to the Designated Safeguarding Contact, or if you feel a report you have made to this Contact has not been handled in a satisfactory way, please contact the University's Research Ethics & Integrity Manager (Lindsay Unwin; l.v.unwin@sheffield.ac.uk).



Research Information Sheet

14/06/24

Contact for further information

Researcher:

Rachel Mallon

School of Education, Floor D, The Wave, 2 Whitham Road, Broomhall, Sheffield, S10 2AH.

Email: ramallon1@sheffield.ac.uk

Project Supervisor:

Dr Claire Whiting

School of Education, Floor D, The Wave, 2 Whitham Road, Broomhall, Sheffield, S10 2AH.

Email: ed4cmw@sheffield.ac.uk

Telephone: 0114 222 8177

Alternative Contact:

Professor Rebecca Lawthom

School of Education, Floor D, The Wave, 2 Whitham Road, Broomhall, Sheffield, S10 2AH.

Email: r.lawthom@sheffield.ac.uk



Telephone: 0114 222 8172

Thank you for your time and consideration

If you wish to take part in this research, please ask your parent or carer to email me:
ramallon1@sheffield.ac.uk.

Appendix C

Template Assent Form

| | | |
|--|---|---|
|  | Hello! My name is Rachel. |  |
| | I am inviting you to take part in a research project. | |
| The information sheet tells you all about the research project and what you will have to do. | | |

For each question, please tick the box ☒ to show yes or no.

1. Has someone read the information sheet with you?

Yes


☐

No


☐

2. Do you understand what the project is about and what you will have to do?

Yes


☐

No


☐


3. Have you got any questions you would like to ask?

Yes


☐

No


☐


4. Have you got any questions you would like to ask your mum, dad or carer?

Yes


☐

No


☐

 5. We will be talking together and this will be recorded. Is this OK with you?

Yes


☐

No


☐



6. The recording will be typed up and your name and the information about you will be anonymous. This means you can create a different name for the research so people will not know it is you or your words. Does this sound OK?

Yes


☐

No


☐

7. You can have a break at any time when we are talking together. Just tell me or use the colour cards given to you. Up until December 2024, you can also decide not to be in the project without needing a reason. Is this OK?

Yes


☐

No


☐


8. The words you say may be shared but people will not know it is you who has said these words. Does this sound OK?

Yes


☐

No


☐

9. Are you happy to take part in this research project?

Yes


☐

No


☐

Write your name:

.....

Thank you 😊

Appendix D

Template Consent Form



Parent/Carer Consent Form: Exploring the experiences of young people attending a school which utilises isolation

Please email completed consent forms to Rachel Mallon (Trainee Educational Psychologist),
ramallon1@sheffield.ac.uk

| Please tick the appropriate boxes | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|
| Taking Part in the Project | | |
| I have read and understood the project information sheet dated 04.07.2024 or the project has been fully explained to me. (If you answer No to this question, please do not proceed with this consent form until you are fully aware of what my child's participation in the project will mean.) | | |
| I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project. | | |
| I agree for my child to take part in the project. I understand that taking part in the project will include an introductory meeting and taking part in an interview that will be audio recorded and recorded using Google Meet. | | |
| I understand that by my child 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 that my child taking part is voluntary and that they can withdraw from the study before December 2024. They do not have to give any reasons for why they no longer want to take part and there will be no adverse consequences if they choose to withdraw. | | |
| How my information will be used during and after the project | | |
| I understand my child's personal details such as name, phone number, address and email address etc. will not be revealed to people outside the project. | | |
| I understand and agree that my child's words may be quoted in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs. I understand that they will not be named in these outputs unless we specifically request this. | | |
| 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 and agree that other authorised researchers may use my child's data in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs, only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form. | | |
| So that the information you provide can be used legally by the researchers | | |
| I agree to assign the copyright I hold in any materials generated as part of this project to The University of Sheffield. | | |

| | | |
|---|-----------|------|
| Name of participant's parent or carer [printed] | Signature | Date |
| Name of Researcher [printed] | Signature | Date |

Project contact details for further information:

Researcher:
Rachel Mallon
School of Education,
Floor D, The Wave,
2 Whitham Road,
Broomhall, Sheffield,
S10 2AH
Email: ramallon1@sheffield.ac.uk

Project Supervisor:
Dr Claire Whiting
School of Education,
Floor D, The Wave,
2 Whitham Road,
Broomhall, Sheffield,
S10 2AH
Email: ed4cmw@sheffield.ac.uk
Phone: 0114 222 8177

Alternative Contact:
Professor Rebecca Lawthom,
University of Sheffield's Head of
School for Education,
School of Education,
Floor D, The Wave,
2 Whitham Road,
Broomhall, Sheffield,
S10 2AH
Email: r.lawthom@sheffield.ac.uk
Phone: 0114 222 8172

Appendix E

Interview Distress Sheet

Interview Distress Protocol



Taking part in this research should not have any major drawbacks or dangers. However, reflecting on our lives can be upsetting or distressing. If you feel upset or distressed within this research project and you would like further support you can contact the researcher:

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>Researcher</p> <p>Rachel Mallon (Trainee Educational Psychologist) Email: ramallon1@sheffield.ac.uk</p> <p>School of Education, Floor D, The Wave, 2 Whitham Road, Broomhall, Sheffield, S10 2AH.</p> |
|--|---|

You may prefer to access support from one of these organisations instead:

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>Get advice about how to support your mental health.</p> <p>https://www.youngminds.org.uk</p> |
| | <p>Shout is a free, confidential and 24/7 text messaging service for anyone in the UK who needs support.</p> <p>If you are struggling to cope and need to talk, trained Shout Volunteers are available for you. To start a conversation, text the word 'Shout' to 85258.</p> <p>https://giveusashout.org/get-help/</p> |
| | <p>Kooth is an online mental wellbeing community.</p> <p>Accessing Kooth is free, safe and anonymous. It is for anyone aged 11 – 25.</p> <p>https://www.kooth.com/</p> |
| | <p>Childline offers help and advice about a wide range of issues.</p> <p>Call 0800 1111 to talk to a counsellor online.</p> <p>https://www.childline.org.uk/</p> |

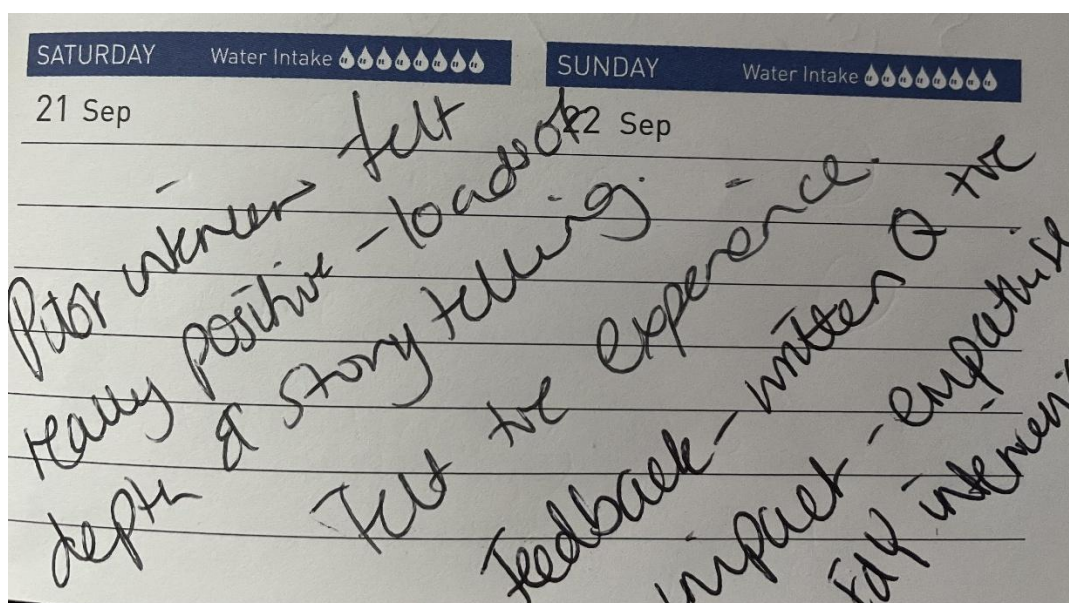
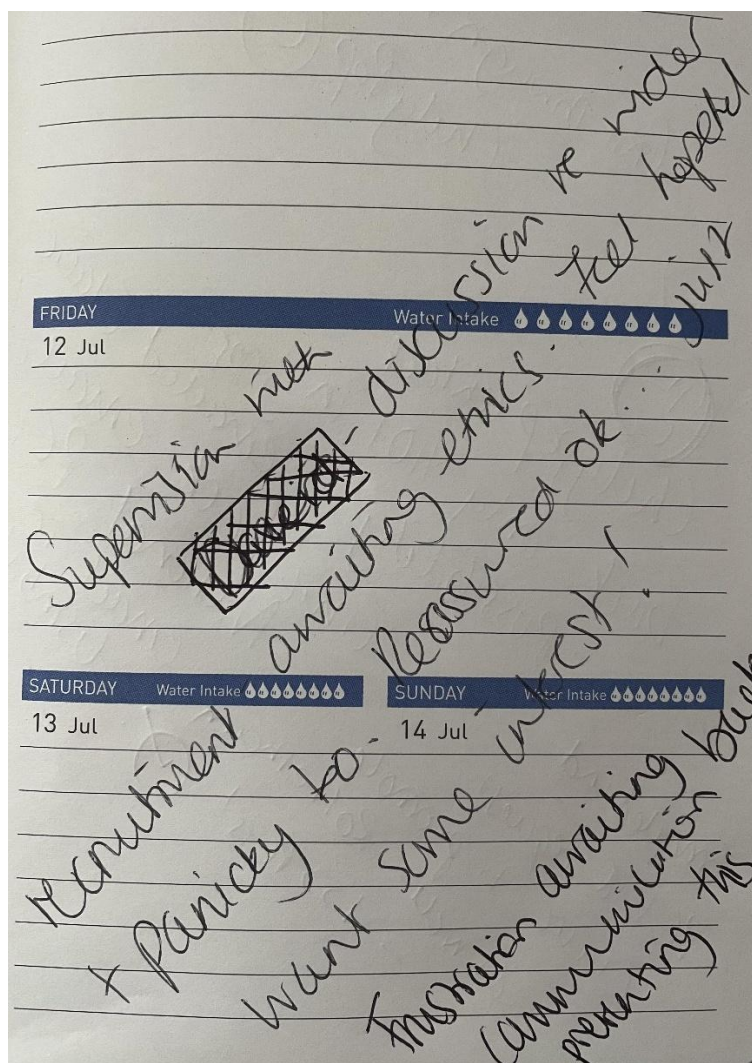
Appendix F

Transcription Conventions adapted from Jefferson (2004)

| Symbol | Meaning |
|-------------|---|
| (.) | A pause of one second or less |
| (3) | Pause lengths with the number of seconds in brackets |
| ((whisper)) | Non-verbal communication |
| [...] | Where speech overlaps |
| * | Information that is potentially identifiable. For example, *isolation room name |
| (inaudible) | The participant's speech is inaudible within the recording |

Appendix G

Samples of Reflective Diary



Appendix H

Listening Guide Overview of Articles (extract)

The Listening Guide Overview of Articles

| Article / Book Reference | Step 1 | Step 2 | Step 3 | Step 4 | Step 5 | Step 6 |
|--|--|---|---|--|---|---|
| <p>McKenzie, M., Hegarty, K. L., Tarzia, L., & Palmer, V. J. (2021). Narrating the self-in-relation: How friends' responses to intimate partner violence shape young women's identities. <i>Qualitative Psychology</i>, 8(2), 279–294. https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000211</p> <p>Really helpful for different voices and how to evidence these. Also explores I, we; he, she; you; they, them</p> <p>LG – valuable analytic framework – systematic exploration of identity within a relationship context.</p> <p>How self is shaped by social relationships, broader cultural context, interactional context of interview.</p> <p>Although emerged from feminist and psychoanalytic approaches, also consistent with social constructionist theories of self (Doucet & Mauthner, 2008).</p> <p>Key idea – in an interview people express and present sense of self through multiple voices which shift across an interview.</p> <p>Facilitates holistic analysis. Instead of fragmenting the account into categories and focusing on content said (thematic analysis) instead explores how content is said through changes in voice.</p> <p>Cannot offer means of accessing authentic – how a participant speaks about themselves reflects interactional dynamics of the interview context.</p> <p>All that can be known is the co-constructed narrated self (Doucet & Mauthner, 2008).</p> | <p>Plot and reader response</p> <p>Critical reflection of self in relation to participants. Considering how data is influenced by relationships between the researcher and Ps and the researcher's emotional responses.</p> <p>Listen to own voice and distinguish from P.</p> <p>Make reflective notes in the margin of transcript as a journal.</p> | <p>Considers how the Ps speak about self and use of verbs in relation to self (e.g. I said vs he said to me) and how P shifts shifts between singular or plural e.g. I, you, we/us – could signal changes in representations of self and relationships (Doucet & Mauthner, 2008; Sorsoli & Tolman, 2008; Woodcock, 2008).</p> <p>I-Poems can be used to highlight the voice of the I.</p> <p>To create an I-Poem, every first person I is extracted with verb and important accompanying words and arranged sequentially.</p> <p>By stripping out the contextual details – plot fades into the background – stands out in Ps presentation of self (Koelsch, 2015) or other personal</p> | <p>Aim – to hear different voices. Done by considering tone and language used by P and how relates to P's self-voice.</p> <p>These contrapuntal voices may be in harmony or contradictory.</p> <p>Can use coloured pens to highlight different voices and how relate to each other. Can use bold, underlined and italics for diff contrapuntal voices.</p> | <p>Based on Doucet & Mauthner who explored identity being constructed through social interactions and cultural narratives.</p> <p>Traces self in relation to others – narrating interaction with others. Voice poem – spoke of self in relation to others e.g. when using 'we' to speak of self and others.</p> | <p>Voice in relation to culturally dominant narratives – master narratives.</p> <p>Moral or drawing on perspectives e.g. 'should' or speaking of common perceptions.</p> | <p>Bringing together and resulting in analysis.</p> |

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|-----------------------|--|--|
| | | <p>pronouns (Doucet & Mauthner, 2008); Sorsoli & Tolman, 2008).</p> <p>Alongside this, this article presents voice poems (see Step 4).</p> | | | | |
| <p>Kiegelmann, M. (2021). Adding listening and reading for social context to the voice approach of the Listening Guide method. <i>Qualitative Psychology</i>, 8(2), 224–243. https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000210</p> <p>Page 230 – really helpful for emancipatory endeavour.</p> <p>Page 241 – talks about power of the method in 'silenced voices' being able to be part of a conversation.</p> <p>Has an additional step in analysis – social context.</p> <p>Co-construction data.</p> <p>Tracks multiple voices and allows analysing social relationships in this complex way – overcomes simplifications. This enriches the process.</p> <p>Before listening for self and multiple voices, locates Ps and interviewer within socioeconomic context. Then listening for less obvious hints – social place.</p> <p>Five listenings ...</p> | <p>1. The plot</p> | <p>2. The researcher's response</p> | <p>3. Social context</p> <p>Example of this on p234 e.g. p236 – says something is 'cool' – then explores this in terms of relationship, colloquial language etc.</p> | <p>4. Self</p> | <p>5. Multiple voices</p> | |
| <p>Van Puyenbroeck, H., Loots, G., Grietens, H., & Jacquet, W. (2013). "I Just Don't Agree": A Voice-Oriented Analysis of An IFPS Case of Alleged Child Maltreatment. <i>Journal of Social Work Practice</i>, 28(2),</p> | <p>Listen for the plot</p> <p>– repeatedly read and listen</p> | <p>Writing I-Poems ... how P describes themselves and their relationships with others.</p> | <p>Focus on listening and reading on appearance of contrapuntal voices – melodiously interact or in tension.</p> | | <p>Examining voices and composing analysis describing</p> | |

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| <p>173–192. https://doi.org/10.1080/02650533.2013.820176</p> <p>Used five adjacent columns, one for each listening, alongside the transcript. Enables following the flow of interpersonal interactions and self-narratives. Comments and interpretations – in sixth column ... not quite LG?</p> <p>States LG is 'theoretically flexible, qualitative, relational-orientated method of in-depth interpretative analysis' (p179).</p> | <p>to the interview to grasp general scope of the story.</p> | <p>Underline and select every I and the accompany words that seem important.</p> <p>Points to changes in voice or some meaning that is not explicitly stated.</p> <p>Stanzas composed on natural breaks in themes and voices.</p> <p>Attends to associative stream of consciousness through the narrative (p180).</p> | | <p>how they relate.</p> <p>Table of voices, what was said summarised and illustrative quotes – helpful – p182 onwards.</p> |
| <p>Hutton, M., & Lystor, C. (2020). The listening guide: voice-centred relational analysis of private subjectivities. <i>Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal, ahead-of-print</i>(ahead-of-print). https://doi.org/10.1108/qmr-04-2019-0052</p> <p>References Gilligan's book – which drew me into the method – 'Was there ever a time where you wanted to say something but felt you couldn't?' ... One participant responded 'all the time, that's my life' ... personal resonance.</p> <p>'... interplay between the voice and the relational, present a unique analytic challenge in tracing the shifting subjectivities of research participants.' (p15)</p> <p>Attending to voice – important epistemological conviction – voice is a way of constructing meaning and voice constructing reality and reality of research constructing voice (p16). No one authentic voice to which we gain access.</p> <p>Instead – polyphonic expressions of being, experience and representation. Importance and value of listening for polyphonic voices.</p> <p>LG was developed out of frustration and dissatisfaction with coding schemes to analyse qualitative data. – moves focus away from coding</p> | <p>Listening for the plot.</p> <p>Listen for the main events.</p> <p>Evidence trail of recurring words, events, plots, subplots and key characters within individual transcripts.</p> <p>Includes 'reader-response' and our emotional response to P. Mindful of reactions and comments – our feelings about the P.</p> <p>Look for silences – pauses, lowered</p> | <p>Listening for the voice of 'I'.</p> <p>I -creative aspect of self.</p> <p>Identify I phrases and put in order.</p> | <p>Listening for contrapuntal voices and relationships</p> <p>Focus - what is the P telling us about this relationships. Listen for the voice of we relationships and multiple voices in this way – valuable in revealing difficulties or complexities.</p> | <p>Listening for broader political, social and cultural structures</p> <p>Listen to how the relational interactions outside of the private realm construct them in moral and social terms.</p> <p>Creates an analytic synthesis as combined with previous listenings and reflexive notes creating an interpretive narrative.</p> |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| <p>and fitting into categories and delays reductionist stage of data analysis (p15).</p> <p>Are we invited to share their experiences and stories on their terms ... can we ever truly know the voices of our participants in a ways that is authentic or meaningful? (p17).</p> <p>Focus – 'what goes unnoticed, the mundane, the underappreciated, the distorted and importantly what is not said.' (p17)</p> <p>Explores epistemology and ontology – p19 – relational ontology, epistemologically – both method and methodology – process of relationship.</p> <p>Bridges private and public knowledge making.</p> | <p>voices, trailing off mid-sentence.</p> <p>Nice example of this – p22</p> | | | | |
| <p>Tolman, D. L., & Head, J. C. (2021). Opening the Black Box: A primer for the Listening Guide method of narrative inquiry. <i>Qualitative Psychology</i>, 8(2), 152–170. https://doi.org/10.1037/qua0000202</p> <p>Foundation commitment of curiosity and empathy.</p> <p>Fundamental principle – psyche (soul, self and inner world) is relational, dynamic, embodied and in constant interaction with the social, material and cultural contexts within which experience occurs and enters the social world through the telling of stories about one's experience (p152).</p> <p>Also talks about being different from other qualitative methodologies (see above).</p> <p>Article talks about how they feel that many people miss the analysis part of the LG.</p> <p>... foundational commitments of curiosity and empathy – by clarifying the key concepts of the embedded psyche, voice(s) and voicing, and relational attunement.' (p153).</p> <p>Heart of LG – '... resistance to assessments, codes, judgments, evaluations, and categorization that are so often at the heart of</p> | <p>Observing the landscape and Reader Response</p> <p>Attuning yourself to the listener and attuning yourself to yourself.</p> <p>Landscape – relational world the narrator brings you into.</p> <p>Let down what strikes you in the story – conflicts, language, elements of the plot of the story, what raises your curiosity, glows, seems out of place or seems missing.</p> | <p>Listen for the "I" or Voice of the Self</p> <p>the voice of self ... note how moves across narrative landscape.</p> <p>I-Poem – notes all I appearing and verb plus additional words.</p> <p>Order and group into stanzas based on flow or feeling of breaks.</p> | <p>Contrapuntal Voices</p> <p>Step is about developing or finding the voices.</p> <p>Voices – tools to be used to track psychological logic. Weaves together conscious and subconscious.</p> <p>Not seeking true or correct voices.</p> <p>Resist judgement and categories ...</p> | <p>Voice Analysis and Assembling the Evidence</p> <p>Tracking the movement of the voices in relation to the I and to each other. Patterns of talk to develop an interpretation.</p> <p>Go through multiple times.</p> <p>Listen for and track on voice at a time. First self, then contrapuntal</p> | <p>Composing an Analysis</p> <p>To answer your question ... develop and present a well supported interpretation of narrator's psychological logic.</p> <p>Interpretative process is visible and audible – provide evidence re how you came to understand.</p> |

Appendix I

Angel's Transcript

- 1 Rachel: Ok (3) So to start with urm I'm just going to cover some basic information questions just to
- 2 kind of ease us into the interview
- 3 Angel: yep
- 4 Rachel: Ok. So, how old are you?
- 5 Angel: I'm 15 but I'm 16 in ten days.
- 6 Rachel: Oh wow. So pretty much 16 ((laugh))
- 7 Angel: Yeah ((laugh))
- 8 Rachel: And do you have any brothers or sisters?
- 9 Angel: I have two older sisters
- 10 Rachel: Ok so you're the youngest
- 11 Angel: yeah
- 12 Rachel: Of three?
- 13 Angel: yeah
- 14 Rachel: Right. And which year group are you in?
- 15 Angel: 11
- 16 Rachel: Ok. And how long have you been in your current school?
- 17 Angel: Urm (1) since year 7 so like four years
- 18 Rachel: Brilliant. So, you started kind of first day year 7
- 19 Angel: yep
- 20 Rachel: and you've been there ever since
- 21 Angel: yep
- 22 Rachel: Ok. And have you ever been to isolation yourself?
- 23 Angel: Urm I haven't (1) there's but in my school there's what's called *area so (2) the isolation room
- 24 is pretty much in the *area. And the *area is for people that may like struggle with like lessons or like
- 25 (1) like kids with more special needs that need to go there so I'm in there quite a bit
- 26 Rachel: hmm
- 27 Angel: So, I see everything that happens in the isolation room
- 28 Rachel: Yeah
- 29 Angel: Cos the door's ((quieter speaking for the remainder of this sentence ... as if a secret??)) basically
- 30 open all the time ((quiet laugh))
- 31 Rachel: Right ok, ok, so close by?

- 32 Angel: Yeah
- 33 Rachel: And has anyone from your friendship group ever been in isolation?
- 34 Angel: Yeah
- 35 Rachel: Ok, ok. And, do you have a favourite subject at school?
- 36 Angel: Er English and History I'd say.
- 37 Rachel: Ok and why are they you're favourites.
- 38 Angel: Urm just cos like urm all the writing I can do. I'm really good at like talking a lot ((laugh))
- 39 Rachel: ((laugh)) yeah
- 40 Angel: In like paper you know and just like whatever
- 41 Rachel: Yeah yeah
- 42 Angel: But then when it comes to like science and maths I'm like I can't do it.
- 43 Rachel: Right, ok, so English, English and History are the ones for you. Are you doing them GCSE or
- 44 Angel: Urm in GCSE I'll probably do like Psychology,
- 45 Rachel: Yeah
- 46 Angel: Philosophy and English Literature.
- 47 Rachel: Fantastic. That's really good. Ok (1). So, the research, as I've already mentioned, is about
- 48 exploring the experiences of young people attending a school which has an isolation space or room.
- 49 So, to start I have one question and then we can explore the areas that you feel are important urm to
- 50 you. So, can you tell me about your experiences and feelings about being in a school with isolation.
- 51 Angel: (1). I'd say it like it feels (4) it's not personally to me cos I don't get in trouble but it feels (1) like
- 52 quite prison like sometimes like and very like restrictive and very like because you know it's like if you
- 53 don't follow the rules its isolation
- 54 Rachel: yeah
- 55 Angel: It's not like we compromise and find out why you're behaving like that or you know or maybe
- 56 do this or that way it's just (1) this is your punishment
- 57 Rachel: Yeah
- 58 Angel: and there's no talking around it and if you refuse to go you have to be excluded
- 59 Rachel: Right
- 60 Angel: So (2) it its very like (2) I don't I can't even think of a word it's just (1) I'm very against the idea
- 61 is what I'd say
- 62 Rachel: Yeah, yeah, yeah and when you said it's kind of like prison like, could you just sort of explain a
- 63 bit more about what what about it reminds you of a prison?
- 64 Angel: Just urm well multiple things about it cos first of all the way it is set up
- 65 Rachel: yeah

66 Angel: you know like everyone sat at a desk doing nothing like or like like barriers between everyone
67 sort of like isolating them as the room's called like making them feel very like like they have to sit with
68 what they've done

69 Rachel: yeah

70 Angel: and think about it. Even if they're like distressed, which a lot of people are in there like crying

71 Rachel: hmm

72 Angel: or like shouting. They just (1) have to sit there.

73 Rachel: yeah

74 Angel: Urm (1) and it just it feels like you can't leave the room never go to the toilet like it feels very
75 like almost like you've taken away their rights

76 Rachel: yeah

77 Angel: for a full day like (2) obviously they get like you know lunch and stuff but other than that they
78 can't do anything. They can't interact with other people like

79 Rachel: yeah

80 Angel: ((much quieter, barely audible)) yeah that's what my view of isolation is

81 Rachel: hmm and when you were kind of were talking about that the *area space that has the isolation
82 so that

83 Angel: yeah

84 Rachel: you're kind of nearby. So are you hearing kind of that distress

85 Angel: yeah

86 Rachel: from other people. And what what does that feel like for you?

87 Angel: It just (2) it feels like it its really weird cos the *area is a really safe place ((really safe place are
88 spoken slower and really clearly punctuated)) with a lot of nice teachers in it

89 Rachel: hmm

90 Angel: and it feels like there's almost like a (1) like just like a curtain between like life other people and
91 then as soon as you step in there or hear in there you just hear shouting and you know like teacher's
92 shouting and it just it makes it like just a bit surprised taken aback

93 Rachel: yeah

94 Angel: by it. Cos everyone in the *area is so lovely and then you look in there and it's like (2) a lot going
95 on like

96 Rachel: Yeah. So, you mentioned the *area feels like that safe place

97 Angel: Yeah

98 Rachel: and so do you feel kind of safe

99 Angel: [Definitely]

- 100 Rachel: [in there.] And the thought of kind of if you had to go to isolation what does the thought of
101 that feel like?
- 102 Angel: I would really hate it cos urm (1) a lot of the reason why the *area is such a good place is cos
103 people go up there to like if they can't face being in a room with people
- 104 Rachel: hmm
- 105 Angel: and they're forced to be in a room with people that might not like them. You know if two people
106 got in a fight (1) or something (1) or like they had beef with each other
- 107 Rachel: hmm
- 108 Angel: and they had to be in that room together cos they both got isolation
- 109 Rachel: Yeah
- 110 Angel: it just it make it probably would make them feel really uncomfortable
- 111 Rachel: Yeah
- 112 Angel: It definitely would make me feel really uncomfortable just sitting there with (1) people that had
113 like don't like me or that want to target me
- 114 Rachel: Yeah
- 115 Angel: So (inaudible)
- 116 Rachel: and in that space can can the young people who are there can they kind of see who else is in
117 there
- 118 Angel: Yeah
- 119 Rachel: Right, so they can see other people but they're kind of, did you say there were splits into kind
120 of like
- 121 Angel: Yeah. Cos it. They sit at like desks that kind of go round a semicircle but so in-between the desks
122 they have like the barriers but they can also look around the room so they can't see who's next to
123 them but they can see everyone else sort of so you know if someone was sitting behind that way they
124 could just turn around and interact with them
- 125 Rachel: yeah
- 126 Angel: and say whatever they liked
- 127 Rachel: yeah. Ok and just in terms of kind of how someone ends up going to isolation or being sent to
128 isolation, are they ordinarily sent there by a teacher?
- 129 Angel: Yeah
- 130 Rachel: So, it's not somewhere someone would choose could choose to go.
- 131 Angel: No absolutely not.
- 132 Rachel: Right ok.
- 133 Angel: I'm pretty sure there's no one in there that wants to be there ((slight laugh))
- 134 Rachel: ok, right, ok. And what sorts of things could end up leading to someone being in isolation?

135 Angel: So, in our school it has a system of C1, C2, C3, Isolation. So C1 is just a behaviour point.

136 Rachel: Hmm

137 Angel: C2 is meeting a teacher after school. C3 is detention. If you don't turn up for a detention you
138 get sent to isolation the next day. (2) Or if like, let's say you refused to go in lesson or you had like an
139 incident with a teacher where you might of like insulted them or a fight maybe

140 Rachel: hmm

141 Angel: you would be sent there for the full day or half a day. Like not just for one hour like its big
142 ((elongated when saying big)) like. There's been multiple times where I've been in class and a teacher's
143 like 'oh where's this student?' (1) and their head will be like 'oh they're in isolation for all of today'

144 Rachel: Right. And when that happens, when you kind of hear about someone whose gone to isolation
145 (1) how does the other people in the class kind of see the person whose been sent there do you feel?

146 Angel: I mean I think in my school it's quite normalised.

147 Rachel: Hmm

148 Angel: Especially with the class I'm in and year group

149 Rachel: Yeah

150 Angel: Cos my year group is like (1) very like they get in trouble a lot so (2) everyone at least knows
151 one person or themselves that has been there so it's like it's sort of like yeah normal if they hear like oh
152 yeah, they're just in isolation

153 Rachel: Yeah

154 Angel: It's not abnormal

155 Rachel: And do the school does the school kind of explain what isolation is to you when you started or

156 Angle: No. Absolutely not. I (3) cos like I only started going to the *area when my mental health got
157 worse so

158 Rachel: Yeah

159 Angel: when I was younger and it didn't really like (1) I had no clue what it was. The first time I went
160 up to the *area I saw it I was like I don't even know what that room is.

161 Rachel: Right

162 Angel: The more I came up there I was like oh so that's what isolation is cos all this time they'd kind of
163 hidden it up there

164 Rachel: Yeah

165 Angel: Cos the *area like if you don't have an *area pass you're not allowed in the *area.

166 Rachel: Oh, ok right

167 Angel: Yeah

168 Rachel: So, you have a pass to get to that area

169 Angel: Yeah so, it's very (1) that's that's again why it kind of reminds me of a prison cos it's like (1)
170 almost a cell like (2) secluded from everywhere else and like feels very isolating for people in there.

171 Rachel: Yeah

172 Angel: Can't see anyone they like their friends and stuff

173 Rachel: Yeah. And do you think that's deliberate by the school that it's kind of a hidden

174 Angel: I think so cos the room, like I mentioned, is in like a semi-circle. The room's not big at all

175 Rachel: Right

176 Angel: Urm well not as big as it should be for the amount of people that go there. And so I think they
177 they definitely have bigger rooms they could have gone in (1) other parts of the school but they just
178 haven't.

179 Rachel: Yeah

180 Angel: So I think it is deliberate that it is up there.

181 Rachel: Ok. Yeah (2). And what do you think are their reasons for using isolation?

182 Angel: I think well they're trying to like (3) deter them it's almost like a scare tactic they're trying to
183 use like you know 'it's so boring' cos I remember being in like lesson and if the teacher's threatening
184 isolation to someone they'll be like 'oh (1) you know it's really boring up there, you don't see your
185 friends, like why would you want to go up there just do your work in here instead of having to go up
186 there'

187 Rachel: Hmm

188 Angel: So they use it as like a (2) yeah just to try to get them to stop doing whatever they're doing by
189 I think almost scaring them saying 'you know you're gonna be really bored and not going to see people
190 you like'

191 Rachel: Hmm

192 Angel: Like I think they're quite aware that it's not good but they kind of do it anyway.

193 Rachel: Yeah. And do you feel like that works at all for anyone?

194 Angel: I, I don't think it does. Because it just like I mean like it works in the short-term like 'Oh I guess
195 I should stop doing this to not get in isolation', but in the long-term (2) like if being there two times
196 they they just get used to it and it doesn't work anymore and it's like 'oh well' (2) or they might just
197 not go at all because they

198 Rachel: Yeah

199 Angel: They know just how horrible it is basically

200 Rachel: Yeah

201 Angel: So, they just are like well just exclude me then

202 Rachel: Yeah

203 Angel: Basically.

204 Rachel: Ok. And you mentioned earlier on that urm there'd been situations where your friends have
205 been sent to isolation.

206 Angel: Hmm

207 Rachel: Would you feel comfortable telling kind of explaining about maybe one of those as a story to
208 me just to kind of

209 Angel: Yeah yeah. Urm. So, one of my friends (1) she like (3) I don't I don't know how to say it in like
210 an appropriate way but like she gets like very in trouble with like, like she has a lot of like friendship
211 struggles so she hardly, she gets in like a lot of drama if you know what I mean

212 Rachel: Yeah

213 Angel: Urm. And she was like in this friendship circle and (2) I dunno but this girl like went up to us and
214 like threatened to fight us or something but like nothing actually happened

215 Rachel: Yeah

216 Angel: Urm but the teacher saw a large group of kids and assumed it was like a fight and obviously
217 seen the people in the middle was her so they assumed oh (3) they're planning to fight even though
218 she wasn't actually doing it

219 Rachel: Yeah

220 Angel: Urm (1) so she got sent up to isolation just for that.

221 Rachel: Right ok

222 Angel: Which usually they should give a detention for

223 Rachel: Yeah

224 Angel: Or at least talk it out

225 Rachel: Yeah

226 Angel: But they just fully was like no (1) like you you can't be doing that. Send them up to isolation.
227 Basically. And that was it. There wasn't a discussion on why they were fighting or like you know trying
228 to sort it out.

229 Rachel: Yeah

230 Angel: It was just like oh we think you're going to fight you're a danger to yourself and all this. Isolation
231 basically.

232 Rachel: And did they have that follow-up conversation do you think?

233 Angel: The main problem with my school is they say they are going to do stuff and then they don't

234 Rachel: Right

235 Angel: They say they're going to talk about it but then they're never available. So they don't talk about
236 things.

237 Rachel: Yeah. And how do you feel about that? What does that feel like?

238 Angel: It feels really like it just feels like they don't care.

239 Rachel: Right

240 Angel: They only really care about following the rules like oh if you do this isolation, not actually why.

241 Rachel: Hmm

242 Angel: They don't actually care about how we feel.

243 Rachel: Yeah

244 Angel: And then if we're like distracted the next day because of it all they'll be like why are you so
245 distracted like we didn't know anything was going on.

246 Rachel: Yeah

247 Angel: Then talk to us.

248 Rachel: Yeah. And do you think that isolation being there, do you think that kind of affects more people
249 than the people who go there? So does it affect you when someone is sent or when people talk about
250 isolation?

251 Angel: I mean it doesn't exactly like affect me when I hear about it it's just when I'm up there it just.
252 It takes a first time looking at it to really get a reaction out of it.

253 Rachel: Hmm

254 Angel: And just. It just feels really like unfair on those people like. Because apparently, they get like
255 told like they deserve to be there but (1) like (1) I like you don't know their stories why they might be
256 acting out like they could urm like hear like stuff from home

257 Rachel: Hmm

258 Angel: And reflect it on their friends.

259 Rachel: Yeah

260 Angel: And then get like you don't know what someone is going through. You can't really just (2) judge
261 it.

262 Rachel: Yeah

263 Angel: So, I get really quite upset looking at sort of certain people who are just kind of sat there, clearly
264 not trying to be angry at anyone just looking really upset. So, I feel quite sad when I see them.

265 Rachel: Yeah, I can imagine. And do you feel like if they came into the space you were in, where you
266 described it as being safe, do you feel they'd get more support?

267 Angel: Yeah, genuinely. I mean I always think that. Like what why put this room there when ((cough))
268 if they came over here,

269 Rachel: Hmm

270 Angel: Where you get talked to and you know it's all so calm, instead of aggravating them in that room
271 with a bunch of other people

272 Rachel: Yeah

273 Angel: It'd just do so much more good.

274 Rachel: Hmm

275 Angel: That room probably creates more ((emphasis of the word 'more')) drama

276 Rachel: Yeah

277 Angel: Than it needs to.

278 Rachel: Yeah

279 Angel: And yeah I think definitely if they were in that safe space they would, that would actually like
280 make like calm the situation down so that things don't happen in the future and they don't get sent
281 there again.

282 Rachel: Right

283 Angel: So that would help deter them better than just being sent there, need to do work or just sit
284 there.

285 Rachel: Hmm. And you said kind of being in that space can kind of aggravate them.

286 Angle: Oh yeah yeah

287 Rachel: What do you mean by that, what kind of happens or ?

288 Angel: Just mainly the (2) well kind of a mix of both the students and the teachers. So, obviously
289 because everyone in there is kind of like a bit more of a trouble maker than you know like me like
290 quiet people are

291 Rachel: Hmm

292 Angel: They're more prone to like if someone says something (1) it will start a chain reaction of people
293 sort of like

294 Rachel: Yeah

295 Angel: turning around and being interested in what's happening and then they contribute something
296 horrible

297 Rachel: Right

298 Angel: But at the same time the teachers they just get really shouty.

299 Rachel: Right

300 Angel: You know like, 'do your work', like shouting unnecessarily

301 Rachel: Yeah

302 Angel: Like aggravating people who might already be in like a heightened state like already angry and
303 trying to control it and then a teacher shouting it just sets them off

304 Rachel: Yeah

305 Angel: which I've seen quite a few times.

306 Rachel: Ok and when you say it sets them off what do they kind of then, what happens?

307 Angel: I mean there's a mix of stuff. I mean they might just shout back and sit down or they might (2)
308 you know shout back, storm off the best they can then they get taken back. The teachers have to find
309 them then they get more angry. It's just like a cycle of like making it worse instead of making it better.

310 Rachel: Yeah

311 Angel: Urm and you can you can really tell they're like genuinely upset but the teachers are just not
312 asking in a good way about it.

- 313 Rachel: Hmm and what does that feel like for you as well when you're hearing, cos you're close by
314 aren't you
- 315 Angel: Hmm
- 316 Rachel: What's that like?
- 317 Angel: It makes me just disappointed in the way they're handling things. Like they could (2) I can think
318 of so many other ways they could (1) like calm or soothe them down
- 319 Rachel: Hmm
- 320 Angel: or you know put them like oh go 'do you want to go in a different room just for today because,
321 you know, you don't want to be around people?' But then they just put them back in the same room
322 and it continues again and it's just like.
- 323 Rachel: Hmm
- 324 Angel: It makes me quite like annoyed at them
- 325 Rachel: yeah
- 326 Angel: It's just so obvious like, don't do it, don't do that but then they're doing it and it's like
- 327 Rachel: Yeah
- 328 Angel: It's almost like you don't want them to calm down you just want to make them more upset like
- 329 Rachel: Right ok. And do you think if they were wanting them to not calm down. What would happen
330 if they didn't calm down, do you think?
- 331 Angel: Urm (2) what do you mean?
- 332 Rachel: Urm you know say if a young person is in isolation and the member of staff, the teacher, is
333 doing something that might like you say, aggravate them and they're not able to calm down because
334 they are aggravated. What would happen, do you think, to that young person if they're kind of, they've
335 come to isolation but they're really aggravated still within there does something, do they kind of go
336 back to class the next day, do they have another day in isolation do you think or
- 337 Angel: It depends on what they do really. So, if they walked out, I think they'd, say if they'd spent a
338 half day there and they walked out and they refused to come back in they'd definitely have to do a
339 full day the next day, instead of just a half day. So, it just kind of increases in what they do.
- 340 Rachel: Yeah
- 341 Angel: I think they are so used to shouting that they don't really punish it anymore it's mainly like if
342 they do something then they'll do something back.
- 343 Rachel: Yeah
- 344 Angel: Urm yeah but I can tell that some of the teachers literally have (2) only you know like put
345 themselves in that job to shout at students and you can just tell
- 346 Rachel: Right
- 347 Angel: There's certain ones that are really good and they can actually try and calm down and certain
348 ones that just you can just tell they want to shout back at people.
- 349 Rachel: Yeah

350 Angel: And they want to let off whatever anger they have inside them

351 Rachel: Yeah

352 Angel: And they know working in isolation you get a lot of that so

353 Rachel: And do you kind of, how can you tell that they are wanting to do that? What do

354 Angel: The demeanor. Like the erm cos for example I can think of one of my teachers who just (2) he
355 is just so relaxed and he really talks on their level, makes them calm. And there's other teachers I can
356 think of who just completely, they loom over them, shout back, (2) act like very like you know like very
357 body languagey, like aggressive

358 Rachel: Hmm

359 Angel: Like it reminds me of like a drunk father or like a (1) someone who just can't control what
360 they're saying. It doesn't even feel like they're a teacher it feels like they're a student actually shouting
361 back

362 Rachel: Right

363 Angel: At times. But that's not all the teachers it's like (3) I'd say like a quarter of them are like that.

364 Rachel: And how does that feel like that difference between those two different teachers that you've
365 just described to me? You know that one who's down on their level. What's the kind of different
366 feelings in you to those two teachers?

367 Angel: Towards me or towards others?

368 Rachel: So, for you when you're kind of hearing those two different styles, what do each of them make
369 you feel? So, if we start with the teacher who is talking at their level and wanting to know what is
370 going on. How do you feel if you hear a teacher speaking to

371 Angel: I feel very like (2) I don't have a word (1) like an emotion to describe but I just kind of think,
372 yes, like that's how you handle something. That's how I would do it if I was a teacher. Urm and then
373 when it comes to the other one, I'm just thinking, No, what, do you not realise that that's making the
374 cycle worse. They are going to hate you now so the next time they come here they're not going to
375 warm up to you at all, they're not going to listen to you, therefore they're going to walk out again.
376 But, and I find that when the nice teachers work in there it you just I hardly hear anyone screaming
377 because he doesn't say like, even if people scream at him he keeps, he speaks really in a soft voice
378 with them back

379 Rachel: Hmm

380 Angel: And he's really calm and like if they if they stand up he stays sat down instead of just towering
381 over them

382 Rachel: Yeah

383 Angel: Like some of them do. And I think that's really important so it makes me feel quite like (2) like
384 (1) I don't think proud's the right word but kind of proud in the school

385 Rachel: Yeah

386 Angel: Like like I'm glad you hired someone like that

387 Rachel: yeah

- 388 Angel: To speak to them nicely
- 389 Rachel: yeah. That's really interesting cos I can yeah I can totally relate to that feeling
- 390 Angel: yeah
- 391 Rachel: and urm yeah. It must be very interesting for you to see those different very different styles
- 392 Angel: Yeah
- 393 Rachel: and like you've just said, the kind of the different outcomes of those different styles you're
394 seeing that first hand
- 395 Angel: exactly.
- 396 Rachel: You you sort of said how you have those thoughts and feelings of 'yes, that's going to work'
- 397 Angel: yeah
- 398 Rachel: or 'no'. Do you ever have opportunities to kind of (1) voice that in your school at all?
- 399 Angel: Urm we do have like student cabinets but (2) like (3) ((sigh)) they don't like they focus on the
400 wrong issues really like (1) they you know they only focus on like 'oh urm (2) we'll let you have this
401 piercing' or (1) you know (2) oh you know 'you can have some trips later on in the year' instead of
402 focusing on actual things
- 403 Rachel: yeah
- 404 Angel: like proper things
- 405 Rachel: yeah
- 406 Angel: they kind of just see like short term issues like 'oh yeah we'll change how the lines go in the
407 canteen' and (2) but not like long term like how are we gonna improve like stuff like isolation rooms
408 like how will we make them less intimidating and
- 409 Rachel: hmm
- 410 Angel: you know controlling
- 411 Rachel: yeah
- 412 Angel: so they. You can voice your opinion but if it's like a thing like that it kind of just gets lost and is
413 like oh well that's too like thinking far ahead (inaudible)
- 414 Rachel: yeah. Earlier on *Angel you were talking around how urm you kind of found out about isolation
415 by going to a space nearby and you saw it and made sense of what it was
- 416 Angel: yeah
- 417 Rachel: how do you think other people kind of find out how how do people in school find out about
418 isolation
- 419 Angel: urm (1) I think just either through lived experience of going there or hearing from it
- 420 Rachel: hmm
- 421 Angel: like cos you'd never see it if you didn't go to the *area so like I have a friend that like I'm
422 describing to her like 'oh yeah I was up in the *area and this happened', she's like 'I can't even like I

423 don't even kind of imagine the isolation room like how big is it?' like she'll ask me all these questions
424 cos she doesn't know what it is because she's never been to the *area

425 Rachel: hmm

426 Angel: Never seen it. Doesn't have had friends who have gone there

427 Rachel: hmm

428 Angel: so, so they just don't find out really ((nervous laugh))

429 Rachel: Yeah. Yeah. And then do people (1) you're kind of talking around isolation and understanding
430 er the needs of the children who are there do do you feel like the rest of your kind of year group think
431 like that as well or do they think

432 Angel: think in what way sorry

433 Rachel: So, you were kind of saying as in you're interested about why that young person in isolation

434 Angel: yeah yeah

435 Rachel: Do you think other children see it in that way as well or

436 Angel: no

437 Rachel: How do you think they see it?

438 Angel: Urm (1) I think (1) like (2) people don't like people in my year group don't really like think deeply
439 about things like

440 Rachel: yeah

441 Angel: It's only like like me and like a couple of like people that I know that are friends with they think
442 like that like all the other people they just (2) they don't even really think about isolation at all they
443 just kind of think like 'oh, she's really mean she kind of deserves isolation' like

444 Rachel: Right

445 Angel: Or like 'I hope she goes to isolation for that' instead of like thinking 'why's she done that?' like
446 thinking behind the action

447 Rachel: Hmm

448 Angel: You know they just kind of see it at face value just well 'oh she did that she deserves that'

449 Rachel: Hmm

450 Angel: So, it's just like that

451 Rachel: Do you feel, does that feel like it effects like your year group if there's some people who are
452 seen as deserving something like that (2)?

453 Angel: I don't know. I think they just (1) no one no one really talks about isolation actually it's sort of
454 like a (1) a weird (1) like a weird like taboo topic for some reason in our year like urm cos they don't
455 like its kind of (1) people are kind of like ashamed of going in there a little bit

456 Rachel: Right

457 Angel: Cos like to like hard people it's very like babyish like 'oh like I got sent to isolation for a full day'
458 and like cos you know like they want to act hard like 'ooh no I'm not going anywhere with you'

459 Rachel: Yeah

460 Angel: But then they have to sit there for ages

461 Rachel: Yeah

462 Angel: And they like feel oh like a bit embarrassed

463 Rachel: Yeah

464 Angel: So, people don't really talk about how they feel about it

465 Rachel: Right

466 Angel: I wouldn't honestly know

467 Rachel: Ok and do you and your friends, do you ever talk about it or

468 Angel: Urm, not really. Only times when we've like heard that people have gone there

469 Rachel: Hmm

470 Angel: And you know like we've been like well (inaudible) I wonder if they're doing alright in there. If

471 they're not like you know getting attacked by people or

472 Rachel: Right

473 Angel: You know

474 Rachel: So do you kind of feel a bit concerned over

475 Angel: Yeah

476 Rachel: Ok

477 Angel: I mean yeah if I like know them urm then I'll be like I just wonder how they're doing in there

478 cos you don't see them for ages so

479 Rachel: yeah

480 Angel: You just don't even know how they are.

481 Rachel: Yeah

482 Angel: You can't comfort them if they need comforting you just like (1) I guess I'll see you at the end

483 of the day ((slight laugh))

484 Rachel: ahh

485 Angel: Cos yeah

486 Rachel: Yeah and how does that feel just to sort of have that?

487 Angel: It's yeah like like what I said earlier just feels really prison like like they've just been like

488 separated

489 Rachel: Yeah

490 Angel: From people that clearly I think like need comforting at the time instead of just (1) being like

491 almost like locked away

492 Rachel: Hmm

493 Angel: For a punishment like (1) it's it's I always like feel like really unfair on them cos like especially if
494 I know what's happened I know the situation I'm like I know why they did that

495 Rachel: Hmm

496 Angel: It's like 'they don't deserve that' and they need someone to be talking to them

497 Rachel: Hmm

498 Angel: Not just getting shouted at.

499 Rachel: Yeah. Yeah. Ok. Ok so I think we might have come to the end of my questions but before we
500 finish the recording urm is there anything else you'd like to sort of tell me about isolation or your
501 feelings or your experiences that you feel we might not of touched on quite yet?

502 Angel: I think we've touched on everything ((laughs))

503 Rachel: Yeah ((laughs)). Thank you, you've done really really well. Thank you. Urm, like I say, thank you
504 so much for your time and agreeing to take part in the interview. As I said the next steps are going to
505 be that I'm going to type it up from this device cos that device gave up

506 Rachel and Angel: ((laughs))

Appendix J

Daisy's Transcript

- 1 Rachel: Ok so to start with we're just going to cover some basic information questions so first of all,
- 2 how old are you?
- 3 Daisy: I'm 14.
- 4 Rachel: Fantastic. And do you have any siblings, any brother or [sisters?]
- 5 Daisy: [Err yeah] I have a younger sister
- 6 Rachel: Lovely and which year group are you in?
- 7 Daisy: I'm in Year 10
- 8 Rachel: Lovely and how long have you been in your current school? (2) Or, did you start at the end of
- 9 err start of Year 7 if that's easier?
- 10 Daisy: Yeah ((laugh))
- 11 Rachel: ((laugh)) so started at the start of Year 7. Fantastic. And have you ever been to isolation
- 12 yourself?
- 13 Daisy: I've never been sent to isolation. I've been in the room only to to drop things off before
- 14 Rachel: Ok
- 15 Daisy: So, I know what it looks like in there
- 16 Rachel: Yep
- 17 Daisy: But I've never myself been told off and been sent there
- 18 Rachel: Ok. Perfect. And have any of your friendship group been sent to isolation?
- 19 Daisy: No
- 20 Rachel: Ok. That's fine. And do you have a favourite subject in school?
- 21 Daisy: (2) Yeah
- 22 Rachel: Ok (2) and what's that?
- 23 Daisy: It's (1) ((sigh)) probably art or history
- 24 Rachel: Ok and why are they kind of your favourite two?
- 25 Daisy: Urm (.) well art because it's more of like a wind down and I get to like kind of express myself
- 26 Rachel: Uh huh
- 27 Daisy: and then I really like history because I really like learning about the stuff that happened in the
- 28 olden days and stuff
- 29 Rachel: Yeah.
- 30 Daisy: That's good

31 Rachel: Very good. Ok so this research is about exploring the experiences of young people attending
32 a school which has an isolation space or an isolation room err so to start with I have one key
33 question and then we will explore the areas that we feel are important to you that we want to
34 explore in more depth. So (.) can you tell me about your experiences and feelings about being in a
35 school with isolation?

36 Daisy: Urm (.) well I've never been threatened (.) to be sent there but I know a lot of people have
37 and (.) for some people they'd rather go there than be in lessons

38 Rachel: Uh huh

39 Daisy: Because they just want to get away from teachers

40 Rachel: Yeah

41 Daisy: like urm when I was in Year (.) 9 there was a girl urm in my year and she (.) just walked out the
42 classroom because one of her favourite teachers was working in isolation on that day

43 Rachel: Right

44 Daisy: Yeah (.) and so people just sometimes leave (.) and like there's a boy in my year who
45 misbehaves a lot

46 Rachel: Hmm

47 Daisy: And he always used to just walk out of class or (.) test teachers so much till they'd send him to
48 isolation but he's ended up getting kicked out of our school

49 Rachel: Oh, right ok

50 Daisy: Yeah urm (2) but I never really feel threatened to go. I wouldn't ever want to go in

51 Rachel: Yeah

52 Daisy: Because it seems like a horrible place but urm (2) yeah

53 Rachel: And you mentioned before that you think like some people would rather be there

54 Daisy: Yeah

55 Rachel: Do you feel like does that happen like if they kind of walk out can they just go there or if they
56 get to isolation would they get told to go back sort of thing?

57 Daisy: I don't really know but (2) when (.) as I previously said when that girl walked out, she did end
58 up going to isolation and get to stay there but some teachers because in lessons teachers can issue a
59 *specific warning, which is an after school detention

60 Rachel: Ok

61 Daisy: And erm you get sent to another room or sometimes if there's no rooms available you get
62 sent to the isolation room

63 Rachel: Ok

64 Daisy: And urm (2) but, I guess they just kind of get to stay (.) I guess

65 Rachel: Hmm and you said that you wouldn't want to go there yourself

66 Daisy: No

- 67 Rachel: Because it's a horrible place (.) Can you tell me a bit more about what makes it a horrible
68 place?
- 69 Daisy: Well, I've only been in there (.) like I said previously (.) to drop off urm or pick up papers and
70 urm there it's just it's like (.) it just is a horrible place like it looks almost sort of like out of a prison I
71 guess in a way
- 72 Rachel: Right
- 73 Daisy: Like there's no windows and it's just like (.) two or three desks with a chair
- 74 Rachel: Right ok
- 75 Daisy: And then there's a teacher's desk
- 76 Rachel: Yeah (2) ok and you mentioned before that there's a *specific warning, which is an after
77 school can you kind of talk me through how how someone ends up getting sent to isolation like with
78 like that system
- 79 Daisy: With like with the system yeah
- 80 Rachel: Yeah
- 81 Daisy: So (.) first you get a *specific warning if you're disruptive in lesson
- 82 Rachel: ok
- 83 Daisy: and then you get a *specific warning if that carries on
- 84 Rachel: Yeah
- 85 Daisy: And then after that it's a *specific warning, which means you have an half an hour after
86 school detention after school and you get moved to another classroom so (2) say I got one which I
87 haven't I would then get moved to like the classroom next door
- 88 Rachel: Hmm
- 89 Daisy: and then if you're disruptive in that lesson (.) then you get a *specific warning, which is a (.)
90 an hour I think or 45 minutes to an hour I think
- 91 Rachel: Yeah
- 92 Daisy: Urm but you can also get like a *specific warning for being on your phone and stuff
- 93 Rachel: Right ok so just out of sudden
- 94 Daisy: Yeah
- 95 Rachel: Right ok
- 96 Daisy: Urm (2) and you can also get (.) we have like *behaviour cards
- 97 Rachel: Yeah
- 98 Daisy: and if you get three bad signatures for like either forgetting your PE kit or misbehaving on the
99 corridors then you get a *detention after school
- 100 Rachel: Right ok

- 101 Daisy: And then after (.) so if you skip, cos some people decide they're just (.) can't be bothered to
102 go to a detention
- 103 Rachel: Hmm
- 104 Daisy: You skip a *detention then the next night you'll have a *longer detention
- 105 Rachel: Right
- 106 Daisy: And urm if you skip your *longer detention you then have isolation for the next day
- 107 Rachel: Oh ok
- 108 Daisy: But when you have isolation, you have a detention after school as well.
- 109 Rachel: Right so they have detention after school and then would the isolation be the next day?
- 110 Daisy: So, the iso so if you skip the *longer detention, so you just decide not to do it the next day
111 instead of lessons all day you're in the isolation room
- 112 Rachel: Right
- 113 Daisy: Including break and lunch. I think you're allowed to go out for food but that's it
- 114 Rachel: Right
- 115 Daisy: And then after school you're put in the detention room
- 116 Rachel: Ok so so if someone is in isolation say from your say one of your friendship group
- 117 Daisy: Yeah
- 118 Rachel: Was in isolation
- 119 Daisy: Yeah ((laugh)) (quite a nervous seeming laugh/almost shocked at thought of the idea?)
- 120 Rachel: Would you know that they were in isolation? Like would you see them at lunchtime or do
121 they literally
- 122 Daisy: Urm well I've seen people that have got isolation
- 123 Rachel: Uh huh
- 124 Daisy: and they get escorted down *corridor which is a corridor that only teachers are allowed down
- 125 Rachel: Ok
- 126 Daisy: By a teacher and it's just to go get food during (.) before lunch (.) and then they have to go str
127 back in that room to eat and stuff
- 128 Rachel: Right ok. So, they're suddenly so you're allowed to kind of walk round school freely
- 129 Daisy: Yeah
- 130 Rachel: I presume. But if you're in isolation, if you move around school (.) you're escorted, is that
131 right?
- 132 Daisy: Urm (.) yeah
- 133 Rachel: Ok
- 134 Daisy: I think

- 135 Rachel: Ok. And (.) have you sort it where someone in your class has been sent to isolation before?
- 136 Daisy: Urm I've never had it where they've been sent to isolation before like by the teacher unless
137 they didn't know they'd got an isolation
- 138 Rachel: Yeah
- 139 Daisy: And then a teacher comes into our classroom to tell them that they need to be going to
140 isolation
- 141 Rachel: ok
- 142 Daisy: But obviously, like I said earlier, people have been sent like decided to just leave [and go]
- 143 Rachel: [Yeah] Yeah. And that time, you know when the teacher came in (.) and sort of said 'you're
144 meant to be isolation'
- 145 Daisy: Yeah
- 146 Rachel: Can you kind of tell me what happened in that
- 147 Daisy: Urm
- 148 Rachel: Like talk me through that?
- 149 Daisy: So once when I was in Science urm (.) a boy named *student he was just urm doing his work
150 normally and he said he'd only skipped a C3 but everyone was (2) convinced he'd skipped a C4
- 151 Rachel: Hmm
- 152 Daisy: And so he said that he didn't need to be going and then urm (.) one of our (2) like headteacher
153 (.) higher up (.) they came and they were just like 'can we have' and then they said his name and
154 then they were like 'you need to take your things you're going to isolation' and then you don't see
155 them for the rest of the day (quieter on word day)
- 156 Rachel: Right ok and when they came and said that [to]
- 157 Daisy: [Yeah]
- 158 Rachel: to the young person in your class how did they kind of react to that
- 159 Daisy: Well (.) I think they were kind of a bit shocked that they got it cos they didn't know they were
160 supposed to be having it but that person gets a lot of detentions and goes to isolation quite often so
161 I don't think they really minded
- 162 Rachel: Ok so they kind of just got up and went
- 163 Daisy: Yeah
- 164 Rachel: With the teacher? And do you find that is there sort of some people who seem to go to
165 isolation a lot would do you think there would be some people who you'd be really surprised or who
166 would never go to isolation?
- 167 Daisy: Yeah, so there's some people like there's (.) it tends to be more like the more kind of people
168 that think they're more popular than everyone and think they're higher up than everyone that tend
169 to just kind of push the teachers to their limits until they get sent there
- 170 Rachel: Hmm
- 171 Daisy: Cos they think it makes them seem more cool

- 172 Rachel: Right ok
- 173 Daisy: Whereas there as there's like the people I tend to hang out with they're too scared to even
174 just get a *warning
- 175 Rachel: Yeah
- 176 Daisy: Yeah
- 177 Rachel: So, you were sort of saying how some people would see it as like like it's cool thing
- 178 Daisy: Yeah
- 179 Rachel: To get sent there but that for others it's a scare kind of a scary thing the system
- 180 Daisy: Yeah
- 181 Rachel: Does do you feel like that some people have those different feelings then towards
- 182 Daisy: Yeah
- 183 Rachel: [The school]
- 184 Daisy: [Definitely.] Like (.) I I would never want to get told off by the teacher like (.) it kind of scares
185 me in a way
- 186 Rachel: Hmm
- 187 Daisy: and it also seems really embarrassing
- 188 Rachel: Yeah
- 189 Daisy: but for some people (.) like they just think that people will find it as if nothing can really
190 bother them
- 191 Rachel: Yeah yeah
- 192 Daisy: Yeah
- 193 Rachel: I know what you mean. And when you started at the school, how did you find out about
194 about isolation as a room, did you get shown it and like a tour around the school or
- 195 Daisy: So basically, urm on like our second day we had to go to a classroom and we had a teacher in
196 there and they'd we had they had a slideshow and they told us all the things like urm (.) well the (.)
197 the house system at our school had just been introduced so they told us about that
- 198 Rachel: Ok
- 199 Daisy: And then they urm told us about *reward cards which is the opposite of a *behaviour card
- 200 Rachel: Uh huh
- 201 Daisy: Where you get positive if you've done something positive you get a signature
- 202 Rachel: Right
- 203 Daisy: And if you get so many signatures you get a reward
- 204 Rachel: Yep

205 Daisy: (2) urm (3) and they just kind of told us like if you're disruptive in class then you'll get a
 206 *warning and then a *another warning and then it continues up and then they told us about
 207 isolation and how you shouldn't want to go there sort of thing

208 Rachel: Right ok

209 Daisy: Yeah

210 Rachel: So, it's (2) so the way it's (.) spoken about, correct me if I'm wrong, but is the way it's spoken
 211 about a bit like you don't want to go to that space, like it's a negative thing to be?

212 Daisy: Well, that's what they told us at the beginning but they don't really tend to, like I think it's
 213 more to kind of influence kind of like the youngers like Year 7 and stuff (2) but they don't really talk
 214 about it as much they are just like 'it's isolation'

215 Rachel: Yeah

216 Daisy: Because I think they kind of think they've embedded it in our heads that it's a really bad place

217 Rachel: Yeah

218 Daisy: Yeah

219 Rachel: And how do you feel about it being there as someone in the school? Do you (2) kind of are
 220 you pleased that it's there at times? Is it something that you wish wasn't in school?

221 Daisy: Urm (2) yes and no because

222 Rachel: Hmm

223 Daisy: It's nice that (.) people who are doing bad things (2) get the punishment

224 Rachel: Hmm

225 Daisy: But at the same time I feel like it could be better if they had other punishments because
 226 people are now just (.) like (3) ((sigh)) I don't know what the word is for (2) like mistreating it

227 Rachel: Yeah yeah

228 Daisy: So, to kind of get their own way I guess

229 Rachel: Yeah

230 Daisy: just to not have to do their lessons

231 Rachel: Yeah

232 Daisy: But also, when you're in isolation, you get sent work but very rarely cos (2) there's *specific
 233 title* students, so when you're in *specific year group, you get a day or two days instead of doing
 234 lessons

235 Rachel: Hmm

236 Daisy: You help out staff so like you go give work and stuff

237 Rachel: Yeah

238 Daisy: There's like other class and majority of the time you get a timetable for the people who are in
 239 isolation (.) but half the time because the school's so busy it ends up not happening so they just read
 240 or something

- 241 Rachel: Oh right
- 242 Daisy: Yeah
- 243 Rachel: So, they're meant to get kind of some work delivered to them
- 244 Daisy: Yeah
- 245 Rachel: But lots of the time they're not
- 246 Daisy: Yeah
- 247 Rachel: So, what do you know what they kind of are so they're reading did you say?
- 248 Daisy: Well, when I was *specific title* student
- 249 Rachel: Yeah
- 250 Daisy: Urm when we went in there, we had to give out work and they were saying about how, the
- 251 teacher said something about 'oh this is the first work they've had all day' and it was like after lunch
- 252 Rachel: Right ok
- 253 Daisy: So, and they were all just sat in there reading so I presume that was what they were doing
- 254 Rachel: Yeah (.) yeah (.) and when you've gone in the space or the room and I know you sort of
- 255 described what it looks like but what does it feel like to walk in is it err
- 256 Daisy: It's not a very nice place. It feels like somewhere that you just wouldn't want to be
- 257 Rachel: Yeah
- 258 Daisy: Like I I hated going in it cos I had to go in it (.) when actually when I was *specific title*
- 259 student a few times to drop off some work and I just (.) hated doing it I kept trying to make whoever
- 260 I was doing *specific title* student with go in there instead of me
- 261 Rachel: Yeah (.) yeah
- 262 Daisy: Yeah
- 263 Rachel: So not a place you'd kind of enjoy
- 264 Daisy: Yeah (.) and all the people in there just looked like (2) they were fed up so
- 265 Rachel: And do you think (2) so I know you kind of talked us through a place that can kind of be used
- 266 as a punishment (.) do you think it kind of works? Do you notice that people who are sent there
- 267 don't get sent there again and it changes them or do you think they go
- 268 Daisy: I don't really know like (3) some people so if they (.) really really misbehave and like they get
- 269 (.) isolation loads they get, sss is it suspended where you're off for a few days?
- 270 Rachel: Yeah
- 271 Daisy: Yeah. Suspended for a few days but to be honest I don't really think that's much of a
- 272 punishment cos they just get to sit at home all and do what they want
- 273 Rachel: Yeah
- 274 Daisy: So, I don't really think it's doing that much
- 275 Rachel: Yeah

- 276 Daisy: I think detentions after school (2) are doing more because it's actually taking time out of their
277 day
- 278 Rachel: Yeah
- 279 Daisy: Which affects them more
- 280 Rachel: Yeah. Yeah (2) and then when you're in school and say you've got some pupils who are in
281 isolation from your year and then the rest of you the rest of you kind of walking around as you want
282 and (.) not like anywhere
- 283 Daisy: ((laugh))
- 284 Rachel: Free between periods and lessons
- 285 Daisy: Yeah
- 286 Rachel: Do you feel like they're part of your year group still when they're in isolation? Or do they feel
287 a bit separate to you?
- 288 Daisy: Well sometimes you just kind of forget
- 289 Rachel: Hmm
- 290 Daisy: Because like you've not seen them all day and some people always presume they're ill
- 291 Rachel: Yeah
- 292 Daisy: And they're not. Urm (4) but it's like (4) for their friends I guess so say if my friend was in
293 there then I'd kind of feel a bit more distant from them
- 294 Rachel: Yeah (2) and are some people (.) in there for more than a day or is it only ever kind of one
295 day
- 296 Daisy: Well (.) urm it depends what you do cos urm (3) cos sometimes at our school some people
297 have fights
- 298 Rachel: Hmm
- 299 Daisy: And urm if they've been in a fight sometimes their punishment, if they weren't the one to
300 start it, it's like isolation for two days
- 301 Rachel: Right ok
- 302 Daisy: Yeah (.) or a few days
- 303 Rachel: And if someone has gone to isolation and I know you've said sort of sometimes people are a
304 bit like 'oh, they're in isolation' how do you find out if someone's in isolation
- 305 Daisy: Normally it's their friends that kind of are just like and the teachers will be like 'oh where's so
306 and so?'
- 307 Rachel: Right
- 308 Daisy: And it's always like the nicer teachers (.) urm who are like 'oh what happened? Why are they
309 in isolation?' ((expressed with concern))
- 310 Rachel: Right
- 311 Daisy: Cos I think teachers get notified

312 Rachel: Yeah

313 Daisy: And their friends are always like 'oh they did this and this and that' but sometimes we just
314 don't find out

315 Rachel: Yeah. Right ok so it's it's not like someone would say

316 Daisy: Yeah

317 Rachel: This person's not here today because

318 Daisy: Yeah

319 Rachel: They're in isolation. The teacher themselves might not necessarily

320 Daisy: Yeah

321 Rachel: Have been. (.) And you sort of said that sometimes those nicer teachers are a bit like 'oh no
322 why what?' Is that as in because they are seeming concerned that they've been sent there or

323 Daisy: Yeah. Yeah cos one of, one of my *subject teachers, she's lovely, and when I used to have her
324 for *subject instead (.) a boy in my class who always gets isolations and detentions always ask us if
325 like what's happened and how he feels about it sort of thing

326 Rachel: Yeah

327 Daisy: So, I think they're doing it more in a like (.) a sort of caring way and sympathetic way

328 Rachel: Yeah (.) yeah. And (.) I know you mentioned like sometimes there's different teachers and (.)
329 like that sometimes people want to go to isolation cos the teacher who's in there

330 Daisy: Yeah

331 Rachel: is one they like. So, is it that there's different teachers in there each day or?

332 Daisy: Yeah it tends to be like (2) it might not be necessarily like a teacher's in there all the time
333 every day.

334 Rachel: Yeah

335 Daisy: I think it's more or less when a teacher's working and they don't have a class to fill out

336 Rachel: Right ok (2) so they kind of go in there

337 Daisy: Yeah

338 Rachel: And do you ever kind of hear anything from isolation is it quite a quiet space, does it ever
339 seem noisy or loud?

340 Daisy: Urm I think the people that go in there just know to be quiet cos urm at break and lunch
341 sometimes or if you like (.) go like fill up your bottle or something during like urm lesson time and it's
342 really quiet you can't hear anything really from that room

343 Rachel: Right

344 Daisy: Although it is like it's kind of like down a corridor that people don't go down and then there's
345 a door (.) and that I think it (.) it's like the door is proper like a (2) very shut shut door

346 Rachel: Yeah, I know what you mean

- 347 Daisy: Yeah
- 348 Rachel: A bit like a fire door sort of thing?
- 349 Daisy: Yeah
- 350 Rachel: Like really solid?
- 351 Daisy: Yeah
- 352 Rachel: And you said that like down a corridor that people don't go down (.) is that because that's
353 the only room off that corridor or is it because you're not allowed down that corridor
- 354 Daisy: Urm it's because it's the only room off that corridor and the corridor's really really short
- 355 Rachel: Right
- 356 Daisy: It's like (3) it's like four metres I think
- 357 Rachel: Yeah (.) yeah
- 358 Daisy: And then it's just the classroom and then I think they have another isolation in case it gets
359 overflowed
- 360 Rachel: Oh right ok. And just sort of thinking about how your school is set up because you just sort of
361 mentioned the short corridor. If you think about your school, is isolation something that's kind of
362 physically like in the middle of school, is it right at the edge, is it (.)
- 363 Daisy: Urm it's like in the middle. So, it's very close to *pastoral department
- 364 Rachel: Right
- 365 Daisy: Which are there to help you if like you've hurt yourself or you need to talk to someone
- 366 Rachel: Yeah
- 367 Daisy: And it's not too far away from the *corridor which I mentioned earlier where all the teachers
368 are down
- 369 Rachel: Yeah
- 370 Daisy: So, I guess that's kind of in case something happens in there
- 371 Rachel: Yeah
- 372 Daisy: That the teacher in there kind of can't handle then they have extra support
- 373 Rachel: Ok (.) urm I know you sort of said you wouldn't want to go there yourself. If you imagined if
374 you did end up in isolation yourself. Do you think it is something that other people like your friends
375 and family, would they be sort of supportive and helpful with that? Would they be disappointed?
376 What do you think?
- 377 Daisy: I think my friends (.) I think it kind of depends on what's happened.
- 378 Rachel: Yeah
- 379 Daisy: So (.) like some people get it for being in a fight. I think if I was in a fight I think my friends
380 would be worried about me but I think my parents would be quite disappointed that I'd gotten into
381 something like that

382 Rachel: Yeah

383 Daisy: But if it was for like (.) some people get detentions for something that (2) is like (.) kind of
384 harmless like sometimes the teachers forget to set our homework online

385 Rachel: Yeah

386 Daisy: And urm (.) if you've not the done the homework even though they've not set it online
387 sometimes they will like give you a detention

388 Rachel: Right ok

389 Daisy: My Mum's always told me if that happens to skip it and my mum will ring the school about it

390 Rachel: Yeah

391 Daisy: But urm (3) I think if that was the case and they gave me isolation after I think my Mum would
392 be more angry with the school than at me

393 Rachel: Yeah absolutely. Just hearing that and thinking you've got that support around you and
394 challenging that back with the school cos that sounds like a school mistake rather than you making a
395 mistake. Ok (2) and yeah just sort of thinking, do you think of isolation kind of like a safe space for
396 someone to go to? I know you said sometimes people want to go there

397 Daisy: Yeah

398 Rachel: Why do you think that is that they're wanting to go there?

399 Daisy: Well (.) I don't necessarily think it's a safe space

400 Rachel: Hmm

401 Daisy: There are other safe spaces in school like it's called *place name and it's a *specific building at
402 school

403 Rachel: Right ok

404 Daisy: And there's teachers to support for students that are struggling in lessons

405 Rachel: Hmm

406 Daisy: Or just really don't want to be in there

407 Rachel: Ok

408 Daisy: Or like too overwhelmed in lessons (.) and urm I think that if (2) that was really the case and
409 they weren't doing it instead to be seen more like 'I don't really care about the school' then they'd
410 go there but they're just kind of doing it to big themselves up I think by going there

411 Rachel: Hmm. So they're that's interesting that you've got kind of a safe space that people can go to

412 Daisy: Yeah

413 Rachel: If they're feeling overwhelmed and they get that support

414 Daisy: Yes

415 Rachel: But that is a different space to the isolation space, is that right

416 Daisy: Yeah (.) so the isolation room is in the main school building (.) whereas the *supportive space
417 is in a *different building separate from school

418 Rachel: Right ok ok and it has that sort of supportive space feeling as a space

419 Daisy: Yeah

420 Rachel: And are there sometimes (.) people who (2) like do you feel it's clear who should go to
421 isolation and who should go to the *supportive place or is there sometimes times where you think
422 (2)

423 Daisy: It's like a mix of both (.) like people who go to the *supportive place, and there's also
424 *another area in school* which is like, people who can't do lessons and stuff (.) urm I think it's kind
425 of a mix so (.) sometimes people who do go to isolation because they are messing around do need
426 the extra support as well

427 Rachel: Hmm

428 Daisy: So, it's kind of like a tough situation whether they go to *support place or isolation first (2) like
429 a punishment or if they should be getting more help but there's some people like I've got a friend
430 who urm she has really bad ADHD like she can't sit still in lessons. So, if something's too much for
431 her then she can just leave the lesson and go to the *supportive place to get help or do something
432 different

433 Rachel: Yeah yeah (.) and is that for her to kind of like say (2) or not necessarily say it but to do that
434 or do the teachers ever kind of help her to

435 Daisy: Urm well it's only been like a new thing since she got diagnosed

436 Rachel: Hmm

437 Daisy: But she's had meetings about it and stuff and her parents in school and (2) there's like (2) on
438 our register we have like (1) for different students (.) they get notes on it so say someone has like (2)
439 diabetes or something

440 Rachel: Yeah

441 Daisy: It would be said on (2) the register so for her now it will say that she needs any extra support
442 and stuff and for teachers to help her a bit more

443 Rachel: Yeah. Ok so it so they all know

444 Daisy: Yeah

445 Rachel: They'll be looking out and she also herself can sort of say that. Ok (.) but there might be say
446 other people in your class who might not have a diagnosis of something and if they were doing a
447 similar thing they could potentially could end up in isolation?

448 Daisy: Yeah

449 Rachel: Ok. And so can anyone go to the *supportive place at any point or is it only certain people
450 who are allowed to be there

451 Daisy: No. You well really if you're really struggling you ought you mainly tell the teacher and (.)
452 majority of the time (.) someone will come to talk to you like (.) out of lesson so like someone might
453 come and find you or someone will pull you out of lesson

454 Rachel: Right

455 Daisy: For like five minutes just to like talk about it

456 Rachel: Hmm

457 Daisy: But urm (2) the *supportive place is mainly for pupils whose parents have kind of (.) said and
458 they've gotten like a diagnosis and stuff

459 Rachel: Yeah yeah

460 Daisy: Cos I think like they've done it that way because otherwise people kind of abuse its power (.)
461 and just go there like 'oh I can't do lessons'

462 Rachel: Ok (.) and do you think that would be something that would be likely to happen a lot that
463 people would kind of like choose to do that?

464 Daisy: Yeah (.) definitely

465 Rachel: So (.) I think we've probably come to the end of the questions around it but before I finish
466 the recording, is there anything else you'd like to add or any more detail or there might be
467 something we've not covered that you might think 'oh I was going to say about this and I haven't
468 had a chance!'

469 Daisy: ((laugh)) urm (4) not really I don't think

470 Rachel: Ok (.) that's absolutely fine. Thank you so much for your time and for agreeing to take part in
471 the interview.

Appendix K

Fenton's Transcript

- 1 **Rachel:** Okay (2) so just to start we're gonna start with some just straightforward questions just to
- 2 kind of help ease into the interview. So (.) first of all how old are you?
- 3 **Fenton:** (2) Urm I'm 13.
- 4 **Rachel:** Okay, thank you. And do you have any brothers or sisters?
- 5 **Fenton:** Err a younger sister.
- 6 **Rachel:** Ok. Lovely. And which year group are you in?
- 7 **Fenton:** (2) I'm in Year 9.
- 8 **Rachel:** Brilliant. Okay. And how long have you been at your current school? Have you been there
- 9 since like Year 7 or did you [change]
- 10 **Fenton:** [Yeah], since Year 7
- 11 **Rachel:** Since Year 7. So, you're in your third year there? ((pitch raising to indicate a question to be
- 12 confirmed)).
- 13 **Fenton:** Yeah. [Yeah.]
- 14 **Rachel:** [Brilliant.] Okay. Lovely. And do you have a favourite subject in school at all?
- 15 **Fenton:** (2) I do, yeah, urm it's construction.
- 16 **Rachel:** Okay, and how come that's your favourite?
- 17 **Fenton:** (2) Err because I want to go on and be an architect when I'm older.
- 18 **Rachel:** Oh wow! Have you always wanted to do that? Or is that
- 19 **Fenton:** Yeah, well for a for a couple years.
- 20 **Rachel:** Yeah. Yeah
- 21 **Fenton:** Yeah
- 22 **Rachel:** You really enjoy that? (2) [Brilliant]
- 23 **Fenton:** [I really do, yeah]
- 24 **Rachel:** Lovely, that's brilliant. And have you ever been to isolation yourself?
- 25 **Fenton:** (3) Yeah. More in Year 8.
- 26 **Rachel:** Okay, and have any of your friendship group ever, been to isolation.
- 27 **Fenton:** Yeah.
- 28 **Rachel:** Yeah. Okay. Lovely. So, just in terms, like I said to you before, in terms of what the research is
- 29 about, it's exploring the experiences of young people attending a school which has an isolation space

30 or room, and it might be called something slightly different depending which school you're in. But, a
31 kind of, some sort of consequence room or isolation room.

32 **Fenton:** Yeah.

33 **Rachel:** And so, to start with, I have just one key question and then we can explore areas that feel
34 important. So, that is, can you tell me about your experiences and feelings about being in a school
35 with isolation?

36 **Fenton:** (2) Urm well so I know this year, my isolation room is a bit different to last year, but I do know
37 that last year, we just had to sit in with our tutor, and we had to stay there for the whole day. But I
38 know that this year, you're in the *area (2) urm and it's with all the other people that are also in
39 isolation, but it's called the *room.

40 **Rachel:** Yep

41 **Fenton:** So, I think the school's trying to make it sound like a good place but it's (.) it's not and there's
42 more consequences if you like misbehave in ((emphasis on the word in)) there.

43 **Rachel:** Uh huh

44 **Fenton:** So, like it can lead to like suspension.

45 **Rachel:** Right.

46 **Fenton:** Pretty easily, urm (.) but isolation room it can be for the silliest things. Like if, if you don't have
47 a shoe with a 90 degree angle at the bottom of it (.) then (2) you go to to the *room.

48 **Rachel:** Right.

49 **Fenton:** Yeah, which I think's silly because you can't see the bottom of your shoe.

50 **Rachel:** Yeah. Okay.

51 **Fenton:** Yeah

52 **Rachel:** Okay. So, in terms of, just understanding what could end up with someone going to the
53 isolation room, or the *room, as it's now called.

54 **Fenton:** Yeah.

55 **Rachel:** So, you talked about kind of, it can be those silly reasons. Is that how, is there kind of a
56 leading up to that point, or would that just be

57 **Fenton:** Yeah so, urm, since the beginning of this year (.) in every entrance of the school, there's two
58 members of staff (.) one or two that check your uniform.

59 **Rachel:** Right.

60 **Fenton:** And if it's not right, then you have to go straight to the *room.

61 **Rachel:** Okay (.) and when you're in the *room, or what was previously (2) the kind of different room
62 with your tutor.

63 **Fenton:** Yeah.

- 64 **Rachel:** What happens in that room, what does the day look like?
- 65 **Fenton:** Urm so you will (.) urm (2) you will go and get work (.) urm if it's physical work from your from
66 your teacher of that lesson, or it'll get sent to you, and you have to do you've got to complete all your
67 work in there. Yeah.
- 68 **Rachel:** And can you tell me a bit more about where that's like in there? I mean is there, are you kind of
69 talking with your tutor? Is it silent work?
- 70 **Fenton:** Urm well when it was with the tutor, urm, (.) you just sit like at the back, because they'd, they'd
71 be teaching different year groups. So, you just have to sit like whether that's in the sort of shelfy bit or
72 like just on an empty desk and you just have to get on with your own work and you could ask your
73 tutor for help but they'd normally be teaching.
- 74 **Rachel:** Okay, and in terms of the difference between how it was last year and this year (2) was last
75 year, was were you just by yourself with your tutor or or were there more people in the room as well?
- 76 **Fenton:** Urm, yeah, normally there'd be other people in the room, but it was only really people from
77 your tutor group if they were also on isolation and...
- 78 **Rachel:** [Right.]
- 79 **Fenton:** [and obviously] the lesson that the teacher was teaching
- 80 **Rachel:** Okay, so this year is it a bigger group, potentially, of children in that
- 81 **Fenton:** [Yeah. Yeah.]
- 82 **Rachel:** [Space] right, okay, okay. And you talked about you, you said it's not a good place, how they're
83 trying to make it sound a bit more like a good place
- 84 **Fenton:** [Yeah. Yeah]
- 85 **Rachel:** [But it's not a good place.] Can you tell me a bit more about how how you feel about that?
- 86 **Fenton:** Yeah, well I think that there's there's different levels of misbehaving that like of children that
87 are in there. So, there's a big, there's a big spectrum of it like there's, there's people that are just in
88 there for uniform. There's people who like go in there for like being like really rude to teachers and
89 stuff (2) and there's (2) urm (1) and there's lots of people in there (2) and last year, because it was
90 just with your tutor, it was a lot quieter (2), but (1) now there's, it's the whole *area. There's lots of
91 children in there who (1) who do misbehave whilst being in there still.
- 92 **Rachel:** Yeah. And have you sort of been there this year to the new (2) *area or [is it]
- 93 **Fenton:** [I've been] I've been once.
- 94 **Rachel:** Hmm
- 95 **Fenton:** (3) like not for that long. [Yeah]
- 96 **Rachel:** [Yeah] and then, when you sort of think back about the times you've been in isolation, are (1)
97 are you generally in there for a day at a time, is it sometimes more? Or (2)

98 **Fenton:** (2) Urm well in Year 8 urm (3) you (2) if your uni if you have two things of your of your uniform
 99 wrong, then you go in there until they're sorted. Urm but this year, urm, they have bought uniform,
 100 which you can change into if you don't have the correct one.

101 **Rachel:** Right.

102 **Fenton:** But a lot of people refuse to

103 **Rachel:** Okay (2) so if they refuse to, (1) do they (3) sort of have to stay?

104 **Fenton:** (2) Yeah, some of them have like detentions urm (2) more time in the *room. Like teachers
 105 can add on how many (2) like periods they want urm to be in there for

106 **Rachel:** Right, okay, and is that the teacher in the room adding them up

107 **Fenton:** Yeah. Yeah.

108 **Rachel:** Right okay so they could go in there and it get longer [and longer]

109 **Fenton:** [Yeah], that's just from this year.

110 **Rachel:** Right, so it wasn't like that last year?

111 **Fenton:** No

112 **Rachel:** Okay, okay. And then just thinking back, is there a particular incident of a time, maybe, when
 113 you were (2) sent to isolation, that you would want to share or that you think would be an interesting

114 **Fenton:** Urm it was more it was definitely more uniform than anything. Urm I don't think I don't ever
 115 really get *REMOVED FROM LESSON as such, more just detentions. But uniform was probably the
 116 main reason for a lot of people to be an isolation.

117 **Rachel:** Yeah. Yeah. (2) And I know at the beginning you mentioned how some of your friendship
 118 group had gone to isolation or *room as well (3) is that for (1) similar situations [would you say]

119 **Fenton:** [Yeah] Yeah, a lot of the time. Yeah.

120 **Rachel:** Yeah (1) and then when you come back when you've been sort of in isolation or *room you
 121 come back into kind of the rest of the school, what's what's that like when you come back?

122 **Fenton:** (2) Urm (1) it's pretty much the same. You just meet up with all your friends and just yeah just
 123 talk about how bad it was really.

124 **Rachel:** Right, so you sort of say, you talk about how bad it was. [Do you] do you kind of together have
 125 a view?

126 **Fenton:** [Yeah.] Yeah.

127 **Rachel:** Yeah. Okay. Okay. And then (2) I'm just sort of thinking (1) you, you mentioned, how there was
 128 a tutor there last year and it would be your tutor group. So there (2) would that be kind of an element
 129 of learning when you're in the isolation space?

130 **Fenton:** Yeah, urm, I mean, (2) because you are alone and a lot of the time, if it was a different year
 131 group they'd be doing different levels of work, you sort of just had to get on with your own stuff.

132 **Rachel:** Yeah. Yeah.

133 **Fenton:** Yeah. But, as bad as it may seem like (2). Isolation last year was a lot more fun than it is this
134 [year]

135 **Rachel:** [Right.]

136 **Fenton:** Because, because, when, Mum doesn't know this but, urm, you could just like take off like your
137 tie and change your shoes and then (1) you'd be an isolation for lessons that you don't want to go to.
138 [And]

139 **Rachel:** [Right. Okay.]

140 **Fenton:** your friend could do it too and then you'd be (1) in the same tutor together.

141 **Rachel:** Yeah. Yeah.

142 **Fenton:** But you can't do that anymore. Yeah, definitely.

143 **Rachel:** No, no. And did that used to happen quite a bit do you think?

144 **Fenton:** Yeah, definitely.

145 **Rachel:** Do you think, do you feel that school were kind of school were aware of that? Do youu think
146 that's part of their change?

147 **Fenton:** Yeah probably, they probably like overheard people talking about it.

148 **Rachel:** Yeah. Yeah. (2) So (1) you sort of mentioned around you know not, trying to avoid certain
149 lessons and things like that is that, do you think that's still a kind of reason why some people might

150 **Fenton:** (2) I think it could be, but I think because we've picked our GCSEs now, a lot of the lessons we
151 don't like we don't have anymore.

152 **Rachel:** Yeah (2) okay. So do you think (1) has that changed things now you've had a bit more control
153 over what subject you're going to be doing.

154 **Fenton:** Yeah, I, yeah, I do believe so.

155 **Rachel:** Yeah. Yeah. And when you started at your school, when did you first hear about isolation as a
156 space?

157 **Fenton:** (3) Well I think Year 7, I never really got into any mischief or anything, so I never really was
158 aware of it (1) urm but I did hear friends in older years talking about it. [And]

159 **Rachel:** [Yeah.]

160 **Fenton:** They, they, they all said it was great because you'd be with your tutor and you didn't have to
161 go to your lesson and stuff.

162 **Rachel:** Right. (3) Yeah. So, it was seen as kind of a great, (1) a good thing.

163 **Fenton:** Yeah.

164 **Rachel:** Yeah.

- 165 **Fenton:** A lot, yeah definitely.
- 166 **Rachel:** But, but then, when you've talked about it, you were saying how it's not not actually so good.
- 167 **Fenton:** No, not, not anymore.
- 168 **Rachel:** No. And that, is that this year's change [that you feel]
- 169 **Fenton:** [Yeah. Yeah.] Definitely.
- 170 **Rachel:** Okay, okay. So, is it a space you'd want to go to now or
- 171 **Fenton:** (3) I think it depends. (1) I mean, (1) I sort of had to pick History, but I wouldn't, if you're two
- 172 minutes late to a lesson, you get five hours in the *room.
- 173 **Rachel:** Right. Five hours.
- 174 **Fenton:** (4) If you're two minutes late.
- 175 **Rachel:** (3) Would, and would that be on the same day? Or would that be on a [different]
- 176 **Fenton:** [Yeah], well (1) urm if it's like, let's say you're in your last lesson, you're two minutes late (1),
- 177 then the whole of the next day you're being there. Or, if you have a third period, three out of, three out
- 178 of, we have five lessons.
- 179 **Rachel:** Yeah.
- 180 **Fenton:** If it was third period you'd spend the next two (3) urm or the next three in there because
- 181 you've got the rest of lesson three, four, and five. You'd spend those three urm in *room and the next
- 182 two of the next day.
- 183 **Rachel:** Right. Okay. And how do you feel about that, that idea?
- 184 **Fenton:** I think it's so stupid.
- 185 **Rachel:** Yeah.
- 186 **Fenton:** Yeah. It's so bad because like you could have a reason for being late but like (1) but like they
- 187 say you need a note and everything now. You could be like popping to the toilet or like filling your
- 188 water bottle up (1) if you just have PE. Then (2) you should be allowed to be two minutes late.
- 189 **Rachel:** And is there, do they have any kind of allowances for things like that or is it just an outright?
- 190 **Fenton:** Urm (1) not really. You do have to have a note, like a lot of the time. Yeah.
- 191 **Rachel:** Yeah, yeah. Have you seen or experienced people having time in *room for that?
- 192 **Fenton:** Yeah, I think I've been near to the two minutes and they just say 'hurry up otherwise, you're
- 193 going to [*room'.]
- 194 **Rachel:** [Right.]
- 195 **Fenton:** But other people, if they come in late because they they shut their doors after the two
- 196 minutes. If they come in after that they'll just say, 'No, go to *room'. It's so severe.
- 197 **Rachel:** And, and you sort of talked around how the teacher might say, 'Hurry up, otherwise it's *room'

198 **Fenton:** Yeah.

199 **Rachel:** Is that how your teachers talk, is it talked about like it's a punishment like that.

200 **Fenton:** Yeah, yeah definitely.

201 **Rachel:** Okay, And then in terms of how like your friends and people talk about isolation, (1) do you
202 kind of, how do you overall feel about there being isolation at your school?

203 **Fenton:** Urm, I think it is (1) I don't think it's that necessarily I think detentions are enough of a
204 consequence to then also have *room is unneeded, I think.

205 **Rachel:** Yeah. Yeah, and you mentioned urm about *REMOVED FROM LESSON ((change in tone)). Was
206 that right?

207 **Fenton:** Yeah, that was urm last year. So, if there was a *NAME AND TIME detention and then a
208 *LONGER TIME detention and then *REMOVED FROM LESSON, which you would just go to your tutor
209 for the rest of the day. [Which is a]

210 **Rachel:** [Right, ok, and would that be something?] Sorry, *Fenton.

211 **Fenton:** And that was isolation when you went to your tutor for the rest of the day.

212 **Rachel:** Right, so it would just be you and your tutor together.

213 **Fenton:** and, and (1)and whoever the teacher's teaching.

214 **Rachel:** Yes. Ok. So, that was kind of in the moment you would go at that point.

215 **Fenton:** Yeah. Yeah.

216 **Rachel:** Okay, right, okay. And then just in terms of, if see, have you seen someone kind of be
217 *REMOVED FROM CLASS in that way and...

218 **Fenton:** What last year?

219 **Rachel:** Yeah.

220 **Fenton:** Yeah. Yeah.

221 **Rachel:** And when that happens is that something people are okay with happening? Or do they kind of

222 **Fenton:** Not really, but they also do it this year because in one of my lessons, there's these two girls
223 and they had to go on their radio to say, 'Can somebody come pick up these two girls?' because they
224 were, they were like 10 minutes late or something. And...

225 **Rachel:** Yeah.

226 **Fenton:** then they were properly refusing. And then at one point, they just walked out and left the
227 teacher who came to collect them.

228 **Rachel:** Right.

229 **Fenton:** To take them to the *room.

230 **Rachel:** Right. Okay.

- 231 **Fenton:** But they're very, they're very persistent towards it.
- 232 **Rachel:** Yeah. Yeah. So when someone sort of told they have to go there, that's not a (2) not a
233 positive, necessarily.
- 234 **Fenton:** No, definitely not ((very serious tone)).
- 235 **Rachel:** Ok, so in terms of my questions, I think we kind of come to the end of my questions, but
236 before I finish the recording, is there anything else you feel you haven't necessarily had the chance to
237 kind of cover in terms of what things are like.
- 238 **Fenton:** Urm, well I think it's just the reasons for the *room, I think they're just really silly. Like, oh what
239 was the other one. Urm (2) I completely forgot, but It's just the stupidest things like if urm if the
240 bottom of your shoes isn't 90 degrees, I can't get over how stupid that is.
- 241 **Rachel:** Mmm.
- 242 **Fenton:** You can't even see the bottom of your shoes so I don't get why it's necessary.
- 243 **Rachel:** When you say that, do you mean like the 90 degree of the heel?
- 244 **Fenton:** Yeah, of the heel, yeah. But like, like, every single shoe has to have the heel. Do you want me
245 to get my shoes? ((laughter))
- 246 **Rachel:** Yeah ((laughter)) that'd be really interesting.
- 247 **Fenton:** (17) These are the shoes that I used to have just normal black bottom shoes.
- 248 **Rachel:** Yeah.
- 249 **Fenton:** But they said they were 'too trainery.' So, we have to have one of these. But here has to be 90
250 degrees.
- 251 **Rachel:** Right.
- 252 **Fenton:** The heel here has to be 90 degrees. (3) It's so stupid.
- 253 **Rachel:** So, when you're walking into school, there's two members of staff did you say?
- 254 **Fenton:** Yeah.
- 255 **Rachel:** And then literally checking shoes ((questioning tone)). What else do they check?
- 256 **Fenton:** Urm, sometimes, if you've got your coat on, they ask you to unzip it to show that you've got
257 your blazer on. But if you say it's in your bag, they'll make you ... like Mr *NAME, he held my bag and
258 made me put my blazer on but like it's under your coat so you can't see it anyway.
- 259 **Rachel:** Yeah. Yeah.
- 260 **Fenton:** But it's stupid.
- 261 **Rachel:** Do you feel that having those sorts of rules, is that changing how people are?
- 262 **Fenton:** [Yeah.]
- 263 **Rachel:** [Do you think it kind of works?] Or do you think it's

- 264 **Fenton:** I don't, I don't think it works because we're allowed to take our blazers off in lessons [anyway]
- 265 **Rachel:** [Mmm.]
- 266 **Fenton:** So, I don't really see the point of wearing it just to walk (1) five minutes to another lesson.
- 267 **Rachel:** Yeah, yeah (2) So, you've got quite a lot of different reasons for why someone could be in
268 isolation
- 269 **Fenton:** Oh, yeah.
- 270 **Rachel:** And like you say, they're they're very, they seem very varied. Yeah. Okay.
- 271 **Fenton:** It's pretty bad. And also, if you're, last year, if you kept on being late like because they didn't
272 have to go straight to *room, sometimes that time would just get added up to a detention like it or
273 something.
- 274 **Rachel:** Yeah, you'd have the isolation and then detention?
- 275 **Fenton:** Yeah, sometimes. But I was gonna say, what was I gonna say? Oh, this year, you have to be
276 escorted to the toilet.
- 277 **Rachel:** So, if, is that anyone or is that if you're in
- 278 **Fenton:** Yeah, anyone. If you're in a lesson and you want to go to the toilet, you have to ask the
279 teacher (2) teacher has to email one of the SLT and they'll come take you and escort you to outside
280 the toilet, wait outside the toilet until you come out and walk you back to your lesson.
- 281 **Rachel:** How does that feel?
- 282 **Fenton:** Urm, it makes. It literally makes no one go to the toilet. There's like two people I've seen go to
283 the toilet because it, it's just embarrassing now.
- 284 **Rachel:** Yeah.
- 285 **Fenton:** Because I'll be like 'Miss, can I go to the toilet?' and she'll be like, 'Okay, just wait, two minutes'
286 or to finish this or 'Yeah, you can go and you just go there and back.' It's stupid. It completely drags
287 you down.
- 288 **Rachel:** Yeah. It sounds really, really tough that does.
- 289 **Fenton:** It's a bit like a prison. And like as much as anyone will say it's prison, it's just the fact that
290 nothing has changed. But since even Mom was in school, nothing's really changed like you have to
291 walk single line, a lot of the time. Urm (2) the uniform is just old-fashioned now, to be honest. And I
292 think we need to move on from it.
- 293 **Rachel:** And do your school ever kind of ask for your view or any student's views on things like this.
- 294 **Fenton:** Never.
- 295 **Rachel:** No. Okay, okay. So, just before we kind of finish, that's been really, really helpful and
296 interesting, is there anything else that kind of you think would be helpful for me to know?
- 297 **Fenton:** Urm, no I don't think there is much to be honest.

298 **Rachel:** No. That's okay. you've shared loads. It's been really, informative, really interesting. And thank
299 you so much for your time and for agreeing to take part in this.

300 **Fenton:** No worries.

301 **Rachel:** I really appreciate it. So, like I said, the next steps will be that I will type this up and I'm not
302 stopping the recording yet just in case we think of another thing but I will do in a moment. Urm, yeha,
303 so once it's been typed up, these recordings will be deleted, they won't exist anymore. Like I say
304 there's gonna be this poem that's created when I do the step that's called analysis. Would you like to
305 have that poem?

306 **Fenton:** I'd love to see it actually, yeah.

307 **Rachel:** As soon as it's done, I will get back in touch and then you can have a look at yours and then
308 see that. And like I said as well within the research, no names will be used to make sure no one knows
309 it's you who's taken part. I won't be telling anyone that you've taken part and it's completely up to you
310 if you choose to tell people. Would you like to choose the name I use for you in the research? Or
311 would you like me to choose?

312 **Fenton:** Yeah, you can choose it.

313 **Rachel:** Yeah, fantastic. I will do what I do that. Is there anything else you'd like to add before we
314 finish?

315 **Fenton:** I blame it on *NAME school ((laugh)).

316 **Rachel:** I will change the name there ((laugh)).

Appendix L

Rico's Transcript

- 1 Rachel: *Rico, has it come up with a message for you to say that it's recording?
- 2 Rico: Yep
- 3 Rachel: Perfect! That's good. That means it's working. So, to start, we're just going to cover
4 some basic information questions. So, first of all, how old are you?
- 5 Rico: 12
- 6 Rachel: Fantastic. And do you have any brothers or sisters?
- 7 Rico: One sister.
- 8 Rachel: Okay. And is your sister older than you or younger?
- 9 Rico: Older
- 10 Rachel: She's older. How old's your sister?
- 11 Rico: 15.
- 12 Rachel: Wow, she is. Okay. Fantastic. And which year group are you in?
- 13 Rico: 8. Year 8.
- 14 Rachel: Very good. And how long have you been at the school you're at now? Did you start
15 when you were in year seven?
- 16 Rico: Yes. Yes.
- 17 Rachel: Yes. So, this is your second year?
- 18 Rico: Yes
- 19 Rachel: Perfect. Fantastic. And do you have a favourite subject in school?
- 20 Rico: Urm (3) Either Food Tech or PE.
- 21 Rachel: Ahh ok. And why do you like those two?
- 22 Rico: Because normally there's not a lot of writing
- 23 Rachel: Right. Okay.
- 24 Rico: Not of (3) not theory
- 25 Rachel: Yeah
- 26 Rico: just like get to do stuff, make make stuff [and play]
- 27 Rachel: [Yeah, brilliant] And you like like doing stuff?

28 Rico: Yeah.

29 Rachel: Yeah. Fantastic. Makes perfect sense. And have you ever been to isolation yourself?

30 Rico: Yes, a lot of time.

31 Rachel: Yeah. And has anyone any of your friends ever been to isolation?

32 Rico: Yes

33 Rachel. Okay. So, like I said to you a little bit before, this research is about exploring your
34 experiences of being at a school that has an isolation space or an isolation room. So, to start
35 with, I have one key question (1) and then when you're talking *Rico, you might see me
36 writing some things down. That's not me testing you or writing anything. It's me, if you've
37 said something and I think, "oo that's really interesting. I'd like to find out more about that."
38 I'll just note down that word on my notepad (1) and it's so that I don't interrupt you because
39 I really want to listen what you're saying. So, if you see me writing, I am still listening. Okay,
40 does that make sense.

41 Rico: (nodding) [Yes.]

42 Rachel: [Fantastic]. Can you tell me about your experiences and your feelings about being at
43 a school with isolation?

44 Rico: Urm (2) the isolation is quite (1) if it's your first time it's quite nerving (2) nervous.
45 You're quite anxious a lot of the times (3), I'd say so. But if you go in there a lot, I say, often,
46 I think you're used to the layout and what happens in there.

47 Rachel: Yeah. Yeah.

48 Rico: But it is quite bad because you don't normally get to move a lot to say if you're like a
49 fidgeter person, you don't get to move. And (1) when I went to a different school in their
50 isolation, they moved a lot

51 Rachel: Right

52 Rico: Like you could go out for the, well, they took you down to the cafeteria, (2) let me
53 have like a really long movement breaks. But in our school, they don't do that. They take
54 down your orders and go to the cafeteria for you.

55 Rachel: Right

56 Rico: Which is quite (1) not (3) I'd say not as good as the other school

57 Rachel: Mmm.

58 Rico: Which is *School name and our school is *School name.

59 Rachel: Hmm. Okay. And you mentioned that very first time how it can make you feel quite
60 anxious. Do do you remember the first time you went to isolation? Would you mind telling
61 me about that?

62 Rico: It was three days and I was it was for apparently swearing at a teacher, but I was
63 swearing at my mate because he was annoying me.

64 Rachel: Yeah

65 Rico: So, I (2) when I first went in, my sister told me all about it. So that kind of eased my
66 nerves but (1) not as much. And so they go in they take your phone and they tell you where
67 to sit. There's 10 seats in there (2) and if you're naughty, you get *chances and the first
68 *chance is just to warn you, the second *chance is to warn you again, but the third *chance
69 is where the next day you get moved to a different school and then that's it.

70 Rachel: Right

71 Rico: Then when it's break, you don't, you just sit there (2) and they don't give people, they
72 barely give anyone movement breaks

73 Rachel: Yeah

74 Rico: And then they do (3) then you go to lunch (2) and (1) you don't get to move at all (1)
75 and they they come over and take down your orders and if you don't have money there's no
76 lunch

77 Rachel: Right.

78 Rico: Which is quite bad because with no money and you're like starving, you really want to
79 get something to eat and then you have no money and they won't get you anything.

80 Rachel: Yeah

81 Rico: And then if (2) then (3) some (1) at 3 you just hear everyone leave (2) and at 3:30 you
82 leave or at 4 or at 5 depending on what you've done.

83 Rachel: Right.

84 Rico: At 4 it's normally if you missed *previous isolation time and at 5 it's normally if you've
85 done something really bad

86 Rachel: Uh huh

87 Rico: And you can get up to 3 weeks in there. [Now I said, yeah.]

88 Rachel: [Right.] (3) Okay (2). Okay, and you were saying it after a bit of time you get used to
89 the layout in there you know when you sort of said the first time you can feel a bit anxious
90 but after a bit of time, you're used to the layout you know and what happens. What is the
91 layout? You mentioned there was ten (2) was it 10 desks or seats?

92 Rico: Yeah, 10 desks.

93 Rachel: Yeah. Can you describe, if you were trying to describe it like a picture to me what it's
94 like on there?

95 Rico: There's (2) three desks at the front. They're all, say about a metre, separated. Then
 96 you do another one. There's another three desks behind that, the same layout.

97 Rachel: Uh huh.

98 Rico: Three desks. And there's one up at the front, like at the very front. (2) And you're not
 99 allowed to talk. (1) You're basically not allowed to look at each other. (1) You're not allowed
 100 to like do anything basically except for work. And if you don't do enough work, you get
 101 another day in there.

102 Rachel: Right. (2) And if you were doing your work and you weren't sure what to do or
 103 something was tricky on your work, would anyone help, is there someone there to help you
 104 or

105 Rico: Normally there's a teacher that looks after you. But if it's a difficult question, they'll
 106 probably just tell you to get on with it.

107 Rachel: Uh huh

108 Rico: But sometimes if it's an easy but difficult question, they can help you. Whereas if it's
 109 [inaudible] it's quite hard.

110 Rachel: Right. Yeah. And the person who's in there, is it always the same people who work
 111 in there? Or, is it different teachers that come in?

112 Rico: Different (1) different teachers. (1) Normally in between 3 (1) 3 o'clock to 3:30, there's
 113 a different teacher.

114 Rachel: Right.

115 Rico: But that's it normally with teachers. They might come in occasionally to sit down for
 116 like a period (1) which is [inaudible] minutes and then they'll leave (3) and that's it from
 117 them. Then, they just, (2) the main teacher comes back and just sits there for the rest of the
 118 day.

119 Rachel: Right. Yeah.

120 Rico: And that's it about the teachers.

121 Rachel: Yeah. Does it feel different when it's different teachers? Are some teachers a bit
 122 different to each other in there or is everyone the same?

123 Rico: Err (5). I'd say everyone's just the same.

124 Rachel: Yeah.

125 Rico: Yeah (4). That's it really. All of them are just the same.

126 Rachel: Yeah. Okay. And you mentioned about the three *chances and (2), you know when
 127 you said that you're not allowed to kind of talk to others or really even look, would that be
 128 what you might get a *chance for if you did something like that?

129 Rico: Yeah, that would be a *chance.

130 Rachel: Okay. And if you've had that third *chance, you said it means you move to a
131 different school. Has that happened to you before?

132 Rico: It's happened to my mates, but I, I haven't been kicked out, kicked out of there.

133 Rachel: Uh huh.

134 Rico: They normally just like throw you outside. Not throw, like they tell you to go.

135 Rachel: Yeah.

136 Rico: Then at three you leave.

137 Rachel: Uh huh.

138 Rico: And then you do and you just go to a different school for a day or, or two. Then you do
139 what they do. Then you're done. But then you've got to go back to *School name and do
140 another day.

141 Rachel: Right okay. And what, how does that feel sort of feeling about that you might go to
142 a different school?

143 Rico: Urm (2) it's kind of more nerve-wracking cos you've got to meet with the headteacher
144 (high pitched when saying 'headteacher')

145 Rachel: Right.

146 Rico: Talk to you about it. And I remember when I, when I went to a different school,
147 everyone, because half of my primary school went there (2) so, I knew everyone and they, in
148 the isolation room, and they saw me and they were like, "Oh my god, why is he in here?
149 Why am I in here?" And so they told all their mates and I almost got thrown out of that (3)
150 because everyone was just coming in to see me.

151 Rachel: Right. So, because they were coming in to see you, (2) you, it almost affected you,
152 what happened to you?

153 Rico: Yep.

154 Rachel: Right, okay. And you said that they kind of reacted by saying, like "Why are you
155 here? What's he doing here?" Is that what it's like if someone's in isolation in a different
156 school?

157 Rico: Yeah, I would say so because at their school's more open and our school's more closed
158 in space I'd say (2) almost the same size as a study [inaudible]

159 Rachel: Right

160 Rico: And (2) it's (2) kind of (2) it feels claustrophobic because you're just sat in there all day
161 with people (1) doing all this work to then go out and (1) go out later than other people
162 which you feel, which is unfair because some people just don't do the work in their classes

163 (4) and they go fine but we go out on 3:30 and we do, have done like 10 pages of work and I
164 find, I find it unfair.

165 **Rachel: Yeah**

166 Rico: And it's quite, there's some stupid reasons you can get isolation as well. (2) The
167 stupidest one I've, one of my mates have got is calling an apple transgender. He got
168 isolation for that (3) I think. (4) And I got one for pretending to be a pterodactyl outside of
169 class (3) which is like "What (2) how (1) I've pretended to be a pterodactyl and, and I've just
170 been put in isolation. (1) Which would normally be a detention but they just gave me
171 isolation.

172 **Rachel: So when you say that would normally be a detention, do you kind of know what**
173 **things would be a detention, what things would be isolation. Yeah. What's the difference**
174 **between what would be a detention and what would be an isolation?**

175 Rico: So detention is (1) you have a normal day at school (2) and end at 4. You have an hour
176 behind. Isolation is you start the day in isolation and come out at 3:30 (2) which is quite bad.
177 It's quite worse than *detention, cos *detention is only an hour in a room, (2) whilst you're
178 sat in there the whole entire day in isolation.

179 **Rachel: Hmm, yeah. And what sorts of things would lead to you getting a detention or would**
180 **lead to you getting isolation? What's**

181 Rico: The detention would lead me to messing about in class and throwing objects like pens
182 at each other, stealing people's equipment, and stealing teachers' equipment that normally
183 get you *detention. And, then (2) for isolation, you'd refuse to go into a designated
184 classroom, which means you've been kicked out your classroom for something, say fighting,
185 trespassing, bunking and vaping and doing bad, really bad, more more worse stuff than
186 detention worthy.

187 **Rachel: Okay. Thank you. And something you [mentioned a few time]**

188 Rico: [Failing a detention]

189 **Rachel: Right. So if you didn't go to it.**

190 Rico: And if you fail it, it is that the same layout as *Isolation. If you get O1, O2 then O3 is
191 when you get kicked out and then you do an *Isolation the next day.

192 **Rachel: And they use, does the school use, you mentioned a lot of things like O1, O2,**
193 ***Isolation, *Detention, (1) that's a lot of words to kind of understand, is that something they**
194 **explain to you when you first start at the school or [how do you]**

195 Rico: [they] they explain it at, on the like, you know when you're in Year 6, they explain it
196 then that *Detention is after school detentions and *Isolation is isolation. And that's it. O1
197 is *chance 1, o2 is *chance 2.

198 **Rachel: Right, okay, okay. And something you mentioned a couple of times was about when**
199 **you're in isolation, you don't get to move, especially in your school's isolation. So, can you**

200 talk me through what you are allowed to do, whether you are allowed to move at all in that
201 room and what that feels like.

202 Rico: The only time you get to move is if you have a packed lunch and you throw your
203 rubbish in the bin.

204 Rachel: Right.

205 Rico: Go up to grab a book. That's it. And to the toilet. That's it.

206 Rachel: And if you go to the toilet, does someone go with you and walk you to the toilet or
207 are you allowed to kind of go by yourself

208 Rico: You're allowed to go by yourself (while yawning).

209 Rachel: Okay, okay. And what does that feel like for you, to not be able to move?

210 Rico: Feels quite bad. Feels (1) not nice because you're just stuck there (2) and not be able
211 to move. Your legs are cramping up

212 Rachel: Yeah

213 Rico: Cramping up, and the only time you really get to move is isolation. No, toilets I mean.

214 Rachel: Yeah. Yes.

215 Rico: But that's it. That's literally the only way you can move. So, you kind of use the toilet as
216 a moving break, a movement break.

217 Rachel: Okay. So, you have to say that? Someone wouldn't say to you, "Let's have a
218 movement break." You'd have to kind of ask to go to the toilet to get that.

219 Rico: Yep

220 Rachel: Yeah. Okay. Something else you mentioned earlier, you said it feels quite
221 claustrophobic and quite closed in. Can you kind of help me sort of see what that's like for
222 you?

223 Rico: Urm, say if I was stuck in this room for eight hours, I wouldn't like it because you were
224 stuck in here. No way to get out. Got to wait a long time. Time goes slowly. You're not
225 allowed to do anything. Only work. Can't go on your phone. Can't do anything. And then,
226 then you feel and you're like, "Ahh it's really tiny. I can't move. It feels like I'm in a
227 claustrophobic situation."

228 Rachel: Yeah.

229 Rico: That's what it feels like. That's it.

230 Rachel: And in that space, do you have kind of windows or is like the door ever open or

231 Rico: The door's open sometimes. But that's like I feel I find that bad because you can just all
232 hear the kids having fun (1) out there.

233 Rachel: Yeah.

234 Rico: I don't like it. I get kind of jealous (slight laugh), but

235 Rachel: Yeah. Yeah. And that made me think, you sort of talked about how you can hear
236 what other people are doing and knowing they're having fun and you also mentioned about
237 when you hear, at 3 o'clock, the others leaving and you're you're having to stay till either
238 3:30 or 4 depending what (2) do you feel quite separate to the rest of your school when
239 you're in isolation.

240 Rico: It feels like you're a different or treated differently.

241 Rachel: Yeah

242 Rico: You're almost treated as like a prisoners and you just hear the outside world moving
243 on (1) and you get to miss all these fun lessons. You never know what (1) you're missing out
244 on some good stuff that's happening.

245 Rachel: Yeah

246 Rico: (4) That's it. That's like, that it's basically a (1) prison. It's like a solitary confinement
247 room really. That's all I have on my isolation room. I don't know about other isolation rooms
248 except for *School's name.

249 Rachel: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And sort of thinking about how other people talk about isolation,
250 you know if you, if say you're in class and someone says that you're going to be going to
251 isolation, what do other people sort of think of that? Like maybe your friends or even other
252 people in your class, right?

253 Rico: You get told a day before and I'm like, "Oh, sorry. I'm not going to be in tomorrow.
254 Well, I am, but you won't see me tomorrow". They'll be like, "Why?". "I got isolation."
255 They'll be like, "Haha, you're going to be missing all out on this fun stuff." So, it makes you
256 even regret it more.

257 Rachel: Yeah.

258 Rico: Makes you even more like, "Oh, my god, why did I get this?" make you more stressed
259 about stuff. (2) I get why it's there, but I don't think you should stay until 3:30. You've
260 already done enough time and then I think you should only be a maximum of 3 to 4.

261 Rachel: Yeah.

262 Rico: Because if you go out at three, you're still going out with the normal people. If you're
263 going out at 4, you can go out in the *Detention time, which is kind of fair. But not five,
264 especially in this time because it gets dark at five. So, if you walk home, I'd say it's not the
265 nicest one to have.

266 Rachel: Yeah. And you mentioned how at three that's when kind of the normal people are
267 going and I know you said before you feel a bit like you're the prisoners kind of. So does it
268 feel very separate like.

269 Rico: Yeah, it feels like you're really different. Different. Really.

270 Rachel: No, absolutely that makes sense. Another thing you mentioned was that if you
271 hadn't brought any money that at lunchtime you couldn't, you wouldn't get food if you
272 hadn't got the money. Has that happened before to you? Have you had a day where that's
273 happened?

274 Rico: You are, I think you, I think it depends because say if your parents work or on a really
275 important work call like they are getting promoted or something you can call them but it
276 depends

277 Rachel: Yeah

278 Rico: Where they are at the moment in time and the school don't, they normally give out
279 free meals but I don't think they give out free meals for *Isolation room people...

280 Rachel: Right

281 Rico: Which is quite like, "What, how's that fair?". (3) I think everyone in *Isolation should
282 have a free lunch. Not saying the people outside shouldn't have a free lunch, they should
283 have a free lunch, but especially in *Isolation, because you're waiting all day. So, that lunch
284 is the most exciting bit of the day (3) because you get to eat (2) and (1) have like that feels
285 good and yeah that's it. But, for other people it's like, no can't sit there waiting till 3:30.
286 Because my mates when they normally have *Isolation, their bus is at 3:28

287 Rachel: Right

288 Rico: They've got to leave at 3:20 to get the bus, or else they miss it. But no, they have to
289 stay there (2) and wait for the longer bus, which normally is around 5 o'clock.

290 Rachel: Oh. So, even if they've come out at 3:30, because they needed to have been there at
291 3:20 to get that bus, they've then got to wait all that time. Oh. Yeah. Right ok.

292 Rico: Yeah, which is even more annoying.

293 Rachel: Yeah.

294 Rico: And I think you should have your phones a little bit during the day. You can text
295 parents, say how it's, how it's going and you can tell them, you can text them because at
296 school they only use phones and emails. And emails like take long cos you've got to write all
297 this stuff.

298 Rachel: Yeah.

299 Rico: But with texting, you can just text your parents if you need money in your phone.
300 Money (2) and they can put some money up there.

301 Rachel: Yeah. Yeah.

302 Rico: So, that's what I think would be good.

303 Rachel: Yeah. And and you mentioned how you could be there for up to three weeks. Is that
304 right?

305 Rico: Yeah.

306 Rachel: So, would that be kind of three weeks as in every single day that person would be in
307 isolation for three weeks?

308 Rico: Or for 15 days.

309 Rachel: And has that (1) what's sort of the most time you've been in one go?

310 Rico: 3 days.

311 Rachel: Right okay. [And what]

312 Rico: [And that] that (1) that (1) like draining like drained me (6) the bor bor bor boringness
313 (raised tone as if checking the word was correct) started getting to me. I was trying, I was
314 falling asleep in there (2) getting a lot of *chances (5) but (1). That's it.

315 Rachel: Do you think you, did you get more opportunities because you were in there for
316 longer, do you think? Is it harder?

317 Rico: Yeah, I think they could split it up (4) maybe three times. Like you could have it on
318 Monday,

319 Rachel: Hmm

320 Rico: Wednesday and then Friday.

321 Rachel: Yeah. Yeah.

322 Rico: So, it's not like not that bad. (4) I remember (1) I got, I had an *Isolation and then I had
323 a *Detention on the same day. So, without they without telling my mom, they said we'll stay
324 in here until 4, 4 o'clock. I was like, why am I staying here until 4? I just want to stay till 3.

325 Rachel: Yeah.

326 Rico: (5) So, I got another day because I didn't do enough work because I was quite angry.
327 So, I didn't tell anyone that I was so looking forward.

328 Rachel: So, your mom didn't know that you were there. (Rico shaking head). And do you
329 think isolation works?

330 Rico: (4) No, because it's draining and the next day (1) you probably get another one. (3)
331 Like, there's always the possibility of anyone getting an *Isolation. There's no point, I would
332 say there's no point of having them. Well there is, but it's not going to teach the kids a
333 lesson right now. It's basically prison basically.

334 Rachel: And one of the things you mentioned earlier, you said that you'd been sent there
335 because you were being a pterodactyl or doing an impression of a pterodactyl. Do you think
336 that would be the same, would anyone have been sent there for doing that? Or do you feel

337 like some people get sent there more easily than others would get their sent there? Do you
338 think it's kind of fair who gets sent there?

339 Rico: I think it's quite more unfair (5) about because (1) some people get for those stupid
340 reasons like my mate got one for.

341 Rachel: Yeah.

342 Rico: So, I say if you're more naughty, you're more likely to get one.

343 Rachel: So, the teacher would be more likely to think, "Oh I know who you are, or maybe I
344 know you've gone there before." And you'd be more likely to then get that than someone
345 who maybe hasn't been there before, do you feel?

346 Rico: Yeah

347 Rachel: Yeah, okay. Okay. In terms of kind of how others sort of see isolation overall, do you
348 think most people think it's a helpful place? You think most people think it's not a good
349 place?

350 Rico: I (1) think most people don't enjoy it really.

351 Rachel: Yeah.

352 Rico: That's it. That's all about my isolation room really.

353 Rachel: Yeah. that's really helpful and helping me understand. And I think we're probably
354 coming towards the end of my questions now and you've done so well and thank you so
355 much. Before I finish the recording though, is there anything else you'd like to add or there
356 might be some more detail? You think, I haven't described that or something maybe I
357 haven't even asked about and you think, "Oh, I was going to tell you this." Is there anything
358 that you think we've missed?

359 Rico: No, I think I've gone through everything.

Appendix M

Angel's First Listening (an extract)

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| <p>Angel: you know like everyone sat at a desk doing nothing like or like like barriers between everyone sort of like isolating them as the room's called like making them feel very like like they have to sit with what they've done</p> <p>Rachel: yeah</p> <p>Angel: and think about it. Even if they're like distressed, which a lot of people are in there like crying</p> <p>Rachel: hrrm</p> <p>Angel: or like shouting. They just (1) have to sit there.</p> <p>Rachel: yeah</p> <p>Angel: Urrm (1) and it just it feels like you can't leave the room never go to the toilet like it feels very like almost like you've taken away their rights</p> <p>Rachel: yeah</p> <p>Angel: for a full day like (2) obviously they get like you know lunch and stuff but other than that they can't do anything. They can't interact with other people like</p> <p>Rachel: yeah</p> <p>Angel: [(much quieter, barely audible)] yeah that's what my view of isolation is</p> <p>Rachel: hrrm and when you were kind of were talking about that the "area space that has the isolation so that</p> <p>Angel: yeah</p> <p>Rachel: you're kind of nearby. So are you hearing kind of that distress</p> <p>Angel: yeah</p> <p>Rachel: from other people. And what what does that feel like for you?</p> <p>Angel: It's just (2) it feels like it's really weird cos the "area is a really safe place (really safe place are spoken slower and really clearly punctuated)) with a lot of nice teachers in it</p> <p>Rachel: hrrm</p> <p>Angel: and it feels like there's almost like a (1) like just like a curtain between like like other people and then as soon as you step in there or hear in there you just hear shouting and you know like teacher's shouting and it just it makes it like just a bit surprised taken aback</p> <p>Rachel: yeah</p> <p>Angel: by it. Cos everyone in the "area is so calmly and then you look in there and it's like (2) a lot going on like</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah. So, you mentioned the "area feels like that safe place</p> | <p>really clear statement here and choose her words carefully.</p> <p>The phrase 'set up' immediately made me wonder about who had set it up in this way and where the power lay within the layout. Potential plot, layout of the space.</p> <p>I found the phrase 'sit with what they've done' really visual and immediately found myself picturing the space and feeling a sadness with this over the idea of guilt being enforced on the young people.</p> <p>Possible plots = boredom, shame.</p> <p>Crying and shouting felt to be a plot around the lack of co-regulation.</p> <p>I was struck by the use of the term 'full day' = it felt to emphasise how long Angel felt they were within the space as opposed to saying 'the day'.</p> <p>Plot = lack of autonomy</p> <p>This is said in a much quieter voice, almost muttering, and again leads me wondering how held back Angel might feel in being able to express her views on isolation?</p> <p>The way Angel says 'really safe place' interests me – she speaks really slowly and punctuates each word really clearly. It leaves me feeling that this point is being made really clearly and strongly.</p> <p>I am interested in the idea that the safe space has the nice teachers. Possible plot – teacher characteristics / coregulation from teachers?</p> <p>The imagery of the curtain creating a division of space, support and atmosphere feels interesting and makes me wonder about this being purposeful on behalf of the school. I felt a sense of sadness over the recognition of how safe one area feels and knowing it isn't the experience for all students.</p> |
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Appendix N

Daisy's First Listening (an extract)

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| <p>tell me about your experiences and feelings about being in a school with isolation?</p> <p>Daisy: Urm (.) well I've never been threatened (.) to be sent there but I know a lot of people have and (.) for some people they'd rather go there than be in lessons</p> <p>Rachel: Uh huh</p> <p>Daisy: Because they just want to get away from teachers</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah</p> <p>Daisy: like um when I was in Year (.) 9 there was a girl um in my year and she (.) just walked out the classroom because one of her favourite teachers was working in isolation on that day</p> <p>Rachel: Right</p> <p>Daisy: Yeah (.) and so people just sometimes leave (.) and like there's a boy in my year who misbehaves a lot</p> <p>Rachel: Hmm</p> <p>Daisy: And he always used to just walk out of class or (.) test teachers so much till they'd send him to isolation but he's ended up getting kicked out of our school</p> <p>Rachel: Oh, right ok</p> <p>Daisy: Yeah um (2) but I never really feel threatened to go. I wouldn't ever want to go in</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah</p> <p>Daisy: Because it seems like a horrible place but um (2) yeah</p> <p>Rachel: And you mentioned before that you think like some people would rather be there</p> <p>Daisy: Yeah</p> <p>Rachel: Do you feel like does that happen like if they kind of walk out can they just go there or if they get to isolation would they get told to go back sort of thing?</p> <p>Daisy: I don't really know but (2) when (.) as I previously said when that girl walked out, she did end up going to isolation and get to stay there but some teachers because in lessons teachers can issue C3, which is an after-school detention</p> <p>Rachel: Ok</p> <p>Daisy: And erm you get sent to another room or sometimes if there's no rooms available you get sent to the isolation room</p> <p>Rachel: Ok</p> <p>Daisy: And um (2) but, I guess they just kind of get to stay (.) I guess</p> <p>Rachel: Hmm and you said that you wouldn't want to go there yourself</p> | <p>Power in language of 'threatened' and 'sent there'.</p> <p>The idea of getting away from or going to a favourite teachers left me wondering about the impact of relationships in terms of behaviour and the management of behaviour. I also wondered whether school policies accounted for this subjective measure or, due to not being objective, this was not considered in the policy?</p> <p>The idea of 'testing teachers' left me wondering about the idea of students recognising dysregulation in staff and the ability to impact a teacher's regulation level to gain access to a teacher they want to be with or to a space away from the classroom. This left me wondering about how a proactive approach to meeting this need to be with an individual you have a relationship with or to a space away from the current room would prevent the need to 'test teachers'?</p> <p>The language of 'kicked out' created a strong image which felt to capture the power of the system and the 'done to' nature experienced by students.</p> <p>Recognition that the space is 'horrible' felt interesting following the concept of others seeking out the space. This left me considering whether the relationships are so strong that other young people seek out this space, or whether this seeking is based on a level of acceptance of them which is not felt in class?</p> <p>I am interested that Daisy is not certain around the procedures and the level of subjectivity around what would happen in this situation.</p> <p>The language of 'issue' in terms of a demeriton as opposed to 'get sent' when discussing isolation interested me. The language around isolation feels more power laden and directive.</p> |
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Appendix O

Fenton's First Listening (an extract)

Rachel: [But it's not a good place.] Can you tell me a bit more about how how you feel about that?

Fenton: Yeah, well I think that there's there's different levels of misbehaving that like of children that are in there. So, there's a big, there's a big spectrum of it I like there's, there's people that are just in there for uniform. There's people who like go in there for like being like really rude to teachers and stuff (2) and there's (2) um (1) and there's lots of people in there (2) and last year, because it was just with your tutor, it was a lot quieter (2), but (1) now there's, it's the whole "area. There's lots of children in there who (1) who do misbehave whilst being in there still.

Rachel: Yeah. And have you sort of been there this year to the new (2) "area or [is it]

Fenton: [I've been] I've been once.

Rachel: Hmm

Fenton: (3) I like not for that long. [Yeah]

Rachel: [Yeah] and then, when you sort of think back about the times you've been in isolation, are (1) are you generally in there for a day at a time, is it sometimes more? Or (2)

Fenton: (2) Um well in Year 8 um (3) you (2) if your uni, if you have two things of your of your uniform wrong, then you go in there until they're sorted. Um but this year, um, they have bought uniform, which you can change into if you don't have the correct one.

Rachel: Right.

Fenton: But a lot of people refuse to

Rachel: Okay (2) so if they refuse to, (1) do they (3) sort of have to stay?

Fenton: (2) Yeah, some of them have like detentions um (2) more time in the

The consideration around the different reasons for being there interested me. It made me wonder if Fenton perceived some reasons as being valid vs some not valid for being there?

The comparison between last year's isolation system and this year's, as well as how it is perceived by Fenton, interested me.

I was interested in the notion that the space is busy with people and that many 'misbehave' within the space. Considering Fenton's various reasons for students being there, I wondered about the impact of this large space with a large number of students.

Utilising isolation practices until compliance interested me in the use of the space to assert power within the system, or to remove power.

The approach of being offered uniform in front of a large number of other students, and this being refused, really interested me and the public approach to offering this. This left me wondering about identity, compliance, public punishment, shame and embarrassment; all potentially being

Appendix P

Rico's First Listening (an extract)

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| <p>Rico: Umm (2) the isolation is quite (1) if it's your first time it's quite nerving (2) nervous. You're quite anxious a lot of the times (3). I'd say so. But if you go in there a lot, I say, often, I think you're used to the layout and what happens in there.</p> | <p>The discussion of being anxiety inducing and initiating nervousness, while an acceptance of this as 'normal' when you've been before, leaves me wondering around the desired impact for schools and whether, once accepted as utilising the space, this is just accepted as 'normal protocol' for the individual and for staff to utilise with the individual?</p> |
| <p>Rachel: Yeah. Yeah.</p> | |
| <p>Rico: But it is quite bad because you don't normally get to move a lot to say if you're like a fidgeter person, you don't get to move. And (1) when I went to a different school in their isolation, they moved a lot</p> | <p>Lack of movement – movement not permitted.</p> |
| <p>Rachel: Right</p> | |
| <p>Rico: Like you could go out for the, well, they took you down to the cafeteria, (2) let me have like a really long movement breaks. But in our school, they don't do that. They take down your orders and go to the cafeteria for you.</p> | <p>Through utilising another school's isolation, Rico has a comparison with the school he attends and a recognition that each school has a different approach.</p> |
| <p>Rachel: Right</p> | |
| <p>Rico: Which is quite (1) not (3) I'd say not as good as the other school</p> | <p>The change from 'you can go' to 'well, they took you down' left me wondering about where Rico feels the power and control lies when in isolation. This initially felt to indicate autonomy but quickly adapted to demonstrated the staff have the control.</p> |
| <p>Rachel: Mmm.</p> | |
| <p>Rico: Which is "School name and our school is "School name.</p> | |
| <p>Rachel: Hmm. Okay. And you mentioned that very first time how it can make you feel quite anxious. Do do you remember the first time you went to isolation? Would you mind telling me about that?</p> | <p>It interests me that the difference in the permitted level of movement is the initial area of importance for Rico to talk about – and the direct comparison with another school's isolation protocol.</p> |
| <p>Rico: It was three days and I was it was for apparently swearing at a teacher, but I was swearing at my mate because he was annoying me.</p> | <p>I wondered about this discrepancy between what a member of staff perceived Rico had done in comparison to what he felt had happened. This left me wondering whether this had been discussed at all to leave Rico with a sense of being heard and understood.</p> |
| <p>Rachel: Yeah</p> | |
| <p>Rico: So, I (2) when I first went in, my sister told me all about it. So that kind of eased my nerves but (1) not as much.</p> | |

Appendix Q

Angel's Second Listening (an extract)

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| <p>Angel: Er English and History I'd say.</p> <p>Rachel: Ok and why are they you're favourites.</p> <p>Angel: Urm just cos like urm all the writing I can do. I'm really good at like talking a lot ((laugh))</p> <p>Rachel: ((laugh)) yeah</p> <p>Angel: In like paper you know and just like whatever</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah yeah</p> <p>Angel: But then when it comes to like science and maths I'm like I can't do it.</p> <p>Rachel: Right, ok, so English, English and History are the ones for you. Are you doing them GCSE or</p> <p>Angel: Urm in GCSE I'll probably do like Psychology,</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah</p> <p>Angel: Philosophy and English Literature.</p> <p>Rachel: Fantastic. That's really good. Ok (1). So, the research, as I've already mentioned, is about exploring the experiences of young people attending a school which has an isolation space or room. So, to start I have one question and then we can explore the areas that you feel are important urm to you. So, can you tell me about your experiences and feelings about being in a school with isolation.</p> <p>Angel: (1). I'd say it like it feels (4) it's not personally to me cos I don't get in trouble but it feels (1) like quite prison like sometimes like and very like restrictive and very like because you know it's like if you don't follow the rules its isolation</p> <p>Rachel: yeah</p> <p>Angel: It's not like we compromise and find out why you're behaving like that or you know or maybe do this or that way it's just (1) this is your punishment</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah</p> <p>Angel: and there's no talking around it and if you refuse to go you have to be excluded</p> <p>Rachel: Right</p> <p>Angel: So (2) it its very like (2) I don't I can't even think of a word it's just (1) I'm very against the idea is what I'd say</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah, yeah, yeah and when you said it's kind of like prison like, could you just sort of explain a bit more about what what about it reminds you of a prison?</p> <p>Angel: Just urm well multiple things about it cos first of all the way it is set up</p> <p>Rachel: yeah</p> | <p>This gave me a sense of relief over the interview ahead and feeling that Angel would be happy to talk.</p> <p>There feels to be quite a long silence before stating that isolation is not personal to Angel due to her never being there. I wonder if the space does personally impact Angel but if she feels like it shouldn't and this leads to hesitation? I feel the silences within the speech here align with Angel wanting to make a clear statement and choose her words carefully. <u>Plot emerging – Restrictions?</u></p> <p>The imagery of a prison creates a clear visual of the space. This image feels strong but the word 'quite' and 'like' after seem to reduce the impact this has and suggests non-committal word choices? I wonder if Angel feels slightly reluctant to use this term?</p> <p>The use of prison as an image, combined with the term 'restrictive' feels a potential plot; the clear-cut nature these are described with, in terms of 'don't follow the rules, it's isolation' and 'no talking'.</p> <p>Very strong statement here. The pauses here left me feeling that Angel wanted to make a</p> |
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Appendix R

Daisy's Second Listening (an extract)

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| <p>tell me about your experiences and feelings about being in a school with isolation?</p> <p>Daisy: Urm (.) well I've never been threatened (.) to be sent there but I know a lot of people have and (.) for some people they'd rather go there than be in lessons</p> <p>Rachel: Uh huh</p> <p>Daisy: Because they just want to get away from teachers</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah</p> <p>Daisy: like urm when I was in Year (.) 9 there was a girl urm in my year and she (.) just walked out the classroom because one of her favourite teachers was working in isolation on that day</p> <p>Rachel: Right</p> <p>Daisy: Yeah (.) and so people just sometimes leave (.) and like there's a boy in my year who misbehaves a lot</p> <p>Rachel: Hmm</p> <p>Daisy: And he always used to just walk out of class or (.) test teachers so much till they'd send him to isolation but he's ended up getting kicked out of our school</p> <p>Rachel: Oh, right ok</p> <p>Daisy: Yeah urm (2) but I never really feel threatened to go. I wouldn't ever want to go in</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah</p> <p>Daisy: Because it seems like a horrible place but urm (2) yeah</p> <p>Rachel: And you mentioned before that you think like some people would rather be there</p> <p>Daisy: Yeah</p> <p>Rachel: Do you feel like does that happen like if they kind of walk out can they just go there or if they get to isolation would they get told to go back sort of thing?</p> <p>Daisy: I don't really know but (2) when (.) as I previously said when that girl walked out, she did end up going to isolation and get to stay there but some teachers because in lessons teachers can issue a C3, which is an after-school detention</p> <p>Rachel: Ok</p> <p>Daisy: And erm you get sent to another room or sometimes if there's no rooms available you get sent to the isolation room</p> <p>Rachel: Ok</p> <p>Daisy: And urm (2) but, I guess they just kind of get to stay (.) I guess</p> <p>Rachel: Hmm and you said that you wouldn't want to go there yourself</p> | <p>Power in language of 'threatened' and 'sent there'.</p> <p>The idea of getting away from or going to a favourite teachers left me wondering about the impact of relationships in terms of behaviour and the management of behaviour. I also wondered whether school policies accounted for this subjective measure or, due to not being objective, this was not considered in the policy?</p> <p>The idea of 'testing teachers' left me wondering about the idea of students recognising dysregulation in staff and the ability to impact a teacher's regulation level to gain access to a teacher they want to be with or to a space away from the classroom. This left me wondering about how a proactive approach to meeting this need to be with an individual you have a relationship with or to a space away from the current room would prevent the need to 'test teachers'?</p> <p>The language of 'kicked out' created a strong image which felt to capture the power of the system and the 'done to' nature experienced by students.</p> <p>Recognition that the space is 'horrible' felt interesting following the concept of others seeking out the space. This left me considering whether the relationships are so strong that other young people seek out this space, or whether this seeking is based on a level of acceptance of them which is not felt in class?</p> <p>I am interested that Daisy is not certain around the procedures and the level of subjectivity around what would happen in this situation.</p> <p>The language of 'issue' in terms of a detention as opposed to 'get sent' when discussing isolation interested me. The language around isolation feels more power laden and directive.</p> |
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Appendix S

Fenton's Second Listening (an extract)

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| <p>Rachel: [But it's not a good place.] Can you tell me a bit more about how how you feel about that?</p> <p>Fenton: Yeah, well I think that there's there's different levels of misbehaving that like of children that are in there. So, there's a big, there's a big spectrum of it like there's, there's people that are just in there for uniform. There's people who like go in there for like being like really rude to teachers and stuff (2) and there's (2) urm (1) and there's lots of people in there (2) and last year, because it was just with your tutor, it was a lot quieter (2), but (1) now there's, it's the whole *area. There's lots of children in there who (1) who do misbehave whilst being in there still.</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah. And have you sort of been there this year to the new (2) *area or [is it]</p> <p>Fenton: [I've been] I've been once.</p> <p>Rachel: Hmm</p> <p>Fenton: (3) like not for that long. [Yeah]</p> <p>Rachel: [Yeah] and then, when you sort of think back about the times you've been in isolation, are (1) are you generally in there for a day at a time, is it sometimes more? Or (2)</p> <p>Fenton: (2) Urm well in Year 8 urm (3) you (2) if your uni, if you have two things of ypur of your uniform wrong, then you go in there until they're sorted. Urm but this year, urm, they have bought uniform, which you can change into if you don't have the correct one.</p> <p>Rachel: Right.</p> <p>Fenton: But a lot of people refuse to</p> <p>Rachel: Okay (2) so if they refuse to, (1) do they (3) sort of have to stay?</p> <p>Fenton: (2) Yeah, some of them have like detentions urm (2) more time in the</p> | <p>The consideration around the different reasons for being there interested me. It made me wonder if Fenton perceived some reasons as being valid vs some not valid for being there?</p> <p>The comparison between last year's isolation system and this year's, as well as how it is perceived by Fenton, interested me.</p> <p>I was interested in the notion that the space is busy with people and that many 'misbehave' within the space. Considering Fenton's various reasons for students being there, I wondered about the impact of this large space with a large number of students.</p> <p>Utilising isolation practices until compliance interested me in the use of the space to assert power within the system, or to remove power.</p> <p>The approach of being offered uniform in front of a large number of other students, and this being refused, really interested me and the public approach to offering this. This left me wondering about identity, compliance, public punishment, shame and embarrassment; all potentially being</p> |
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Appendix T

Rico's Second Listening (an extract)

Rico: Urm (2) the isolation is quite (1) if it's your first time it's quite nerving (2) nervous. You're quite anxious a lot of the times (3), I'd say so. But if you go in there a lot, I say, often, I think you're used to the layout and what happens in there.

Rachel: Yeah. Yeah.

Rico: But it is quite bad because you don't normally get to move a lot to say if you're like a fidgeter person, you don't get to move. And (1) when I went to a different school in their isolation, they moved a lot.

Rachel: Right

Rico: Like you could go out for the, well, they took you down to the cafeteria. (2) let me have like a really long movement breaks. But in our school, they don't do that. They take down your orders and go to the cafeteria for you.

Rachel: Right

Rico: Which is quite (1) not (3) I'd say not as good as the other school

Rachel: Mmm.

Rico: Which is *School name and our school is *School name.

Rachel: Hmm. Okay. And you mentioned that very first time how it can make you feel quite anxious. Do do you remember the first time you went to isolation? Would you mind telling me about that?

Rico: It was three days and I was it was for apparently swearing at a teacher, but I was swearing at my mate because he was annoying me.

Rachel: Yeah

Rico: So, I (2) when I first went in, my sister told me all about it. So that kind of eased my nerves but (1) not as much.

The discussion of being anxiety inducing and initiating nervousness, while an acceptance of this as 'normal' when you've been before, leaves me wondering around the desired impact for schools and whether, once accepted as utilising the space, this is just accepted as 'normal protocol' for the individual and for staff to utilise with the individual?

Lack of movement – movement not permitted.

Through utilising another school's isolation, Rico has a comparison with the school he attends and a recognition that each school has a different approach.

The change from 'you can go' to 'well, they took you down' left me wondering about where Rico feels the power and control lies when in isolation. This initially felt to indicate autonomy but quickly adapted to demonstrated the staff have the control.

It interests me that the difference in the permitted level of movement is the initial area of importance for Rico to talk about – and the direct comparison with another school's isolation protocol.

I wondered about this discrepancy between what a member of staff perceived Rico had done in comparison to what he felt had happened. This left me wondering whether this had been discussed at all to leave Rico with a sense of being heard and understood.

Appendix U

Angel's I Poem

I'm 15.
but I'm 16 in ten days
I have two older sisters
I haven't
but in my school
so I'm in there quite a bit
I see everything that happens
English and History I'd say
all the writing I can do
I'm really good at like talking
I'm like
I can't do it
I'll probably do like Psychology

I'd say
it's not personally to me
I don't get in trouble
I don't
I can't even think of a word
I'm very against
I'd say
that's what my view of isolation is

I would really hate it
make me feel really uncomfortable
people that ... don't like me
want to target me
I'm pretty sure there's no one in there that wants to be there

I've been in class

I mean

I think

In my school it's quite normalised
with the class I'm in and year group
my year group

like I only started going
my mental health got worse

I was younger

I had no clue

first time I went

I saw it

I was like

I don't even know what that room is

I came up

I was like oh

I think so

like I mentioned

I think they ... have bigger rooms

I think it is deliberate

I think well

I remember being in like lesson

by I think almost scaring them

I think

I don't think it does

I mean like it works in the short-term

'Oh I guess'

'I should stop doing this'

one of my friends

I don't

I don't know how to say it

if you know what I mean

I dunno

main problem with my school

I mean it doesn't

affect me

when I hear about

just when I'm up there

I like

I get really quite upset

I feel quite sad

when I see them

I mean

I always think that

I think definitely

like me

I've seen quite a few times

I mean there's a mix of stuff

I mean

I can think of so many other ways

It makes me quite like annoyed

I think

I think

I can tell

I can think
one of my teachers
other teachers I can think of
reminds me of like a drunk father

I feel very
I don't have a word
I just kind of think
That's how I would do it
if I was a teacher
I'm just thinking
I find that when the nice teachers work
I hardly hear anyone screaming
I think that's really important
I don't think proud's the right word
I'm glad you hired someone like that

I think just either through lived experience of going there or hearing
I have a friend
I'm describing to her
'oh yeah I was up in the *area'
'I can't even'
'I don't even kind of imagine'

I think
It's only
like me and
people that I know
like 'I hope she goes to isolation for that'

I don't know

I think

'Oh like I got sent to isolation for a fully day'

act hard like 'ooh no I'm not going anywhere with you'

I wouldn't honestly know

I wonder if they're doing alright

I mean

if I like know them

I'll be like

I just wonder

I guess

I'll see you at the end of the day

I think

I always

if I know what's happened

I know the situation

I'm like

I know why

I think

Appendix V

Daisy's I Poem

I'm 15
but I'm 16 in ten days
I have two older sisters
I haven't
but in my school
so I'm in there quite a bit
I see everything that happens
English and History I'd say
all the writing I can do
I'm really good at like talking
I'm like
I can't do it
I'll probably do like Psychology

I'd say
it's not personally to me
I don't get in trouble
I don't
I can't even think of a word
I'm very against
I'd say
that's what my view of isolation is

I would really hate it
make me feel really uncomfortable
people that ... don't like me
want to target me
I'm pretty sure there's no one in there that wants to be there

I've been in class

I mean

I think

In my school it's quite normalised
with the class I'm in and year group
my year group

like I only started going
my mental health got worse

I was younger

I had no clue

first time I went

I saw it

I was like

I don't even know what that room is

I came up

I was like oh

I think so

like I mentioned

I think they ... have bigger rooms

I think it is deliberate

I think well

I remember being in like lesson

by I think almost scaring them

I think

I don't think it does

I mean like it works in the short-term

'Oh I guess'

'I should stop doing this'

one of my friends

I don't

I don't know how to say it

if you know what I mean

I dunno

main problem with my school

I mean it doesn't

affect me

when I hear about

just when I'm up there

I like

I get really quite upset

I feel quite sad

when I see them

I mean

I always think that

I think definitely

like me

I've seen quite a few times

I mean there's a mix of stuff

I mean

I can think of so many other ways

It makes me quite like annoyed

I think

I think

I can tell

I can think
one of my teachers
other teachers I can think of
reminds me of like a drunk father

I feel very
I don't have a word
I just kind of think
That's how I would do it
if I was a teacher
I'm just thinking
I find that when the nice teachers work
I hardly hear anyone screaming
I think that's really important
I don't think proud's the right word
I'm glad you hired someone like that

I think just either through lived experience of going there or hearing
I have a friend
I'm describing to her
'oh yeah I was up in the *area'
'I can't even'
'I don't even kind of imagine'

I think
It's only
like me and
people that I know
like 'I hope she goes to isolation for that'

I don't know

I think

'Oh like I got sent to isolation for a fully day'

act hard like 'ooh no I'm not going anywhere with you'

I wouldn't honestly know

I wonder if they're doing alright

I mean

if I like know them

I'll be like

I just wonder

I guess

I'll see you at the end of the day

I think

I always

if I know what's happened

I know the situation

I'm like

I know why

I think

Appendix W

Fenton's I Poem

I'm 13

I'm in Year 9

I do, yeah

I want to go on and be an architect

when I'm older

I really do, yeah

I know this year

my isolation room is a bit different to last year

I do know that last year

I think the school's trying to make it sound like a good place

which I think's silly

I think that there's ... different levels of misbehaving

I've been

I've been once

I don't think

I don't ever really get *removed from the lesson as such

Yeah, urm, I mean

my Mum doesn't know this

I think it could be

but I think because

I, yeah

I do believe so

I think Year 7

I never really got into any mischief or anything

I never really was aware of it

but I did hear friends in older years talking about it

I think it depends

I mean

I sort of had to pick History

but I wouldn't

I think it's so stupid

Yeah, I think

I've been near to the two minutes

I think it is

I don't think it's that necessary

I think detentions are enough

*room is unneeded, I think

I think

I think they're just really silly

I completely forgot

I can't get over how stupid

I don't get why it's necessary

Do you want me to get my shoes?

the shoes that I used to have

held my bag

made me

put my blazer on

I don't

I don't think it works

I don't really see the point

what was I gonna say

two people I've seen go

I'll be like 'Miss'

'can I go to the toilet?'

I think we need to move on

I don't think there is much to be honest

I'd love to see it

I blame it on *name school

Appendix X

Rico's I Poem

I say
I think
when I went to a different school
let me have like a really long movement breaks
I'd say not as good as the other school

I was
but I was swearing at my mate
So, I
when I first went in
kind of eased my nerves
Now I said

I'd say everyone's just the same
but I
I haven't been kicked out
I remember
when I
when I went to a different school
I knew everyone
'Why am I in here?'
I almost got thrown out

I would say
I'd say
I find
I find it unfair
The stupidest one I've
I think

I got one for pretending to be a pterodactyl
I've pretended to be a pterodactyl
I've just been put in isolation
just gave me isolation

detention would lead me to messing about
I mean
say if I was stuck
I wouldn't like it
I can't move
feels like I'm in a claustrophobic situation
like I feel
I find that bad
I don't like it
I get kind of jealous

all I have
I don't know about other isolation rooms
I'm like
I'm not going to be in tomorrow
Well, I am
I got isolation
why did I get this?
I get why it's there
I don't think
I think you should only
I'd say it's not the nicest one

I think you
I think it depends
I don't think

I think everyone
I think you should have your phones
that's what I think

like draining like drained me
I was trying
I was falling asleep
I think they could split it up
I remember
I got
I had an *isolation
then I had a *detention on the same day
I was like
why am I staying
I just want to stay till 3

I got another day
I didn't do enough work
because I was quite angry
I didn't tell anyone
I was so looking forward

I would say there's no point
I think it's quite more unfair
stupid reasons like my mate got
I say
I (1) think most people don't enjoy it really
That's all about my isolation room
I think
I've gone through everything

Appendix Y

Angel's Plotting the Landscape (an extract)

P1: Angel - Plotting the Landscape

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|--|------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Voice of Witnessing | I see everything that happens | it's not personally to me cos I don't get in trouble | | | | |
| Voice of Restrictions | | feels (1) like quite prison like | very like restrictive | there's no talking around it | | the way it is set up ... everyone sat at a desk doing nothing ... barriers between everyone |
| Voice of Psychological Understanding | | | it's not like we compromise and find out why you're behaving like that | there's no talking around it | | have to sit with what they've done even if they're like distressed which a lot of people are in there like crying ... or like shouting |
| Voice of Disapproval | | | | | I'm very against the idea | |

Appendix Z

Daisy's Plotting the Landscape (an extract)

| P2: Daisy - Plotting the Landscape | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|--|--|---------------------------------|---|
| Voice of Witnessing | I've never been to isolation. I've been in the room only to drop things off | I know what it looks like ... I've never been myself | I know a lot of people have | | I never really feel threatened to go |
| Voice of Fear | | I've never been threatened to be sent there | | | I never really feel threatened to go |
| Voice of Control | | some people, they'd rather go there ... they just want to get away from teachers | she just walked out the classroom because one of her favourite teachers was working in isolation | he always used to just walk out | tests teachers so much ... they'd send him to isolation ... ended up getting kicked out |
| Voice of Normalisation | | | a boy in my year ... misbehaves a lot | he always used to just walk out | tests teachers so much ... they'd send him to isolation ... ended up getting kicked out |

Appendix AA

Fenton's Plotting the Landscape (an extract)

P3: Fenton - Plotting the Landscape

| | | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Voice of Restrictions | we just had to sit | we had to stay there for the whole day | | | you have to do you've got to complete all your work in there |
| Voice of Relationships | in with our tutor | | | | when it was with the tutor ... you just sit like at the back ... they'd be teaching different year groups |
| Voice of Pretence | | the school's trying to make it sound like a good place but it's (.) it's not | | | |
| Voice of Unfairness | | there's more consequences if you like misbehave in there | it can be for the silliest things | I think's silly because you can't see the bottom of your shoe | if it's not right, then you have to go straight to the *room |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| you just have to sit ... you just have to get on with your work | | | | | you can't do that anymore | because we've picked our GCSEs now, a lot of the lessons we don't like we don't have anymore | |
| you could ask your tutor for help | | You just meet up with all your friends and ... talk about how bad it was really. | Isolation last year was a lot more fun than it is this year | You could just like take off like your tie and change your shoes and then (1) you'd be in isolation for lessons that you don't want to go to ... your friend could do it too and the you'd be (1) in the same tutor together. | | because we've picked our GCSEs now, a lot of the lessons we don't like we don't have anymore | they all said it was great because you'd be with your tutor and you didn't have to go to your lesson and stuff |
| | There's lots of children in there who ... do misbehave whilst being in there still. | | You just meet up with all your friends and ... talk about how bad it was really. | | You could just like take off like your tie and change your shoes and then (1) you'd be in isolation for lessons that you don't want to go to ... your friend could do it too and the you'd be (1) in the same tutor | | |
| | there's a big, there's a big spectrum of it like there's, there's people that are just in there for uniform. There's people who like go in there for like being like really rude to teachers | teachers can add on how many (2) like periods they want | | | | | |

Appendix AB

Rico's Plotting the Landscape (an extract)

P4: Rico - Plotting the Landscape

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Voice of Psychological Impact | if it's your first time it's quite nerving (2) nervous. You're quite anxious | my sister told me all about it ... that kind of eased my nerves | |
| Voice of Normalising Othering | if you go in there a lot ... you're used to the layout and what happens | | if you're naughty, you get *chances ... the third *chance is where the next day you get moved to a different school and then that's it |
| Voice of Lack of Movement and Freedom | it is quite bad because you don't normally get to move a lot to say if you're like a fidgeter person, you don't get to move. | in our school ... they take down your orders and go to the cafeteria for you | they take your phone ... they tell you where to sit if you're naughty, you get *chances ... the third *chance is where the next day you get moved to a different school and then that's it |
| Voice of Injustice | | it was for apparently swearing at a teacher, but I was swearing at my mate | you just sit there ... they barely give anyone movement breaks |

Appendix AC

Angel's Transcript with Steps 1-5 (an extract)

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Rachel: Ok (3) So to start with urm I'm just going to cover some basic information questions just to kind of ease us into the interview</p> <p>Angel: yep</p> <p>Rachel: Ok. So, how old are you?</p> <p>Angel: I'm 15 but I'm 16 in ten days.</p> <p>Rachel: Oh wow. So pretty much 16 ((laugh))</p> <p>Angel: Yeah ((laugh))</p> <p>Rachel: And do you have any brothers or sisters?</p> <p>Angel: I have two older sisters</p> <p>Rachel: Ok so you're the youngest</p> <p>Angel: yeah</p> <p>Rachel: Of three?</p> <p>Angel: yeah</p> <p>Rachel: Right. And which year group are you in?</p> <p>Angel: 11</p> <p>Rachel: Ok. And how long have you been in your current school?</p> <p>Angel: Urm (1) since year 7 so like four years</p> <p>Rachel: Brilliant. So, you started kind of first day year 7</p> <p>Angel: yep</p> <p>Rachel: and you've been there ever since</p> <p>Angel: yep</p> <p>Rachel: Ok. And have you ever been to isolation yourself?</p> <p>Angel: Urm I haven't (1) there's but in my school there's what's called *area so (2) the isolation room is pretty much in the *area. And the *area is for people that may like struggle with like lessons or like (1) like kids with more special needs that need to go there so I'm in there quite a bit</p> <p>Rachel: hmm</p> <p>Angel: So, I see everything that happens in the isolation room</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah</p> <p>Angel: Cos the door's basically open all the time ((quiet laugh))</p> <p>Rachel: Right ok, ok, so close by?</p> <p>Angel: Yeah</p> <p>Rachel: And has anyone from your friendship group ever been in isolation?</p> <p>Angel: Yeah</p> <p>Rachel: Ok, ok. And, do you have a favourite subject at school?</p> | <p>Voice of witnessing</p> <p>Angel says this sentence as a whisper. I wonder if the door is not meant to be open and feels to be a secret or if Angel feels uncertain as to whether it should be open or if she should see in?</p> |
|---|---|

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Angel: Er English and History I'd say.</p> <p>Rachel: Ok and why are they you're favourites.</p> <p>Angel: Urm just cos like urm all the writing I can do. I'm really good at like talking a lot ((laugh))</p> <p>Rachel: ((laugh)) yeah</p> <p>Angel: In like paper you know and just like whatever</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah yeah</p> <p>Angel: But then when it comes to like science and maths I'm like I can't do it.</p> <p>Rachel: Right, ok, so English, English and History are the ones for you. Are you doing them GCSE or</p> <p>Angel: Urm in GCSE I'll probably do like Psychology.</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah</p> <p>Angel: Philosophy and English Literature.</p> <p>Rachel: Fantastic. That's really good. Ok (1). So, the research, as I've already mentioned, is about exploring the experiences of young people attending a school which has an isolation space or room. So, to start I have one question and then we can explore the areas that you feel are important urm to you. So, can you tell me about your experiences and feelings about being in a school with isolation.</p> <p>Angel: (1). I'd say it like it feels (4) it's not personally to me cos I don't get in trouble but it feels (1) like quite prison like sometimes like and very like restrictive and very like because you know it's like if you don't follow the rules is isolation</p> <p>Rachel: yeah</p> <p>Angel: It's not like we compromise and find out why you're behaving like that or you know or maybe do this or that way it's just (1) this is your punishment</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah</p> <p>Angel: and there's no talking around it and if you refuse to go you have to be excluded</p> <p>Rachel: Right</p> <p>Angel: So (2) it its very like (2) I don't I can't even think of a word it's just (1) I'm very against the idea is what I'd say</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah, yeah, yeah and when you said it's kind of like prison like, could you just sort of explain a bit more about what what about it reminds you of a prison?</p> <p>Angel: Just urm well multiple things about it cos first of all the way it is set up</p> | <p>This gave me a sense of relief over the interview ahead and feeling that Angel would be happy to talk.</p> <p>There feels to be quite a long silence before stating that isolation is not personal to Angel due to her never being there. Voice of witnessing? I wonder if the space does personally impact Angel but if she feels like it shouldn't and this leads to hesitation? I feel the silences within the speech here align with Angel wanting to make a clear statement and choose her words carefully. <u>Plot emerging – Restrictions – voice of restrictions.</u></p> <p><i>Voice of the level of restorative approach/psychological understanding</i></p> <p>The imagery of a prison creates a clear visual of the space. This image feels strong but the word 'quite' and 'like' after seem to reduce the impact this has and suggests non-committal word choices? I wonder if Angel feels slightly reluctant to use this term? <i>Voice of dislike.</i></p> <p>The use of prison as an image, combined with the term 'restrictive' feels a potential plot; the clear-cut nature these are described with, in</p> |
|--|---|

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Rachel: yeah Angel: you know like everyone <u>sat at a desk</u> <u>doing nothing</u> like or like like <u>barriers between</u> everyone sort of like <u>isolating them</u> as the room's called like making them feel very like like they have <u>to sit with what they've done</u></p> <p>Rachel: yeah Angel: and think about it. Even if they're like <u>distressed, which a lot of people are</u> in there like <u>crying</u></p> <p>Rachel: hmm Angel: or like <u>shouting</u>. They just (1) have to sit there.</p> <p>Rachel: yeah Angel: Urm (1) and it just it feels like you can't leave the room never go to the toilet like it feels very like almost like you've <u>taken away their</u> <u>rights</u></p> <p>Rachel: yeah Angel: for a <u>full day</u> like (2) <u>obviously they get</u> <u>like you know lunch</u> and stuff but other than that they <u>can't do anything</u>. They <u>can't interact</u> <u>with other people like</u></p> <p>Rachel: yeah Angel: ((much quieter, barely audible)) <u>yeah</u> <u>that's what my view of isolation is</u></p> <p>Rachel: hmm and when you were kind of were talking about that the *area space that has the isolation so that</p> <p>Angel: yeah</p> <p>Rachel: you're kind of nearby. So are you <u>hearing kind of that distress</u></p> <p>Angel: yeah</p> <p>Rachel: from other people. And what what does <u>that feel like for you?</u></p> <p>Angel: It just (2) it feels like it its really weird cos the *<u>area is a really safe place</u> ((really safe place are spoken slower and really clearly punctuated)) with a <u>lot of nice teachers in it</u></p> <p>Rachel: hmm Angel: and it feels like there's <u>almost like</u> a (1) like just like a <u>curtain between</u> like life other people and then as soon as you step in there or hear in there <u>you just hear shouting</u> and you know <u>like teacher's shouting</u> and it just it makes it like just a bit <u>surprised taken aback</u></p> <p>Rachel: yeah Angel: by it. Cos everyone in the *<u>area is so</u> <u>lovely</u> and <u>then you look in there</u> <u>and it's like (2) a lot going on</u> <u>like</u></p> | <p>terms of 'don't follow the rules, it's isolation' and 'no talking'.</p> <p><u>Voice of restrictions ... including restriction from</u> <u>working.</u></p> <p>Very strong statement here. The pauses here left me feeling that Angel wanted to make a really clear statement here and choose her words carefully.</p> <p><u>Idea of shame ... lack of psychological</u> <u>understanding?</u></p> <p>The phrase 'set up' immediately made me wonder about who had set it up in this way and where the power was within the layout.</p> <p>Potential plot, layout of the space.</p> <p><u>Idea of lack of freedom due to restrictions</u> I found the phrase 'sit with what they've done' really visual and immediately found myself picturing the space and feeling a sadness with this over the idea of guilt being enforced on the young people.</p> <p><u>Social restrictions</u> Possible plots – boredom, shame.</p> <p><u>Crying and shouting felt to be a plot around the</u> <u>lack of co-regulation/psychological</u> <u>understanding.</u></p> <p>I was struck by the use of the term 'full day' – it felt to emphasise how long Angel felt they were within the space as opposed to saying 'the day'.</p> <p><u>Plot – lack of autonomy</u></p> <p>This is said in a much quieter voice, almost muttering, and again leads me wondering how held back Angel might feel in being able to express her views on isolation?</p> <p><u>Witnessing and comparison with alternative</u> <u>supportive space from where isolation is being</u> <u>witnessed.</u></p> <p><u>Simile of curtain between two different</u> <u>approaches being witnessed/experienced.</u></p> <p><u>Voice of witnessing combined with emotional</u> <u>response to psychological impact of approach.</u> The way Angel says 'really safe place' interests me – she speaks really slowly and punctuates each word really clearly. It leaves me feeling that this point is being made really clearly and strongly.</p> |
|---|---|

Appendix AD

Daisy's Transcript with Steps 1-5 (an extract)

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Rachel: Ok so to start with we're just going to cover some basic information questions so first of all, how old are you?</p> <p>Daisy: I'm 14.</p> <p>Rachel: Fantastic. And do you have any siblings, any brother or [sisters?]</p> <p>Daisy: [Err yeah] I have a younger sister</p> <p>Rachel: Lovely and which year group are you in?</p> <p>Daisy: I'm in Year 10</p> <p>Rachel: Lovely and how long have you been in your current school? (2) Or, did you start at the end of err start of Year 7 if that's easier?</p> <p>Daisy: Yeah ((laugh))</p> <p>Rachel: ((laugh)) so started at the start of Year 7. Fantastic. And have you ever been to isolation yourself?</p> <p>Daisy: I've never been sent to isolation. I've been in the room only to to drop things off before</p> <p>Rachel: Ok</p> <p>Daisy: So, I know what it looks like in there</p> <p>Rachel: Yep</p> <p>Daisy: But I've never myself been told off and been sent there</p> <p>Rachel: Ok. Perfect. And have any of your friendship group been sent to isolation?</p> <p>Daisy: No</p> <p>Rachel: Ok. That's fine. And do you have a favourite subject in school?</p> <p>Daisy: (2) Yeah</p> <p>Rachel: Ok (2) and what's that?</p> <p>Daisy: It's (1) ((sigh)) probably art or history</p> <p>Rachel: Ok and why are they kind of your favourite two?</p> <p>Daisy: Urm (.) well art because it's more of like a wind down and I get to like kind of express myself</p> <p>Rachel: Uh huh</p> <p>Daisy: and then I really like history because I really like learning about the stuff that happened in the olden days and stuff</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah.</p> <p>Daisy: That's good</p> <p>Rachel: Very good. Ok so this research is about exploring the experiences of young people attending a school which has an isolation space or an isolation room err so to start with I have one key question and then we will explore the areas that we feel are important to you that we want to explore in more depth. So (.) can you</p> | <p>Voice of witnessing</p> <p>I was interested in the power being positioned with staff in the language of 'sent' as opposed to 'asked to go'.</p> <p>I was interested in the sigh Daisy expressed here in needing to choose a favourite. It felt as if this was difficult for Daisy to pick one, which felt to indicate to me immediately a level of enjoyment over school and learning.</p> <p>I was fascinated over Daisy valuing of a subject that enables her to 'wind down' and 'express herself'. This left me wondering about young people who do not experience this in any academic subjects and the potential benefits, in terms of regulation, of having this within learning.</p> |
|--|---|

tell me about your experiences and feelings about being in a school with isolation?

Daisy: Urm (.) well I've never been threatened (.) to be sent there but I know a lot of people have and (.) for some people they'd rather go there than be in lessons

Rachel: Uh huh

Daisy: Because they just want to get away from teachers

Rachel: Yeah

Daisy: like urm when I was in Year (.) 9 there was a girl urm in my year and she (.) just walked out the classroom because one of her favourite teachers was working in isolation on that day

Rachel: Right

Daisy: Yeah (.) and so people just sometimes leave (.) and like there's a boy in my year who misbehaves a lot

Rachel: Hmm

Daisy: And he always used to just walk out of class or (.) test teachers so much till they'd send him to isolation but he's ended up getting kicked out of our school

Rachel: Oh, right ok

Daisy: Yeah urm (2) but I never really feel threatened to go. I wouldn't ever want to go in

Rachel: Yeah

Daisy: Because it seems like a horrible place but urm (2) yeah

Rachel: And you mentioned before that you think like some people would rather be there

Daisy: Yeah

Rachel: Do you feel like does that happen like if they kind of walk out can they just go there or if they get to isolation would they get told to go back sort of thing?

Daisy: I don't really know but (2) when (.) as I previously said when that girl walked out, she did end up going to isolation and get to stay there but some teachers because in lessons teachers can issue a C3, which is an after-school detention

Rachel: Ok

Daisy: And erm you get sent to another room or sometimes if there's no rooms available you get sent to the isolation room

Rachel: Ok

Daisy: And urm (2) but, I guess they just kind of get to stay (.) I guess

Rachel: Hmm and you said that you wouldn't want to go there yourself

Voice of fear

Power in language of 'threatened' and 'sent there'.

Voice of control/manipulation/freedom

The idea of getting away from or going to a favourite teachers left me wondering about the impact of relationships in terms of behaviour and the management of behaviour. I also wondered whether school policies accounted for this subjective measure or, due to not being objective, this was not considered in the policy?

The idea of 'testing teachers' left me wondering about the idea of students recognising dysregulation in staff and the ability to impact a teacher's regulation level to gain access to a teacher they want to be with or to a space away from the classroom. This left me wondering about how a proactive approach to meeting this need to be with an individual you have a relationship with or to a space away from the current room would prevent the need to 'test teachers'?

The language of 'kicked out' created a strong image which felt to capture the power of the system and the 'done to' nature experienced by students.

Recognition that the space is 'horrible' felt interesting following the concept of others seeking out the space. This left me considering whether the relationships are so strong that other young people seek out this space, or whether this seeking is based on a level of acceptance of them which is not felt in class?

I am interested that Daisy is not certain around the procedures and the level of subjectivity around what would happen in this situation.

Voice of manipulation

The language of 'issue' in terms of a detention as opposed to 'get sent' when discussing isolation interested me. The language around

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Daisy: No</p> <p>Rachel: Because it's a horrible place (.) Can you tell me a bit more about what makes it a horrible place?</p> <p>Daisy: Well, I've only been in there (.) like I said previously (.) to drop off urm or pick up papers and urm there it's just it's like (.) it just is a horrible place like it looks almost sort of like out of a prison I guess in a way</p> <p>Rachel: Right</p> <p>Daisy: Like there's no windows and it's just like (.) two or three desks with a chair</p> <p>Rachel: Right ok</p> <p>Daisy: And then there's a teacher's desk</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah (2) ok and you mentioned before that there's a C3, which is an after school can you kind of talk me through how how someone ends up getting sent to isolation like with like that system</p> <p>Daisy: With like with the system yeah</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah</p> <p>Daisy: So (.) first you get a C1 if you're disruptive in lesson</p> <p>Rachel: ok</p> <p>Daisy: and then you get a C2 if that carries on</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah</p> <p>Daisy: And then after that it's a C3 which means you have a half an hour after school detention after school and you get moved to another classroom so (2) say I got one which I haven't I would then get moved to like the classroom next door</p> <p>Rachel: Hmm</p> <p>Daisy: and then if you're disruptive in that lesson (.) then you get a C4, which is a (.) an hour I think or 45 minutes to an hour I think</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah</p> <p>Daisy: Urm but you can also get like a C4 for being on your phone and stuff</p> <p>Rachel: Right ok so just out of sudden</p> <p>Daisy: Yeah</p> <p>Rachel: Right ok</p> <p>Daisy: Urm (2) and you can also get (.) we have like *behaviour cards</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah</p> <p>Daisy: and if you get three bad signatures for like either forgetting your PE kit or misbehaving on the corridors then you get a C3 after school.</p> <p>Rachel: Right ok</p> | <p>isolation feels more power laden and directive. Whereas 'issue' feels like it is being given in a depersonalised manner as opposed to the level of power and authority with the individual teacher in 'get sent'.</p> <p>Voice of witnessing</p> <p>Voice of fear</p> <p>The visual description interested me here in the recognition of there being no windows and only desks and chairs as 'horrible' and like 'a prison'. I was left wondering about how this connects with a prison environment and considered the lack of connection with the outside world and the restricted movement in terms of the space and what is available.</p> <p>Voice of control/manipulation/freedom</p> <p>I am interested in the idea of forgetting something warranting a 'bad signature'. The nature of something being forgotten suggests, to me, a passive and unintentional act. I was also left wondering about the young person's life context and the degree to which</p> |
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Appendix AE

Fenton's Transcript with Steps 1-5 (an extract)

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Rachel: You really enjoy that? (2) [Brilliant]</p> <p>Fenton: [I really do, yeah]</p> <p>Rachel: Lovely, that's brilliant. And have you ever been to isolation yourself?</p> <p>Fenton: (3) Yeah. More in Year 8.</p> <p>Rachel: Okay, and have any of your friendship group ever, been to isolation.</p> <p>Fenton: Yeah.</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah. Okay. Lovely. So, just in terms, like I said to you before, in terms of what the research is about, it's exploring the experiences of young people attending a school which has an isolation space or room, and it might be called something slightly different depending which school you're in. But, a kind of, some sort of consequence room or isolation room.</p> <p>Fenton: Yeah.</p> <p>Rachel: And so, to start with, I have just one key question and then we can explore areas that feel important. So, that is, can you tell me about your experiences and feelings about being in a school with isolation?</p> <p>Fenton: (2) Urm well so I know this year, my isolation room is a bit different to last year, but I do know that last year, we just had to sit in with our tutor, and we had to stay there for the whole day. But I know that this year, you're in the *area (2) urm and it's with all the other people that are also in isolation, but it's called the *room.</p> <p>Rachel: Yep</p> <p>Fenton: So, I think the school's trying to make it sound like a good place but it's (...) it's not and there's more consequences if you like</p> | <p>I was interested that Fenton started by comparing last year and this year and therefore the importance of this change to Fenton's experiences and feeling.</p> <p>Voice of lack of movement</p> <p><i>Voice of lack of freedom</i></p> <p>Voice of pretence</p> <p><i>Voice of unfairness</i></p> <p>The concept of the school being interested in presenting the space as a</p> |
|---|---|

| | |
|--|--|
| <p><i>misbehave in ((emphasis on the word in)) there</i></p> <p>Rachel: Uh huh</p> <p>Fenton: So, like it can lead to like suspension.</p> <p>Rachel: Right.</p> <p>Fenton: Pretty easily, urm (.) but isolation room <i>it can be for the silliest things</i> Like if, if you don't have a shoe with a 90-degree angle at the bottom of it (.) then (2) you go to the *room.</p> <p>Rachel: Right.</p> <p>Fenton: Yeah, <i>which I think's silly because you can't see the bottom of your shoe.</i></p> <p>Rachel: Yeah. Okay.</p> <p>Fenton: Yeah</p> <p>Rachel: Okay. So, in terms of, just understanding what could end up with someone going to the isolation room, or the *room, as it's now called.</p> <p>Fenton: Yeah.</p> <p>Rachel: So, you talked about kind of, it can be those silly reasons. Is that how, is there kind of a leading up to that point, or would that just be</p> <p>Fenton: Yeah so, urm, since the beginning of this year (.) in every entrance of the school, there's two members of staff (.) one or two that check your uniform.</p> <p>Rachel: Right.</p> <p>Fenton: And <i>if it's not right, then you have to go straight</i> to the *room.</p> | <p>'good place' interested me, alongside Fenton's factual 'but it's not' statement.</p> <p>The concept of being within the space potentially leading to further, more serious, punitive measures was interesting to me. The idea that someone could be accessing a more serious punishment in the system due to being within that space.</p> <p>The reasons explained for being within the space, feel in contrast to the government guidance.</p> <p>I was interested in Fenton's choice of the word 'silly' here. This felt to summarise Fenton not valuing or respecting these reasons but also felt to reduce the power of the system in implementing this or being considered as a threat as the term 'silly' felt quite young and non-blaming.</p> <p>This image led me to perceiving a guard or patrolling concept in checking uniform immediately on entrance to the school.</p> |
|--|--|

Rachel: Okay (.) and when you're in the *room, or what was previously (2) the kind of different room with your tutor.

Fenton: Yeah.

Rachel: What happens in that room, what does the day look like?

Fenton: Urm so you will (.) urm (2) you will go and get work (.) urm if it's physical work from your from your teacher of that lesson, or it'll get sent to you, and you have to do you've got to complete all your work in there. Yeah.

Voice of lack of freedom

Rachel: And can you tell me a bit more about where that's like in there? I mean is there, are you kind of talking with your tutor? Is it silent work?

Fenton: Urm well when it was with the tutor, urm, (.) you just sit like at the back, because they'd, they'd be teaching different year groups. So, you just have to sit like whether that's in the sort of shelfy bit or like just on an empty desk and you just have to get on with your own work and you could ask your tutor for help but they'd normally be teaching.

Rachel: Okay, and in terms of the difference between how it was last year and this year (2) was last year, was where you just by yourself with your tutor or or were there more people in the room as well?

Fenton: Urm, yeah, normally there'd be other people in the room, but it was only really people from your tutor group if they were also on isolation and...

Rachel: [Right.]

Fenton: [and obviously] the lesson that the teacher was teaching

Rachel: Okay, so this year is it a bigger group, potentially, of children in that

Appendix AF

Rico's Transcript with Steps 1-5 (an extract)

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Rico: Urm (2) the isolation is quite (1) if it's your first time it's quite nerving (2) nervous. You're quite anxious a lot of the times (3). I'd say so. But <i>if you go in there a lot, I say, often, I think you're used to the layout and what happens in there</i>.</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah. Yeah.</p> <p>Rico: But it is quite bad because you don't normally get to move a lot to say if you're like a fidgeter person, you don't get to move. And (1) when I went to a different school in their isolation, they moved a lot.</p> <p>Rachel: Right</p> <p>Rico: Like you could go out for the, well, they took you down to the cafeteria. (2) let me have like a really long movement breaks. But in our school, they don't do that. They take down your orders and go to the cafeteria for you.</p> <p>Rachel: Right</p> <p>Rico: Which is quite (1) not (3) I'd say not as good as the other school</p> <p>Rachel: Mmm.</p> <p>Rico: Which is *School name and our school is *School name.</p> <p>Rachel: Hmm. Okay. And you mentioned that very first time how it can make you feel quite anxious. Do do you remember the first time you went to isolation? Would you mind telling me about that?</p> <p>Rico: It was three days and I was it was for apparently swearing at a teacher, but I was swearing at my mate because he was annoying me.</p> <p>Rachel: Yeah</p> | <p>The discussion of being anxiety inducing and initiating nervousness, while an acceptance of this as 'normal' when you've been before, leaves me wondering around the desired impact for schools and whether, once accepted as utilising the space, this is just accepted as 'normal protocol' for the individual and for staff to utilise with the individual?</p> <p>Voice of psychological impact</p> <p><i>Voice of normalising othering</i></p> <p><u>Voice of lack of movement and freedom</u></p> <p>Lack of movement – movement not permitted.</p> <p>Through utilising another school's isolation, Rico has a comparison with the school he attends and a recognition that each school has a different approach.</p> <p>The change from 'you can go' to 'well, they took you down' left me wondering about where Rico feels the power and control lies when in isolation. This initially felt to indicate autonomy but quickly adapted to demonstrated the staff have the control.</p> <p>It interests me that the difference in the permitted level of movement is the initial area of importance for Rico to talk about – and the direct comparison with another school's isolation protocol.</p> <p><i>Voice of injustice</i></p> <p><i>Voice of injustice</i></p> <p>I wondered about this discrepancy between what a member of staff perceived Rico had done in comparison to what he felt had happened. This left me wondering whether this had been</p> |
|---|--|

Rico: So, I (2) when I first went in, my sister told me all about it. So that kind of eased my nerves but (1) not as much. And so they go in they take your phone (3) and they tell you where to sit. There's 10 seats in there (2) and if you're naughty, you get *chances and the first *chance is just to warn you, the second *chance is to warn you again, but the third *chance is where the next day you get moved to a different school and then that's it.

Rachel: Right

Rico: Then when it's break, you don't, you just sit there (2) and they don't give people, they barely give anyone movement breaks

Rachel: Yeah

Rico: And then they do (3) then you go to lunch (2) and (1) you don't get to move at all (1) and they they come over and take down your orders and if you don't have money there's no lunch

Rachel: Right.

Rico: Which is quite bad because with no money and you're like starving, you really want to get something to eat and then you have no money and they won't get you anything.

Rachel: Yeah

Rico: And then if (2) then (3) some (1) at 3 you just hear everyone leave (2) and at 3:30 you leave or at 4 or at 5 depending on what you've done.

Rachel: Right.

Rico: At 4 it's normally if you missed *previous isolation time and at 5 it's normally if you've done something really bad

discussed at all to leave Rico with a sense of being heard and understood.

Voice of psychological impact

Voice of lack of movement and freedom

Voice of normalising othering

Sibling support to ease nervousness ... this was through telling Rico what it was like. Again, this left me wondering about the intentional 'hidden' nature of the space for the students.

Again, Rico's recognition for his need for a movement break but this being seen as a privilege as opposed to a need within the isolation space left me wondering about the resulting impact on Rico's regulation within this situation and the energy, he would require to remain regulated and avoided experiences the *chances protocol.

This made me consider the level of othering Rico felt at points where he could hear others within the community going about their ordinary day and the different finish time being a direct indicator of the level of 'punishment' related to what had happened.

Rachel: Uh huh

Rico: And you can get up to 3 weeks in there. [Now I said, yeah.]

Rachel: [Right.] (3) Okay (2). Okay, and you were saying it after a bit of time you get used to the layout in there you know when you sort of said the first time you can feel a bit anxious but after a bit of time, you're used to the layout you know and what happens. What is the layout? You mentioned there was ten (2) was it 10 desks or seats?

Rico: Yeah, 10 desks.

Rachel: Yeah. Can you describe, if you were trying to describe it like a picture to me what it's like on there?

Rico: There's (2) three desks at the front. They're all, say about a metre, separated. Then you do another one. There's another three desks behind that, the same layout.

Rachel: Uh huh.

Rico: Three desks. And there's one up at the front, like at the very front. (2) And you're not allowed to talk. (1) You're basically not allowed to look at each other. (1) You're not allowed to like do anything basically except for work. And if you don't do enough work you get another day in there.

Rachel: Right. (2) And if you were doing your work and you weren't sure what to do or something was tricky on your work, would anyone help, is there someone there to help you or

Rico: Normally there's a teacher that looks after you. But if it's a difficult question, they'll probably just tell you to get on with it.

Rachel: Uh huh

This felt a large timescale for a punishment to continue for.

I was interested that as well as being isolated from the school community, the individuals within the room were being physically isolated from each other.

This left me wondering about how I would cope within this learning environment, knowing that when I am learning I need to have moments of looking around my physical space, connection with others I'm in the environment with. It made me wonder about how slowly time might pass for the individuals within this room and whether any staff members in any schools ever trial out what isolation feels like with tasks to complete themselves.

I felt a sense of warmth in 'looks after you' in terms of learning.

Appendix AG

Angel's Voice Poem (an extract)

| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/He/She/Teacher</u> | <u>We / Us</u> |
|---|---|--|----------------------------|----------------|
| I see everything that happens I'd say it feels | | it's not personally | | |
| to me I don't get in trouble | | it feels like quite prison like | | |
| | you know | it's like | | |
| | if you don't follow the rules | | | |
| | | it's isolation It's not like we compromise | | |
| | and find out why you're behaving like that you know this is your punishment | | | |

I**You****It****They/He/She/Teacher****We / Us**

if you
 refuse
 you have to
 be excluded

I don't
 I can't even
 think of a word

it's just

I'm very
 against the
 idea
 I'd say

everyone sat at a desk
 doing nothing
 barriers between
 everyone
 isolating them
 making them feel very
 they have to sit with
 what they've done
 they're like distressed
 they just have to sit

you can't
 leave
 you've
 taken away
 their rights

they can't do anything
 they can't interact with
 other people

| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/He/She/Teacher</u> | <u>We / Us</u> |
|---|--|-------------------------------|--|----------------|
| that's what my view of isolation is | | | | |
| | | it's really weird | | |
| | | | a curtain between like life other people | |
| | as soon as you step in there you just hear shouting | | | |
| | | | you know like teachers shouting cos everyone in the *area is so lovely | |
| | then you look in there | | | |
| | | it's like a lot going on | | |
| I would really hate it | | *area is such a good place | | |
| | | | cos people go up there if there they can't face being in a room with people | |

Appendix AH

Daisy's Voice Poem (an extract)

| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/He/She/Teacher</u> | <u>We / Us / Our / Everyone</u> |
|--|------------|-----------|--|---|
| I've never been threatened to be sent there I know a lot of people have | | | for some people they'd rather go there than be in lesson they just want to get away from teachers | |
| when I was in Year 9 in my year | | | she just walked out people just sometimes leave there's a boy ... who misbehaves he always used to just walk out they'd send him to isolation he's ended up getting kicked out | of our school |

I**You****It****They/He/She/Teacher****We / Us /****Our /****Everyone**

I never really
 feel
 threatened to
 go
 I wouldn't ever
 want to go

it seems like a
 horrible place

I don't really
 know
 as I previously
 said

when that girl walked
 out
 she did end up going
 to isolation and get to
 stay

you get sent
 you get sent
 to the
 isolation
 room

I guess

they just ... get to stay

I guess

I've only been
 in there
 like I said
 previously

| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/He/She/Teacher</u> | <u>We / Us / Our / Everyone</u> |
|----------|---------------|--------------------|----------------------------|---|
| | | it's just | | |
| | | it's like | | |
| | | it just is a | | |
| | | horrible place | | |
| | | it looks almost | | |
| | | sort of like out | | |
| | | of a prison | | |
| I guess | | | | |
| | | there's no | | |
| | | windows | | |
| | | it's just like (.) | | |
| | | two or three | | |
| | | desks with a | | |
| | | chair | | |
| | first you get | | | |
| | a C1 | | | |
| | if you're | | | |
| | disruptive | | | |
| | you get a | | | |
| | C2 if that | | | |
| | carries on | | | |
| | | then ... it's a | | |
| | | C3 | | |
| | you have a | | | |
| | half an hour | | | |
| | after school | | | |
| | detention | | | |

Appendix A1

Fenton's Voice Poem (an extract)

| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/He/She/Teacher</u> | <u>We / Us / Our / Everyone</u> |
|--|------------------------|--|----------------------------|---|
| I know this year my isolation room is a bit different to last year I do know that last year | | | | |
| | | | | we just had to sit with our tutor we had to stay there |
| I know that this year | you're in the *area | | | |
| | | it's with all the other people *it's called the *room | | |
| I think the school's trying to make it | | | | |

| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/He/She/Teacher</u> | <u>We / Us / Our / Everyone</u> |
|----------------------------|---|---|---------------------------------|---|
| sound like a good place | | but it's not | | |
| | if you like misbehave in ((emphasis on 'in')) | | | |
| | | it can lead to like suspension it can be for the silliest things | | |
| | if you don't have a shoe with a 90 degree angle you go to to the room | | | |
| which I think's silly | | | | |
| | you can't see the bottom | | | |
| | | | there's two members of staff | |
| | | if it's not right | | |

| | | | | |
|----------|------------|-----------|----------------------------|---|
| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/He/She/Teacher</u> | <u>We / Us /</u> <u>Our /</u> <u>Everyone</u> |
|----------|------------|-----------|----------------------------|---|

you have to
go
you will
you will go
and get
work

or it'll get sent

to you
you have to
you've got to
complete all
your work
you just sit

they'd
they'd be teaching

you just
have to sit
you just
have to get
on
with your
own work
you could
ask
your tutor

they'd normally be
teaching
there'd be other
people

Appendix AJ

Rico's Voice Poem (an extract)

| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/He/She/Teacher</u> | <u>We / Us / Our / Everyone</u> |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| | if it's your first time | | | |
| | | it's quite nerving (2) nervous | | |
| | you're quite anxious | | | |
| I'd say so | | | | |
| | if you go in there | | | |
| I say often I think | | | | |
| | you're used to | | | |
| | | it is quite bad | | |
| | you don't normally get to move if you're like a fidgeter you don't | | | |
| when I went to a different school | | | | |
| | | | they moved | |
| | you could go out | | | |

| <u>I</u> | <u>You</u> | <u>It</u> | <u>They/He/She/Teacher</u> | <u>We / Us / Our / Everyone</u> |
|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|---|---|
| | | | well they took you down | |
| let me have like a really long movement breaks | | | | but in our school |
| | | | they don't do that they take down your orders | |
| | go to the cafeteria for you | | | |
| I'd say not as good as the other school | | | | our school is *School name |
| | | It was three days | | |
| I was | | it was for apparently | | |

I**You****It****They/He/She/Teacher****We / Us /****Our /****Everyone**

but I was
swearing at
my mate

he was annoying me

So, I
when I first
went in
my sister told
me all
kind of eased
my nerves

they go in
they take your phone
they tell you where to
sit

if you're
naughty
you get
*chances
to warn you
to warn you
again
you get
moved to a
different
school

then that's it
when it's
break

you don't

Appendix AK

Angel's Table of Voice

| Voice | Self-Voice | Way of speaking (e.g. tone, language, positioning of self) |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| Voice of Witnessing | Singular - 'I' or 'me' | Predominantly positions self as active (e.g. 'I see', 'I'm very', 'I saw') while also passive (e.g. 'it's not personally to me'). |
| | Plural - 'you' | <p>Perspective language is used (e.g. 'I feel').</p> <p>Positions self as active (e.g. 'I saw', 'I feel') while also utilising plural passive self-voice (e.g. 'you just hear').</p> <p>Positions self as subject of actions of others when considering the self-impact (e.g. 'it doesn't exactly like affect me').</p> <p>Aligns self with others when reflecting on past experiences (e.g. 'you just hear', 'you can tell').</p> <p>Speaks of self in the present tense ('makes me', 'I see', 'I hear').</p> <p>Utilises a whispering tone ('cos the door's basically open all the time') along with a quiet laugh, potentially apprehension over whether witnessing is permitted.</p> <p>Tone of awareness around isolation practices ('I see everything', 'it makes me just disappointed', 'reminds me of like a drunk father', 'I'm glad you hired someone like that') along with a wondering tone around those experiencing isolation ('I just wonder how they're doing', 'I think it is deliberate').</p> |
| <i>Voice of Psychological Understanding</i> | Singular – 'I', 'me' or 'my' | <p>Positions self as active ('not like we compromise', 'would make me feel', 'in my school', 'I get', 'I feel', 'makes me').</p> <p>Perspective language is used ('I feel', 'I wonder').</p> <p>Speaks in hypothetical assertions ('It definitely would make me feel', 'I think they're quite aware').</p> <p>Speaks in present tense.</p> <p>Tone of sadness ('I feel quite sad', 'scare tactic', 'don't care', 'I get really quite upset')</p> |
| <u>Voice of Restriction</u> | Plural pronouns – 'you' | Utilises descriptive language ('you get sent', 'you would be sent', 'reminds me of a prison'). |
| | Singular – 'me', 'I' | <p>Positions self as active ('would make me feel', 'I wonder', 'reminds me').</p> <p>Speaks in present tense and future tense.</p> <p>Tone of power dynamics ('I wonder if they're doing alright', 'You can't comfort them', 'prison like').</p> |
| <i>Voice of Disapproval</i> | Singular pronouns – 'I', 'I'm', 'me' | <p>Positions self as active ('I'm very against ...', 'I would really hate it', 'I'm pretty sure').</p> <p>Utilises descriptive and emotive language ('how horrible it is', 'feels unfair', 'aggravating', 'annoyed').</p> <p>Combines a purposeful tone with an ambivalent tone ('It's just so obvious', 'you can just tell', 'they're making the cycle worse', 'people that clearly' with 'like how are we gonna improve like stuff', 'I just wonder', 'I wonder', 'I think').</p> <p>Utilises I and me predominantly but occasionally uses 'it', 'you' and 'we' to align self with others ('it's like', 'it just feels', 'you can just tell', 'only you know like', 'how are we gonna improve', 'how will we').</p> <p>Speaks in assertions with a tone of conviction ('don't do it, don't do that, then they're doing it'). The tone here emphasises 'that', asserting Angel's recognition of an alternative.</p> <p>Speaks in present tense and future tense ('they're not going to').</p> <p>Speaks in a frustrated tone ('no, what do you not realise', 'that's making the cycle worse').</p> |
| | Plural pronouns – 'You', 'it', 'we' | |

Appendix AL

Daisy's Table of Voices

| Voice | Self-Voice | Way of speaking (e.g. tone, language, positioning of self) |
|--|---|--|
| Voice of Witnessing | Singular - 'I' Plural - 'you' | Utilises descriptive language ('you can't hear anything') Positions self as active ('I've never been', 'I know a lot of people', 'I never really'). Utilises neutral tones and informative communication ('I've only been', 'for some people', 'all the people in there just looked') alongside emotional tones ('I hated going in'). Ordinarily speaks of self in singular voice and does not align self with others ('I've never been'). Utilises tone of conviction ('I know'). Speaks in present tense and past tense ('I know' and 'just looked like'). |
| Voice of Control | Singular – I Plural – 'you'll', 'our', 'you're', 'you' | Utilises active and passive voice ('if you're struggling you ought', 'I guess', 'she just walked out') and ('it will say'). Utilises prescriptive language ('if you're disruptive in that lesson then you get a C4'). Positions self as active ('I think'). Utilises an informative tone and an evaluative tone ('they'd rather go there than', 'she did end up going', 'if you're disruptive then') and ('I guess they just kind of get to stay', 'some people decide', 'just can't be bothered', 'decided to just leave'). Speaks with a tone of conviction and in assertions ('some people', 'can't be bothered', 'decided to just leave'). Speaks in past tense and present tense ('decided to just leave' and 'they think it makes them seem more cool'). |
| Voice of Fear | Singular – 'I', 'me' Plural – 'us', 'you', 'people' | Speaks in an active voice ('I would never', 'you shouldn't want to go there') alongside a passive voice ('I've never been threatened to be sent there', 'they've embedded it in our heads'). Utilises an emotional tone ('I've never been threatened', 'like out of a prison', 'they're too scared', 'it's a really bad place', 'it scares me', 'I hated going in', 'people don't go down', 'I don't necessarily think it's a safe space'). Positions self as subject to the actions of others ('I've never been threatened', 'I never really feel threatened to go', 'you shouldn't want to go there', 'they've embedded it in our heads'). Speaks in past and present tense. |
| Voice of Normalisation for Others | Singular – 'I', 'me' Plural – 'people' | Mainly positions self as active ('I don't really think', 'I think'). Utilises a confident tone which is persuasive and reasoned ('it tends to be', 'I feel like it could be better', 'I don't really think that's much of a punishment', 'I think they're doing it', 'I think the people', 'always told me', 'more angry at the school than at me'). Speaks in present tense and past tense. Utilises a considered tone ('I think'). |

Appendix AM

Fenton's Table of Voice

| Voice | Self-Voice | Way of speaking (e.g. tone, language, positioning of self) |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Voice of Restrictions | Plural – 'we', 'you', 'you'd', 'your friend', 'we've', 'we' Singular – 'my', 'me' | Spo ke of the self in plural terms ('we just had to sit', 'you just have to sit', 'you just have to get on'), aligning self with others ('you have to', 'you could just', 'you'd be in isolation', 'your friend could do it too', 'we've picked'). Spoke of self as passive and the subject of others. Use prescriptive language with a tone of conviction and assertion ('had to', 'have to', 'you have to', 'you've got to', 'you can't do that', 'you do have to'). Spoke in past tense and present tense. |
| <i>Voice of Relationship</i> | Plural – 'we', 'they'd', 'you', 'your', 'we've', 'they', 'other people' Singular – 'I', 'I've' | Predominantly spoke of self in plural terms. Spoke in past, present and future tense. Positions self as passive predominantly ('you just sit at the back', 'you'd be with'). |
| <u>Voice of Pretence</u> | Singular – 'I', Plural – 'all your friends', 'you'd', 'you', 'we're' | Speaks in the active voice ('I think', 'they all said', 'you'd be with', 'you didn't'). Positions self as active ('I think', 'you didn't have to go'). |
| | | Speaks predominantly in the past tense, but also the present tense when utilising singular self-voice ('I don't think it works'). Utilises a critical tone ('trying to make it sound like a good place', 'talk about how bad it was', 'I don't get why it's necessary', 'I don't think it works'). |
| <i>Voice of Unfairness</i> | Singular – 'I' Plural – 'you', 'your', 'you're', 'we're' | Tends to speak in plural self-voice but at times utilises singular to express an opinion. Positions self as active but at times is more passive when using plural self-voice. Aligns self with others ('like if you misbehave', 'you're two minutes late', 'we're allowed to take'). Speaks in present tense. Speaks with a tone of conviction in assertions with criticality ('you should be allowed to be two minutes late', 'It's so severe', 'I think they're just really silly', 'I can't get over how stupid that is', 'I don't get why it's necessary', 'I don't, I don't think it works', 'It's stupid', 'It completely drags you down', 'I blame it on *name school'). |

Appendix AN

Rico's Table of Voices

| Voice | Self-Voice | Way of speaking (e.g. tone, language, positioning of self) |
|---|---|--|
| Voice of Psychological Impact | Plural – 'your', 'you're', 'you', 'you've', Singular – 'I'd', 'my', 'me', 'I' | Utilises a mixture of plural and singular self-voice. Positions self as passive predominantly ('its quite nerve wracking', 'that kind of eased my nerves', 'you get another day', 'like throw you outside', 'tell you to go'). Positions self as separate to others ('You're almost treated as like a prisoner', 'you just hear the outside world moving on'). Speaks in a descriptive and emotive tone ('you can just all hear the kids having fun out there', 'my god, why did I get this?', 'I'd say it's not the nicest one to have', 'like draining like drained me', 'I got another day because I didn't do enough work', 'it's basically prison basically'). Speaks in past and present tense. |
| <i>Voice of Normalising Othering</i> | Plural – 'your', 'you', 'you're', 'you'd', 'you've', Singular – 'I', 'me' | Speaks in active and passive voice ('I think you're used to the layout and what happens', 'if you're naughty you get *chances', 'you kind of use the toilet as a moving break') and ('they take your phone', 'you get moved', 'they tell you to go', 'detention would lead me to messing about'). Speaks in present tense predominately. |
| | | Aligns self as separate to others ('normally just like throw you outside', 'like they tell you to go', 'you won't see me tomorrow', 'I get kind of jealous', 'you're still going out with the normal people', 'feels like you're really different'). Speaks descriptively about what has happened and what does happen. Utilises a regretful tone ('then that's it', 'I get kind of jealous'). |
| <u>Voice of Lack of Movement and Freedom</u> | Plural – 'you', 'you're', 'your', 'our' Singular – 'I', 'I'm', | Predominantly speaks about self using plural self-voice. Mainly uses passive voice ('you don't normally get to move', 'they take down your orders and go to the cafeteria for you', 'they take your phone', 'they barely give anyone movement breaks', 'you're basically not allowed to look at each other', 'it feels claustrophobic', 'you're just sat in there all day', 'only time you get to move', 'you're just stuck there', 'you're not allowed to do anything', 'it's basically a prison', 'you're almost treated as prisoners', 'you just hear the outside world moving on'). Speaks with a tone of conviction and speaks in assertions ('you're basically not allowed', 'you're not allowed'). Speaks with a hurt tone ('it's basically a prison', 'you're almost treated as prisoners', 'you're not allowed to do anything', 'it feels claustrophobic', 'the only time you get to move', 'your legs |

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| | | are cramping', 'literally the only way you can move', 'time goes slowly', 'I can't move', 'you just hear the outside world moving on'). |
| <i>Voice of Injustice</i> | Singular – 'I', 'me', Plural – 'you', 'you're' | <p>Utilises an active voice ('if you're more naughty, you're more likely to get one', 'but I was swearing', 'you just hear everyone').</p> <p>Positions self as subject of actions of others ('they come over and take down your orders', 'if you don't do enough work, you get another day', 'I almost got thrown out').</p> <p>Utilises frustrated tone ('for apparently swearing', 'if you don't have money there's no lunch', 'you get another day in there', 'at 3 you just hear everyone leave', 'Why am I in here?', 'is unfair', 'some stupid reason', 'normally be a detention but they just gave me isolation', 'makes you more stressed', 'I don't think I should stay', 'going out with the normal people', 'I don't think they give out free meal for *isolation people', 'I got another day because I didn't do enough work because I was quite angry', 'it's quite unfair', 'stupid reasons', 'if you're more naughty, you're more likely to get one').</p> <p>Speaks in past and present tense.</p> |