Institute of Education
UCL

Does an inclusive ethos enhance the sense of school belonging and encourage the social relations of young adolescents identified as having social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) and moderate learning difficulties (MLD)?

2017

by

Eleni Dimitrellou

A thesis submitted to the UCL Institute of Education for the degree of PhD

in School of Psychology and Human Development

Declaration

I, Eleni Dimitrellou, hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

Word Count

Word count (exclusive of appendixes and bibliography): 71,083

Copyright

Abstract

Background Empirical evidence has shown that the inclusion of pupils identified as having social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) and moderate learning difficulties (MLD) can be challenging. There is limited research investigating the relationship between the inclusivity of a school and the reported schooling experiences of pupils with SEMH and MLD. This study addresses the question as to whether a school with an inclusive ethos enhances the sense of belonging and encourages the social relations of these groups of SEN.

Method Three secondary mainstream schools from a metropolitan area participated in the study. Data collection employed a mixed methods approach utilising semi-structured interviews and self-completed questionnaires from pupils (SEMH, MLD, typical) and educational staff.

Results The inclusive ethos of a school was found to be positively associated with the perceived sense of school belonging as well as the social relations of pupils identified as having SEN. Comparison of the schooling experiences between groups revealed that pupils identified as having SEMH reported having different needs and were found to have less of a sense of belonging and more negative social relations than those identified as having MLD.

Conclusions A school with an inclusive ethos appears to promote feelings of belonging and positive social relations of pupils identified as having SEMH and MLD. It is proposed that differentiation of inclusive practices within mainstream settings is important for the successful inclusion of pupils identified as having SEMH and MLD, as the different SEN groups are not homogenous. It is also proposed that active participation of pupils with SEN in school decision making and listening to pupils' voices can be a powerful tool in informing differentiation and engendering an inclusive ethos.

Acknowledgements

Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The ideology of inclusion and its practical implementation in mainstream settings has been in the frontline of educational research for many years, having gained many supporters worldwide. In the past, several scholars have explored the effectiveness of inclusion of pupils identified as having special educational needs (SEN) by asking teachers (e.g. Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burdern, 2002), head teachers (e.g. Abbott, 2006), parents (e.g. Rogers, 2007) or even typical pupils' opinions (e.g. Farrell, 2000). However, it is only recently that the exploration of pupils with SEN's perception has gained momentum, this happening not only in academic research (e.g. O'Connor, Hodkinson, Burton, & Torstensson, 2011), but also in terms of legislation. It is the 2014 Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0-25 years – it applies to England, which places pupils' opinions and their active participation in decision-making within the school as a key principle of its implementation.

This chapter provides the background context of the current study. It begins by describing the purpose of the present study and continues by presenting the rationale and the overall aim. It also provides a brief overview of the research approach used for the data collection and concludes by explaining the significance of the study.

1.2 Purpose

The purpose of the current study is to explore the schooling experiences of pupils identified as having social emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH) and moderate learning difficulties (MLD). Specifically, it investigates whether their perceptions regarding school ethos, sense of belonging and social relations are moderated by the inclusivity of the school setting. A further objective of this study is to investigate any differences in the experiences of pupils identified as having SEMH difficulties and those identified as having MLD in mainstream secondary schools in England.

1.3 Rationale

More than 23 years have passed since the enactment of the Salamanca World Statement issued by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Culture Organisation (UNESCO, 1994), where 92 governments from all over the world, including the U.K. and

25 international organisations, pledged to "adopt the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise" (UNESCO, 1994, p. 44).

The Department for Education (DfE) in England has since been encouraging all schools to implement inclusive practices and facilitate the inclusion of pupils with SEN within mainstream settings, via the ratification of various legislation and policies. This has resulted in an increased placement of pupils with SEN in mainstream schools. Statistics provided by the DfE show a rise of pupils in these schools with a statement of SEN[1] from 48 percent in 1993 to 61 percent in 2001. At the same time, the respective rates of pupils attending special schools fell from 49 percent to 36 percent. However, even though England has continued promoting inclusive practices, in 2002 an unexpected fall in the percentage of pupils with SEN attending mainstream schools occurred and this trend continued, though less rapidly, with there being a decrease from 60 percent in 2002 to 51 percent in 2015. Conversely, the percentage of pupils with a statement of SEN attending special schools increased significantly from 37 percent in 2002 to 44 percent in 2015. This shift from mainstream to special schooling has raised concerns about the effectiveness of current inclusive practices.

By definition, inclusion places the onus on schools to make suitable and often radical adjustments in order to accommodate the individual needs of pupils (Ainscow, 1999). As Sebba and Sachdev (1997, p. 9) stated, inclusion is "the process by which a school attempts to respond to all pupils as individuals by reconsidering and restructuring its curricular organisation and provision and allocating resources to enhance equality of opportunity". To achieve this, it is necessary for schools to accurately identify pupils' type of SEN, in order to provide them with suitable support that meets their individual needs. However, it is a common finding in the literature of special education that this is not always the case for certain types of SEN. Pupils with SEMH and MLD, who comprise the two largest categories of those with SEN receiving education in mainstream schools (DfE, 2015), pose a significant challenge in being reliably identified; arguably, the most challenging of which is SEMH (e.g. Ellis & Tod, 2012). Additionally, these categories

---

[1] A Statement of SEN is the highest educational support available for a child with SEN as suggested by the 2001 SEN Code of Practice. With the introduction of the 2014 SEN Code of Practice, this has now been replaced by the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHC Plan).

are considered the most difficult to be successfully included (e.g. Monchy, Pijl, & Zandberg, 2004; Pijl, Frostad, & Flem, 2008) — a claim that is reinforced by the 2011 National Statistics, where pupils with SEMH were found to be more likely to receive high rates of fixed period exclusions and those with MLD were more likely to be regularly absent (DfE, 2011). This also suggests that pupils identified as having SEN are not a homogeneous group with similar needs. Thus, there is a pressing need to ensure reliable identification and most importantly to listen to pupils' own views regarding inclusion separately in order to identify the changes schools should make to satisfy their needs and improve their schooling experience.

The significant role the school plays in the schooling experience has been demonstrated through several surveys. School ethos characteristics, such as pupils' active involvement in decision making and participation, praise and encouragement by teachers, as well as the successful implementation of caring behaviour management policies, were found to have a positive effect on behaviour, attainment, social relations, and sense of belonging (see for example: Carter, 2002; Cemalcilar, 2010; Ma, 2003; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, Ouston, & Smith, 1979). These findings, however, only involved typical pupils, but it seems reasonable to suggest that the relation between school ethos and schooling experience extends to pupils with SEN. In fact, the above characteristics of ethos were also included by Booth and Ainscow (2002) in their seminal publication 'Index for Inclusion' as part of the so called inclusive ethos. Thus, it can be hypothesised that pupils with SEN attending a school with a more inclusive ethos would have an enhanced sense of belonging and good social relations, throwing light on how inclusion works.

A small number of studies have examined the sense of belonging and social relations of pupils with SEN attending mainstream settings (e.g. McCoy & Banks, 2012; Murray & Greenberg, 2001; Nepi, Facondini, Nucci, & Peru, 2013), but it would appear that no study has investigated the impact of an inclusive ethos. In addition, no research has involved exploring any differences between pupils with SEMH and those with MLD, with respect to their perceptions of schools' inclusive ethos, feelings of belonging and social relations, in the English context. It is contended here that by understanding the individual needs of pupils with SEMH and MLD, schools can make suitable adjustments that enhance their inclusive practices and thus, make mainstream settings a welcome place for all.

1.4 Overall Aim

The overall aim of this study is to examine whether the perceptions of pupils identified as having SEMH difficulties and MLD regarding school ethos, sense of school belonging and social relations are moderated by the inclusive ethos of the school setting to which they attend (see Literature Review for further information).

1.5 Research Approach

In order to address the aims of the current study, three distinct phases were completed:

The first phase was the identification of a pair of schools that differ in terms of the level of inclusivity. A rigorous and systematic process based on school census statistics and five criteria were used as a refinement process to identify a "more inclusive" and a "less inclusive" school.

The second phase was an exploratory process, where the reliability and validity of the self-constructed questionnaires were tested and any necessary improvements were made in order to ensure the suitability of the research tools used in the third phase.

In the third phase, a sequential mixed methods approach was carried out for the data collection, which was further divided into two stages. In the first stage, two self-completed questionnaires, i.e. the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) and the main questionnaire, were distributed to all participating pupils for completion. In the second stage, a number of pupils participated in a semi-structured interview.

1.6 Significance of the Research

As reported earlier only a small number of studies examined whether there is a link between a school's inclusive ethos and a sense of belonging and social relations for pupils identified as having SEN. To the knowledge of the researcher, no other similar study has ever been conducted in the English context or internationally, and since this research is novel, it makes an original contribution to knowledge. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, regarding those studies that examined the link between school characteristics and schooling experiences of pupils, they were mainly focused on behaviour (e.g. Naylor & Cowie, 1999), attainment (e.g. Morris, 1995), sense of belonging (e.g. Cemalcilar, 2010)

or social relations (e.g. Carter, 2002). Very few studies have investigated the link between school characteristics and pupils' sense of belonging and/or their social relations, and those that there have been have been conducted on typical pupils in non-English environments, such as Canada (Ma, 2003), the US (Smerdon, 2002), and Turkey (Cemalcilar, 2010). Consequently, none has examined the association between a school's inclusive ethos and SEMH and MLD pupils' sense of school belonging and social relations who attend mainstream schools in England.

The current study will therefore make a significant and original contribution to the field of special education and will be an addition to the international literature. By exploring SEMH and MLD pupils' schooling experiences this study will provide new insights into the vital changes that schools should make in order to accommodate their individual needs. The voices of pupils assessed as having SEN can thus serve as a powerful tool for improving inclusive practice. The findings of this study are expected to draw the attention of educational practitioners, policy-makers, and scholars. Finally, it is hoped they will help to improve the schooling experiences of pupils identified as having SEN in mainstream settings.

1.7   Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 2 presents the context of inclusion in which the current study is set and underlines the challenges in the identification process of pupils identified as having SEMH difficulties and MLD. This is followed by reviews of the literature relating to school ethos and how it affects pupils' sense of school belonging and their social relations, with a particular focus being given to the schooling experiences of pupils identified as having SEN. The chapter concludes by presenting the aims and the research questions of the study.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology underlying the criteria and the process for identifying a school with an inclusive ethos as well as the rationale for developing new instruments. The pilot study and the subsequent amendments, research design, procedure, ethical issues, selected sample, and data analysis are also explained and justified.

Chapter 4 presents the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data obtained from the self-completed questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

The findings and their implications for the field of special education, the contribution to knowledge, and the limitations of the current study as well as suggestions for future directions, and final thoughts are discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter begins by presenting a retrospective on the legislation passed to establish inclusion. National statistics are used to illustrate how their implementation changed the numbers of pupils identified as having SEN receiving education in mainstream settings. Then, the rational for focusing on pupils identified as having SEMH and MLD, and the difficulties in being accurately identified are explained, thereby setting the framework of the current study. The main body of the literature is divided into three sections: the first concerns ethos and discusses the difficulty in defining and measuring the concept, followed by a review of the literature on the school factors that influence the schooling experiences of pupils within mainstream settings. The second section refers to belonging, and discusses the influence of pupils' individual characteristics, and social relations in their feeling of belonging towards school. The final section covers the challenges that pupils identified as having SEMH, and MLD encounter in their social relations with teachers, teaching assistants[2] (TAs) and peers. Finally, the chapter concludes by outlining the existing gaps in the literature that this study covers, thus signifying its original contribution to knowledge, followed by the aims of the study and the research questions.

2.2 Twenty-Three Years of Inclusion: Time for Improvement

The first interest in educating individuals with disability in the UK was initiated in the 19th century, mainly by voluntary or charitable enterprises. In those days, pupils who deviated from the norm were perceived as being "abnormal", and classification of their special conditions was made according to their deficits or defects, thereby reflecting society's attitude towards disability. The type of education such pupils received differed according to their identified categories: the 'idiots' were perceived to be ineducable; the 'imbeciles' received support within asylums, and the 'feeble-minded' received educational provision in 'auxiliary' schools, separated from their ordinary counterparts.

---

[2] A teaching assistant or educational assistant (often abbreviated to TA or EA; sometimes classroom assistant) in a school in England and Wales supports a teacher in the classroom. Duties can differ dramatically from school to school, although the underlying tasks usually remain the same. Retrieved from The Open University Website: http://www.open.ac.uk/choose/unison/develop/my-understanding/role-teaching-assistant.

Of the 'defective' pupils, only those with normal intelligence had the opportunity to attend ordinary schools (Warnock, 1978, 2.17, 2.22).

After a long period of stagnation, gradual changes in the educational field occurred in the mid-1940s. The ratification of the 1944 Education Act created the Ministry of Education of England and placed the onus for the identification of pupils with a disability of mind or body on the local education authorities[3] (LEAs). The act also deemed LEAs responsible for the provision of 'special educational treatment' to handicapped pupils in separate schools or in hospitals. However, those pupils identified as having severe disabilities were described as 'ineducable' and were excluded from any educational provision. One year later, the Handicapped Pupils and School Health Service Regulations introduced eleven categories of 'handicap', where pupils' special conditions were described according to medical terms. The categories were: blind, partially sighted, deaf, partially deaf, delicate, diabetic, educationally subnormal, epileptic, maladjusted, speech defects and/or physically handicapped (Warnock, 1978, 2.45). Despite the social unrest that emerged after the Second War World, considerable progress in special needs provision was made in the following decade between 1945 and 1955, with a significant increase in the number of schools providing special education. In fact, the number of special schools rose from 530 to 745 and the number of pupils receiving special education from 38,500 to 58,035 (Warnock, 1978, 2.49).

It was not until 1970, with the passing of the Education (Handicapped Children) Act, where the term 'uneducable' was rejected, and for the first time, all pupils regardless of their difficulty had the right to receive an education. The educational provision for those pupils was thus transferred from the health service to LEAs. The practical implementation of the 1970 Act was echoed in the significant escalation of the number of special schools (including hospital schools) operating during that period in England and Wales, which almost tripled, from 601 in 1950 to 1653 in 1977 (Warnock, 1978, 8.2).

---

[3] Local Education Authority: a department of local government in Britain that oversees the state schools and colleges in its area. Some of the schools and colleges in the area of any local authority, however, are given money directly by central government and are no longer in the control of local government. The term Local Education Authority is no longer in official use, but it is still sometimes used informally to refer to the department of a local authority that deals with education. Retrieved from http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com

The 1978 Warnock Report and the subsequent 1981 Education Act proposed a social approach towards disability rather than a medical one. The medical model, which had been applied until then, located disability within a person's body or mind, whereas the social model described disability as the response of society on the individual's needs and the impact they have on one's life (Oliver, 1983). The incorporation of the social model of disability brought radical changes and marked a new era in special education. The 11 categories of handicap were abolished and the term 'special educational needs' (SEN) was introduced to describe a wider group of exceptional pupils. The shift from integration —where pupils with disabilities had to adapt themselves within mainstream settings— to inclusion —where these settings had to change to meet the individual needs of all pupils— was proposed. The 1981 Act is considered to be a cornerstone in the field of special education as mainstream schools became accessible, for the first time, to pupils with special educational needs, thereby suggesting that both typical pupils and those with SEN should be educated under the same settings. The subsequent 1988 Education Reform Act introduced the National Curriculum and a system of league tables, where academic outcomes became the prime focus of education. The National Curriculum inclusion statement certified that all pupils, irrespective of their learning difficulties, were entitled to follow the same curriculum, affirming that, besides receiving education in the same environment, typical pupils and pupils identified as having SEN would also be sharing "common" educational goals.

Six years later, this vision was ratified at the World Conference on Special Needs Education (1994), held in Salamanca, with the introduction of the concept of inclusion, where all pupils, irrespective of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions, had a right to attend mainstream schools. The ensuing 1994 Code of Practice ensured that inclusion was underpinned by two notions: acceptance and individualised support for all. The subsequent years' similar legislation, including the Green Paper Excellence for all children (1997a) and the White Paper (1997b), aimed to safeguard the quality of education provided to pupils with SEN, thereby enabling them to reach their full potential.

Statistics from the period 1993–1998 portrayed significant changes in the number of pupils with a statement of SEN[4], who were allocated to receive education in mainstream schools, instead of special settings. The proportion of pupils with statements in all schools in England steadily increased from 2.3 percent in 1993 to 2.6 percent in 1995. By 1998 the percentage had climbed to 2.9. A similar increase was noted in the percentage of pupils with statements placed in mainstream schools, which rose from 48 percent to 58 percent between 1993 and 1998. At the same time, there was a corresponding sharp 10 percent decrease in the proportion of pupils with statements placed in special schools (maintained and non-maintained) or Pupil Referral Units[5] (PRUs), from 49 percent in 1993 to 39 percent in 1998 (DfE, 1998).

Owing to this considerable increase in pupils with statements receiving education in mainstream schools, the introduction of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001a) was an attempt to safeguard pupils with SEN's rights in mainstream settings. The act stated for the first time that discrimination, exclusion (temporary or permanent), rejection or intentional refusal of a pupil with SEN's admission to a school was an infringement of disabled pupils' rights and hence, deemed unlawful. Accordingly, all schools were obliged to include pupils with SEN regardless of whether they had the knowledge to implement appropriate inclusive practices to meet pupils with SEN's individual needs. The 2001 Act, followed by the revised SEN Code of Practice (2001b), replaced the five stages of assessment with three levels of need for better educational support of pupils identified as having SEN, i.e. School/Early Years Action, School/Early

---

[4] A pupil has a statement of SEN when a formal assessment has been made. A document is in place that sets out the child's needs and the extra help they should receive (DfE, 2014). See also footnote 7, p. 4.

[5] Pupil referral units are a type of school, set up and run by local authorities to provide education for children who cannot attend school—because of medical problems, teenage mothers and pregnant schoolgirls, pupils who have been assessed as being school phobic, and pupils awaiting a school place. They also provide education for pupils who have been excluded, and they can be used to provide short placements for those who are at risk of exclusion. Retrieved from http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk

Years Action Plus[6], and Statements of SEN[7]. It also placed emphasis on pupils with SEN's individual views as well as inviting their parents to have a more active role and participation in decision-making with regards to their children's placement and the educational support provided.

In 2002, just one year after the implementation of the 2001 SEN Code of practice, an unprecedented fall in the proportion of pupils with a statement of SEN attending mainstream schools was detected. Although the fall was small (1 percent from previous year), it was the first occurrence after nine years of steady increase (1993–2001). One interpretation for this outcome is that parents, after the 2001 Act and their increased involvement in the educational provision of their pupils, started favouring special schools over the mainstream settings. The following year there was particular attention by policy-makers paid towards the educational provision within special schools. The DfES Ministerial Working Party on the Future of Special Schools (2003) set out some recommendations for the improvement and development of special settings, with the aim being to strengthen collaboration between special and mainstream schools. Additionally, the subsequent Green Paper, Every Child Matters (2004), recommended a more active involvement of special schools with health, social care and other agencies to provide enhanced support to pupils with SEN beyond the classroom.

Ten years later, the 2014 Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE, 2014) and the 2014 Children and Families Act continued to make changes for the enhancement of special educational provision in schools. Some of the changes were (p. 14, 98):

- The statement of SEN was replaced by the Educational, Health, and Care (EHC) plan assessment process.
- The "School Action" and "School Action Plus" categories were replaced by the "SEN support" category.

---

[6] School Action Plus: the second level of SEN, when the child is still not making adequate progress to the previous level and teachers seek external advice from outside school specialists.

[7] Statement of SEN: the highest educational support available for a child with SEN as suggested by the Code of Practice (DfES, 2001).

- The "Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties" (BESD) classification was replaced by the new "Social, Emotional and Mental Health" (SEMH).
- There is a clearer focus of pupils and their parents on participation and access in decision-making.

Despite several governmental educational policies being issued to promote the inclusive education of pupils with SEN in mainstream settings, the statistics over the last thirteen years reveal a rather worrisome picture. Since 2002, the percentage of pupils with a statement of SEN attending mainstream schools dropped significantly, from 60 percent in 2002 to 51 percent in 2015. In a corresponding way, the percentage of pupils with a statement of SEN attending special schools increased by almost 7 percent, from 37 percent in 2002 to 44 percent in 2015. This is illustrated in Figure 2.1, which shows that the difference in percentage between pupils with a statement of SEN attending mainstream schools[8] and those attending special schools[9] gradually fell.

Given, on the one hand, the legislation that was passed to promote inclusion since 1994 and on the other, the sharp decline in the percentage of pupils with a statement of SEN attending mainstream schooling over the previous thirteen years, it is apparent that there remains a gap between the theoretical notion of inclusion, as manifested by several governmental policies, and its practical implementation in mainstream schools in England. This gap between theory and practice should not come as a surprise, as researchers who used narratives to explore the notion of inclusion found that its meaning still remains unclear not only among scholars (Allan & Slee, 2008), but also among educational practitioners (Sikes, Lawson, & Parker, 2007), i.e. those with the greatest responsibility for implementing inclusion. As Lunt and Norwich (1999) explained, lack of consistency and openness in interpretation often causes confusion, which results in conflict over how the concept of inclusion is pursued in practice.

---

[8] Mainstream schools include nursery, primary, and secondary.

[9] Special schools include special maintained, non-maintained special and PRUs.

Figure 2.1. Placement[10] of Pupils with SEN Statements by Type of School[11] (England 1993-2015)
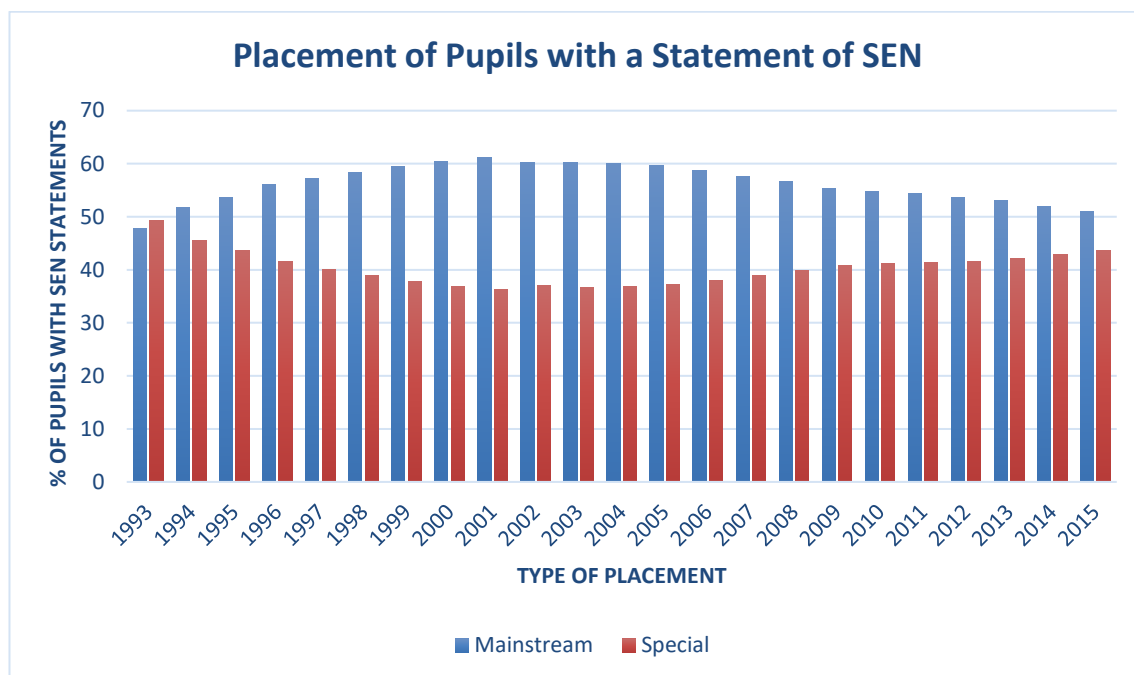
When reviewing the literature of the last two decades, two broad families of definition of inclusion emerge. The first is "education for all", where inclusion is viewed as a right, referring initially to pupils identified as having special educational needs, being subsequently extended to all vulnerable pupils (e.g. Booth, 1999; Donnelly & Watkins, 2011). The second focuses on "opportunities for all", where inclusion is viewed as providing education equity (e.g. Farrell, 2000; Lindsay, 2007) as well as quality in social interactions and friendships (e.g. Bailey, 1998; Bunch & Valeo, 2004). The key problem with most definitions of inclusion proposed by scholars is that they mainly focus on *who* is eligible for education, or *what* inclusion should provide to pupils identified as having SEN in terms of social and educational opportunities. However, there is little reference to *how* schools could become more effective in practice. Since there are about 1.1 million pupils with SEN in mainstream state-funded schools across all educational levels (DfE,

---

[10] Placement of pupils: the number of pupils with statements or EHC plans expressed as a proportion of the number of pupils with statements in all schools.

[11] Independent schools are not covered.

2015), there is an overriding need for these schools to become acquainted with how to meet the individual needs of this large minority.

Summary

From the early 19th century, when the first interest in educating pupils with "disability" arose up until now, numerous legislative and educational policies have been enacted. Their implementation brought attitudinal shifts in the educational provision offered, as well as in the way disability was treated by English society. The medical terminology, that located the problem "within the child", was replaced by educational and the educational provision to pupils identified as having SEN was transferred from the medical services to the Local Educational Authorities. With the implementation of inclusive policies, pupils identified as having SEN ceased to be treated as "passive recipients", gradually gaining rights in actively being involved in decision making, with most representative testament the 2014 Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice.

2.2.1 The "Accuracy" of Identification: Pupils Identified as Having SEMH, MLD — Who are They?

As explained in the introduction, the underlying rationale of the current study of focusing on pupils identified as having SEMH and MLD is due to the fact that they comprise the two largest groups of SEN to receive education in mainstream secondary schools as well as being considered difficult categories to be included. According to the DfE (2011) statistics, pupils identified as having SEMH and MLD were the most likely to be regularly absent from school when compared to other SEN groups. Absenteeism in the former group occurs mainly due to fixed or permanent exclusions they receive from teachers, while in the latter is by choice.

One significant challenge in the inclusion of these pupils relates to their identification. In an English study, Ellis and Tod (2012) explored teachers' perceptions of inclusion, policy and practice for SEN from a wide range of primary, secondary and special schools from four different Local Authorities (LAs). Analysis of 1,500 responses obtained from an on-line survey, and over 100 interviews with teachers revealed that pupils with SEMH and MLD were the most difficult to be identified. The following quote taken from interview data clearly illustrates this frustration:

"Dyslexia is easy to identify…SEN identification gives me an explanation — like dyslexia or *[Autistic Spectrum Disorder]* ASD— but MLD is not an explanation —SEMH…that's different because there is no easy answer" (p. 61).

In practice, there are three factors that can negatively influence educators in accurately identifying pupils with SEMH and MLD. The first pertains to the vague criteria of identification. Specifically, the 2014 Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice placed pupils with MLD under the broader category of Cognition and Learning, and introduced the following educational definition for their identification:

"Support for learning difficulties may be required when children and young people learn at a slower pace than their peers, even with appropriate differentiation" (p. 63).

This suggests that pupils who will need support for learning difficulties might have deficits in general cognitive abilities. However, since low IQ is not mentioned, concerns have been raised with reference to the assessments used to identify pupils (Norwich, 2004).

Similar unspecified concepts can be found in the medical classification of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-V). The MLD category can be seen as synonymous with the term intellectual disability (ID), and is defined as:

"Intellectual disability is a disorder with onset during the developmental period that includes both intellectual and adaptive functioning deficits in conceptual, social, and practical domains" (p. 33).

Despite the medical classification explaining in detail what is meant by "intellectual disability" (deficits in reasoning, problem solving, planning etc.), "deficits in adaptive functioning" (failure to meet developmental and sociocultural standards) or "onset in developmental period", it does not clarify how the severity of these criteria will be assessed. There is a contradiction in that, on the one hand, it implies that IQ tests are a good way of screening intellectual functions, but on the other, it reports that "individual cognitive profiles based on neuropsychological testing are more useful for understanding intellectual abilities than a single IQ test" (DSM-IV, p. 37).

Lack of clarity has also been observed in the educational and medical definition for pupils with SEMH. The 2014 Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice provides the following definition:

> Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or attachment disorder. (p. 98)

In the DSM-V, although there is no specific category equivalent to SEMH, psychiatrists and psychologists have theorised a similar umbrella, which is divided into two categories: "externalising difficulties" and "internalising difficulties" (Cooper, 2005, p. 107). The difference between them is that in the former, the child's behaviour affects other people and causes disturbance to those around them, while in the latter the child suffers, possibly by being overlooked (Achenbach, 1982). Regarding the definitions used to describe pupils with SEMH, there are some criteria that need clarification. For instance, in the educational definition it was suggested that a pupil has a possible mental health problem when he or she becomes *"withdrawn or isolated"* or *"disruptive"*. However, it does not specify the duration, the severity or the intensity of a behaviour that might be considered to be problematic.

The second challenge of the identification process relates to the overlap between the categories of pupils with SEN (i.e. communication and interaction; cognition and learning; social, mental and emotional health; and sensory and/or physical), acknowledgement of which was made by the 2014 Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: "In practice, individual children or young people often have needs that cut across all these areas and their needs may change over time" (p. 97). The overlap between moderate learning difficulties with other categories of SEN is well established in the literature. Male (1996), in a national survey involving a total sample of 75 MLD schools, found that pupils with MLD are more likely to have additional needs related to language and communication difficulties (97%), social emotional mental and

health (97%), and/or medical conditions and syndromes (80%). This claim is reinforced by Norwich and Kelly (2004), who found that 84 percent of pupils with MLD had other associated difficulties, and were more likely to develop other medical conditions and syndromes (Linna, Moilanen, Ebeling, Piha, Kumpulainen, Tamminen, & Almqvist, 1999). In this respect, Emerson (2003) in an English metadata survey using the Development and Well Being Assessment to identify the presence of psychiatric disorders, found that pupils with learning difficulties were more likely to experience higher rates of conduct disorders, anxiety disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorders, and pervasive developmental disorders. However, no statistically significant overlap between learning difficulties and depressive disorders was found.

However, when Simonoff et al. (2006) administered the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire to teachers and parents of pupils with MLD, the findings revealed conflicting results. The researchers found that pupils with IQ scores lower than 60 attending mainstream schools were more likely to be identified by teachers as having emotional difficulties (i.e. depression and/or anxiety). However, parents were less likely to identify pupils as having emotional difficulties. It is impossible to interpret the reason for this difference without further information, but it would appear to be due to either differences between teachers and parents in their assessment of emotional problems or differences in children's behaviour in the potentially more stressful school environment as compared with the more supportive home environment.

The third challenge in the identification process is with regards to subjectivity in terms of the way educational staff interpret either a child's attainment or behaviour. As Lindsay (2007, p. 16) argued, there are some categories of SEN, such as MLD, identification of which largely depends on "locational variables"; socioeconomic disadvantages, ethnic profiles and overall levels of attainment can vary greatly between mainstream schools. Defining pupils with MLD as those who "learn at a slower pace than their peers" (Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, DfES 2014, p. 63), leaves the identification of such pupils open to subjective interpretation. For instance, since an educator's perspective of pupils with MLD is shaped according to the performance of their peers at the same school, it is possible a pupil identified as having MLD in one school will be considered as typical in another. Subjectivity also applies to the SEMH term, which is arguably the most challenging category of SEN for accurate identification (e.g. Ellis & Tod, 2012). This is due to its dual nature (i.e. covering both internalising and

externalising difficulties) and its largely subjective and interpretable criteria, what Cooper (1996) calls an "ill-defined" descriptor (p. 147).

The complex nature of SEMH captured the interest of several scholars to examine the accuracy of teachers in identifying pupils with elevated levels of emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. For instance, in the USA, Youngstrom, Loeber, and Stouthamer-Loeber (2000), using the Achenbach (1991) checklist, examined the agreement of 394 triads of male adolescent pupils, their caregivers' and their teachers' ratings about the difficulties of pupils (both internalising and externalising). The findings showed that both pupils and caregivers reported significantly more severe externalising difficulties than the teachers did, while large disagreement was found in relation to all the informants' levels of internalising difficulties. Among all the informant dyads, that of pupil-to-teacher showed significantly less agreement, which was more apparent in internalising difficulties than in externalising ones.

Similar findings were replicated by Soles, Bloom, Heath, and Karagiannakis (2008) in the USA, who sought to understand primary teachers' perceptions of the definition of SEMH and to examine the agreement between teachers and pupils' reports using the Achenbach (1991) checklist. It was revealed that teachers and pupils' reports were found to have little agreement and this was more obvious in the internalising domain. Another interesting finding was that the majority of pupils nominated by teachers as having SEMH, were reported to display more externalising than internalising difficulties. One explanation for these discrepancies might be that teachers can easily spot those pupils who systematically violate the school rules and whose behaviour can disturb the lesson, whereas internalising behaviours are more difficult to be observed and therefore, less likely to capture teachers' attention.

The difficulty of teachers in accurately identifying pupils who self-report elevated levels of internalising difficulties has been confirmed by the research outcomes of several studies conducted in the USA (Auger, 2004; Cunningham & Suldo, 2014) and England (Moor, Ann, Hester, Elisabeth, Robert, Robert, & Caroline, 2007). Of note, is the study conducted by Auger (2004), who showed that there is a significant association between teachers and students' characteristics in the ability of the former to identify pupils with self-reported depression. In particular, it was found that depression ratings from teachers and pupils in the sixth-grade were significantly more congruent than the respective ratings from higher grade levels in middle school. This finding was reinforced by Cunningham

and Suldo (2014), who found that primary teachers were in the position to identify correctly almost half of the pupils who self-reported depression and anxiety symptoms. While they falsely identified 16.2 and 17.5 percent of pupils, who self-reported typical levels, as having anxiety and depression, respectively. Auger (2004) also elicited that teachers' ratings on depression were much more likely to be in agreement with those of pupils with whom they had more intimate relations as well as with those with whom they spent more than five hours per week. Combining the above findings, the differences in identifying pupils with internalising difficulties between teachers across educational levels could be explained by taking into account the timetable differences. Since secondary teachers normally spend far less time with pupils than primary teachers, it is not unanticipated that they were also found to be less effective in identifying pupils with internalising difficulties. However, another possible explanation is that an adolescent's emotional difficulties can be concealed behind the turbulent disturbances of that period, whereas younger pupils' feelings are easier to discern. The majority of studies examining the accuracy of teachers in identifying pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties were carried out in American educational settings where teacher training and suggested guidelines for the identification process differ from that of the U.K. Therefore, there is a need for further research to be carried out in the English educational context, if it is to understand the challenges in the identification process educational practitioners encounter in England.

This significant challenge in the identification of pupils with mental health problems has also been acknowledged by the DfE in the 2016 "Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools". The report suggests the use of a multidimensional approach as a more effective way to detect pupils at risk of mental health difficulties. The recommended approach involves the use of an "effective pastoral system", where at least one member of teaching staff will know every pupil well and will be in the position to notice when certain behaviours pose reasons for concern; an "effective use of data", where unusual changes in pupils' attainment, attendance and behaviour are detected; and finally the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), a diagnostic tool for enabling schools to identify pupils at risk of mental health difficulties reliably (DfE, 2016, p. 14-16).

Summary

In the English educational system, pupils with MLD and SEMH comprises the two largest categories of SEN receiving education within mainstream settings, and the two most

challenging in terms of being accurately identified by educators. In practice, there are three main factors that negatively influence teachers' ability to identify pupils with MLD and SEMH: i) unclear and vague definitions, ii) co-morbidity and overlap between categories of SEN and iii) subjectivity due largely to interpretable criteria. Among the two categories, SEMH is arguably the most difficult to be identified by teachers due to its complex nature involving externalising and internalising difficulties. Common sense and research evidence have shown that while pupils with disruptive behaviour can easily be detected by teachers, those who experience anxiety and depression difficulties often escape their attention and remain unidentified.

2.3 Ethos

2.3.1 A Difficult Term to Define

Ethos is an extensively used term but remains unclear as to its meaning in the literature of social sciences. There are two main reasons that explain this ambiguity (McLaughlin, 2005). The first pertains to its conceptual breadth. For instance, some describe ethos as an outcome of previous social interactions (e.g. Allder, 1993), while others support the view that ethos is better expressed in the school mission statement (e.g. Brown, Busfield, O'Shea, & Sibthorpe, 2011). The second reason is related to the numerous terms used to define the concept. Words, such as 'climate', 'culture', 'environment' or 'atmosphere', often appear to be used interchangeably with 'ethos', but more often than not are defined differently. For instance, Deal and Peterson (1999) in their attempt to explain the differences between 'culture' and 'ethos', stated that "ethos is the feeling that results from the school culture", where culture is defined as "the school's own unwritten rules and traditions, norms, and expectations that seem to permeate everything" (Deal & Peterson, 1999, p. 2).

2.3.2 "Objective" and "Subjective" Definitions of Ethos

The observed definitions of ethos in the current literature have reinforced the distinction made by Donnelly (2000), who, in her analysis of the interpretation of ethos, proposed that they can be divided into two broad categories, as perceived by a 'positivist' or an 'anti-positivist' scholar. A positivistic perspective of ethos describes the formal objectives of an organisation that "prescribes social reality" (p. 135) not affected by

people or social events. On the opposite side, an anti-positivist would describe ethos as "something more informal emerging from social interaction and process" (p. 136).

A positivistic view supporting that ethos is imposed by the school's authority, through written rules, was introduced by Hogan (1984) who perceived ethos as custodial:

> The authorities of a school or educational system view themselves largely as custodians of a set of standards which are to be preserved, defended and transmitted through the agency of schools and colleges. (p. 695)

In a similar vein, Brown et al. (2011), in a very simplistic but succinct way, stated that "school ethos will find its most explicit and informal expression in a mission statement" (p. 10).

The antithesis of these perspectives can been found in the anti-positivists' views of several scholars (e.g. Allder, 1993; MacBeath, Meuretz, Schratz, & Jakobsen, 1999; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, Ouston, & Smith, 1979) all of whom stressed the importance of social interactions in the description of ethos. Specifically, Rutter et al. (1979) described ethos as teachers and students' solidarity and affiliation expressed by positive social interactions, high emphasis on academic performance, positive teacher expectations of pupils, encouraging teacher attitudes towards pupils, and finally, by an emphasis on positive rewards, consistency, as well as shared morals and principles. In a similar vein, MacBeath et al. (1999) argued that school ethos could be perceived as the institutional culture expressed by pupils' engagement at school and the quality of pupil-to-teacher relationships. A more extensive description of an anti-positivistic view is provided by Allder (1993), where:

> The ethos of a school…is the unique, pervasive atmosphere or mood of the organisation which is brought about by activities or behaviour, primarily in the realm of social interaction and to a lesser extent in matters to do with the environment, of members of the school, and recognised initially on an experiential rather than a cognitive level. (p. 69)

Here, Allder (1993) introduces subjectivity as another characteristic of ethos, perceiving it as something that is experienced. Similarly, Solvason (2005) clearly illustrated the same argument by asserting that the ethos of the school is commonly referred to as "the 'feeling' of the organisation" (p. 85). The same perspective was also shared by Torrington

and Weightman (1993), who claimed that "the ethos of a school is a more self-conscious expression of specific types of objective in relation to behaviour and values" (p. 45).

All the above expressions of ethos were summarised by Donnelly (2000) in three proposed dimensions. The first, called "aspirational ethos", is manifested in school documents, the second, termed "ethos of outward attachment" is manifested in a school's organisational structures as well as educational staff and pupils' behaviour and the third, "ethos of inward attachment" is manifested in individuals' deep feelings and perceptions about the school. According to the author, all dimensions of ethos are equally important and thus, there is the need to examine all of them in order to capture the ethos of a school (ibid).

2.3.3   Is the Prescribed Ethos of a School Congruent with the Practices it Applies?

A number of studies have examined the agreement between the mission statement of a school as expressed in the official written rules, with what is happening in reality, as expressed in the values, beliefs, and practices it applies. Donnelly (2004), in a study using interviews and observations of 18 teachers from an inclusive school (i.e. including Catholics and Protestants) in Ireland, found that the suggested ethos of the school was completely different from what teachers were implementing in practice. Specifically, although the official documents of the school (i.e. school prospectus) seemed to follow the values of an inclusive education, in fact, teachers admitted that they purposefully avoided discussions on any 'controversial topic' that might lead to dispute between pupils of a different religion. A discrepancy between prescribed ethos and what is applied in practice was also found by Carter (2002) in a longitudinal action research project involving an all boys' comprehensive school. Data collection on school ethos and boys' behaviour was carried out by means of observation, journal entries, school documentation and a self-completed questionnaire delivered to 120 boys aged 13-14 years. Findings indicated that even though the school's mission statement appeared to be highly caring and supportive, in reality pupils' responses revealed that they experience not only verbal and physical abuse from their peers, but also an authoritarian approach from the teachers. The above study clearly indicates that the prescribed ethos of a school may significantly differ from the ethos that pupils and educational staff experience in practice. This finding is important; however, it would be even more beneficial to understand the reasons for this

discrepancy which arguable can be better captured with interviews rather than self-completed questionnaires.

Hatton (2013) reported mixed responses from educational staff, which depended on certain school characteristics. Examining the perspectives of 128 members of staff of 16 schools via self-completed questionnaires, this scholar found that the responses of educational staff from exclusionary schools about disciplinary exclusions varied widely. Conversely, however, in non-excluding schools there was a congruence between the educational policies applied in practice and the officially prescribed ethos, with 100% agreement. Interviews with educational staff shed light on the main reason for which the two categories of schools differed. Specifically, it was found that teachers in non-exclusionary schools felt more confident in their ability to meet the needs of all pupils and thus, were more capable of applying inclusive behaviour policies. Staff from exclusionary schools were holding the view that it was not their responsibility to deal with pupils who displayed high levels of need and it would be better for them to be placed in special schools instead. A possible explanation for the observed differences is that able and confident members of staff could cultivate an inclusive ethos, which in turn supports less able staff to develop confidence and implement inclusive practices. As Solvason (2005) stated, "written or spoken aims in any organisation become null and void if human interaction points to the contrary" (p. 92). Teachers' unwillingness, neglect and ignorance significantly affect the school ethos and negatively impact on the implementation of school policies (Brown et al., 2011). It can thus be concluded that on one hand the ethos of a school can shape the quality of relationships between pupils and teachers, and on the other hand teachers and the way they interact with each other can influence school ethos either in a positive or a negative way.

2.3.4 Ethos and Policy Implementation in Schools

In recent years, several studies have established a link between ethos (defined as the school's unwritten rules, attitudes and social interactions) and successful implementation of educational practices. Kane, Lloyd, McCluskey, Maguire, Riddell, Stead, and Weedon (2009) were invited by the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) to evaluate a longitudinal pilot project on restorative practices (RP) aiming to promote *Better Behaviour Better Learning* in Scottish schools. Drawing on qualitative data from interviews, documentary analysis along with staff and pupil surveys from three case study schools (each of which represented a group of schools with certain similarities), the

researchers identified six differences in school ethos characteristics accounting for the successful implementation of RPs, namely: readiness, change processes, head teachers' leadership skills, use of multiple innovation approaches, and good understanding of the RPs themselves. These characteristics of school ethos were found to facilitate the implementation of RPs, which once in place contributed to the improvement of this ethos, thereby supporting a mutual relationship.

This view echoed the findings of Banerjee, Weare, and Farr (2014), who examined the association between school ethos and the effective implementation of Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL). The researchers showed that school ethos was a key indicator for the successful implementation of a whole school practice, which in turn mediated associations with pupils' social experiences, overall school attainment and persistent absence. However, the cross-sectional nature of the study prevented scholars from drawing a strong conclusion of a causal model between the variables. Similar findings were reported by Brown, Busfield, O'Shea, and Sibthorpe (2011), who examined the association between school ethos and effective delivering of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE). By using a mixed methods approach to collect the data, the researchers reported a strong link between school ethos and PSHE implementation. Specifically, it was implied that there is a reciprocal complementary relationship between school ethos and the implementation of educational policies. However, caution is required in the interpretation of their results. Firstly, there is a discrepancy in the findings between the qualitative and quantitative data: the interviewed teachers stated that they were not aware of the school mission statement, while over two thirds of those who completed the questionnaire answered that PSHE was consistent with the mission statement of school. Secondly, the researchers implied in their discussion a causal model between the variables, even though their study was cross-sectional and not longitudinal.

2.3.5   School Ethos, and its Influence on Pupils' School Life

The impact of school ethos on pupils' school life is well established in the literature. In particular, there is now ample evidence supporting the link between it and pupils' attainment, behaviour, social relations, and sense of school belonging.

2.3.5.1 Ethos and Attainment

Ethos has captured the attention of several scholars in the educational field aiming to examine the extent to which school factors influence pupil attainment. It was not until

1979, when Rutter et al., in their seminal study of 'Fifteen Thousand Hours', for the first time placed the onus on institutional effects to explain the variation in performance among schools. Using longitudinal data from pupils at age 14 and age 16, the researchers demonstrated significant differences in examination pass rates, attendance rates and delinquency rates between schools. They found that pupil involvement and praise from teachers were significant indicators of attainment and behaviour, and thus concluded that there is a causal relationship between school processes (or ethos) and pupils' attitude and performance. Conversely, school factors such as size, physical environment and teacher to pupil ratio had only a slight or no effect on performance or behaviour.

In a subsequent large-scale longitudinal study involving 2000 pupils from 50 primary schools of Inner London, Mortimore, Sammons, Stoll, Ecob and Lewis (1988) endorsed that school effects were more statistically significant indicators of pupil's academic progress and development than their individual characteristics. The school factors that contributed to the effectiveness of a setting were found to be within the control of the head teacher and teachers, underlying once again the key role that educational staff have in changing and promoting the ethos of a school. In particular, the researchers found that schools that were more effective had head teachers with good leadership skills, who were always present in the school environment, and permitted teachers' involvement in decision making. These were schools in which the teachers had a consistent approach, gave opportunities to pupils to express their opinion and their lessons were characterised by challenging and stimulating teaching while parents were actively involved in pupils' school life. It could thus be suggested that the espoused ethos of a school has the power to either accelerate or hinder the academic progress of pupils.

Morris (1995) also examined the link between school ethos and pupil attainment. Using' General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) scores and semi-structured interviews, the researcher explored the differences in pupils' performance between those remaining within the Catholic school system, and those transferring to local authority schools to complete their education after the age of 16. The findings revealed that among those pupils who had attained high grades in GCSEs, those who stayed in their own school fared better in comparison to those who had transferred to the sixth form college. Conversely, weaker pupils were found to have performed slightly better when they changed environment. Analysis of interview data taken from a small representative sample of pupils who had opted for a non-Catholic setting revealed that teachers in Catholic schools were more likely to have high educational expectations for all pupils,

and more willing to foster positive relationships with them. This finding is very important as it gives a possible reason as to why the attainment of good students dropped after they were transferred from Catholic schools to a sixth form college. One explanation for this difference might be that weak students are more motivated to prove themselves in a new environment and thus, adjust quicker while high achieving students, who take their academic success for granted, might be less ready to adjust with negative consequences resulting in relation to their performance. However, this result is contrary to Mortimore's (1988) conclusions as it proves that the attainment of some pupil groups can be affected differently by the ethos of the school.

The significant role that caring pupil-to-teacher relations have on pupil academic attainment was also found in an American study examining the link between classroom climate and academic achievement, with student engagement being the mediator. The scholars collected data from 1,399 pupils attending 63 fifth- and sixth-grade classrooms, which showed that when the emotional climate of the class was supportive (i.e. characterised by positive pupil-to-teacher relations), pupils made better academic progress, partly because they were more engaged in the learning process (Reyes, Brackett, Rivers, White & Salovey, 2012). From the above it can be concluded that not all schools are equally effective in promoting academic attainment, with some having a more supportive school ethos than others. It has also emerged that even the ethos of the same school can have different implications for different groups and what can be effective for one might not be effective for another, thus pointing to the need for an environment fit model.

2.3.5.2 Ethos and Behaviour

There is overwhelming evidence corroborating the notion that ethos is associated with pupil behaviour (e.g. Mortimore et al., 1988; Naylor & Cowie, 1999; Stephenson & Smith, 2002), whereby it can create and sustain aggression (Askew, 1989; Carter, 2002; Yoneyama & Naito, 2003) and increase disciplinary exclusions (Hatton, 2013; Munn, 2003). Some of the identified school effects contributing to the maintenance of aggressive behaviour are the lack of Student Voice and participation in school life (Carter, 2002; Jamal, Fletcher, Harden, Wells, Thomas, & Bonell, 2013; Mayer, 2001; Rutter et al., 1979), inconsistency in school rules (Mayer, 2001; Rutter et al., 1979), punitive methods of control, unclear rules and lack of appropriate behaviour management procedures (Kidger, Donovan, Biddle, Campbell & Gunnell, 2009; Mayer, 2001). Hatton (2013) has also revealed a link between school ethos characteristics and the use of disciplinary

exclusions. In particular, the researcher revealed that schools were more likely to apply exclusionary practices if pupils and staff were not aware of the school rules, sanctions and rewards were equally supported, and where behaviour policies lacked consistency by staff throughout the school.

Carter (2002), in a longitudinal action research project focusing on an all-boys comprehensive school in England, found that an authoritarian ethos, which deprives teachers and pupils of decision making and active participation, can indeed foster aggressive behaviour. Along similar lines, after a systematic review, Jamal et al. (2013) explained that when pupils understand they are excluded from decision-making, they react to rules that they feel are unfair by exhibiting challenging behaviour and sometimes by adopting conduct that puts their health at risk. By contrast, giving active roles to several pupils, i.e. in assemblies and school meetings along with teachers and pupils sharing extracurricular activities, results in better pupil behaviour and academic performance (Rutter et al., 1979).

2.3.5.3 Ethos and Social Interactions

School ethos was also found to be associated with quality of social interactions. In an action research project conducted in England, Carter (2002) demonstrated that an authoritarian ethos could foster offensive and damaging relationships with regards to pupil-to-teacher, and pupil-to-pupil relations. In particular, this scholar observed that obedience, discipline and threat were some of the applied methods used by teachers to gain pupils' respect. For instance, one teacher was overheard to say to students: "I don't care if you hate me but you will respect me" (Carter, 2002, p. 28). With reference to pupil-to-pupil relations, the current literature appears to validate such a view with several researchers supporting a connection between ethos and bullying incidents in school settings. In their systematic review of the Japanese literature on bullying, Yoneyama and Naito (2003) concluded that school factors are linked with the prevalence of bullying in schools. In England, Naylor and Cowie (1999) drew similar conclusions, arguing that certain school policies can create antisocial behaviours, including bullying. As Askew (1989) so aptly put it, "bullying is partly an outcome of the structure and organisation of schools themselves" (p. 69) and if they want to disentangle from it, they then need to change the school ethos (Stephenson & Smith, 2002), thus illustrating clearly the link between ethos and quality of social relations in a school.

2.3.5.4 Ethos and Belonging

Quite a few surveys have also examined the relation between school ethos and pupils' sense of school belonging using samples of typical pupils from the 6th to 9th grades attending mainstream schools for different national systems, including the US (Nichols, 2008; Smerdon, 2002), Canada (Ma, 2003), Australia (Fullarton, 2002) and Turkey (Cemalcilar, 2010). Taking a large-scale sample, Smerdon (2002), Ma (2003) and Fullarton (2002) examined the association between individual pupils' characteristics and school characteristics in relation to pupils' belonging. Using hierarchical linear modelling for their analysis, all three studies delivered similar research outcomes: that the majority of variation in pupils' belonging lies within rather than between schools. In particular, Smerdon (2002) found that the proportion of the variance within-school was 95% and between-school was 5%. Similarly, Ma (2003) showed that 96% of the variance in a sense of belonging was attributable to the students, and only 4% of its variance to schools. Fullarton (2002) found slightly higher results for the between-school aspect that reach 9% of its variance. It is worth noticing that all aforementioned research studies employed quantitative methodologies for the data collection. In contrast to the individual characteristics (such as gender, attainment and socioeconomic status) that can be objectively measured, ethos is a difficult term to define and measure as it is subjectively perceived and experienced. As such, the small variance in the sense of belonging due to ethos might be the outcome of insufficient tools that measure it.

It can also be said that the fact that most variability was found to be within schools, suggests that the sense of belonging is more strongly shaped from the experiences and opportunities they have at school, thus implying that some pupils have better experiences than others. In addition, although the between-school differences in belonging was not found to be large, this outcome is very important, as it indicates that the quality of the school a pupil attends does indeed play a role in their belonging. This suggests that irrespective of the individual differences a pupil might have, the ethos of a school can equally enhance or discourage pupils' sense of belonging towards school.

In a Turkish study involving 799 middle school pupils from 13 schools, Cemalcilar (2010) found that pupils' perceived satisfaction with their social relations as well as with the school ethos were significant predictors of positive feelings of belonging towards school. The belonging of pupils is higher in schools that promote positive relationships between individuals as well as in those where they are given the opportunity to take decisions about academic work, learn collaboratively (Battistich et al 1997; Smerdon, 2002) and

participate in the school's extracurricular activities (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Finn, 1989; Fullarton, 2002). The applied behaviour management of a school was also found to be linked with pupils' belonging. Cassidy (2005) found that care-based[12] disciplinary practices can be more effective in sustaining school belongingness than the traditional practices that rely on punishment. Fair treatment was also argued by Newmann (1992) to be crucial to a student fostering a positive sense of belonging to school. In a similar vein, Ma (2003) drawing on quantitative data from a large-scale study conducted in Canada, found school's disciplinary climate were positively associated with 8th grade pupils' sense of school belonging. The findings of the same study also show that context variables, such as school size and school mean socioeconomic status (SES) had no effect on a pupil's feeling of belonging towards school. The fact that school ethos characteristics were found to be strongly associated with pupils' sense of belonging is a very significant finding. It highlights that unlike school context characteristics that are external and intractable factors, school ethos characteristics are malleable and can be reformed by educators. Consequently, head teachers and teachers play a very critical role in creating schools where all pupils can feel welcomed and included.

2.3.6 Inclusive Ethos: Defining School Features that Make it "Effective"

By definition, inclusion is based on the premise that schools "respond to all pupils as individuals by reconsidering and restructuring its curricular organisation and provision and allocating resources to enhance equality of opportunity" (Sebba & Sachdev, 1997, p.9). The key implication of the inclusive education movement is that it placed the onus on mainstream schools to make all the necessary adaptations in order to facilitate the inclusion of all pupils such that they are able to reach their full potential. This view is clearly illustrated by Clark, Dyson, Millward, and Skidmore (1995) in the so called 'organisational paradigm' supporting the assumption that 'SEN' does not emerge due to deficits within pupils themselves, but rather, due to insufficiencies in the organisational structures and policies within schools.

---

[12] Care-based practices focus on promoting the academic and personal welfare of students.

The organisational paradigm is echoed in the work of several scholars (e.g. Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2002; Booth & Ainscow, 2002) who sought to identify those characteristics that make some schools more inclusive than others, and thus bridge the knowledge of two fields that traditionally used to be separate: those of special educational needs and school effectiveness. The most representative of the latter is the major study *Fifteen Thousand Hours* conducted in England by Rutter et al. (1978). Examination of literature with regards to the organisational paradigm led to the identification of two main approaches being used by researchers to determine the characteristic features of an inclusive ethos: one that mainly focused on the viewpoints of the key educators (i.e. teachers, governors) and another, comprising a growing literature, which uses the voices of pupils identified as having SEN to evaluate the effectiveness of inclusion.

According to the key educators' perspective, a school with an inclusive ethos is one that places emphasis on the learning of all pupils, and actively promotes their participation in decision making. It is one where staff and pupils have a clear understanding of the school rules, and behaviour management approaches are applied with consistency by all staff throughout the school, as a way to reduce exclusions. In addition, teachers work in collaboration to resolve any problems encountered and they share equally the responsibility to employ inclusion, without relying on staff specialising in pupils with SEN. Moreover, it is a place where ongoing professional development, and continuous changes in the school environment are embodied as key principles on agenda (see Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2002; Booth & Ainscow, 2002; Hatton, 2013; Rouse & Florian, 1996).

Regarding pupils identified as having SEN, their perspectives on inclusion were found to differ according to their SEN category. Middle school (9-15 years) pupils with mobility difficulties in a Canadian study reported that an inclusive school is one that undertakes all the necessary environmental modifications (i.e. ramps) to meet their individual needs and works towards the elimination of intentional attitudinal barriers, such as bullying or unintentional failings that occur due to lack of awareness of the difficulties they encounter (Pivik, McComas & Laflamme, 2002). For some pupils identified as having MLD, the quality of support they receive within school, and the need for intimate relations with peers were reported to be the main facilitators of their inclusion (Norwich & Kelly, 2004). Finally, regarding the research outcomes of one Maltese review paper (Cafai & Cooper, 2010) and two English studies (Sellman, 2009; Wise & Upon, 1998) focusing on pupils identified as having SEMH, the pupils revealed various school factors that they held were

barriers to their inclusion: poor relationships with teachers, inappropriate implementation of behaviour management policies (i.e. lack of consistency and clarity in school rules), a sense of oppression and powerlessness, unconnected learning experiences, limited help provided by teachers as well as large school and class size. From the above studies, it is apparent that listening to the voice of pupils identified as having SEN is not only an effective way to become acquainted with the individual difficulties that they encounter, but also a powerful tool that schools can employ to inform policies and practices in order to meet their individual needs.

2.3.7 Student Voice

The recognition of the rights of pupils to have an active role in decisions that affect them was ratified by the United Nations as a pupil's legal right (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), 1989). In 1989, the Article 12 of the UNCRC stated that all pupils have the right to express their views freely, and to have their views taken into account when decisions are being made in any matter that affects them. The requirement to seek the voice of pupils was also set out in the 2001 SEN Code of Practice (DfE, 2001) and was a central tenet of the 2014 Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, which places pupils' opinions and their active participation in decision-making within schools as a key principle of its implementation. The aforementioned statutory guidance documents are seen as particularly important for two reasons: firstly, they empower pupils identified as having SEN to be key players in any decision that affect their school life, and secondly, they oblige schools to actively involve, listen and put into practice pupils with SEN's suggestions for school improvement. Opportunities are presently provided through school mechanisms such as that of Student Voice.

In its widest sense, Student Voice is a term used for school reform activities that gives pupils the opportunity to express their opinion, and share their views about school problems and possible solutions. It could also require pupils to collaborate with adults in order to put their suggestions into practice (Fleming, 2013; Messiou, 2006; Mitra, 2004; Whitty and Wisby, 2007). Several scholars around the world, including Australia (Quinn & Owen, 2016), the USA (Mitra, 2004), England (Fleming, 2013) and Cyprus (Messiou, 2006), involved typical pupils and young adolescents to investigate the outcomes of their participation in Student Voice.

Using a qualitative case study, Quinn and Owen (2016) explored pupils and staff's perspectives to investigate a primary school's approach to Student Voice and student leadership. After analysing thematically school documents, staff and pupils' interviews, findings revealed that daily teacher-to-pupil interactions and regular collaboration of pupils with their teachers in learning had positive outcomes in enhancing the power of Student Voice in the school community. At a personal level, pupils' involvement in the Student Voice was found to bring many benefits as it enables them to develop skills of collaboration, communication and active listening as well as to enhance their sense of school belonging, and their belief they are capable to positively contribute in school improvement. Good structure of Student Voice and provision of a clear agenda was found to facilitate pupils' participation. On the contrary, one reported challenge that made less popular pupils unwilling to participate and put themselves forward as representatives was the competitive process of election. Despite the in-depth exploration of Student Voice provided in this study, findings should be treated with caution as the external validity of data is limited and generalisation to a wider population cannot be made.

Mitra (2004) explored how pupils' participation in Student Voice contribute to their 'youth development' using observations, focus groups, and semi-structured interviews from various staff and pupils attending a mainstream secondary school in Northern California. Research outcomes revealed that pupils' involvement in Student Voice enabled them to create positive experiences about school and helped them meet developmental needs such as their need to belong, feel competent and exert influence. However, the degree that pupils managed to meet these needs was found to be influenced by two things: the quality of structure of Student Voice and the nature of teacher-to-pupil relations. Similar obstacles that hinder pupils' participation were noted by Messiou (2006) in a qualitative study involving 227 primary aged pupils in Cyprus. Research outcomes revealed that limited resources, and teachers' restricted time to collaborate and listen to pupils' views were some of the reasons reported that the school avoided seeking pupils' views about school issues. As Messiou (2006) stated, applying the right mechanisms to gather information from pupils is one step, but implementation is the actual evidence that shows that schools truly care to engage and address the needs of those pupils.

In a similar vein, Fleming (2013), after critically reviewing three studies exploring pupils' perceptions on their participation in school decision making, suggested that pupils have the skills, capacity and knowledge to express perceptive ideas and make constructive

suggestions about school change. However, the researcher found that all efforts were in vain as rarely any of the pupils' suggestions were implemented.

It can thus be concluded that by asking pupils to express their opinion does not necessarily mean that their voices are listened to and valued. It is important for schools firstly to structure Student Voice in an effective way where the applied mechanisms would encourage the participation of all pupils even the least popular ones, and secondly it is vital for the involved teachers to receive training to be in the position to actively listen and help pupils to put their suggestions into practice. It should be noted that most studies investigated typical pupil experiences on their participation in Student Voice. There is thus the need for future studies to include the voices of pupils identified as having SEN, which would be interesting to investigate further.

<u>Summary</u>

Ethos is a difficult term to define. It manifested itself either in the school mission statement, or in unwritten rules, practices and interactions between individuals. It is also something that is experienced and subjectively measured. In the literature, there is ample evidence demonstrating the significant impact that school ethos has on pupils' attainment, behaviour, social interactions or even feelings of belonging towards school. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that the ethos of a school *does* matter as the schooling experiences of pupils can be affected either in a positive or negative way.

2.4 Belonging

2.4.1 Theoretical Perspectives and Operational Definitions

Examination of the literature, reveals three psychological theories linked with the concept of belonging: Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs theory, Bowlby's (1969) attachment theory and Baumeister and Leary's (1995) belongingness hypothesis. Considering each in turn, Maslow (1943), in his hierarchy of needs theory, conceived belongingness as the third most fundamental need of the self, and argued that the need to belong has to be satisfied before other needs can be fulfilled (i.e. self-esteem, self-actualisation). Bowlby (1969), in his attachment theory, supported the assumption that all infants are genetically programmed to form a strong bond with their caregivers, even if the care provided lacks affection and warmth. According to author's view, quality of primary relations serves as

a prototype for all future relations. In this respect, lack of secure attachment with the caregiver in early years can disable an individual's capacity to form caring and affectionate relations with others in later life. The significance of belongingness in an individual's life was also acknowledged by Baumeister and Leary (1995), who described the need to belong as a vital human motivation. The authors articulated that human beings are innately social and have an internal desire to foster and maintain relationships that need to be characterised by approval and intimacy in order for close social bonds to be formed.

Regarding the need to belong to the school environment, Finn (1989) was the first to propose the identification-participation model to explain pupils' engagement and disengagement from school. He suggested that only when pupils feel that school satisfies their needs (i.e. they feel respected and valued), will they be willing to participate actively in school activities. He went on to explain that if the need for identification with school does not occur, a pupil's participation in education will always be inadequate. Finn's model focuses mostly on institutional belongingness so as to elucidate upon pupils' attitudes towards school. However, a different angle of belongingness was given by Goodenow (1993), who defined belonging by placing sole emphasis on the social relationships of pupils with others in the school environment. According to the researcher, belongingness to school reflects "the extent to which students feel personally accepted, respected, included and supported by others in the school social environment" (Goodenow, 1993, p. 80). Despite the differences in the operational definitions used by scholars to measure feelings of belongingness towards school, one thing that is consensually agreed, is that a sense of belonging is a psychological need that when fulfilled has a positive impact on pupils' school lives.

2.4.2   Belonging and Individual Characteristics

Several research outcomes in the field of educational psychology have emphasised the link between pupils' individual characteristics and sense of belonging. It is evident that some pupils are more likely to belong, whereas others have a predisposition to feeling disengaged. In the literature, there seems to be inconsistency with regards to the relation of gender and belonging. Surveys such as those conducted by Goodenow (1993), Voelkl (1997), Karcher and Lee (2002), Ma (2003), Nichols (2008), and McCoy and Banks (2012) have shown that girls are more likely to report a higher sense of belonging than boys. Conversely, two studies, one cross-sectional and one longitudinal, conducted by

58

Cemalcilar (2010) and Black, Grenard, Sussman, and Rohrbach (2010), respectively, elicited that gender does not have a statistically significant effect.

Age differences have also been found to be associated with pupils' feelings of belonging towards school. According to Goodenow (1991), the most crucial stage to foster a sense of belonging to school is at the beginning of secondary education, where pupils are in transition from childhood to adolescence. This argument is echoed in findings conducted by Ma (2003) and Hawkins, Guo, Hill, Battin-Pearson, and Abbott (2001), who claimed that pupils in lower classes are more likely to have a higher sense of belonging than their elder counterparts. In particular, Ma (2003) found that 6th graders had a higher sense of belonging than 8th graders. This finding was reinforced by the outcomes of a longitudinal study conducted by Hawkins et al. (2001), who found that pupils' sense of belonging to school drops steadily from age 13 to age 18. Conversely, in another longitudinal design study, Black et al. (2010) found that age was weakly correlated (r=-0.03) with school belonging. A possible explanation for this disparity of outcomes might be the differences in the instruments used by scholars to measure belonging. For instance, Hawkins et al. (2001) exclusively included items with reference to liking school and willingness to do homework, whilst Black et al. (2010) also included the natural mentoring relationships between pupils. It is worth mentioning, however, that despite the inconsistency in the findings, there is a weight of evidence supporting the direction that pupils' belonging decreases as they get older.

Socioeconomic status (SES) has also been reported as being connected with pupils' sense of belonging. While McCoy and Banks (2012) found that those coming from semi- and unskilled social class backgrounds were more likely to report a lower sense, Ma (2003), Smerdon (2002) and Cemalcilar (2010), elicited that pupils' SES was not statistically significantly linked with their feelings of belonging regarding school. The latter findings were consistent not only when differences in belonging were examined within schools (i.e. the SES of individual pupils attending the same school), for they also held between schools (i.e. the SES of pupils attending schools located at different areas).

Finally, several studies have reported that pupils identified as having SEN are more likely to report a lower sense of school belonging compared to their typical counterparts (e.g. McCoy & Banks, 2012; Murray & Greenberg, 2001; Nepi et al., 2013). With a sample comprising of 289 pupils attending primary schools in the USA, Murray and Greenberg (2001) examined pupils' relationships with teachers and sense of belonging to schools.

The findings from this cross-sectional study revealed that pupils identified as having SEN tend to have a lower sense of belonging, greater disaffection with teachers and greater perceptions of school dangerousness. Drawing on data from the *Growing Up in Ireland* - national longitudinal study of 9-year-old children, McCoy and Banks (2012) found that pupils with SEN are more likely to report that they have never liked school, which is almost twice as likely if teachers have identified them as having a form of SEN. The authors also found that pupils' type of need is also related to their sense of belonging in that those with multiple needs, as well as MLD and SEMH, are more likely to report a lower sense of belonging, compared with their typical counterparts as well as those having physical, visual, hearing disabilities, and speech impairments (ibid).

Similarly, in an Italian study involving 418 eight to eleven-year-old primary pupils, of which 122 were identified as having SEN, Nepi et al. (2013) examined the social position and sense of belonging of pupils identified as having SEN and three sub divisions of typical pupils, according to their attainment (i.e. high, medium, and low-proficiency learners). The findings revealed that pupils identified as having SEN had an overall lower social position than their typical peers and a lower sense of school belonging. More specifically, high-proficiency learners scored a higher sense of belonging compared with that of medium-proficiency learners, and more than twice the rate of low-proficiency ones. The latter group was found to have similar rates of sense of belonging to pupils identified as having learning and/or behavioural difficulties as well as those with low sociocultural and/or socioeconomic status. Among all of the pupils, those identified with a statement of SEN had the lowest scores regarding sense of belonging. One limitation of all the aforementioned studies involving pupils with SEN is that they have mainly focused on primary years. Further research is therefore required to investigate the sense of school belonging during the adolescence stage. What is more, no study has investigated quantitatively and/or qualitatively the perceptions of belonging of secondary pupils identified as having MLD and SEMH in the English context.

2.4.3   Belonging and Social Relations

In the literature, numerous studies have established a link between pupils' sense of school belonging and their social relations with teachers (e.g. McCoy & Banks, 2012; Murray & Greemberg, 2001; Roeser, Midgley & Urdan, 1996) and peers (e.g. Osterman, 2000). Pupils' relations with teachers have been found to be a stronger predictor of their sense

of school belonging than those with their peers (e.g. Cemalcilar, 2010; Drolet, Arcand, Ducharme, & Leblanc, 2013; Nichols, 2008).

In a Turkish study involving 799 middle school pupils (7th-8th Grades), Cemalcilar (2010) examined the association between pupils' perceived social relations with teachers, administrators and peers along with their feelings of belonging towards school. The findings indicated that all three relationships were positively correlated with sense of school belonging, but the perceived relations with their teachers was found to be the most significant of all. The findings were reproduced in an American study involving 296 8th grade middle school pupils (Roeser, Midgley, & Urdan, 1996).

Similar research outcomes were also elicited from several studies that collected qualitative data. Nichols (2008), in the USA, conducted 45 semi-structured interviews with pupils attending the 6th to 8th grades in order to investigate conceptions of belongingness. The findings revealed that pupils attributed positive or negative feelings of belonging according to the quality of their perceived relations with their teachers or peers. In particular, those who characterised their teachers as being supportive when they struggled and fair when they distributed punishments tended to have a higher sense of belonging than those who described their teachers as neglectful and unfair. Interview analysis from 26 pupils (in the 7th and 8th grades) in a Canadian study revealed a significant impact of intimate relations with peers, and particularly that of teachers, on pupils' feelings of belonging towards school (Drolet, Arcand, Ducharme, & Leblanc, 2013). Along similar lines, Mouton, Hawkins, McPherson and Copley (1996) revealed that pupils who had a negative sense of belonging described their lives at school as lonely and isolated, and saw themselves as alienated from the school setting. However, when the reason for why these pupils felt this way was further examined, most of the respondents were found to have a sense of value for the provided education. It therefore seems reasonable to surmise that pupils' negative relations at school can have an adverse impact on their belonging, but other reasons, such as value for education can, mediate this influence. All the aforementioned studies on this subject employed either solely quantitative or qualitative methods to examine the link between social relations and belonging. Owing to the fact that quantitative methods cannot be used to explain reasons and qualitative methods have limited sized samples, it seems appropriate for a future study to use a mixed methods approach to examine the association between the variables so as to gain further insight into the targeted pupils' perspectives.

Only a small amount of literature has emerged that has examined the link between social relations and sense of school belonging of pupils identified as having SEN. Regarding which, in the USA, Murray and Greenberg (2001) by involving a total sample of 289 primary pupils identified as having SEMH, MLD, Mild Mental Retardation (MMR), or Other Health Impairments (OHI) have shown that teacher-to-pupil identified as having SEN relations and sense of school belonging were positively correlated. It was also found that pupils with SEN were more likely to have negative relations with teachers, and lower rates of sense of school belonging than pupils without disabilities. Among pupils identified as having SEN, those identified as having SEMH and MMR were found to have less intimate relations with and were more dissatisfied by teachers than pupils without disabilities. Similarly, in an Irish longitudinal design study, McCoy and Banks (2012), interviewed 8,578 nine-year old pupils, their parents and their teachers about various topics with the emphasis being on pupils' feelings of belonging. The research outcomes revealed that the sense of school belonging of all pupils with or without SEN was positively related with their perceived relations with teachers and peers. Moreover, pupils who reported to have positive relations with teachers were less likely to report that they have never liked school. While a few scholars have investigated the association between belonging and social relations with teachers and peers, very little consideration has been given to the perceived relations of pupils identified as having SEN with their teaching assistants (TAs). There has been also no or little research examining the link between social relations and the sense of school belonging of pupils identified as having SEN in the U.K.

Summary

Belonging is a psychological need that when met has many benefits for pupils' school lives. Unfortunately, there is ample evidence suggesting that not all pupils can easily develop a sense of belonging at school. There are certain individual characteristics that can either facilitate or hinder a pupil feeling attached to school. For instance, girls are more likely to have a higher sense of belonging than boys, younger pupils more so than older ones and typical pupils a higher sense than those identified as having SEN. In addition to the individual characteristics of pupils, there are two external factors that can positively or negatively affect their sense of belonging: school ethos characteristics, and social relations with teachers and peers. Among these, pupils' perceived relations with teachers compared to peers, was found to be a stronger predictor for their belonging, thus highlighting the crucial role that teachers play in facilitating the inclusion of pupils.

2.5 Social Relations: The Positive Effects on Pupils' School Life

In the literature, several studies have shown the beneficial effects that intimate relations with peers and teachers have on pupils' school life. Pupils who have positive relations with their peers are more likely to feel safe within the school environment and avoid experiencing any form of aggression in comparison with alienated pupils (Rodkin & Hodges, 2003), as well as having more positive perceptions of school (Osterman, 2000). Likewise, research evidence has shown that pupils who have warm relations with teachers as characterised by mutual support, respect, and trust have been found to be more likely to display autonomy and self-reliance (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991), perform better academically (Goodenow, 1993) and be less likely to display delinquency (Smith, 2006) as well as violent behaviour within the school environment (Black et al., 2010; Markham et al., 2012; West, Sweeting, & Leyland, 2004).

2.5.1 Social Relationships between Pupils with SEN and their Teachers

There is currently substantial evidence in the field of special education that pupils identified as having SEMH are commonly viewed as being particularly challenging and the most difficult to be included within mainstream settings (e.g. Evans & Lunt, 2002; Hodkinson, 2006; Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2002). Examination of literature has also uncovered that negative teacher-to-pupil with SEMH relations are reciprocal and thus, it is difficult to separate cause from effect. Pupils with SEMH, by definition, are those who display internalising difficulties or challenging and disruptive behaviour. Those with externalising difficulties are the ones that teachers find hard to deal with, as they are more likely to break rules, disturb the lesson and cause trouble in class (Desforges, 1995). As a result, teachers display negative behaviour towards them, often due to their individual incapacity to deal with such pupils' challenging behaviour owing to lack of skills and insufficient training (e.g. Allan, 2015; Goodman & Burton, 2010; Hodkinson, 2006). Inadequate knowledge about how to control the class often leads teachers to unfair distribution of punishments, and the display of oppressive behaviours towards pupils, such as denying them the opportunity to defend themselves when punished (Cefai & Cooper, 2010). Unfair treatment results in pupils displaying more challenging behaviour or absenteeism (Cefai & Cooper, 2010; Wise & Upton, 1998).

In particular, in an English study, Wise and Upton (1998) conducted 36 interviews with middle school pupils identified as having SEMH who had been rejected by mainstream schools, being subsequently placed in SEMH special schools. When they were asked to describe their perceived relations with teachers in mainstream schools, they were invariably found to be disheartened by that experience. According to their views, teachers used to dedicate very limited time to listen or even help them with their work, and applied unfair and inappropriate techniques to manage their behaviour. The teachers' inability to address their individual needs was a possible reason attributed by the pupils to their failure to fit in within mainstream schools.

Similar findings were also supported by Murray and Greenberg (2001) in a longitudinal quantitative study examining the perceived relations of various groups of pupils with SEN (i.e. SEMH, MLD, MMR, or OHI) attending primary school with their teachers. Among the SEN pupils, those identified as having MLD have better relationships than those identified as having SEMH, which were found to have the least intimate relations with teachers and peers and greater dissatisfaction with teachers. From the fat that research outcomes of both qualitative and quantitative studies conducted in the European and the USA context revealed similar outcomes it can be hypothesised that the pupils identified as having SEMH are more likely to have less positive relations with teachers in any educational system around the globe.

On the contrary, Norwich and Kelly (2004), who explored the views of 101 pupils identified as having MLD (age 10-11 and 13-14) qualitatively, discovered pupils' overall positive relations with teachers. In particular, it was found that the 55% of pupils identified as having MLD reported as having warm relations with teachers, 45% reported mixed feelings and no pupil was found to express a negative evaluation of their teachers. It can be concluded that pupils identified as having SEMH have rather thorny relationships with their teachers as compared to pupils identified as having MLD and thus indicating that the challenges each group of SEN encounters to fit in within mainstream schools are not homogeneous.

2.5.2 Social Relationships between Pupils with SEN and their Teaching Assistants

Extensive research in the UK and Ireland has been conducted to investigate the working role of teaching assistants in mainstream (e.g. Groom & Rose, 2005) or special schools

(Moran & Abbott, 2002). Research evidence from a large volume of studies with pupils identified as having SEN has shown that despite the negative impact that TA support has on academic progress (Webster, Blatchford, Bassett, Brown, Martin, & Russell, 2010; Webster & Blatchford, 2013; 2015) and social interactions with peers (Logan, 2006; Symes & Humphrey, 2012), TAs provide a significant contribution in the inclusion of pupils identified as having SEN. This fact was acknowledged not only by teachers and principals (Groom & Rose, 2005; Logan, 2006; Webster et al., 2010), but also by the pupils identified as having SEN themselves (Logan, 2006; Norwich & Kelly, 2004).

In a mixed methods approach study conducted in England, Groom and Rose (2005) examined the perceptions of a wide range of stakeholders (such as teachers, TAs, pupils and governors) to investigate whether the role of a TA was enhancing the inclusion of primary pupils (aged 7-11) identified as having SEMH. Most of the respondents consensually agreed about the positive role that TAs have in facilitating the inclusion of such pupils within English mainstream settings. In particular, the majority of the respondents recognised TAs' commitment in terms of teaching and supporting pupils with their work as well as offering a pastoral care that enables them to control their behaviour and improve their social skills.

The following year, Logan (2006) conducted a similar study seeking to investigate the role of TAs working in primary mainstream schools in Ireland. The author employed a mixed methods approach divided into two phases. In the first, a postal self-completed questionnaire was randomly distributed to the head teachers, teachers, and TAs of several primary schools in Ireland. In the second phase, three case studies of pupils identified as having SEN along with their teachers, TAs and parents were invited to attend interviews. Analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data obtained from a wide range of key stakeholders revealed an overall positive view of TA's contribution in the implementation of inclusive practice, and only few of them expressed their reservations. In general, positive views about the TAs were expressed by all three pupils identified as having SEN, who acknowledged the significant help they were getting with their work and the essential support to control their behaviour. One pupil criticised the fact of being constantly shadowed by her TA as a barrier to fostering intimate relations with her peers. The main weakness of this study is that only the perspectives of three cases of pupils identified as having SEN were explored and thus, generalisability of these findings to a wider population was not possible. There is hence the need for a larger scale study to investigate the perceptions of pupils identified as having SEN regarding their TAs.

2.5.3 Social Relationships between Pupils with SEN and their Peers

In the current literature, there is substantial empirical research suggesting that pupils identified as having SEN are more likely to be victims of bullying (e.g. Norwich & Kelly, 2004; Wise & Upton, 1998), and less likely to be socially accepted compared to their typically developing peers (e.g. Monchy, Pijl & Zandberg, 2004; Vaughn, Elbaum & Schumm, 1996). In Norway, Frostad and Pijl (2007) examined the link between the social skills of pupils identified as having SEN and their social position in inclusive classrooms. Data drawn through the employment of sociometric techniques from a total sample of 989 pupils (of 4 and 7 grades) revealed that almost 25% of pupils identified as having SEN were not socially included in their peer group. In particular, it was found they were less popular, had fewer friends and participated less often as members of subgroups compared to their typical peers. Similar findings were generated in the Netherlands by Koster, Pijl, Nakken, and Houten, (2010) and in England by Avramidis (2013), who also applied sociometric techniques in a sample of primary school pupils.

In a similar vein, Monchy, Pijl, and Zandberg (2004) employed sociometric techniques to examine the social position of pupils 9–12 years of age. Data analysis revealed that roughly 50% of those identified as having SEMH were rejected by other peers, while the respective levels in the peer group of typical pupils was only 19%. This means that pupils identified as having SEMH run a 30% higher risk of being rejected than their non-SEN peers. One explanation for this difference was given by Frostad and Pijl (2007), who found that pupils identified as having SEMH lack social skills, which negatively affects their ability to foster intimate relations. Similar findings have been found for pupils identified as having MLD. In the USA, Vaughn, Elbaum, and Schumm (1996) in a sample of 64 primary pupils using peer ratings of liking as well as positive and negative nominations, found that pupils identified as having MLD who received education in inclusive classrooms were less likely to be accepted by their peers, and more likely to be rejected than the typical pupils. Moreover, research outcomes obtained from Pijl, Frostad, and Flem (2008) have shown that among these two SEN groups, pupils identified as having SEMH were found to be over 50% isolated, while the respective figures for pupils identified as having severe and mild learning difficulties were almost 40%. A discrepancy of 10% is a significant difference and hence, makes it reasonable to conclude that the social inclusion of pupils identified as having SEMH within mainstream settings is arguably the most challenging.

Even though sociometric techniques have been extensively used to identify a pupil's social position within a group, such methods have certain limitations as they fail to capture in depth the intimacy, warmth, and quality involved in pupil-to-pupil relations. As Avramidis (2013) stated, the nomination method is limited in providing any understanding of the quality or strength of social relations. For instance, a common finding of the aforementioned studies was that pupils identified as having SEN have low social positions within their peer group, suggesting that fewer pupils nominate them as being their friends. However, having fewer friends does not necessarily signify that a pupil feels isolated or excluded. As Baumeister and Leary (1995) in their belongingness hypothesis contended a pupil can feel a sense of belonging even with one individual, providing their relationship is based on mutual respect, care and affection. Further qualitative work is therefore required to explore the relations of pupils identified as having SEN with peers.

<u>Summary</u>

Social relations with peers as well as educational staff, such as teachers and TAs have been found to play a significant role in pupils' school life. However, not all groups of pupils can successfully foster and maintain intimate relations with others. It is well acknowledged within the literature that pupils identified as having SEN are less likely to have intimate relations with both teachers and peers as compared to their typically developing counterparts. Difference in terms of acceptance is well documented even among groups of SEN categories, with pupils identified as having SEMH being more likely to have mutual negative relations with teachers and peers. Conversely, pupils identified as having MLD have been less consistently identified as having relationship problems, thus suggesting that pupils with SEN are not a homogenous group and consequently, do not all encounter the same difficulties within mainstream settings.

2.6   Existing Gaps in the Literature

This section presents the existing gaps in literature that this study aims to address and therefore, make an original contribution to knowledge.

Identification

A wide range of studies have examined the accuracy of teachers in identifying pupils who report at-risk levels of mental health difficulties (Auger, 2004; Cunningham & Suldo, 2014; Moor et al., 2007; Soles, Bloom, Heath, & Karagiannakis, 2008) or the level of agreement in the ratings in relation to parents, teachers and pupils' self-reports (for a review see De Los Reyes & Kazdin, 2005; Youngstrom, Loeber, & Stouthamer-Loeber, 2000). The studies which focused on emotional and behavioural difficulties were mainly conducted in relation to the American educational system involving primary (Soles et al., 2008), or middle school pupils (Youngstrom et al., 2000), using Achenbach's behaviour checklist. There appears to be no study that has examined the accuracy in identification of the SEMH category by comparing the identification provided by SENCO and pupils' self-reports, using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, which was only recently proposed by the DfE (2016) as an effective diagnostic tool to identify pupils with possible mental health difficulties. In England, only one study was found to examine the level of agreement between teachers' nominations and pupils' self-reports, which was specifically on depression by Moor et al. (2007), who used the Mood and Feelings Questionnaire (MFQ).

Measuring School Ethos

In the field of special educational needs, numerous studies have explored the notion of inclusion and the school characteristics that make some schools more inclusive than others. In their investigations, most of the studies employed qualitative methods and approaches such as ethnographic research (e.g. Avramidis, Bayliss & Burder, 2002), or action research (e.g. Booth & Ainscow, 2002) while others used a mixed methods approach (e.g. Hatton, 2013). Of these only two studies developed a quantitative questionnaire that measured individuals' perspectives of school ethos in relation to inclusivity, namely, Hatton (2013) as well as Booth and Ainscow (2002). The former focused solely on examining the inclusivity of the applied behaviour policies, whilst the latter probed the equality of opportunity and participation within schools. It is widely accepted that one of the fundamental principles of inclusion is equality of opportunities for all. Equity in participation and learning is one aspect of inclusion which safeguards that all pupils irrespective of their learning difficulties will have equal access to learning by receiving individualised support enabling them to reach their full potential. Appropriate behaviour management strategies, is the other aspect of inclusion that secures

that all pupils irrespective of their emotional or behavioural difficulties will have equal opportunities to remain within class and by extension within school environment, by being equally, fairly and suitably treated by their teachers to help them improve their behaviour. In contrast with Hatton (2013) and Booth and Ainscow (2002) that solely focused on a single aspect of inclusion, there is a need for a questionnaire that includes both dimensions if the concept of ethos is to be captured in its entire equity.

Despite several studies having explored the perspectives of inclusion of key educators (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2002; Booth & Ainscow, 2002; Hatton, 2013; Rouse & Florian, 1996) those of Educational Psychologists (EPs) (Farell, 2004) and those of pupils identified as having SEN (Cafai & Cooper, 2010; Norwich & Kelly, 2004; Pivik, Mccomas & Laflamme, 2002; Sellman, 2009; Wise & Upon, 1998), it seems that there has been no investigation of the inclusivity of a school setting by comparing the perceptions of inclusion amongst educators, EPs and pupils identified as having SEN. Additionally, no study would appear to have employed subjective (Educational Psychologists, Educational staff and pupils' perspectives of inclusion) and objective (data provided from School Census[13] as indicators of inclusivity) measures to triangulate the results with regards to the inclusivity of a school setting.

Interrelationship

In the literature, a large volume of studies has examined the interrelationship between school ethos characteristics and pupils' attainment (e.g. Morris, 1995; Mortimore et al., 1988; Reyes et al., 2012), behaviour (e.g. Hatton, 2013; Mayer, 2001; Munn, 2003; Naylor & Cowie, 1999; Stephenson & Smith, 2002), social relations (e.g. Carter, 2002; Yoneyama & Naito, 2003) and sense of school belonging (e.g. Cemalcilar, 2010; Fullarton, 2002; Ma, 2003; Smerdon, 2002). From those studies that examined the link between ethos and social relations, only one longitudinal study conducted in England by Carter (2002), has been found to investigate the influence of an authoritarian ethos on

---

[13] The School Census is a statutory data collection for all maintained nursery, primary, secondary and other settings in England. It collects information about individual pupils and information about the schools themselves, such as their educational provision. The individual pupil information collected includes free school meal eligibility, ethnicity, special educational needs, attendance and exclusions. Retrieved from https://data.gov.uk/dataset/school-census

typical pupils' social relations with teachers and peers. The rest mainly examined the effect of school ethos on pupils' bullying experiences (e.g. Askew, 1989; Naylor & Cowie, 1999; Stephenson & Smith, 2002; Yoneyama & Naito, 2003). Additionally, all studies found that probed the link between school ethos and pupils' sense of school belonging, involved a sample of typical pupils. These were conducted at different national school systems, including the USA (Nichols, 2008; Smerdon, 2002), Canada (Ma, 2003), Australia (Fullarton, 2002) and Turkey (Cemalcilar, 2010) and all employed quantitative methods. No empirical study appears to have examined the link between an inclusive ethos and the sense of school belonging of pupils identified as having SEN, in England or anywhere else. Finally, no study has investigated the interrelationship between inclusive ethos, sense of school belonging and social relations using a mixed methods approach.

A substantial body in the extant literature examined the link between pupils' sense of school belonging and their perceived relations with teachers and peers at the international level, including countries such as the USA (Mouton, Hawkins, McPherson & Copley, 1996; Nichols, 2008; Roeser, Midgley, & Urdan, 1996), Canada (Drolet, Arcand, Ducharme, & Leblanc, 2013) and Turkey (Cemalcilar, 2010). Among them, several scholars investigated the interrelationship between the variables by employing correlational (Cemalcilar, 2010; Roeser, Midgley, & Urdan, 1996), qualitative (Drolet, Arcand, Ducharme, & Leblanc, 2013; Mouton, Hawkins, McPherson, & Copley, 1996) or mixed methods approaches (Nichols, 2008) to samples of typical middle school pupils. However, only a small number of studies seem to have focused on pupils identified as having SEN. Among these, one was conducted in the USA by Murray and Greenberg (2001) and another, in Ireland by McCoy and Banks (2012) using a sample of primary aged pupils. Both studies investigated the association between the sense of school belonging of pupils identified as having SEN and their perceived relations with teachers and/or peers via quantitative (Murray & Greenberg, 2001) or qualitative methods (McCoy & Banks, 2012). However, so far, no study has examined this interrelationship for such pupils in the English context. There has been also no or little consideration regarding the link between pupils' perceived relations with teaching assistants and their sense of school belonging.

Voice of Pupils Identified as Having SEMH and MLD on their Schooling Experiences

Several scholars in Canada, Malta and England have expressed an academic interest to explore the perceptions of inclusion of pupils identified as having SEN. In Canada, Pivik, McComas, and Laflamme (2002) explored middle school pupils identified with mobility difficulties' perceptions as to whether certain school features acted as barriers to or facilitators of their inclusion. Norwich and Kelly (2004), in an English study, investigated the schooling experiences in relation to the teaching and learning of pupils identified as having MLD (age 10-11 and 13-14) attending either mainstream or special settings. Similarly, three studies, one conducted in Malta (Cafai & Cooper, 2010) and two in the English context (Sellman, 2009; Wise & Upon, 1998), explored the school factors within mainstream settings that pupils identified as having SEMH (12-16) attributed to their difficulties and disaffection to fitting in and thus, contributed to their subsequent placement in special schools. Most of the studies conducted in England on pupils identified as having SEMH mainly involved pupils who attended special schools to explore what went wrong with their inclusion in mainstream schools. No study was found that compared the perceptions of inclusion of pupils identified as having SEMH and MLD attending secondary schools, nationally or internationally.

With regards to belonging, there is only limited published research on pupils identified as having SEN. In the USA, Murray and Greenberg (2001) employed a quantitative method to examine the sense of school belonging of 289 primary pupils identified as having SEMH, MLD, MMR and OHI. In Ireland McCoy and Banks (2012) explored qualitatively the perceptions of belonging of a large sample of 9-year old pupils, including both pupils identified as having SEN and typical pupils. Similarly, Nepi et al. (2013) in an Italian quantitative study investigated the sense of school belonging of 418 eight to eleven-year-old primary pupils, of which 122 were identified as having SEN. No study, to the best of this researcher's knowledge, has explored quantitatively and/or qualitatively the perceptions of secondary pupils identified as having MLD and SEMH feelings of belonging towards school in the English context.

Only a small number of studies were found to investigate the perceived relations with teachers of pupils identified as having SEN. In the USA, Murray and Greenberg (2001) examined quantitatively the quality of relations between teachers and pupils with SEN in a sample of 289 primary pupils identified as having SEMH, MLD, MMR, and OHI. In Malta, several small-scale qualitative studies investigated teacher-to-pupil with SEMH

relations (found in a review paper by Cefai and Cooper, 2010). In England, Wise and Upton (1998) recruited 36 middle school pupils identified as having SEMH, who attended SEMH special schools, and Norwich and Kelly (2004) employed 101 pupils who had been identified as having MLD (age 10-11 and 13-14), attending special or mainstream schools. No study in the English context appears to have compared the differences quantitatively and/or qualitatively the perceived relations with teachers between the focal SEN groups attending mainstream schools, namely, SEMH and MLD.

The perceived relations with TAs of pupils identified as having SEN was investigated by only a handful of studies. The two most significant large-scale studies conducted in England, the Deployment and Impact of Support Staff (DISS) project (Blatchford et al., 2012) and the Making a Statement (MAST) project (Webster & Blatchford, 2013), with a particular interest in pupils identified as having SEN and the role of TAs in their inclusion, focused on pupils' educational experiences, but not on their social relations. Other studies identified in the UK and Ireland investigated the working role of TAs either in primary (Groom & Rose, 2005; Logan, 2006) or secondary (Symes & Humphrey, 2012) schools, by exploring the views of various educators and/or pupils (Groom & Rose, 2005; Logan, 2006; Symes & Humphrey, 2012). Scant literature was found that investigated the TA-to-pupils with SEN relations, in particular with regards to exploring the views of middle school pupils identified as having SEMH and MLD in the English context.

Finally, the majority of the studies that examined the social relations with peers of pupils identified as having SEN relied on data through the use of sociometric techniques, pertained to the USA (Vaughn, Elbaum, & Schumm, 1996), the Netherlands (Koster et al., 2010; Monchy, Pijl, & Zandberg, 2004), Norway (Frostad & Pijl, 2007; Pijl, Frostad, & Flem, 2008) and England (Avramidis, 2013). Two English studies were the only ones found to explore pupil-to-pupil with SEN relations qualitatively: Norwich and Kelly (2004) who focused on middle school pupils identified as having MLD and Wise and Upton (1998) on SEMH. No study was found that explored the perceptions on social relations with peers for pupils identified as having SEMH and MLD or investigated what, if any, are the differences between these SEN groups. Therefore, in this study the researcher will seek to address the aforementioned limitations to gain a better understanding of whether a school with an inclusive ethos enhances the sense of belonging and encourages the social relations of pupils identified as having SEMH and MLD in mainstream secondary schools in England.

2.7 Aims of the Study

More specifically, the aims of this study are:

- ❖ To evaluate the inclusive ethos of schools through the comparison of objective and subjective measures.
- ❖ To identify any differences between pupils' perception of ethos.
- ❖ To explore whether the sense of belonging and social relations of pupils identified as having SEMH difficulties and MLD are moderated by the inclusivity of the school setting.
- ❖ To investigate any differences between SEMH and MLD pupils' perceptions of the schools' inclusive ethos.
- ❖ To examine the interrelationship between the perceptions of pupils identified as having SEN regarding school ethos and their sense of belonging as well as their social relations.
- ❖ To investigate the reliability in the identification of pupils with SEMH difficulties.

2.8 Research Questions:

The research questions posed were:

Difference between Settings

- Are there shared perspectives on ethos amongst schools, as measured by statistics provided by the DfE, individuals (i.e. educational staff and pupils) and schools' educational psychologists?
- Does a school's inclusive ethos moderate the relationship between groups of pupils and their perspectives on this ethos?
- Does a school's inclusive ethos moderate the relationship between groups of pupils and their perspectives on the sense of school belonging?
- Does a school's inclusive ethos moderate the relationship between groups of pupils and their perspectives on social relations with teachers, TAs and peers?

Differences between Groups of Individuals

- Is there a difference in school ethos perceptions between pupils and educational staff?

- Is there a difference between groups of pupils and their perceived views on ethos, sense of belonging and social relations?

Interrelationship

- Is there a relationship between pupils with SEN's perceptions on ethos with their sense of school belonging, and social relations?
- Is there a relationship between pupils with SEN's perceptions on social relations (i.e. with teachers, TAs, and peers) with their sense of school belonging?

Identification

- Are pupils with SEMH, as identified by the school, more likely to score as being abnormal on SDQ total difficulties scale than their typical peers?
- Is there an association between those pupils identified as having SEMH and those scored as abnormal on the SDQ externalising and internalising difficulties scale?
- Is there an association between school setting and pupils' identification as having SEMH and their scoring as abnormal in externalising and internalising difficulties scale?

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a description of the methods used to investigate pupil and staff perspectives about inclusive education and schooling experience. It describes the gradual progression of the research, from designing the study, to formulating the research methods, collecting the data and planning the analysis process for answering the research questions, as posed at the beginning of the study. The chapter begins by describing the research location as well as the target school settings and population. It continues by presenting the research design and providing the rationale for the selected methods. This is followed by an explanation of the development of the research instruments, and a report of a pilot study, which also provides the alterations made in the data collecting methods for the main study. Subsequently, there is a description of the administration of the instruments in the main fieldwork, along with the explanation and justification for the analysis used to deliver the findings. Finally, ethical considerations are discussed.

3.2 Research Setting: Location, Target School Settings, and Population

3.2.1 Location

The research was carried out in England and there are two main reasons for this choice. England has a long tradition regarding the implementation of inclusive policies, in particular, those targeted at developing inclusive schools. Consequently, the researcher thought that there would be a greater possibility of identifying schools with a more inclusive ethos, and thus, be able to recruit them for her study. Secondly, in England, compared to Greece where the researcher comes from, there is easier access to a variety of information regarding the demographic characteristics of schools, as provided from the DfE, and reports about the quality of teaching standards, as provided from Ofsted, thus enabling the identification of school settings with similar characteristics. Since socioeconomic status, ethnicity and quality of teaching (i.e. Ofsted reports) were found in literature to affect the schooling experience of pupils, it was important to control these variables to ensure that any possible differences found between schools are attributed to ethos and not these variables.

3.2.2   Target School Settings

The target school settings in this study were state-funded secondary schools that differ in ethos. The researcher aimed to identify two schools from the same local authority, one with an inclusive ethos and another less so, whilst being similar otherwise. A detailed conceptualisation of inclusive ethos and the systematic process that was followed to identify such schools is described below.

3.2.2.1 Conceptualisation of Inclusive Ethos

For the current research, the construct of inclusive ethos is conceptualised in two ways: objective and subjective. The objective way refers to measurable characteristics that capture the inclusive ethos of a school setting. Conversely, the subjective way pertains to the perceived construct of an inclusive school as conceived by pupils and educational staff. Each of these can be further clarified by employing both a conceptual and an operational definition.

Conceptual definitions describe the meaning of the inclusive ethos. The School Census[14] is used by the UK government as a way to track social inclusion policy, by monitoring such numerical characteristics as "information on class sizes, pupils with statements, pupils with SEN but without statements, free school meals, ethnicity, absences, and permanent exclusions" (DfE, 2013). These statistics were used as an objective measure to define the inclusive ethos of a school. The second conceptual definition has been formulated by the researcher after a thorough review of the current literature, and refers to the perceived and subjective construct of an inclusive school. Collating research outcomes for various studies regarding pupils and educational staff's perspectives on inclusive ethos, the researcher theorised two emerging themes that underpin a school's inclusivity: inclusive educational policies and inclusive behaviour management.

Inclusive educational policies are expressed through access to equal treatment in learning and participation, encouragement and celebration of all types of academic achievement aligned with pupils' individual needs, opportunities for collaborative work, and active

---

[14] The School Census is statutory and takes place during the autumn, spring, and summer terms. All maintained schools should take part in the census. Information drawn from https://www.gov.uk/school-census.

involvement in decision making. As evidenced in the literature, inclusive behaviour management policies are manifested through consistency, clarity, and fairness in school rules. As shown in section 2.3.5.2 of the literature review, research outcomes have elicited that when pupils are aware of the rules, experience fairness and consistency in the way teachers apply them, they are more likely to stop misbehaving, and conform to the school rules. Reduction in misbehaviour leads to fewer exclusions and thus, engenders more inclusive schools.

Operational definitions specify how the construct of inclusive ethos is measured. The first, refers to the characteristics that underpin the inclusivity of a school setting by using objective measures. Thus, rigorous statistical analysis on the School Level Census Metadata was conducted to identify the inclusivity of each school. The identification of the school's inclusivity was made by taking into account the proportion of pupils with special educational needs, as well as the proportion of exclusions and absenteeism per school (for further information see below). The second operational definition refers to the perceived inclusivity as measured by the subjective opinion of pupils and educational staff. Specifically, in the current study, perceived inclusivity was measured by asking educational staff and pupils to complete the school ethos questionnaire (see Appendix III, and IV), where they had to state their views about the inclusivity of the school ethos. Semi-structured interviews with pupils were also applied to explore their opinion qualitatively. Finally, the schools' educational psychologists were also asked to give their professional perspectives in order to triangulate the data on the inclusivity of the schools.

3.2.2.2 Schools Ethos Identification: DfE Statistics

Schools with a specific ethos were identified for the purpose of the current research, thus demonstrating the employment of a purposive sampling strategy.

3.2.2.2.1   School Identification Process: "Pairs of Schools"

For the identification of settings with different ethos (i.e. inclusive vs. less-inclusive) a rigorous statistical analysis was carried out, involving the School Level Census Metadata along with statistics of the local authorities of Inner and Outer London provided by the Department for Education (DfE, 2013).

3.2.2.2.2 Total Number of BESD[15] and MLD Pupils

Initially, all mainstream secondary schools of all the local authorities within the Inner and Outer London were identified. The first aim was to detect those schools that had high numbers of BESD and MLD[16] pupils, the two SEN categories on which the current study is focused. Schools that had more than 50 pupils in one and no fewer than 18 in the other of these SEN categories, or at least 25 pupils in both categories were included. Conversely, schools that had a lower number of pupils than the above cut-off criteria were excluded from the subsequent analysis, as they would have restricted the size of the recruitment sample.

3.2.2.2.3 School Pairs

The next step was to identify pairs of the remaining schools from each local authority that differed in inclusivity, but had scored similarly on the Ofsted inspection[17] and had relatively similar socioeconomic and ethnicity characteristics. The comparison, in terms of the inclusivity, was based on the percentage of SEN pupils in the school and the percentage of absenteeism, which included both authorised exclusions and unauthorised absences. The socioeconomic status and the ethnicity background were based on the percentage of pupils' premium (i.e. eligibility for free school meals), and on the percentage of pupils who spoke English as a first language.

3.2.2.2.4 Refinement of the Schools' Identification Process

There are five criteria on which the identification of the "pair of schools" was based.

---

[15] Pupils with behaviour, emotional social difficulties (BESD). Since the fieldwork was carried out during 2012-2013, when the old SEN Code of Practice (2001) was still in use, from now on the term BESD will be strictly used to refer to statistics taken from DfE during that period, while for other reference the new applied term SEMH will be used across the study.

[16]Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD).

[17] Ofsted is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. It inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people, and those providing education and skills for learners of all ages; retrieved from http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/about-us.

First criterion: The "inclusivity" of each school was measured by the difference in the percentage of SEN pupils in each school with the average for the Local Authority (LA) to which it belonged. The criterion for pairing two schools was satisfied when one school had a higher percentage, and the other had a lower percentage of pupils with SEN than the percentage of SEN pupils who attended mainstream schools within the LA. For a better conceptualisation of schools' inclusivity, the differences in the percentages of pupils identified as having SEN were banded, and the schools were classified, as presented in Table 3.1.

Second criterion: Another indication of "inclusivity" was the percentage of exclusions. School pairs were considered to be the ones that had high and low percentages of these, when compared with the LA's average. Schools with a lower percentage of exclusions were characterised as inclusive, while those with a higher percentage were characterised as less so.

Table 3.1 Classification of Inclusivity among Schools

Intervals (difference in percentages between the school and LA)	Characterisation
40 – 30	Extremely inclusive
30 – 20	Highly inclusive
20 – 10	Very inclusive
10 – 5	Fairly inclusive
5 – 0	Just inclusive
0 – −5	Slightly inclusive
−5 – −10	Not inclusive

The percentages of exclusions were calculated by dividing the sum of the sessions that had authorised exclusions by the sum of possible sessions both for the schools and LAs.

$$\% \textbf{ Exclusions in school} = \frac{\textbf{sum of authorised excluded sessions}}{\textbf{sum of possible sessions}}$$

$$\% \textbf{ Exclusions in LA} = \frac{\textbf{sum of authorised excluded sessions}}{\textbf{sum of possible sessions}}$$

Similar calculations were made for the percentage of unauthorised absenteeism in a school, and at the LA level.

Third criterion: Only schools with similar Ofsted reports were paired. According to Ofsted, schools are assessed on a 4-point scale: 1 (Outstanding), 2 (Good), 3 (Satisfactory) and 4 (Inadequate) in relation to the effectiveness, quality and standards in education.

Fourth criterion: Paired schools had similar socioeconomic status, which was controlled as it could have an influence on pupils' belonging. Findings in literature are contradictory with respect to this, so this variable was controlled to ensure quality of results. The variable was manipulated by taking into account the percentage of pupils eligible for pupil premium[18] (or free school meals) at each school. Pairs of schools were considered to be those that did not differ by more than 8 percent.

Fifth criterion: Due to contested views found in the literature, ethnicity was controlled by taking into account the percentage of pupils speaking English as a first language. Pairs of schools were considered to be those that did not differ by more than 19 percent.

After the above statistical analysis was completed, 20 pairs of schools from 13 LAs of Inner and Outer London were identified and approached to take part in the current study (detailed analysis for each school can be provided in excel format on request). It should be noted that the five criteria used were the five best operational criteria that could be identified to objectively measure "inclusivity". The characteristics of the recruited schools are provided in section 3.13.

3.2.3   Target Population

From the identified schools, educational staff, and pupils with special educational needs, with the particular focus being on pupils identified as having SEMH and MLD, were asked to take part in the study. Typical pupils were also recruited as a referral group. The decision to focus on state-funded secondary mainstream English schools was based on the statistics provided from DfE (2011), suggesting that secondary pupils with SEN are

---

[18] Pupil premium is additional government funding for students eligible for free school meals, those from service families and those who are looked after by the LA.

more likely to have negative schooling experiences compared to those in earlier educational levels. For all SEN groups, emphasis was given to pupils identified as having SEMH and MLD for two reasons: firstly, these are the two largest groups of SEN to receive education in mainstream settings and secondly, they are more likely to be absent from school. As statistics from the DfE (2011) showed, pupils identified as having SEMH had the highest number of authorised absenteeism due to fixed or permanent exclusions they receive from teachers, whilst pupils identified as having MLD had the highest number of unauthorised absenteeism, by choosing to not attend school.

3.3   Epistemology

In this study, a pragmatic approach was adopted to answer the research questions. Pragmatism relies on the philosophical assumption that rejects the conflict between the positivist and interpretivist paradigms concerning the nature and sources of knowledge and instead it supports the integration of both positions within the scope of a single study (Robson, 2011). A pragmatic approach endorses the use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches and is focused on answering the research questions of an identified problem in the best possible way (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

Since the notion of inclusion still remains unclear (see Section 2.2), the researcher appraised the employment of mixed methods approach as the most efficient way to increase clarity in capturing the complexity of inclusion. In particular, by using both self-completed questionnaires and semi-structured interviews the researcher aimed to better understand pupils identified as having SEN's perceptions of inclusion, justifying accordingly the adoption of a pragmatic approach.

3.4   Research Design

A cross-sectional comparative non-experimental fixed design was adapted for the purpose of this study, employing a mixed-methods approach for the data collection. A cross-sectional design examines the relationship between variables as they exist in defined populations at a single point in time or over a short period of time (Robson, 2011). The use of a comparable non-experimental fixed design is aimed at identifying the differences between separate distinctive sub-groups (i.e. referring either to settings or groups of pupils) within a population, by comparing samples (Coolican, 2009). Thus, for the current

study the concern was to compare the perceptions of pupils identified as having SEMH, MLD, and typical on ethos, sense of school belonging and social relations in terms of capturing a snapshot of their schooling experiences at a specific time.

A non-experimental fixed design study is one where the examined variables are not deliberately manipulated or intentionally changed by the researcher and there are three advantages to applying such a design.

The first pertains to the fact that there is no option for the current research to manipulate the involved variables, either because such an action might be impossible, or it could be deemed as unethical. For instance, it would be unethical to purposefully allocate specific pupils with SEN in an inclusive school, and others in a less-inclusive school, and then test their schooling experiences. Second, a non-experimental fixed design gives the opportunity to examine how naturally occurring variables relate in the real world. For example, it can capture a natural picture of SEMH, MLD, and typical pupils' perceptions regarding school ethos, and its influence on their sense of school belonging. The final reason that justifies its selection, is that it is exploratory, thus permitting differences between groups, (e.g. SEMH, MLD and typical) to emerge, and testing for associations among the involved variables, in this case, perceived school ethos, sense of school belonging, and social relations.

One of the main weaknesses of cross-sectional studies is the difficulty in determining causal relations between variables. However, the collected data "can be used to make useful predictions even if the reasons for the discovered relationships are not clear" (Wilson & MacLean, 2011, p. 89). It was decided that as this study was a first of its kind, and a longitudinal design was not possible given the scope of this work, a cross-sectional design was the most suitable for investigating the relationships between the involved variables and thus, was adapted accordingly.

In terms of the collection of the data, a mixed-methods approach was applied. According to Cresswell (2002), a mixed methods approach is a procedure that involves collecting, analysing and "mixing" both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study, so as to understand a research problem more completely than when a single approach is adopted. That is, the rationale for mixing is that neither quantitative nor qualitative methods are sufficient by themselves to capture the details of a complex situation, such as the issue of SEMH and MLD pupils' schooling experiences, and their difficulty in fitting in within

mainstream secondary schools. Under the quantitative paradigm, theory guides the research in a deductive way and the researcher adopts post-positivist principles for developing knowledge, such as nomological thinking. This means his/her role is to test theories and subject hypothesis to empirical scrutiny in order to identify causality between variables, extrapolate findings in a wider context, and permit others to replicate hypotheses (Bryman, 2004; Sarantakos, 2005). According to Bryman (2004), one of the major criticism of quantitative studies is that "the analysis of relationships between variables creates a static view of social life that is independent of people's lives" (p.79).

Conversely, in qualitative studies, a researcher gives emphasis to the differences between people's subjective opinions and perceptions, and thus collection and data analysis are mainly focusing on words. An inductive approach is applied where the aim is the generation of theory. That is, the researcher adopts an interpretivist epistemological approach for developing knowledge. This means that the emphasis is placed on how individuals interpret the social world, as people's subjective perspectives is what matters the most. The frequent criticism of qualitative studies is that the results are prone to subjectivity, and they are limited in terms of replication and generalisation (Bryman, 2004; Sarantakos, 2005).

When used in combination, quantitative and qualitative methods supplement each other and allow for more comprehensive analysis (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998) as well as methodological triangulation. Denzin, (1970) defined it as the process of using more than one method to examine a social phenomenon. These advantages have *"particular value when a researcher is trying to solve a problem that is present in a complex educational or social context"* (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2002 in Mertens, 2005, p. 293).

In this research two methods were used to gather information: self-completed questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The strengths of questionnaires are that they enable data to be collected from many respondents easily, and in a relatively cost effective way. They are also less sensitive to bias and errors caused by the attitudes of the researcher. The main weaknesses of questionnaires are that they do not provide the opportunity for the researcher to probe, prompt and examine whether the respondents understood the questions (Sarantakos, 2005). The advantage of interviews is found in their flexibility. For, they allow the researcher to reformulate questions as necessary, clarify any misunderstandings, and ensure that respondents have properly understood the questions. Moreover, the researcher has the opportunity to rearrange the structure of

questions by following the flow of the interview and to pick up non-verbal clues from the respondent. In addition, the interviewee has greater licence to express his or her viewpoint than when completing a questionnaire. The main limitations of interviews are interviewer bias, sensitivity when delicate issues are discussed, as well as their being a costly and time consuming way of data collection and analysis (Sarantakos, 2005).

Three issues are necessary to be taken into consideration in a mixed-methods design: priority, implementation and integration (Cresswell, Plano Clark, Cuttman, & Hanson, 2003). Priority refers to designating, which is the prevalent method in the study: qualitative or quantitative. Implementation pertains to the selected form of data collection and analysis. When quantitative and qualitative data are collected and analysed concurrently, this is known as parallel form, whereas when one type of data provides a basis of collection for another, it is known as sequential form. Finally, integration refers to the phase where quantitative and qualitative data are brought together and compared.

To collect data in this study, a sequential mixed-methods design was applied. In the first phase, self-completion questionnaires examining pupils' schooling experiences were administered, thus allowing the researcher to collect data in a standardised form from a large number of pupils. In a second phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted with multiple cases of pupils with SEN, hence giving the researcher the opportunity to gain insight into pupils' experiences, and to explore how their perceptions on school ethos affected their thoughts and feelings. Interviews were used as a supplementary method to illustrate and clarify SEMH, MLD, and typical pupils' responses, and to explain the findings generated from the self-completion questionnaires. A combination of both methods together enabled the researcher to shape an in depth understanding about the schooling experiences of pupils identified as having SEN. The relationship between the research questions and the selected methods is shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Research Questions and Methods of Investigation

Research Questions	Methods or tests chosen
Differences between Settings	
Are there shared perspectives on ethos amongst schools, as measured by statistics provided by the DfE, individuals (i.e.	DfE statistics

educational staff and pupils) and school educational psychologists?	Self-completed questionnaires by pupils and staff telephone interviews with EPs
Does a school's inclusive ethos moderate the relationship between groups of pupils and their perspectives on this ethos? Does a school's inclusive ethos moderate the relationship between groups of pupils and their perspectives on the sense of school belonging? Does a school's inclusive ethos moderate the relationship between groups of pupils and their perspectives on social relations with teachers, TAs and peers?	Self-completed questionnaires by pupils Semi-structured interviews with pupils
Differences between Groups of Individuals	
Is there a difference in school ethos (i.e. inclusivity, behaviour management) perceptions between pupils and educational staff?	Self-completed questionnaires by staff and pupils
Is there a difference between groups of pupils and their perceived views on ethos, sense of belonging and social relations?	Self-completed questionnaires by pupils Semi-structured interviews with pupils
Interrelationship	
Is there a relationship between pupils with SEN's perceptions on ethos with their sense of school belonging, and social relations? Is there a relationship between pupils with SEN's perceptions on social relations with their sense of school belonging?	Self-completed questionnaires by pupils Semi-structured interviews with pupils

Identification	
Are pupils with SEMH, as identified by the school, more likely to score as being abnormal on the SDQ total difficulties scale than their typical peers?	Self-completed questionnaires by pupils
Is there an association between those pupils identified as having SEMH and those scored as abnormal on the SDQ externalising and internalising scales?	School registers provided by SENCO
Is there an association between school setting and pupils' identification as having SEMH and their scoring as abnormal in externalising and internalising difficulties?	

3.5 Development of Questionnaires

This section describes the questionnaires developed to examine the perceptions on school ethos of educational staff and pupils identified as having SEN. It provides a critique of previous measurements and explains the rationale behind developing new scales for the purpose of this research. The sources of questionnaire items are described and the rationale for their selection are clarified. Finally, validity issues are discussed.

3.5.1 The Necessity of Developing New Measures

3.5.1.1 Pupils' Sense of School Belonging

In the existing literature, there is a spectrum of puzzling terms measuring pupils' identification with school namely, school belongingness (Voelkl, 1996), school membership (Goodenow, 1993), school attachment (Mouton et al., 1996), school connectedness (Libbey, 2004), among other terms. In reality, empirical research in the workplace has shown that despite the use of different terms, the measurements, in fact, comprise similar contextual concepts, measuring similar aspects of pupils' school lives.

There are two core drivers underpinning the perceptions of researchers on school identification, or school belongingness[19]. The first, used by numerous researchers, pertains to measuring pupils' belongingness to school in terms of social relations, by examining the extent to which students feel valued, and accepted by the members of the school community (i.e. teachers and peers). Several scholars in their studies only measured social relations in terms of pupil-to-teacher relations (Resnick et al., 1997; Smith, 2006; Voelkl, 1996). However, the majority of those measuring social relations also perceived acceptance by peers as an important consideration (Christenson & Anderson, 2002; Goodeneow, 1993; Karcher & Lee, 2002; Lohmeier & Lee, 2011; Ma, 2003; Morrison et al., 2012; Reschly & Christenson, 2006; Smerdon, 2002; Morrison et al., 2012). The second concept perceives a pupil's belongingness to the school as an institution. Relations with school are measured mostly by examining pupils' feelings of school liking or belonging. For instance, McCoy and Banks (2012) measured pupils' liking about school by simply asking "what do they think about their school" or as examined by other scholars "to what extent do they feel part of the school" (Cemalcilar, 2010; Roeser, Midgley, & Urdan, 1996) or "whether they are interested in school work" (Archambault, Janosz, Fallu, & Pagani, 2009).

The majority of previous studies were mainly focusing on examining typical pupils' general feelings about school, using a definition that involved social relations to measure school belonging. In contrast, for this study the interest lies in investigating pupils identified as having SEN's feelings towards an institution, by using inclusion as a theoretical framework. According to Florian (1998), inclusion is defined as the opportunity for active involvement and choice in the school setting, and not something given to SEN pupils. Thus, in order to examine pupils' belonging to school as an institution there is a need to separate out social relations, and relations to school, i.e. probing each one discretely. To fulfil the aims of this study, a new scale measuring institutional belongingness was developed and a detailed description of its items is given in section I of 3.5.2.2.

---

[19] From now on in this research the term "school identification" is used interchangeably with the terms "school belongingness" or "school belonging".

3.5.1.2 Inclusive Ethos

Inclusive ethos was another measure developed for the purpose of this study. Research outcomes (e.g. Donnelly, 2004) have shown that whilst the school environment plays an important role in the school life of all pupils, this is much more so for those with SEN, where the satisfaction of their individual needs is strictly related to the quality of the resources and educational provision they receive. Booth and Ainscow (2002) in their 'Index for Inclusion' supported this view in the way they defined inclusion. Specifically, the researchers suggested that "Inclusion is about making schools supportive and stimulating places for staff as well as students. It is about building communities which encourage and celebrate their [pupils'] achievements" (p.4). The importance of the environment in the school life of pupils with SEN was also proposed in Wedell's (2003) interactive model. According to this model, the way the environment interacts with SEN pupils can either "exacerbate" or "compensate" for their individual needs (p.109).

One of the aims of the current study was to examine whether an inclusive ethos promotes pupils identified as having SEN's belonging to school, as an institution. To clarify things, while belonging to school, as an institution measures these pupils' sense of attachment to school, their perceived inclusive ethos pertains to a judgement of the school's institutional behaviour and level of attachment to the pupil. In the past, several researchers have measured pupils' perspectives about their school environment by including it either in the definition of belonging, or as explanatory variables that examined its influence in pupils' belonging. Of those, only Roeser et al. (1996) tried to capture pupils' perceptions of how the school behaves towards them, by measuring pupils' perceptions about school's attitude towards them on an academic level. There is no existing scale measuring the perceptions of pupils with SEN about an inclusive ethos and hence, for the purpose of the current study a new scale was developed. Section II in 3.5.2.2., provides a full description of the inclusive ethos scale.

3.5.1.3 Social Relations

The last scale developed is focused on social relations. Several researchers in the past have examined pupils' social relations with teachers and peers (e.g. Cemalcilar, 2010; Ma, 2003). Some scholars used these as a dependent variable to measure pupils' sense of school belonging (e.g. Christenson & Anderson, 2002; Ma, 2003; Reschly & Christenson 2006), and others have separated out social relations from belonging, and attempted to investigate the influence of the former on pupils' sense of school belonging, as an explanatory variable (e.g. Cemalcilar, 2010; Murray & Greenberg, 2001; Roeser et al.,

1996). Their rationale was to achieve a better understanding of the role of social relations in pupils' schooling experiences, and to examine, distinctly, the quality of pupils' relations with teachers and their peers.

The most common approach used to measure pupils' relationships with teachers or peers was by asking pupils' perspectives of their relationships. After a systematic review of the literature, the researcher constructed four types of questions used to measure pupils' social relations. Pupils were asked to report: 1) what they thought of their teachers' behaviour towards them (i.e. my teachers care about me), 2) what they believed about their teachers (i.e. I like my teacher this year), 3) what were their perspectives about their behaviour towards their teachers (i.e. I am rude to my teachers), and 4) what were their perspectives about teachers' beliefs towards them (i.e. My teachers think I am stupid). Items 1 and 2 measured the pupils' awareness of their beliefs and behaviour to others, while items 3 and 4 measured the pupils' perspectives on the way others behaved and thought about them.

One of the problems with the instruments previous researchers used to measure pupils' social relations is that they strictly examined only one or two types of the questions mentioned above. Examining the social interaction between two individuals is complicated, due to its multidimensional nature and, thus approaches of this kind fail to examine these relations in depth. It is contended here that to achieve a better understanding of the way pupils interact with others, it is necessary to examine all of the four dimensions.

A large number of the previous studies involved only typically developing pupils to examine pupil-to-teacher and pupil-to-pupil relationships. Some of those studies also tried to examine the influence of other adults in the school, apart from the teachers, on pupils' sense of school belonging (Black et al., 2010; Cemalcilar, 2010; Goodenow, 1993; Lohmeier & Lee, 2011; Morrison et al., 2012). No previous research used items to investigate explicitly the influence of TAs on typical or pupils with SEN's sense of school belonging. The important role of TAs in pupils with SEN's lives was reported by a few scholars (e.g. Webster and Blatchford, 2013), and thus, there is a need to examine its association such pupils' sense of school belonging.

In general, there are two main reasons for the need to develop a new measurement with regards to social relations. The first is concerned with the necessity to construct an

instrument that captures most of the dimensions of an interactive relationship. The second pertains to the importance to include items specifically adjusted to capture the difficulties that SEMH and MLD pupils encounter in their social interactions with teachers and peers, for as aforementioned, most of the previous studies have devised tools to examine typical pupils' social relations.

3.5.2   Content and Sources

The layout and format of the educational staff and pupil questionnaires were modelled in accordance with the recommendations of writers on research methods, such as Robson (2011) and Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007). The final versions of the questionnaires for these two cohorts, delivered for the data collection in the fieldwork, can be found, respectively, in Appendices III and IV.

3.5.2.1 Questionnaire for Educational Staff

The questionnaire for the educational staff consists of one section measuring staff's perceptions on school ethos on inclusion. A high score indicates an inclusive perception of school ethos whereas a low score suggests a less inclusive. In particular, they were asked to respond to each statement on a 4-point Likert Scale, expressing level of agreement with the statement (from 1, strongly disagree, to 4, strongly agree). A 4-point Likert scale was used due to its advantage of reducing the social-desirability bias (Garland, 1991). Of the 26 items for the measurement, seven were reversed (i.e. 3, 10, 11, 14, 21, 23, 24). The ethos questionnaire for educational staff is an adjusted version of one used for pupils. The rationale was to triangulate pupils and educational staff's perspectives on ethos and identify any differences. The inclusive ethos scale for educational staff contains 26 items covering two main constructs: the first is behaviour management encapsulated by 12 items pertaining to: a) consistency, b) clarity, c) behaviour management strategies, d) responsibility, e) beliefs about reducing exclusions and f) fairness in the school rules. The second construct measures inclusion and involves 14 items referring to: a) beliefs about inclusion, b) respect between staff and pupils, c) access to decision making (or autonomy), c) school encouragement, d) encouragement from others, e) praise of pupils' academic attainment, f) praise of pupils' academic effort, and g) access to equal opportunities. A detailed organisation of statements within educational staff questionnaire can be found in (Appendix II).

3.5.2.2 Questionnaire for Pupils

The questionnaire for pupils contained 56 items systematically informed by existing measures (see Table 3.3), and consisted of three sections, as follows: school belonging, inclusive ethos and social relations. A detailed organisation of statements within the questionnaire is given in Appendix I. The pupils were asked to respond to each statement on a 5-point Likert Scale, expressing level of agreement (from 1, strongly disagree, to 5, strongly agree). The choice of a 5-point Likert scale was so as to reduce the task difficulty (Krosnick & Presser, 2010), as the pupils were being asked to complete a relatively long questionnaire. Of the 56 statements, twelve were reversed (i.e. 7, 28, 30, 32, 33, 35, 48, 50, 51, 53, 54, 56). The main reason for altering item wording is to minimise extreme response and acquiescent biases. Misinterpretation of negatively worded items, neglecting to reverse the score on the part of respondents, as well as miscoding on the part of researcher are some of the disadvantages of altering items (Weems, 2007).

Section I: School Belonging

The school belonging to an institution consists of nine items, and is defined by five variables, namely, liking, participation in activities, liking to express one's opinion, equality, and the value of school. A high score suggests a strong sense of belonging while a low score a weak one.

Section II: Inclusive Ethos

The inclusive ethos scale contains seventeen items, and consists of two main constructs. The first dimension measures behaviour management with six items relating to a) consistency, b) clarity, and c) fairness of school rules. The second dimension measures inclusion and involves eleven items covering: a) school's values of students, b) access to decision making (autonomy), c) school encouragement, d) encouragement from others, e) praise of pupils' academic attainment, f) praise of pupils' academic effort and g) access to equal opportunities. Most of the items in this section are adjusted items taken from the school ethos questionnaire developed by Hatton (2013) to explore educational staff perceptions of practices in school as well as beliefs about inclusion and exclusion. A high score indicates that the pupil perceives the school as being inclusive while a low score suggests a less inclusive.

This section contains thirty items and examines pupils' social relations with teachers, teaching assistants, and pupils. The scale of pupils' social relations with teachers is covered by ten items, and measured by four constructs: 1) pupils' beliefs about their teachers, 2) pupils' behaviour towards their teachers, 3) pupils' perspectives about teachers' beliefs about them and 4) pupils' perspectives about teachers' behaviour towards them. The items pertaining to this scale were either developed by the researcher or taken from pre-existing scales as they were, or slightly modified.

Similar constructs to those for pupil-to-teacher relations were defined for pupil-to-TA relations, which contains 10 items. The first five pertain to measuring pupils with SEN's relations with their individual TA, and the other five items are about measuring pupils' relation with TAs in class, the: 1) pupils' beliefs about their TAs, 2) pupils' behaviour towards their TAs, 4) pupils' perspectives about TAs' beliefs about them, 5) pupils' perspectives about TAs' behaviour towards them. All items involved in this scale were inspired by/drawn from pre-existing pupil-to-teacher relation scales. Pupils with no SEN, or those who did not work individually with a TA were advised to skip the first five statements. The instructions can be found in Appendix IV. In the same vein, pupil-to-pupil relations contain 10 items for four constructs: 1) pupils' beliefs about their peers, 2) pupils' behaviour towards their peers, 3) pupils' perspectives about peers' beliefs about them, e) pupils' perspectives about their peers' behaviour towards them. A high score means a positive perception on social relations while a low score indicates a negative one.

3.5.3 Validity

In order to ensure content validity in the teacher and pupil questionnaires, most of the items were taken unchanged from previously validated instruments. Some were slightly altered, and a few were developed by the researcher herself to serve the purpose of this study. A meticulous review of most of the published work of relevance to researcher's aims was scrutinised in order to ensure that all key themes identified in the literature were covered. Table 3.3 presents the major themes covered, in accordance with the literature review, the statements used, and the sources that items were taken from.

Table 3.3 Themes, Statements and Sources of Questionnaire Items

Theme	Statement	Sources of questionnaire items*
	Sense of School Belonging Scale	
Liking	I like school	U: Archambault et al. (2009)
Participation in activities	I like to take part in lots of school organised activities (i.e. clubs, teams).	A: Lohmeier & Lee (2011)
	I like to part in class discussions and activities.	U: Murray and Greenberg (2001)
	I like to participate in student council (or student body).	New
Liking in expressing opinion	I like to express my opinion/ ideas in the classroom.	A: Cemalcilar (2010)
Equality	I feel I am an equal member of the school community.	New
Students' value of school	School is a waste of time	U: Smith (2006)
	School teaches me things that will help me in later life	U: Smith (2006)
	Working hard at school is important to me.	U: Smith (2006)
	School Ethos Scale	
Consistency	All my teachers reward my good behaviour in the same way.	A: Hatton (2013)
	All my teachers punish my bad behaviour in the same way.	A: Hatton (2013)
Clarity	All pupils in this school understand how they are expected to behave.	A: Hatton (2013)

	I have a clear understanding of the behaviour that will get me into trouble.	A: Hatton (2013)
	I have a clear understanding of the behaviour that will get me a reward.	A: Hatton (2013)
Fairness in school rules	Rules in this school applied equally to all pupils.	A: Hatton (2013)
School's values of students	My needs are met in this school.	A: Hatton (2013)
Access in decision making	Teacher and pupils plan things together in this school.	U: Battistich et al. (2004)
	There is a student council (or student body) here where I can decide on some really important things that go on in this school.	A: Battistich et al. (2004)
	I have the chance to start up my own clubs in this school.	U: Battistich et al. (2004)
School encouragement	In this school, I am encouraged to take part in class discussions and activities just like other pupils.	New
Encouragement from others	In class, I am encouraged to ask questions when I don't understand something in the material we are studying.	A: Ma (2003)
	In lessons, I am often encouraged to work with other pupils in pairs and small groups.	A: Booth and Ainscow (2002)
Praise students' academic attainment	In this school, teachers only care about the clever pupils.	A: Roeser, Midgley and Urdan (1996)
Praise students' academic effort	In this school, teachers praise my effort not the marks I receive.	A: Reschly and Christenson (2006)

Access to equal opportunity.	My school helps me to be the best I can be.	New
	In the classroom, teachers try to meet the learning needs of all pupils by helping them learn in different ways.	New
	Social Relations Scale	
	Relations with teachers	
Students' beliefs about teachers	I like my teacher this year.	U: Murray and Greenberg (2011)
	My teachers are impatient towards me.	A: Cemalcilar (2010)
	My teachers are supportive when I don't understand something in the lesson.	A: Lohmeier & Lee (2011)
Students' behaviour toward teachers	Behaving badly is a way to show my teachers I don't understand.	New
	I listen carefully to what my teachers say to me.	A: Reschly and Cristenson (2006)
Students' perspectives about teachers' beliefs about them	My teachers think I am not clever.	New
	My teachers think I am a troublemaker.	U: Smith (2006)
	My teachers respect me for what I am.	A: Goodenow (1993)
Students' perspectives about teachers' behaviour towards them	My teachers ignore me in class.	A: Murray and Greenberg (2011)
	Relations with pupils	
Students' beliefs about peers	I have a close friend in this school whom I can trust.	New
	Pupils in this school are impatient towards me.	A: Cemalcilar (2010)

	Pupils in this school are very friendly.	A: Goodenow (1993)
	It's hard for me to make friends in this school.	A: Ma (2003)
Students' behaviour toward teachers	I ignore most of the pupils in this school.	New
	I am nice to most pupils in this school.	New
Students' perspectives about teachers' beliefs about them	Pupils think of me as not fitting in with any group.	A: Smerton (2002)
	My classmates think I am not clever.	New
Students' perspectives about teachers' behaviour towards them	My classmates help me in class when I am stuck with my work.	U: Booth and Ainscow (2002)
	My classmates ignore me.	U: Lohmeier and Lee (2011)

*Note   **U:** means that the item was taken unchanged, **A:** the item was slightly altered, **New:** the item has been developed by the researcher.

The items measuring pupils' relations with their TA were taken from the same sources used for measuring pupil-to-teacher relations, and adjusted for the purpose of this study. What is more, the ethos questionnaire for educational staff is an adjusted version of school ethos for pupils and thus, there is no need to present again the sources of the questionnaire items.

3.5.4   SDQ Questionnaire

As a triangulation of pupils classified by their school as SEMH, the pupil self-report version of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) (Goodman, 1997) was also used (see Appendix X). Goodman (2001) evaluated the internal scale reliability of the SDQ for a sample of 10,438 British children aged 5–15 years and reported that the mean Cronbach's alpha across all scales and all informants (parent, teacher and self-report) was good, at 0.73. Hence, there is no need for it to be piloted again.

3.6 Interview Schedules

Semi-structured interviews were used to supplement the questionnaire data, thereby by gaining a more in depth understanding on the perceptions of inclusion and schooling experiences of those pupils identified as having SEMH and MLD. For such interviews a set of open-ended questions are prepared. The researcher is then able to have the flexibility to probe in more depth, essential issues that arise from the respondents' answers, by adapting the sequence of questions so as to maintain the flow of the interview (Gray, 2004; Robson, 2011).

3.6.1 Interviews with Pupils

The schedule consisted of 36 open-ended questions with supplementary questions used for probing the respondents' views (see Appendix VI). The first eight questions were to elicit information about their sense of belonging and attitude towards school. Fourteen questions sought to examine pupils' perspectives about school ethos. Five were concerned with exploring pupils' perspectives about behaviour management, and nine were aimed at investigating pupils' experiences about inclusion. The final 14 questions were put so as to explore pupils' perceptions on their social relations with teachers, TAs and pupils. Questions for the interview schedule were developed in accordance with the questionnaire items that had been informed by the literature review.

3.7 Pilot Study Report

Piloting enables researcher to check the clarity of items as well as to test the reliability and validity of the research tools. It also gives the opportunity to check the administration process and the time needed for each participant to complete the questionnaires (Mertens, 2005; Gray, 2004; Robson, 2011). For the purpose of this study, the pilot study was carried out for both the questionnaires and interview questions, to test the adequacy of research instruments before the final data gathering. Piloting allowed the researcher to test for any possible weaknesses in the administration process, as well as to identify and address potential ambiguities in the research tools. Owing to the fact that some of the items in the questionnaires were taken from pre-existing scales, whilst others were designed by the researcher herself, standardisation of the current instruments to the target population was vitally important. A thorough description of pilot work is given below.

This section is allocated into two main sub-sections: the first is concerned with the questionnaires and the second with the semi-structured interviews. Each sub-section is elucidated by presenting the sampling, administrative procedures and the pilot outcome.

3.8   Questionnaires Validation

For research to be rigorous, there is a need to establish quality and accuracy of the procedures, and measurements used to address the research questions. This is what is known as validity and it permits the researcher to evaluate whether the research instrument measures what it is intended to measure, and whether it is concrete and precise. As such, it involves reflecting the quality of research tools and when present ensures the value of the research outcomes (Sarantakos, 2005).

There are five types of validity used to evaluate whether the findings are sound. Firstly, face validity seeks to prove that a research instrument is measuring what it is said to measure, and when the instrument covers the full range of the items that it purports to cover, it is said to have content validity. Secondly, when the scores obtained on one measure can be accurately compared to those obtained with a more direct or already validate measure of the same phenomenon, this is known as criterion validity (Kumar, 2011). Internal validity pertains to the issue of causality between two or more examined variables, while lastly, external validity refers to the extent to which the research findings can be generalised beyond the specific research conditions (Bryman, 2004).

In the current research, the pupils and educational staff constructed questionnaires were used as the main method of data collection, and thus a rigorous check had to be followed to ensure a high degree of validity. The researcher, as explained in Chapter two, meticulously reviewed the literature of ethos, belonging and social relations of pupils with SEN in order to identify all the major domains related to these topics, which ensured the content validity of the questionnaires. To ensure criterion validity, pilot semi-structured interviews were carried out that involved asking the pupils similar questions that pertained to the variables used in the self-completed questionnaire. Identification of pupils' responses in both measurements for matching was easy as they had been requested to provide their name in the self-completion questionnaire. However, due to the nature of this study, it is difficult to establish causal relations between the variables and thus, internal validity is weak. What is more, the use of purposive sampling for the data

collection does not allow for the generalisability of findings and also makes the external validity of the study questionable.

3.9   Pilot Sample

Two pilot studies were conducted regarding the questionnaires for educational staff and pupils. In the first, the research instrument and the administration process of the delivery of the questionnaires were assessed to identify any weaknesses. Analysing the results, the research instruments were improved, and a second pilot study followed for validation.

3.9.1   Questionnaire for Educational Staff

In the first pilot study, the draft ethos questionnaire for educational staff, was distributed to 30 educational practitioners of both primary and secondary schools, who were enrolled on a Master's Degree in Inclusive Education, at the Institute of Education. Only six of the participants were working in a primary school, while the majority of them were teaching in secondary schools. They had a variety of professional roles at school: 23 were teachers, three were SENCOs, three were cover supervisors, and one was part of the administration team. The second pilot study was conducted in one mainstream secondary school on the northern outskirts of London. Twenty-five educational practitioners took part in the study, 15 teachers and 10 teaching-assistants.

3.9.2   Questionnaire for Pupils

In the first pilot pertaining to pupils, the self-completion questionnaire was distributed to two forms of each of Years 7, 8 and 9 in one mainstream secondary school on the northern outskirts of London. It consisted of 113 items and to avoid this being too taxing for the pupils, it was divided into five sections: 1) belonging, 2) school ethos, 3) relations with teachers, 4) relations with pupils and 5) relations with teaching assistants. These were randomly distributed to pupils as separate questionnaires, ensuring that each one was completed by at least 25 pupils. In the second pilot study, a reduced updated questionnaire was delivered to 30 pupils.

3.10 Questionnaire Reliability

3.10.1 Questionnaire for Educational Staff

The first pilot study was found to have a satisfactory total Cronbach's alpha $\alpha = 0.915$ (30 items), with the two sub-scales indicating a high alpha for behaviour management $\alpha = 0.803$ (16 items), and for inclusion $\alpha = 0.919$ (14 items). Items with small Cronbach's alpha and less relevance were deleted and thus, the questionnaire was reduced to 26 items. The reduced school ethos questionnaire for educational staff was piloted again for a different sample and the total Cronbach's alpha was $\alpha = 0.881$, suggesting a very good internal consistency reliability for the scale, for the sample. For the behaviour management, the sub-scale Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.815$, while for the inclusion sub-scale it was $\alpha = 0.804$.

3.10.2 Questionnaire for Pupils

Assessment of the internal consistency of all dimensions comprising the pupils' questionnaire was also made using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient statistics. The initial questionnaire consisted of 113 items and the Cronbach's Alpha score for all dimensions was found to be satisfactory (i.e. greater than 0.7, Pallant, 2013), as shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Cronbach's Alpha Reliability for the Questionnaire for Pupils

Dimension	Number of items	Total Cronbach's Alpha 1
Sense of belonging	10 items	$\alpha = 0.845$
Behaviour Management	10 items	$\alpha = 0.811$
Inclusion	27 items	$\alpha = 0.921$
Relations with teachers	25 items	$\alpha = 0.901$
Relations with pupils	22 items	$\alpha = 0.721$
Relations with TAs	23 items	$\alpha = 0.878$

After the first pilot study, a consistent effort was made to reduce the number of the questionnaire items. Many turned out to have little importance in relation to the literature and the aims of the study, or had low Cronbach's alpha and so were deleted from the questionnaire. After this rigorous process, the items were reduced from 113 to 56. The reduced questionnaire was piloted again in one form of Year 7 pupils that was designated as being available and the total Cronbach's alpha from these responses for all dimensions was satisfactory. Table 3.5 shows the alpha score for each dimension.

Table 3.5 Cronbach's Alpha Reliability for the Reduced Questionnaire for Pupils

Dimension	Number of items	Total Cronbach's Alpha 1
Sense of belonging	9 items	α = 0.793
School ethos	17 items	α = 0.833
Behaviour Management	6 items	α = 0.855
Inclusion	11 items	α = 0.678
Relations with teachers	10 items	α = 0.804
Relations with pupils	10 items	α = 0.710
Relations with TAs	10 items	α = 0.774

3.11 Decisions Made Following the Pilot Study

Following the piloting procedure, slight alterations were made to the content and administration process of the questionnaire for pupils.

3.11.1 Content

In the questionnaire for pupils, some of the wording of items was further simplified in order to reassure that they can be understood by all participants, even those with low learning and comprehension skills. For example, the word "consistency" was replaced

with the phrase "in the same way", thus the item was modified as "All my teachers reward my good behaviour in the same way".

3.11.2 Administration Procedure

To ensure similarity in the conditions under which data were collected and to enhance reliability, the researcher agreed with the form teachers that instructions would be read out verbally in the class, and sufficient time would be given for the questions to be answered. To guide the respondents, the written instructions included a short question and answer as an example (see Appendix III). Piloting indicated that all research tools were operational, and thus it was deemed unnecessary to introduce a cut-off criterion on pupil literacy level.

3.11.3 Interviews

Pilot work was also conducted in relation to the interviews. Whilst there is no specific procedure for piloting an interview schedule, under certain conditions the questions are required to be tested and refined. Breakwell, Hammond, Fife-Schaw, and Smith (2006) suggested five stages for enhancing the reliability of the interviews: a) assess whether the explanation of the interview is understood by all participants, b) check the degree to which specific questions can be easily perceived by them, c) make the necessary amendments that arise from pilot feedback, d) test whether the participants engage easily with the interview process, and e) evaluate whether the responding answers are the desired ones. Scholars have recommended that the validity of the interviews in relation to the consistency in respondents' answers, can be assessed by comparing it with other types of data that have already proven to be valid. The above described practices for improving the reliability and validity of interviews were applied by the researcher during the piloting work.

3.11.4 Interviews for Pupils

Three pupils who had already completed the main questionnaire were invited to take part in an individual face-to-face semi-structured interview, which lasted about half an hour. Consent forms were obtained from all pupils and their parents as enshrined by the ethical guidelines. To ascertain the reliability of questions, a subsample, representative of the sample that was ultimately used was selected. These interviews were conducted with one

typical, one pupil identified as having MLD and one identified as having SEMH to test pupils' degree of understanding and engagement in the interview process.

During the interviews, all interviewees gave permission for their responses to be recorded. Content analysis was subsequently employed to establish whether the received answers fell within the scope of the study. From the pilot interviews, it was observed that some of the questions were difficult for those pupils identified as having SEN to understand, and were re-worded. For example, the pupil identified as having MLD could not understand the question "I have a clear understanding of the behaviour that will result in a sanction", and it was paraphrased to "I have a clear understanding of the behaviour that will get me into trouble". Validity of these pilot interviews was checked by comparing the responses given by the pupils with those they provided for the main questionnaire. It was found that they were consistent in the patterns of answering the questions, thus suggesting there was internal consistency. It is acknowledged that this exercise was conducted on a very small sample.

3.12 The Main Fieldwork

Following the achievement of the pilot study and the completion of the necessary amendments in the research instruments, the main fieldwork commenced. The final data collection started in June 2014 and finished in March 2015. Difficulty in school recruitment and administrative arrangements for collecting data from the three participating schools were the reasons why it took the researcher almost six months to complete the data collection.

Data from each school were collected in two subsequent phases. In the first phase, the administration of the two self-reported questionnaires, the screening Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, and the main questionnaire, were delivered to pupils to complete. In the second phase, multiple cases of pupils were selected to take part in short semi-structured interviews.

3.13 Participating Schools and their Characteristics

After following a rigorous examination pertaining to the identification of school pairs using five strict objective criteria, twenty pairs of secondary schools, from thirteen Local Authorities of Inner and Outer London were detected. However, in reality the recruitment

of schools with specific characteristics from the same LA was proved arduous. To increase the possibility of identifying participating schools some of the criteria[20] were slightly relaxed. A systematic and persistent strategy of recruiting schools was followed (see Appendix VII). Subsequently, 6 more pairs of schools were identified, but the researcher failed to negotiate access. Finally, three Outer London schools agreed to take part in the study.

The characteristics of the three schools, as taken from the statistics provided from DfE, are described below.

3.13.1.1.1 School 1

School 1 was the first school that expressed an interest in taking part in the study and according to the Ofsted inspection, it was judged to be '*Good*'. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) at the school was 38.9%, which is higher than the percentage for the LA (26.6%) as a whole. Hence, the difference between the school and LA was 12.3%, thus suggesting that School 1 was '*very inclusive*', when compared with the LA's average inclusion level. The number of pupils with MLD was 59, and those classed as having BESD[21] was 35. The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium was 65.4%, and the percentage whose first language was English was 58.4%, whereas the relevant percentages for the LA as a whole were 34.6% for the former and 61% for the latter. The proportion of exclusions of School 1 was found to be 0.398%, whereas the percentage in the entire LA was 0.184%. Hence, the difference in the percentages of exclusion between the school and LA as a whole was 0.214%, thus, suggesting it was a rather '*less-inclusive school*' than the previous figures have indicated. A sample of 528 pupils across years 7 to 9 was recruited for the final study.

3.13.1.1.2 School 2

School 2 was also judged by the Ofsted inspectors to be '*Good*'. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) at the school was 27%, which was higher than the

---

[20] The difference between schools in the percentage of pupil premium and English as a first language.

[21] Pupils with behaviour, emotional social difficulties (BESD). Statistics from DfE were taken in 2012-2013 when the old SEN Code of practice 2001, was still in use and hence, the difference in labelling.

relevant percentage for the LA (25.9%) as a whole. Thus, the detected difference between the school and LA was small 1.1%, suggesting that School 2 was '*just inclusive*', when compared with the LA's average level of inclusion. The number of pupils with MLD was 66, and that for BESD was 38. The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium was 49.7% and the percentage of pupils whose first language was known or believed to be English was, 57.6%, whereas the relevant percentages for the LA were 26.7% and 55.5%, respectively. The proportion of exclusions was also measured and it was found that School 2 had a percentage of 0.142%, whereas the respective percentage in the LA was 0.115%. The difference in the percentages of exclusion between school and LA was 0.027%, thus suggesting that it was a '*less-inclusive school*', when compared with the LA's average level of inclusion. A sample of 457 pupils across years 8 to 10 took part in the final study.

3.13.1.1.3 School 3

School 3 was also judged by the Ofsted inspection to be '*Good*'. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in the school was 43%, which is higher than the relevant percentage given to LA (25.9%). The detected difference between school and LA was 17.1%, suggesting that school 3 was '*very inclusive*' when compared with the LA's average level of inclusion. The number of pupils with MLD was 17, and that of BESD was 72. The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium was 36.7% and the percentage of those whose first language was known or believed to be English was 78.4%, whereas the relevant percentages for the LA were 26.7% for the former and 55.5% for the latter. The proportion of exclusions was also measured and it was found that School 3 had a percentage of 0.032%, whereas the respective percentage for the LA was 0.115%. The difference in the percentages of exclusion between school and the LA was -0.083%, thus suggesting it was a rather more '*inclusive school*', when compared to the LA's average.

The proportion of SEN pupils and that of exclusions per school are shown in Figure 3.1. School 3 was found to be the most inclusive, having a relatively high proportion of SEN pupils on role and a relatively low rate of exclusion. School 2, in the same LA as School 3, was less inclusive on both these counts. School 1 was the least inclusive in terms of exclusion but did have a higher proportion of SEN pupils than School 2.

Figure 3.1. Percentage of SEN Pupils and Exclusions per School
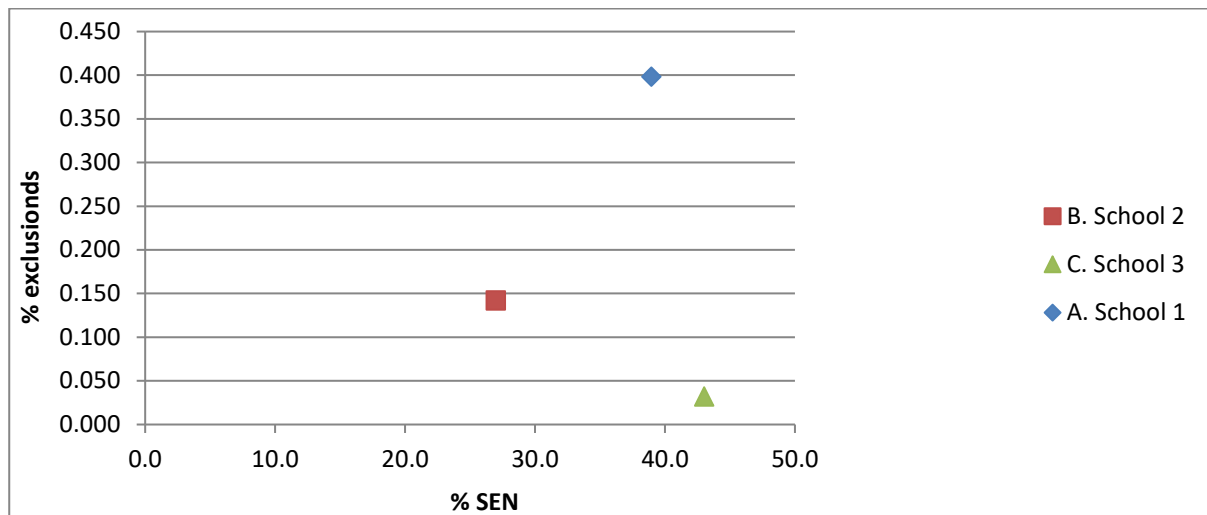
3.14 Questionnaires

3.14.1 Sample Selection

As described above, three mainstream state-funded secondary schools from Outer London were selected to take part in the final study. Total sample of 1,486 pupils, approximately 500 from each school, from year 7 to year 10, were invited to complete the SDQ along with the main questionnaire. Regarding gender, 39.5% (n = 587) were girls, and 54.3% (n = 807) were boys, whilst 6.2% (n = 92) failed to record their gender. The majority of pupils, nearly 78%, were classified by schools as typical, while 19% were identified as having SEN. 3% of pupils did not provide their name and could therefore not be grouped.

All SEN categories and a variety of combinations (i.e. SLCN & ASD, SEMH, ASD & SPLD) were identified. For the purpose of this study, pupils identified by the school as having SEMH or SEMH and another SEN category were classified as pupils with SEMH. Similarly, pupils classified as having MLD or MLD and another SEN category were classified as MLD. Pupils identified as having another category of SEN, as well as those pupils that had a combination of MLD and SEMH, were classified as having Other SEN. The rationale for this classification relates to the main aim of this study, that of examining the differences in pupils with SEMH, and MLD's schooling experience. Table 3.6 shows the distribution of pupils with SEN, according to their category.

Table 3.6 Distribution of Type of SEN for the Pupils' Sample

SEN category	No.	%
SEMH	36	2.4
MLD	99	6.7
Other SEN	147	9.9
Typical	1158	77.9
Missing data	46	3.1

On the other hand, classification made based on the SDQ total difficulties scores revealed that 70.3% of pupils were identified as normal, 11.5% as borderline and 7.5% as abnormal. There were also 10.8% missing values. When pupils scored on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale it was found that 76.3% were classified as normal, 7.2% as borderline, while 5.9% came out as being abnormal.

Besides pupils, educational staff was also invited to complete the school ethos questionnaire. A total sample of 104 educational staff took part in the study. They were classified according to their professional role on teachers, teaching assistants, members of the senior management team and Others, which pertained to those such as afternoon staff, support staff, catering, and cleaning staff. Table 3.7 shows the distribution of teachers according to their professional role.

Table 3.7 Distribution of Professional Roles for the Educational Staff Sample

Professional role	No.	%
Teacher	54	51.9
Teaching Assistant	16	15.4
Senior Management team	10	9.6
Other role	24	23.1
Total	104	100.0

3.14.2 Data Collection

Questionnaires were delivered to the respondents with the assistance of the SENCO and the form teachers of each school due to the large sample size of participants, and the restricted time available for the data collection. Form teachers were advised by the researcher to read the instructions to the pupils and ensure that everyone understood. All questionnaires were collected personally. Table 3.8 shows the response rate for each delivered questionnaire in the main study.

Table 3.8 Questionnaire Response Rate

Questionnaire	Distributed	Collected Questionnaires	
			%
Educational staff ethos	130	104	80
Pupils main	1,486	1,440	96.9
Pupils SDQ	1,486	1,339	90.1

A high percentage of pupils (48%) were willing to take part in the semi-structured interview, 40.4% refused, while 11.6% were neutral. Finally, Table 3.9 shows the proportion of typical and pupils identified as having SEN who filled in the main and SDQ questionnaires.

Table 3.9 Percentage of Type of Pupil Filling in the Main and SDQ Questionnaires

	Main questionnaire		SDQ	
	Typical	SEN	Typical	SEN
Completed	89.9%	87.6%	91.1%	97.2%
Not-completed	10.1%	12.4%	8.9%	2.8%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

In total, 22.5% of pupils did not adequately complete the main questionnaire, and a smaller percentage of 11.7%, the SDQ questionnaire. There are five possible reasons identified by the researcher explaining the obtained missing values: 1) pupils with visual or literacy difficulties found it hard to fill in the questionnaires, 2) pupils completed the questionnaire but neglected to write their name (intentionally or unintentionally), 3) pupils were completely unwilling to fill in the questionnaire, 4) pupils completed the questionnaire but left out some questions (intentionally or unintentionally or 5) pupils felt overwhelmed by the questionnaire's length. In cases where the questionnaire was completed, but some missing values were identified, the researcher used a pro-rata approach. This was only done where only few items were missing from each scale.

3.14.3 Reliability

A reliability check was conducted on the final educational staff and pupil questionnaires. The Cronbach' alpha values obtained for both questionnaires were high. Table 3.10 shows the Cronbach's alpha results of the educational staff school ethos questionnaire.

Table 3.10 Cronbach's Alpha Reliability for the Final Staff Questionnaire

Dimension	Number of items	Total Cronbach's Alpha
School ethos total	26 items	α=0.837
Behaviour Management	12 items	α=0.800
Inclusion	14 items	α=0.715

Table 3.11 shows the Cronbach' alpha reliability score for all the sub-scales comprising the final pupil questionnaire.

Table 3.11 Cronbach's Alpha Reliability for the Final Pupil Questionnaire

Dimension	Number of items	Total Cronbach's Alpha
Sense of belonging	9 items	α = 0.742
School ethos total	17 items	α = 0.834
Behaviour Management	6 items	α = 0.724
Inclusion	11 items	α = 0.755
Relations with teachers	10 items	α = 0.803
Relations with pupils	10 items	α = 0.748
Relations with TAs total	10 items	α = 0.961
Relations with my TA	5 items	α = 0.924
Relations with TA	5 items	α = 0.881

3.15 Interviews

3.15.1 Sample Selection

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with multiple cases of pupils from the three different schools. Pupils invited were from those who had completed the main and the SDQ questionnaires and who had expressed willingness to take part in an interview, in response to a question at the beginning of the questionnaire. A purposive sample of 45 pupils who had been selected by the researcher based on their SEN status and scores on the sense of school belonging scale participated in the interviews. Of these, 19 pupils scored in the upper quartile (SOSB scores 36>=) on the school belonging questionnaire, four SEMH, eight MLD, four typical (based on school records) and three "abnormal" (SDQ terminology based on SDQ total difficulties). Whilst 26 scored in the lowest quartile (SOSB scores 29>=) on the school belonging questionnaire, nine SEMH, nine MLD, four typical (based on school records) and 4 "abnormal" (SDQ terminology based on SDQ total difficulties). The aim was to include pupils of all groups to maximise the range of opinions heard about their schooling experiences. It should also be noted that of

the 13 pupils identified as having SEMH in school reports, five of them classified themselves as normal on the SDQ questionnaire, and eight classified themselves as "abnormal". Whilst consideration was given to the personal views of all pupils as they had been officially registered as SEMH in school reports, emphasis was given to the responses of those where the identification between school and self-reports were consistent. Table 3.12 shows analytically the type of interviewee pupils per school.

Table 3.12 Type of Interviewee Pupils per School

| | **High Sense of Belonging** (Upper quartile >= 36%) | | | | **Low Sense of Belonging** (Bottom quartile >= 29%) | | | | |
	SEMH	MLD	Abnormal	Typical	SEMH	MLD	Abnormal	Typical	Total
School 1	-	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	10
School 2	2	5	1	1	3	3	1	1	17
School 3	2	2	1	2	4	4	1	2	18

3.15.2 Interview Procedure

At the beginning of each interview, the researcher provided an explanation to the pupils about the aims of the research and the importance of their contribution. Then, an ice-breaking activity was carried out in order to create a friendly atmosphere (see Appendix V). Most of the interviewees seemed uncomfortable when they were asked if they could be audio recorded and so the researcher had to reassure them of their anonymity and to explain the practicalities of needing the recordings for subsequent data analysis. Interviews were only audio recorded after the pupils' permission was obtained. It is worth mentioning that one boy who was identified as having SEMH was unwilling to be interviewed after the researcher asked him to be audio recorded. A question schedule was prepared by the researcher, the sequence of which changed in accordance with the flow of the interviews. The length of each interview ranged from 15 to 25 minutes.

All interviews were conducted face to face on an individual basis. In the first school, 10 pupils, comprising two SEMH, three MLD, three "abnormal" and two typical, were interviewed. After the completion of the interviews, it was noticed that of all the interviewee pupils those with MLD were more reluctant to engage in the interview process. Consequently, in the second and third schools' interviews with pupils identified as belonging to this cohort were conducted in a group of two, in the hope of relaxing them. A justification for this has been provided from Kitzinger (1995, p. 299 in Robson,

2011), who stated that group interviews "do not discriminate against people who cannot read or write and they can encourage participation from people reluctant to be interviewed on their own or who feel they have nothing to say".

In the second school, interviews were conducted with 17 pupils, including five SEMH, two "abnormal", two typical, and eight MLD. Pupils identified as having MLD were paired based on their sense of school belonging scores (i.e. low/high). Of the four pairs of pupils, two of them were all boys and they were quiet talkative. The other two pairs were a mixture of boy-girl. In those two pairs the girls were younger than the boys, with a Muslim cultural background and were quite reserved about expressing their opinion.

Finally, in the third school a total of 18 pupils were interviewed, of whom, six had been identified with SEMH, six with MLD, two as "abnormal" and four as typical. Two pairs of pupils with MLD were interviewed. Two of those identified as having MLD were in the same class and thus, were quite comfortable about sharing their feelings and experiences regarding school.

3.16 Data Analysis Procedure

The data analysis process is divided in two sections. Section one is concerned with the analysis of questionnaire data, while section two describes the analysis of the qualitative data received from the semi-structured interviews.

3.16.1 Questionnaires

To start with, all questionnaire data were coded and inputted into a computer in order to be analysed using SPSS. Screening and cleaning of the data were carried out before the analysis. Explicitly, negative worded items were reversed, and missing values were manipulated through a prorating process. Descriptive and inferential statistics were calculated to examine educational staff, and pupils' perceptions of inclusive ethos, as well as pupils' belonging and social relations at school. Regarding the descriptive statistics, the mean scores of all the variables were calculated to detect trends among schools and groups of individuals, using the midpoint as a reference. Graphical forms of frequencies, percentages and cross tabulations were often used to enable the researcher to analyse and interpret the data. Inferential statistics calculation then followed. First, examination of the normality along with the distribution of scores and outliers of all the continuous variables,

as measured for the educational staff and pupils, was carried out in order to ensure that parametric tests could be applied. The findings indicated that the continuous variables of ethos (and the two subscales of behaviour management and inclusivity), as measured for educational staff, were normally distributed, based on the Shapiro-Wilk's test ($p>0.05$) and visual observation of histograms. Conversely, when similar examination of all the continuous variables measured for pupils (i.e. ethos, belonging, and social relations) occurred, it was found that all were negatively skewed. However, as pointed out by Field (2013, p.184), in social sciences, violation of the assumption of normality is not a problem for large sample sizes, as according to central limit theorem sampling distribution will be normal regardless of what the sample data look like. This applies to the current study as responses were taken from 1,486 pupils.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to examine the differences between schools regarding ethos (measured for both staff and pupils), belonging and social relations. In cases where significant differences between schools were found, post-hoc comparisons using Bonferroni's test were applied to identify the location of such differences. Similar analysis was applied to explore the differences between specific groups of pupils' perspectives on ethos, belonging and social relations. Significant results were further surveyed by using pairwise comparisons. When differences between specific groups of educational staff's perspectives on ethos probed, the equivalent non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis H test was used due to the small sample size of some groups of this independent variable (i.e. senior management team n=10, TA n=16).

Independent-sample t-tests were used to compare the mean scores on ethos, belonging and social relations, for pairs of specific groups of pupils (e.g. pupils identified as having SEN vs. typical, pupils identified as having SEMH vs. MLD and pupils scoring as abnormal on internalising difficulties vs. pupils scoring as "abnormal" on externalising difficulties). T-tests was also applied to compare the mean score on ethos between pupils and educational staff. Finally, correlations were conducted to explore for the interrelationships between variables. In cases where the preliminary analysis of variables indicated that assumption of linearity and homoscedasticity held, a multiple regression analysis was followed. This test enabled the researcher to predict and weight the relationship between two or more explanatory variables and the outcome variable.

3.16.2 Interviews

All the 45 semi-structured interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim through the employment of the qualitative analysis program QSR NVivo 10. Thematic analysis was initially performed through the process of coding in six phases, as described by Braun and Clarke (2006), followed by an inductive and deductive circle of coding, as explained by Saldaña (2013). The reason for selecting thematic analysis was to produce a surface-level analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), where emphasis would be given to the voices of pupils identified as having SEN, rather than on the researcher's personal interpretation of their perceptions. Moreover, the use of thematic analysis enabled the researcher to use theory as a sense of direction to explore themes across the dataset. The current study involved exploring the schooling experiences of pupils identified as having SEMH and MLD using the ideology of inclusion as a theoretical framework and the use of thematic analysis provided a flexible qualitative method that gave the opportunity to incorporate existing theory into the analysis on the one hand and to shed light on the insights of pupils, on the other.

During the inductive coding the researcher familiarised herself with the data by solely listening to the voices of pupils and any theme that occurred or assumption made was thus data-driven. The deductive analysis was structured around how the questionnaire and interview data addressed *school ethos*, *sense of school belonging* and *social relations*, as defined by the extant literature in the field. As such, the emerged themes from raw data were based on a pre-existing framework that the researcher had conceived from theory and key responses from the data were organised accordingly under the aforementioned major themes as follows:

- School Ethos: Inclusivity (i.e. allocation of teachers' attention, access in decision making and group work) and behaviour management (i.e. consistency of the school rules, clarity, behaviour strategies, and fairness of the school rules).
- Sense of School Belonging: Expressing opinion, liking school, taking part in activities, and importance of school.
- Social Relations:
    - Pupils-to-pupil relations: friendship, bullying.
    - Pupil-to-TA relations: help with learning, help with behaviour, and offer psychological support.

o Pupil-to-teacher relations: way of managing behaviour, quality of support, and way of teaching.

3.17 Farrell's Model

Farrell proposed that inclusion comprises: *Presence*, *Acceptance*, *Participation* and *Achievement*. According to Farrell "it is not…sufficient for children simply to be *present* in a school. [Children] need to be *accepted* by their peers and by staff, they need to *participate* in all the school's activities, and they need to attain good levels of *achievement* in their work and behaviour" (Farrell, 2004, p. 8 – 9, original emphasis).

Following analysis of the findings, an elaboration of Farrell's model of inclusion was developed and subsequently employed to discuss the findings and implications of the current study.

3.18 Ethical Considerations

For the current research project, the ethical approaches as enshrined in the codes and guidelines produced by the British Psychological Society (2009) were adopted. Particular emphasis was given to the ethical concerns for conducting research with pupils (Lewis & Newcomer, 2005), especially with regards to those having been diagnosed with special educational needs. Throughout this project, the ethical and legal dilemmas of undertaking research with vulnerable pupils and the researcher's obligations were considered. During the earlier stages of this study, the procedures that were to be applied were approved by the university. This approval of the ethics form was used to gain access to the schools, as it provided a guarantee to the principals and the educational staff involved that the study would be ethically sound.

3.18.1 Process for Obtaining Consent

According to the British Psychological Society (2009), researchers have the responsibility to ensure that all participants understand the aims and purpose of the study so that they are able to give informed consent. For the current project, instead of simply providing a leaflet to educational staff (see Appendix VIII) and pupils about the aims, the purpose and the use of their personal data, the participants were verbally informed about the key aspects of the project by the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and the

form teachers. Teachers explicitly told all pupils about the aims of the study by using simplified language, ensuring that all pupils understood about what the research is about. This meant that all the pupils, even those with literacy difficulties, were able to understand what was going to happen and why.

Due to the vulnerable age of the pupils, additional consent forms along with a summary of the main aims of the study were distributed to pupils' parents seeking their permission for their child to participate (see Appendix IX). The form was written in simplified English so as to address equally all the parents irrespective of their educational or English language proficiency level. Acknowledging that some parents might have further questions or concerns about the research at a later date, the researcher provided her personal and her supervisor's contact details in case parents wanted to have further information regarding the research. Parents were also reassured that the researcher had Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) clearance and that her proposed research would follow the ethical guidelines of the British Psychological Society.

3.18.2 Considerations during Data Collection

Several issues had to be taken into consideration regarding the procedures of the research so as to ensure the ethical nature of the study. First, all the quantitative instruments were set to require no more than an estimated 25 minutes each so that pupils would be able to fill in the questionnaires during their registration time. Even less time, around 10 minutes, was allocated for educational staff to complete the teachers' questionnaire. Moreover, the interviews with pupils were arranged with the adult staff at convenient time for them and during the interview procedure the researcher reassured the pupils that they only had to stay for as long as they wanted within the arranged time. All the participant pupils were treated fairly, and with respect, and were allowed to stop, if they felt that they did not want to continue, which happened twice with two boys identified as having SEN. During both the self-completion questionnaire and interviews it was clearly explained to the pupils that their involvement in the study was voluntary. It was stressed to them that they had the right to withdraw from the research at any time and request that their data be destroyed.

The researcher was careful to promise confidentiality, and anonymity within limits for her participants, as one of the requirements was to report their names in both the SDQ and main questionnaire in order to be identifiable at a later stage. Of course, after the

completion of the questionnaires, envelops were provided to the pupils so that their name and answers were sealed, which hopefully reassured them that no one else apart from researcher could not have access to their responses. Similar limitations of confidentiality and anonymity were made clear to the pupils at the beginning of the interviews. Moreover, all were informed that for child protection reasons, if any of the information was putting their life or other pupils' life into danger, the researcher would have to disclose this information to a person who they trusted, after first seeking for their permission. Sensitive topics regarding pupils' relations with adults and peers were avoided in order to protect pupils from any "physical or mental distress", and/or "invading their privacy" (Robson, 2002, p. 200).

To ensure an ethical process further, the data collected in relation to the teachers and pupils' responses from the questionnaires and transcribed interviews, all had to be stored privately and analysed strictly by the researcher. No real names were utilised as they were all replaced with a code number as a way to ensure anonymity. All participants were informed that their personal data were stored on password protected electronic files. For facilitating the completion of the questionnaires for those pupils with literacy difficulties, the researcher offered to help any who want further assistance. However, all of the participating schools preferred pupils to be helped by their teaching assistant, a person who they were familiar with.

3.19 Summary

The questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were piloted in a state-funded secondary school on the northern outskirts of London involving a small sample of pupils identified as having SEMH, MLD and typical with a resemblance to that targeted by the main fieldwork. Questionnaires for both pupils, and educational staff were piloted twice. The first pilot was aimed at reducing the taxing number of items in both questionnaires by selecting the most pertinent ones. In the subsequent pilot, the researcher had the chance to change the wording of some items and test the reliability of the scale one more time. With reference to the administration of the questionnaires, it was agreed that distribution would be made with the assistance of the SENCO and the form teachers of each school due to the large number of forms (i.e. 18 from each school), and the restricted time available. Otherwise, it would have been impossible for the researcher to deliver the questionnaires herself. Data were collected from three secondary schools chosen after

rigorous analysis such that they were considered suitable subjects for the research given its set parameters. Responses were received from 1,486 pupils, approximately 500 from each school, and 104 educational staff, while 45 cases of pupils identified as having SEMH, MLD, other difficulties (i.e. "abnormal" in the SDQ questionnaire) as well as typical pupils were interviewed. The research outcomes of this study are presented in the next chapter.

Chapter Four

Findings

4.1 Introduction

Chapter Four presents the findings of the data collection obtained through the use of self-completed questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to address the research questions of the current study. There is one main purpose that this study aims to address: the extent to which the perceived school ethos, sense of school belonging and social relations of pupils vary between different school settings and among different groups of pupils. To achieve this a quantitative and qualitative investigation was followed.

The quantitative investigation is divided into five sections. The first, checks the agreement between the identification of pupils with SEMH as reported in school registers, and that given by the pupils themselves, through the completion of the SDQ questionnaire. The second section refers to school ethos and examines any differences in the perceived inclusivity of pupils and educational staff between different school settings, and among different groups of pupils. The third section focuses on the sense of school belonging and also examines any differences between school settings and groups of pupils. The fourth, identifies any differences in the perceived social relations of pupils with their teachers, TAs and peers between school settings and groups of pupils. The final section presents the interrelationship between the perceived school ethos and the sense of school belonging as well as the social relations of pupils identified as having SEN.

The qualitative investigation is divided into three themes: ethos, belonging and social relations. The aims of the analysis are the triangulation of the quantitative data and an in-depth exploration of the schooling experiences of pupils between different school settings and groups of pupils. A synopsis of the findings is followed at the end of each section in both quantitative and qualitative data.

4.2 Analysis of Questionnaire Data

This section begins with the SEMH identification and then presents any possible differences between school settings and groups of pupils in terms of ethos, belonging and social relations. Finally, the interrelationship between the involved variables is examined.

4.2.1   Identification

The aim in this section was to check the agreement between school registers and pupil self-reports. Pupils were asked to complete the SDQ total difficulties scale, the scores of which were compared with the school registers for pupils identified as having SEMH.

4.2.1.1 Identification of SEMH: School vs. Self-Reported SDQ

Research Question: Are pupils with SEMH, as identified by the school, more likely to score as being abnormal[22] on the SDQ total difficulties scale than their typical peers?

---

[22] Abnormal: SDQ terminology, based on SDQ difficulties.

Table 4.1. Cross-tabulation of Groups of Pupils vs. Categories in SDQ Total Difficulties Scale

Groups of pupils as identified by the school	Normal			Borderline			Abnormal			Total		
	N	% within group	% within score	N	% within group	% within score	N	% within group	% within score	N	% within group	% within score
Typical	844	80.8	81.5	125	12.0	73.5	76	7.3	68.5	1045	100%	79.4
SEMH	20	58.8	1.9	7	20.6	4.1	7	20.6	6.3	34	100%	2.6
MLD	64	66.7	6.2	21	21.9	12.4	11	11.5	9.9	96	100%	7.3
Other SEN	107	75.9	10.3	17	12.1	10.0	17	12.1	15.3	141	100%	10.7
Total	1035	78.6	100%	170	12.9	100%	111	8.4	100%	1316	100%	100%

A chi-square test for independence was conducted, with the results indicating a statistically significant association, χ^2 (6, $N = 1316$) = 23.376, $p < .001$, between type of pupil and scores in the SDQ total difficulties scale. The proportion of pupils that scored as abnormal on the SDQ scale was markedly different between those identified as having SEMH by the school and those registered as typical (Table 4.1). However, there was also a substantial miss-match between the self-report SDQ and school classification of SEMH, with 68.5% of pupils self-reporting within the abnormal range of the SDQ being registered as typical by the school and 55.8% of pupils considered by the school to be SEMH self-reporting on the SDQ as normal. This could indicate that the schools had failed to identify as SEN a large number of pupils who self-reported elevated levels of mental health difficulties and that they had thus been mistakenly registered as typical in school reports. It might also suggest that pupils' perceptions do not agree with the way others see them. A further investigation involved examining the agreement in the identification of SEMH between school registers and pupils' self-reports on the SDQ externalising difficulties and the internalising scales.

Table 4.2. Cross-tabulation of Groups of Pupils vs. Categories in the SDQ Externalising Scale

Groups of pupils as identified by the school	Normal			Borderline			Abnormal			Total		
	N	% within group	% within score	N	% within group	% within score	N	% within group	% within score	N	% within group	% within score
Typical	816	78.1	81.5	56	5.4	76.7	173	16.6	71.5	1045	100%	79.4
SEMH	17	50.0	1.7	2	5.9	2.7	15	44.1	6.2	34	100%	2.6
MLD	64	66.7	6.4	4	4.2	5.5	28	29.2	11.6	96	100%	7.3
Other SEN	104	73.8	10.4	11	7.8	15.1	26	18.4	10.7	141	100%	10.7
Total	1001	76.1	100%	73	5.5	100%	242	18.4	100%	1316	100%	100%

Research Question: Is there an association between those pupils identified as having SEMH and those scored as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale?

The results chi-square test for independence indicate that of all the pupils registered as having SEMH in school reports, 44.1% scored as abnormal in externalising difficulties, 5.9% as borderline, while 50% scored as normal, $\chi^2 (6, N = 1316) = 26.721, p < .001$. The full results of the analysis can be seen in Table 4.2. This means that half of the pupils identified by the school as having SEMH classified themselves as not having externalising difficulties. Conversely, among those pupils registered as typical in school reports, 16.6% classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale. As can been seen from Table 4.2, of all the pupils who classified themselves as abnormal, 6.2% were registered by school reports as having SEMH, while the majority of them, 71.5%, were registered as typical. Thus, it can be said that a large number of pupils who had been registered as typical in school reports self-scored elevated levels of externalising difficulties.

Table 4.3. Cross-tabulation of Groups of Pupils vs. Categories in the SDQ Internalising Scale

Groups of pupils as identified by the school	Normal			Borderline			Abnormal			Total		
	N	% within group	% within score	N	% within group	% within score	N	% within group	% within score	N	% within group	% within score
Typical	911	87.2	81.2	72	6.9	67.3	62	5.9	71.3	1045	100%	79.4
SEMH	25	73.5	2.2	4	11.8	3.7	5	14.7	5.7	34	100%	2.6
MLD	75	78.1	6.7	11	11.5	10.3	10	10.4	11.5	96	100%	7.3
Other SEN	111	78.7	9.9	20	14.2	18.7	10	7.1	11.5	141	100%	10.7
Total	1122	85.3	100%	107	8.1	100%	87	6.6	100%	1316	100%	100%

Research question: Is there an association between those pupils identified as having SEMH and those scored as abnormal on the SDQ internalising difficulties scale?

The findings from a chi-square test reveal that regarding pupils identified by school registers as having SEMH, 14.7% scored as abnormal, 11.8% as borderline, while the majority of them, 73.5%, scored as normal, χ^2 (6, N = 1316) = 18.722, p < .005. Comparing this to the results for SDQ externalising difficulties, as might be expected, there was a better agreement between school and pupil on externalising difficulties than on internalising difficulties, the former being more apparent to others than internalising difficulties. As can been seen from Table 4.3, of all the pupils classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ internalising difficulties scale, the highest proportion were found to be registered as typical (71.3%) in school reports, while only 5.7% of them had been identified as having SEMH. It seems that all three schools had failed to detect the anxiety and/or depression difficulties of a large proportion of pupils, who self-reported elevated levels of internalising difficulties and thus, they had mistakenly been registered as typical in school reports.

4.2.1.2 Differences in the Identification of SEMH between Settings

Research question: Is there an association between school setting and pupils' identification as having SEMH and their scoring as abnormal in externalising and internalising difficulties?

A chi-square test was conducted, the results of which indicate a strong association between school settings, and the identification of pupils as having SEMH, χ^2 (2, N = 1445) = 24.537, p < .001. As shown in Figure 4.1, among the three school settings in this study, School 3 had the highest proportion of pupils identified as having SEMH.

Figure 4.1. Histogram of the Identification of Pupils with SEMH by School Settings
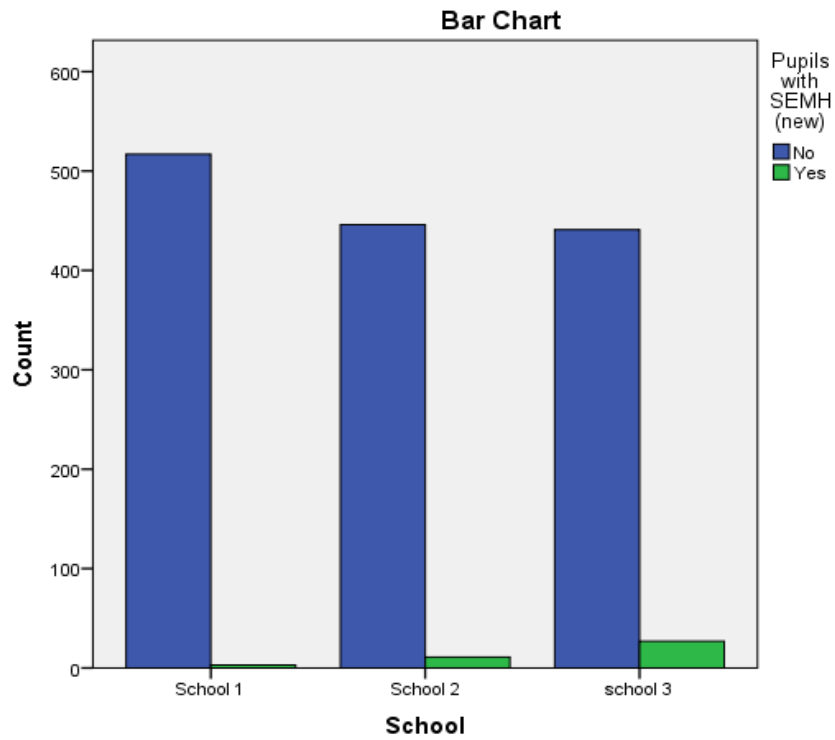
Figure 4.2. Histogram of Pupils' Scores as Abnormal on the Externalising Scale by School Setting
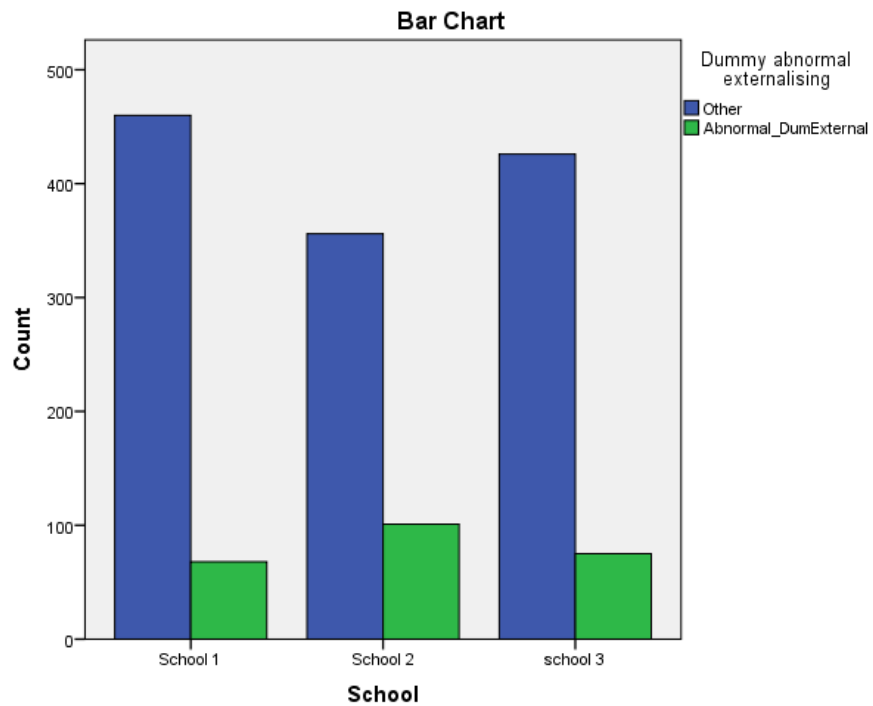
A similar investigation followed, to examine whether there was any association between pupils scoring as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale and school settings. The results of the chi-square test elicited a statistically significant association between the two variables, χ^2 (2, N = 1486) = 16.338, p < .001. From the data in Figure 4.2 , it is apparent that among the three school settings, School 2 was found to have the highest percentage of pupils scoring as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale.

However, no statistically significant association between school settings, and pupils scoring as abnormal on the SDQ internalising difficulties scale was found, χ^2 (2, N = 1486) = .613, p = .736.

It seems that School 3 was more likely to identify a pupil as SEMH as compared to Schools 2 and 1. However, when pupils were asked to complete the SDQ externalising difficulties scale, School 2 was found to have the highest proportion of pupils who scored in the abnormal range.

4.2.1.3 Synopsis

In summary, there is only limited agreement found between the school identification of SEMH and the results from the self-reporting SDQ questionnaire. Most pupils (around 70%) who scored as abnormal on any SDQ scale (internalising, externalising, total), were registered as typical. In contrast, only around 6% (on all scales) of them were registered by schools as having SEMH. A link between school settings and identification was also found, with School 3 being more likely to identify pupils as having SEMH, and School 2 being more likely to have pupils who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale.

4.2.2   School Ethos

This section is focused on school ethos and its two sub-scales of behaviour management and inclusivity. The possible differences between school settings, as well as between groups of educational staff and pupils are examined.

4.2.2.1 School Ethos Identification: Educational Staff and Pupils' Perspectives

Research Question: Is there a difference in school ethos, behaviour management and inclusivity, between the three school settings?

As can been seen in Table 4.4, a series of one-way ANOVA was conducted to test for differences between the means of the three school settings on ethos: behaviour management and inclusivity, as measured by educational staff and pupils. The assumption of homogeneity of variance, as assessed by Levene's test, held in all tests.

The *Ethos* scores were found to be statistically significantly different between the school settings, as measured by both educational staff, $F(2, 96) = 8.458$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = 0.13$, and pupils, $F(2, 1260) = 5.557$, $p = .004$, $\omega^2 = .01$.

Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for School 3 ($M = 67.24$, $SD = 8.3$) was significantly lower (less consistent and inclusive) than School 1 ($M = 72.5$, $SD = 6.9$), and School 2 ($M = 75.4$, $SD = 9.6$). However, Schools 1 and 2 did not differ significantly from each other on ethos, as measured by educational staff. In consensus with educational staff, pupils also reported similar findings in the mean scores of ethos among the three schools. In particular, School 3 ($M = 55.37$, $SD = 9.08$) was found to be statistically significantly lower than School 1 ($M = 56.9$, $SD = 9.99$), and School 2 ($M = 57.46$, $SD = 8.97$), while no statistically significant difference in the mean scores between Schools 1 and 2 was found.

Table 4.4. Means, SD and Results of Statistical Analysis on Ethos, BM and Inclusivity of schools as measured by Educational Staff and Pupils

	Total	School 1	School 2	School 3				
	(n = 104)	(n = 34)	(n = 26)	(n = 44)				
Variable	M (SD)	*M* (*SD*)	*M* (*SD*)	*M* (*SD*)	ANOVA Group	p	ω^2	Tukey's HSD
ESEthos	70.98 (8.81)	72.52 (6.91)	75.42 (9.55)	67.24 (8.34)	$F(2, 96)$	< .001**	.13	School2>School1>School3
ESBM	30.20 (5.23)	31.29 (4.48)	33.28 (5.53)	27.61 (4.37)	$F(2, 100)$	< .001**	.02	School2>School1>School3
ESInclusivity	40.57 (4.6)	40.88 (4.1)	41.88 (5.03)	39.55 (4.7)	$F(2, 97)$	.122		
	(n = 1263)	(n = 427)	(n = 436)	(n = 400)				
PEthos	56.61 (9.4)	56.92 (10.0)	57.46 (9.0)	55.37 (9.1)	$F(2,1260)$	.004**	.01	School2>School1>School3
PBM	20.54 (4.3)	21.04 (4.5)	20.75 (4.1)	19.78 (4.2)	$F(2, 1310)$	< .001**	.02	School1>School 2> School3
PInclusivity	36.03 (6.2)	35.87 (6.5)	36.68 (6.0)	35.49 (5.9)	$F(2,1264)$	.015*	.01	School2>School1>School3

Note. N =, M = Mean, SD = Standard deviation; ESEthos = Educational staff's perspectives on ethos; ESBM = Educational staff's perspectives on behaviour management; ESInclusivity = Educational staff's perspectives on inclusivity; PEthos = Pupils' perspectives on ethos; PBM = Pupils' perspectives on behaviour management; PInclusivity = Pupils' perspectives on inclusivity.

*p <0.05, **p < 0.01.

Behaviour management subscale scores were also found to be statistically significantly different between the school settings, as measured by both educational staff $F(2, 100) = 12.896$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = .02$, and pupils $F(2, 1310) = 10.249$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = .02$. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test reveal that the mean score for School 3 on behaviour management subscale ($M = 27.61$, $SD = 4.37$) was significantly lower than School 1 ($M = 31.29$, $SD = 4.47$), and School 2 ($M = 33.28$, $SD = 5.53$), while no statistically significant difference in the mean scores between Schools 1 and 2 was found, as measured by educational staff. Pupils were also found to share similar views as their mean score for School 3 ($M = 9.78$, $SD = 4.19$) was significantly lower than School 1 ($M = 21.04$, $SD = 4.54$) and School 2 ($M = 20.75$, $SD = 4.07$), while no statistically significant difference between Schools 1 and 2 was found.

Contrasting perceptions in the *inclusivity subscale* scores among school settings were identified as measured by the responses of educational staff and pupils. In particular, while the scores of education staff referring to inclusivity among settings did not differ significantly, $F(2, 97) = 2.14$, $p = 0.122$, those obtained from pupils indicated a statistically significant difference, $F(2, 1264) = 4.20$, $p = .015$, $\omega^2 = .01$. Post hoc comparisons were used to examine further any differences in the perceived inclusivity of pupils among school settings. The Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for School 3 ($M = 35.49$, $SD = 5.89$) was statistically significantly less inclusive than School 2 ($M = 36.68$, $SD = 6.01$), while School 1 ($M = 35.87$, $SD = 6.48$) did not differ significantly from either School 2 or School 3.

Table 4.5. Summary of the Differences between Schools for All Measures of Ethos

	School 1 & 2	School 1 & 3	School 2 & 3
ESEthos	✗	✓	✓
ESBM	✗	✓	✓
ESInclusivity	✗	✗	✗
PEthos	✗	✓	✓
PBM	✗	✓	✓
PInclusivity	✗	✗	✓

Note. ES = Educational staff perspectives, P = Pupil perspectives, ✗ = No differences between schools were found, ✓ = Differences between schools were found.

Overall, the findings indicated that School 3 was consistently scoring lower on the behaviour management subscale as compared to Schools 1 and 2, which were found to be similar. As Table 4.5 shows, the analysis of the variance produced no statistically significant difference between Schools 1 and 2 for all measures, as consensually perceived by both educational staff and pupils. In contrast, Schools 1 and 3 were found to differ significantly in terms of behaviour management subscale, apart from inclusivity subscale, as measured by both staff and pupils. Finally, comparison between Schools 2 and 3 reveals statistically significant differences in all measures, with the exception of educational staff's perspectives on the inclusivity sub-scale.

4.2.2.1.1 School Ethos Identification: Objective vs. Subjective Measures

Research Question: Are there shared perspectives on ethos amongst schools, as measured by statistics provided by the DfE, individuals (i.e. educational staff and pupils) and schools' educational psychologists?

The findings have shown that there was a discrepancy in perceptions of inclusion between school settings, as measured by objective (i.e. DfE statistics) and subjective (i.e. individuals, schools' educational psychologists) measures. According to the objective measures, as explained in section 3.13 of methodology, School 3 clearly appeared to be the most inclusive; it had a higher percentage of SEN pupils, and lower proportions of exclusions compared with that of the LA as a whole. School 1 and School 2 were the least inclusive, each in different counts. Specifically, School 1 was found to be *"very inclusive"* in terms of the percentage of SEN pupils, but it was relatively less inclusive with regards to the proportions of exclusions when compared with the LA as a whole. Conversely, School 2 was found to be *"just inclusive"* according to the percentage of SEN pupils, and relatively more inclusive with respect to the proportions of exclusions when compared with the LA as a whole. As reported in the previous subsection, the subjective measures revealed contradictory findings. School 2 emerged as being the most inclusive, while School 3 was reported to be the least inclusive of all, as measured by the responses of educational staff and pupils. Similar opinions about the inclusivity of the three settings were supported by the educational psychologist of each school.

4.2.2.1.2 Differences on Ethos between Groups of Educational Staff and Pupils

Research Question: Are there shared perspectives on school ethos, behaviour management and inclusivity, between and across various groups?

Table 4.6. Kruskal-Wallis Test Analysis of Perceptions of Different Groups of Educational Staff on Ethos, BM and Inclusivity

Professional role	Teacher		Teaching Assistant		Senior Management		Other[a]		Kruscal-Wallis test χ^2	p
	N	Mean rank	N	Mean rank	N	Mean rank	N	Mean rank		
Ethos	53	49.46	16	61.72	10	56.75	20	38.68	6.362	.095
BM	54	48.92	16	71.53	10	55.25	23	44.24	9.135	.028*
Inclusivity	53	54.47	16	51.38	10	60.45	21	35.07	8.173	.043*

Note. a. Other professional role at school, *p <0 .05.

4.2.2.1.2.1 Between Groups of Educational Staff

To examine any differences between groups of educational staff, a non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test was used due to the small sample size of the four groups of the independent variable professional role at school, as shown in Table 4.6. The findings revealed significant differences between these groups of educational staff scores for behaviour management subscale, χ^2 (3, $N = 103$) = 9.14, $p = .028$, and on inclusivity subscale, χ^2 (3, $N = 100$) = 8.17, $p = .043$. To investigate more where differences between them were located, pairwise comparisons were performed using Dunn's (1964) procedure with a Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons. Post hoc analysis revealed statistically significant differences in behaviour management subscale scores between other staff[23] ($M = 44.24$) and teaching assistant ($M = 71.53$) $p = .029$, and teacher ($M = 48.92$), and teaching assistant ($M = 71.53$) $p = .046$, but not with senior management team or any other combination. With regards to inclusivity subscale, post hoc analysis revealed statistically significant differences in scores between teacher ($M = 41.56$) and

---

[23] Other staff: Staff with a professional role, other than teacher, TA or senior management.

other staff ($M = 27.26$), and between senior management ($M = 21.35$) and other staff ($M = 13.45$). It can be thus concluded that teachers rated their schools lower on behaviour management than TAs, but higher on inclusivity, whilst senior managers were in between.

Table 4.7. Means, SD and Results of the Statistical Analysis on Ethos, BM and Inclusivity of Schools as Measured by Pupils

	Ethos			BM			Inclusivity		
	M (SD)	ANOVA	p	M (SD)	ANOVA	p	M (SD)	ANOVA	p
Typical	56.54 (9.2)	F (3, 1223)	$p = .120$	20.47 (4.2)	F (3.1270)	$p = .099$	36.03 (6.0)	F (3, 1227)	$p = .201$
SEMH	53.93 (8.1)			19.94 (3.4)			34.07 (5.5)		
MLD	57.36 (99.8)			20.97 (4.2)			36.39 (6.7)		
Other SEN	58.11 (9.4)			21.38 (5.0)			36.69 (7.0)		
Normal_Sebdtot	57.51 (9.2)	F (2,1113)	$p < .001^{**}$	20.92 (4.3)	F (2,1153)	$p < .001^{**}$	36.56 (5.9)	F (2, 1116)	$p < .001^{**}$
Border_Sebdtot	54.50 (8.5)			19.54 (3.8)			34.90 (6.1)		
Abnormal_Sebdtot	54.41 (10.1)			19.47 (4.4)			34.81 (7)		
Normal_external	58.08 (8.9)	F (2, 1113)	$p < .001^{**}$	21.21 (4.1)	F (2,1153)	$p < .001^{**}$	36.85 (5.8)	F (2,1116)	$p < .001^{**}$
Border_external	53.25 (9.3)			19.07 (4.2)			34.15 (6.1)		
Abnormal_external	52.71 (9.5)			18.60 (4.4)			34.03 (6.5)		
Normal_internal	56.98 (9.2)	F (2, 1113)	$p = .725$	20.68 (4.3)	F (2,1155)	$p = .493$	36.26 (5.9)	F (2, 1116)	$p = .777$
Border_internal	56.51 (9.9)			20.66 (4.1)			35.78 (6.8)		
Abnormal_internal	56.21 (9.8)			20.08 (4.4)			36.13 (6.9)		

Note. Sebtot = SDQ total difficulties scale, external = SDQ externalising difficulties scale, internal = SDQ internalising difficulties scale, $^{**}p < .01$

4.2.2.1.2.2   Between Groups of Pupils

A series of one-way ANOVA was also conducted to determine whether school ethos (i.e. behaviour management and inclusivity) were perceived differently by each group of pupils. The assumption of homogeneity of variance, as assessed by Levene's test, was held for all measures. As can been seen from the Table 4.7, examination of pupil perspectives between the scoring categories of the total difficulties scale revealed statistically significant differences on ethos $F(2, 1113) = 9.915$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = .02$, behaviour management subscale $F(2, 1153) = 10.366$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = .02$, and inclusivity subscale $F(2, 1116) = 7.144$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = .01$. Specifically, pupil scores in all measures consistently decreased from normal, to borderline, to abnormal. It seems that the higher the difficulties a pupil admitted to having, the more likely they were to give negative responses about school ethos: behaviour management and inclusivity subscales. A series of Tukey post hoc analysis followed to identify differences between groups. As shown in Table 4.8, significant differences in all measures were found between the groups of pupils classifying themselves as normal and borderline as well as those normal and abnormal.

Table 4.8. Tukey HSD Comparisons among Different Categories of SDQ Total Difficulties

Variable	Comparisons	Mean Diff.	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Ethos	B vs. N	-3.02**	.846	-5.00	-1.03
	A vs. N	-3.10**	1.02	-5.50	-0.71
BM	B vs. N	-1.38**	.381	-2.28	-0.49
	A vs. N	-1.45**	.464	-2.54	-0.37
Inclusivity	B vs. N	-1.66**	.554	-2.96	-0.36
	A vs. N	-1.74**	.024	-3.30	-0.18

Note. B = borderline, N = normal, A = abnormal, **p <.01.

With regards to the perspectives of pupils who completed the SDQ externalising difficulties scale, the findings show statistically significant differences between groups for ethos, $F(2, 1113) = 33.052$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = .05$, behaviour management subscale, $F(2, 1153) = 37.789$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = .06$, and inclusivity subscale, $F(2, 1116) = 21.520$, $p < .0005$, $\omega^2 = .04$. A series of Tukey post hoc tests between the scoring categories of the

SDQ externalising difficulties scale reveal significant differences between those pupils who classified themselves as normal and those who claimed to be borderline or abnormal. Table 4.9 shows where these differences between the groups were.

Table 4.9. Tukey HSD Comparisons among Different Categories of SDQ Externalising Scale

Variable	Comparisons	Mean Diff.	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Ethos	B vs. N	-3.02**	0.846	-5.00	-1.03
	A vs. N	-3.10**	1.02	-5.50	-0.71
BM	B vs. N	-2.15**	0.549	-3.44	-0.86
	A vs. N	-2.61**	0.321	-3.36	-1.86
Inclusivity	B vs. N	-2.69**	0.802	-4.57	-0.81
	A vs. N	-2.82**	0.473	-3.93	-1.71

Note. B = borderline, N = normal, A = abnormal, **$p < .01$.

Table 4.10. Summary of the Differences among Groups of Pupils on Ethos, BM and Inclusivity

	Ethos	BM	Inclusivity
Typical	✗	✗	✗
SEMH	✗	✗	✗
MLD	✗	✗	✗
Other SEN	✗	✗	✗
TotalDiffic_Normal	✓	✓	✓
TotalDiffic_Border	✓	✓	✓
TotalDiffic_Abnormal	✓	✓	✓
Internal_Normal	✗	✗	✗
Internal_Border	✗	✗	✗
Internal_Abnormal	✗	✗	✗
External_Normal	✓	✓	✓
External_Border	✓	✓	✓
External_Abnormal	✓	✓	✓

Note. ✗ = no differences between the groups, ✓ = there were differences between the groups.

From Table 4.10 it can be observed that pupils scoring as normal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale rated their perceived ethos, including behaviour management and inclusivity subscales, higher than those scoring as borderline or abnormal. From the overall findings, it can be concluded that the higher pupils' score on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale, the less likely they were to give positive responses for all measures.

4.2.2.1.3 Differences on Ethos between Specific Groups of Pupils

Research question: Are there shared perspectives on school ethos, behaviour management and inclusivity, among specific groups of pupils?

A summary of the mean, standard deviations and t-test on ethos, behaviour management and inclusivity between specific groups of pupils is presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11. Independent Group T-tests between Ethos, BM, Inclusivity and Different Groups of Pupils.

	Ethos					Behaviour Management					Inclusivity			
	M	(SD)	*t*-test	η^2		M	(SD)	*t*-test	η^2		M	(SD)	*t*-test	η^2
SEN	57.27	(10.2)	-1.1	.001		21.04	(4.5)	-1.9	-.001		36.23	(6.7)	-.454	-.001
Typical	56.54	(9.2)				20.47	(4.2)				36.03	(6.0)		
SEMH	53.93	(8.1)	-1.7	.001		19.94	(3.4)	-1.2	.001		34.07	(5.5)	-1.7	.001
MLD	57.36	(9.7)				20.97	(4.2)				36.39	(6.7)		
Abnormal_exter	52.71	(9.7)	5.0**	.10		18.60	(4.5)	3.7**	.06		34.01	(6.6)	5.5**	.011
MLD	59.71	(9.9)				22.04	(4.1)				37.64	(7.1)		
Abnormal_int	58.52	(8.3)	3.8**	.07		20.93	(3.6)	3.4**	.05		37.59	(6.0)	3.4**	.07
Abnormal_exter	52.72	(9.3)				18.57	(4.3)				34.05	(6.2)		

Note. **p < .01

A series of independent samples t-tests was conducted to examine differences in perspectives among two different groups of pupils. As can been seen from Table 4.11, significant differences were found in scores of ethos $t(231) = 4.950$, $p < .001$, behaviour management subscale $t(232) = 3.731$, $p < .001$, and inclusivity subscale $t(245) = 5.5$, p < .001, between those pupils who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale, and those identified as having MLD according to school registers. In particular, pupils identified as having MLD scored consistently higher on all measures as compared to pupils who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale, i.e. the scores on ethos were ($M = 59.71$, $SD = 9.9$) and ($M = 52.71$, $SD = 9.7$), behaviour management subscale ($M = 22.04$, $SD = 4.1$) and ($M = 18.60$, $SD = 4.5$), and inclusivity subscale ($M = 37.64$, $SD = 7.1$) and ($M = 34.01$, $SD = 6.6$) for pupils identified as having MLD and those with abnormal SDQ externalising difficulties scoring, respectively.

Significant differences in the scores of all measures were also observed between pupils who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ internalising difficulties scale, and those classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale. In particular, pupils who self-reported elevated levels of internalising difficulties scored higher ($M = 58.52$, $SD = 8.3$) on ethos $t(208) = 3.824$, $p < .05$ than those who self-reported elevated levels of externalising difficulties ($M = 52.72$, $SD = 9.3$). Behaviour management subscale scores also reached statistical significance $t(220) = 3.423$, $p < .001$, with pupils who self-reported elevated levels of internalising difficulties scoring higher ($M = 20.93$, $SD = 3.6$), than those who self-reported elevated levels of externalising difficulties ($M = 18.57$, $SD = 4.3$). Finally, pupils who self-reported elevated levels of internalising difficulties ($M = 37.59$, $SD = 6.0$) rated the inclusivity subscale of school ethos higher than those who self-reported elevated levels of externalising difficulties ($M = 34.05$, $SD = 6.2$), $t(209) = 3.431$, $p < .001$.

4.2.2.1.4   Differences on Ethos between Education Staff and Pupils' Perspectives

Research question: Are there shared perspectives of school ethos, behaviour management and inclusivity, between pupils and educational staff?

Table 4.12 Independent Group T-tests on Ethos, BM, and Inclusivity between Pupils and ES

	Pupils	Educational Staff		
	M (SD)	M (SD)	t-test	η^2
Ethos	41.39(7.4)	33.39(5.3)	13.6**	0.12
BM	17.86(3.6)	12.96(3.1)	15.18**	0.09
Inclusivity	23.50(2.8)	20.29(2.8)	10.12**	0.09

Note. **$p < .01$.

A series of independent-samples t-tests was conducted to examine possible differences between pupils and educational staff's perspectives. As can been seen from Table 4.12, pupils were found to score consistently higher than educational staff in all measures including ethos $t(124.669) = 13.690$, $p < .001$, behaviour management subscale $t(124.748) = 15.181$, $p < .001$, and inclusivity subscale $t(136.522) = 10.120$, $p < .001$.

4.2.2.2 Synopsis

To conclude, analysis of the quantitative data between school settings has shown that School 3 scored consistently lower in all measures as compared to School 1 and 2 which were found to be similar. Comparison between pupils and educational staff perspectives on school ethos, including behaviour management and inclusivity subscales, indicated that the former held overall better views about their school ethos than did the latter. Focusing on the differences between groups of educational staff, the findings revealed statistically significant differences on behaviour management subscale with TAs scoring higher than teachers and on inclusivity subscale with teachers scoring higher than staff with other professional roles. With regards to the observed differences between groups of pupils, the findings suggest that pupils who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale rated their perceived school ethos lower than pupils identified as having MLD as well as those who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ internalising difficulties scale.

4.2.3   Belonging to School as an Institution

This subsection is concerned with examining differences in belonging between school settings, and among different groups of pupils.

4.2.3.1 Differences in Belonging between Schools

Research question: Are there differences in belonging between schools?

Table 4.13 Belonging Scores for Different School Settings

	School 1 (n = 452)	School 2 (n = 446)	School 3 (n = 423)		
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	ANOVA	p
Belonging	32.16 (5.7)	32.41 (5.3)	31.41 (5.2)	$F(2,1318)$	p = .018*

Note.* p <.05

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance, as shown in Table 4.13, was conducted. The findings indicate a statistically significant difference at the p < .05 level in the mean scores on the sense of school belonging of pupils for the three settings: $F(2, 1318) = 4.020$, $p = .018$. Despite reaching statistical significance, the effect size was small, $\omega^2 = .001$. Post hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test show that the mean score on the sense of school belonging for school 2 ($M = 32.41$, $SD = 5.3$) was significantly different from School 3 ($M = 31.4$, $SD = 5.2$), with school 2 scoring higher than School 3. However, School 1 did not differ significantly from either School 2 or School 3. Interestingly enough, School 3 was found to score lower than School 2, not only between belonging scores, but also, as shown earlier, between the school ethos scores.

4.2.3.2 Differences in Belonging between Groups of Pupils

Research question: Are there differences in belonging between groups of pupils?

Table 4.14. Means, SD and Results of the Statistical Analysis on Belonging as Measured by Different Groups of Pupils

	Sense of School Belonging			
	M (SD)	ANOVA	p	Comparisons
Typical	32.23 (5.4)	*F* (3, 1277)	*p* = .106	
SEMH	30.29 (5.3)			
MLD	31.60 (5.0)			
Other SEN	31.56 (5.9)			
Normal_Sebdtot	32.75 (5.1)	*Welch's F* (2,1113)	*p*< .001**	Normal>borderline>abnormal
Border_Sebdtot	29.90 (5.3)			
Abnormal_Sebdtot	29.57 (6.7)			
Normal_external	32.96 (4.9)	Welch's F (2, 142.76)	*p*< .001**	Normal>borderline>abnormal
Border_external	29.71 (5.5)			
Abnormal_external	29.38 (6.2)			
Normal_internal	32.28 (5.3)	Welch's F (2, 122.11)	*p* = .141	
Border_internal	31.26 (6.4)			
Abnormal_internal	31.34 (5.5)			

Note. **p < .01

A series of One-Way ANOVA was conducted to determine whether sense of school belonging was differently perceived between different groups of pupils. The assumption of homogeneity of variance, as assessed by Levene's Test, was held for most of the tests

and in cases where this was violated the Welch's F was used. As can be seen in Table 4.14, statistically significant differences in the sense of school belonging scores were found only between groups of pupils on the SDQ total difficulties scale, Welch's $F(2, 173.7) = 25.830$, $p < .001$, and on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale, Welch's $F(2, 142.761) = 38.099$, $p < .001$.

Pupils who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ total difficulties scale had the lowest sense of school belonging scores, with this increasing for borderline and then normal scoring groups, in that order. Games-Howell post hoc analysis reveals that the increase from abnormal to normal (-3.181, 95% CI (-4.52 to -1.84)) was statistically significant ($p < .05$), as well as the increase from borderline to normal (-2.855, 95% CI (-3.96 to -1.75)). Similar outcomes were also found for pupils who filled in the SDQ externalising scale where the increase from borderline to normal (-3.246, 95% CI (-4.97 to -1.52)) reached a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$), as well as the increase from abnormal to normal (-3.575, 95% CI (-4.65 to -2.50)).

4.2.3.2.1   Differences in Belonging between Specific Groups of Pupils

Research question: Are there differences in belonging between specific groups of pupils?

Table 4.15. Summary of Independent Group t-test of Belonging for Different Groups of Pupils

	Belonging		
	M (SD)	*t*-test	η^2
Boys	32.33 (5.5)	-2.25*	0.004
Girls	31.65 (5.3)		
Typical	32.23 (5.4)	2.14*	0.003
Pupils with SEN	31.41 (5.5)		
SEMH	30.29 (5.3)	-1.25	0.01
MLD	31.60 (5.0)		
MLD	32.58 (4.5)	3.86**	0.06
Abnormal_exter	29.43 (6.0)		
Abrnomal_inter	32.22 (5.0)	2.99**	0.04
Abnormal_exter	29.28 (6.2)		

Note. *p < .05, **p < .01

4.2.3.2.1.1   t-Test

A series of independent-samples *t*-test conducted to compare the sense of school belonging scores between different groups of pupils. Statistically significant differences were found between gender, $t(1306) = -2.251$, $p = 0.25$, with boys scoring higher ($M = 32.33$, $SD = 5.5$) than girls ($M = 31.65$, $SD = 5.3$), as well as SEN status ($t(1279) = 2.139$, $p = 0.033$), with pupils identified as having SEN scoring lower ($M = 31.41$, $SD = 5.5$) than their typical peers ($M = 32.23$, $SD = 5.4$). Belonging scores also differed significantly between pupils, with those identified as having MLD ($M = 32.58$, $SD = 4.5$) scoring higher in their perceived sense of school belonging than those who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale ($M = 29.43$, $SD = 6.0$, $t(244) = 3.859$, $p < .001$). Finally, it was also found that pupils who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale ($M = 29.28$, $SD = 6.2$, $t(277) = 2.992$, $p = .03$) rated their perceived sense of school belonging lower than pupils classified

themselves as abnormal on the SDQ internalising difficulties scale ($M = 32.22$, $SD = 5.0$).

4.2.3.3 Synopsis

Overall, the research outcomes reveal a statistically significant difference in belonging between settings, with pupils attending School 2 reporting a higher sense of belonging than those attending School 3. Differences in sense of school belonging was also observed among groups of pupils who filled in the SDQ externalising scale, with those classified as normal scoring higher than those classified as borderline or abnormal. It seems that the higher a pupil scored on the SDQ the less likely they were to feel a sense of school belonging. Comparisons between specific groups of pupils also showed statistically significant differences, with boys reporting to belong more than girls, typical pupils more so than pupils with SEN, MLD more so than those classified as abnormal on the SDQ externalising scale and finally, pupils classified as abnormal in internalising difficulties more than those classified as abnormal in externalising difficulties.

4.2.4   Social Relations

In this subsection, the focus is on examining differences in social relations with teachers, teaching assistants and peers, between different school settings, and groups of pupils.

4.2.4.1 Differences in Social Relations between Schools

Research Question: Is there a difference in social relations between the three schools?

Table 4.16. Differences for School Settings and Social Relations

	School 1	School 2	School 3		
	M (SD)	M (SD)	M (SD)	ANOVA	p
Relations with Teachers	34.72(6.2)	35.86(6.0)	35.04(6.4)	F (2, 1248)	$p = .022^*$
Relations with TAs	41.33(8.4)	38.63(9.0)	33.67(11.6)	F (2, 42)	$p = .177$
Relations with pupils	37.83(5.8)	37.89(5.3)	37.73(6.1)	F (2, 1160)	$p = .919$

Note. $^*p < .05$.

A series of one-way between groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of school on social relations, the results of which can been seen in Table 4.16. Statistically significant differences were found only for social relations with teachers scores for the three school settings: $F(2, 1248) = 3.840$, $p = .022$, $\omega^2 = 0.005$. Contrary to expectations, as previous comparisons on ethos and belonging have shown, post hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicate that the mean score for School 1 ($M = 34.72$, $SD = 6.2$) was significantly lower than School 2 ($M = 35.86$, $SD = 6.0$), while School 3 did not differ significantly from either School 1 or School 2 in social relations with teachers. Thus, it can be concluded that pupils attending school 2 perceived their relations with teachers more positively than those pupils attending School 1, while those attending School 3 were found to be in between.

Table 4.17. Means, SD and Results of Statistical Analysis on Social Relations as Measured by Different Groups of Pupils

	Relations with Teachers				Relations with Peers			
	M (SD)	ANOVA	p	Comparisons	M (SD)	ANOVA	p	Comparisons
Typical	35.47 (6.1)	Welch's F	$p = .042*$		38.25 (5.5)	Welch's F	$p < .001**$	Typical > MLD >
SEMH	32.83 (6.0)	(3, 99.165)			34.12 (7.0)	(3, 86.358)		SEMH
MLD	35.16 (6.2)				35.76 (5.5)			
Other SEN	34.15 (7.3)				37.11 (6.1)			
Normal_Sebdtot	36.41 (6.0)	F (2,1105)	$p < .001**$	Normal >	39.10 (5.1)	F (2, 1034)	$p < .001**$	Normal >
Border_Sebdtot	32.46 (5.6)			Borderline >	33.95 (5.3)			Borderline >
Abnormal_Sebdtot	30.42(5.9)			Abnormal	32.55 (5.5)			Abnormal
Normal_exter	36.81(5.8)	F (2, 1105)	$p < .001**$	Normal >	38.67(5.6)	F (2, 1034)	$p < .001**$	Normal >
Border_exter	32.17(5.3)			Borderline >	35.75(4.4)			Borderline >
Abnormal_exter	30.35(5.3)			Abnormal	35.36(5.5)			Abnormal
Normal_interl	35.68 (6.2)	F (2, 1105)	$p < .001**$	Normal >	38.81 (5.2)	F(2, 1034)	$p < .001**$	Normal >
Border_inter	34.11(6.0)			Abnormal	33.44 (5.5)			Borderline >
Abnormal_inter	33.78(6.7)				32.11 (5.6)			Abnormal

Note. $*p < .05$, $**p < .01$

4.2.4.2 Differences in Social Relations between Groups of Pupils

Research question: Is there a difference in social relations with teachers, teaching assistants and peers between different groups of pupils?

A series of one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine whether social relations with teachers, teaching assistants and peers were differently perceived by different groups of pupils. Preliminary analysis was carried out to check for the assumption of normality and homogeneity of the variance. In cases of violation of normality, the non-parametric Kruscal-Wallis test was used, whereas Welch's F was used when the assumption regarding the variance held. As can been seen in Table 4.17, statistically significant differences were found between groups of pupils in their perceived relations with teachers, and peers.

4.2.4.2.1.1   Relations with Teachers

Statistically significant differences in perceived relations with teachers were found in scores between different categories of pupils, including those identified as having SEMH, MLD, Other SEN as well as typical pupils, Welch's $F(3, 99.165) = 2.839$, $p = .042$. However, when the Games-Howell test was conducted —a series of pairwise "post hoc" tests where all combinations of group pairs are compared to check if any group has higher values than another— the results showed no statistically significant difference among the groups. By contrast, statistically significant differences on the perceived relations with teachers were found among specific groups, as shown in subsection 4.2.4.2.2.1. For further information, see Table 4.20 below. Differences in the mean scores on social relations with teachers were also observed among pupils who filled in the SDQ total difficulties scale ($F(2, 1105) = 61.28$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = .098$), the SDQ internalising scale ($F(2, 1105) = 5.35$, $p < .001$) and the SDQ externalising scale ($F(2, 1105) = 111.19$, $p < .001$). Regarding all these different groups, the pupils' scores on social relations with teachers increased from abnormal, to borderline to normal, indicating that pupils who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ scales were more likely to hold negative perceptions about their relations with teachers.

Tukey post hoc analysis for groups of pupils that filled in the SDQ total difficulties scale revealed that the mean score for pupils classified themselves as normal ($M = 36.41$, $SD = 6.0$) was significantly different to those who classified themselves as borderline ($M = 32.46$, $SD = 5.6$), and abnormal ($M = 30.42$, $SD = 5.9$). Differences in total difficulties

scale were also found between pupils who classified themselves as abnormal ($M = 30.42$, $SD = 5.9$) and those who saw themselves as borderline ($M = 32.46$, $SD = 5.6$). For pupils who filled in the internalising difficulties scale, Tukey post hoc analysis revealed that the mean scores were statistically significantly different only for those who classified themselves as normal ($M = 35.68$, $SD = 6.2$) and those who considered themselves as abnormal ($M = 33.78$, $SD = 6.7$). Finally, Tukey post hoc analysis for the pupils who filled in the SDQ externalising difficulties scale indicate a statistically significant difference in the mean scores between pupils who classified themselves as normal ($M = 36.81$, $SD = 5.8$), and those who saw themselves as borderline ($M = 32.17$, $SD = 5.3$), and abnormal ($M = 30.35$, $SD = 5.3$).

4.2.4.2.1.2   Relations with Pupils

Examination of the differences in perceived relations with peers indicates statistically significant results between groups of pupils, Welch's $F(3, 86.358) = 8.417$, $p < .001$. A Games-Howell post hoc test shows statistically significant differences between pupils registered as typical in school reports ($M = 38.25$, $SD = 5.5$), and those identified as having SEMH ($M = 34.12$, $SD = 6.9$), and MLD ($M = 35.76$, $SD = 5.5$). Statistically significant differences in social relations with peers were also found between groups of pupils who filled in the SDQ total difficulties scale, $F(2, 1034) = 104.0$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = .16$, the SDQ internalising difficulties scale $F(2, 1034) = 85.64$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = .14$, and the SDQ externalising difficulties scale $F(2, 1034) = 31.38$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = .06$.

A Tukey post hoc analysis followed to identify where specific differences in perceived social relations with peers between groups were located. For pupils who filled in the SDQ total difficulties scale, a statistically significant difference was found in the mean scores between pupils who classified themselves as normal ($M = 39.10$, $SD = 5.1$) and those who saw themselves as borderline ($M = 33.95$, $SD = 5.3$), and abnormal ($M = 32.55$, $SD = 5.5$). Similar findings were revealed for pupils who completed the SDQ internalising difficulties scale, with those who classified themselves as normal ($M = 38.81$, $SD = 5.2$) having significantly different scores from those seeing themselves as borderline ($M = 33.44$, $SD = 5.5$), and abnormal ($M = 32.11$, $SD = 5.6$). Finally, regarding pupils who filled in the externalising difficulties scale, a statistically significant difference was found in the mean scores between those who classified themselves as normal ($M = 38.67$, $SD = 5.6$), and those considering themselves as borderline ($M = 35.75$, $SD = 4.4$) and abnormal ($M = 35.36$, $SD = 5.5$).

154

Table 4.18 Kruskal-Wallis Test Analysis for Social Relations with TAs

Groups of pupils	Mean rank	Relations with TAs	
		Kruskal-Wallis test χ^2	p
Typical	41.80	6.524	$p = .554$
SEMH	28.50		
MLD	49.60		
Other SEN	44.61		
Normal_Sebdtot	40.39	6.524	$p = .038*$
Border_Sebdtot	41.48		
Abnormal_Sebdtot	19.75		
Normal_external	41.67	3.350	$p = .187$
Border_external	25.67		
Abnormal_external	33.28		
Normal_internal	40.25	3.950	$p = .139$
Border_internal	25.65		
Abnormal_internal	41.41		

Note. *$p < .05$

4.2.4.2.1.3   Relations with Teaching Assistants

Differences in perceived relations with teaching assistants were also examined, and are presented in Table 4.18. One of the aims of the current study was to examine the perceived relations of pupils identified as having SEN with their individual TA, along with other class TAs; a differentiation which had been made in the questionnaire (see Appendix IV). Unfortunately, the relatively small number of pupils with SEN who reported having an individual teaching assistant, prevented such an investigation. Consequently, when pupils' relations with the TA is mentioned thereafter, it will refer to all pupils' relations with the general class TAs. The Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric test was used to examine any possible differences in the perceived relations of pupils with their TA. A statistically significant difference in social relations with TAs was found only for pupils who filled in the total difficulties scale, χ^2 (2, N = 76) = 6.524, $p = .038$. Among the groups of pupils, those classified themselves as borderline reported a higher median score ($Md = 41.48$) for social relations with their TAs than those who saw themselves as normal ($Md = 40.39$)

and abnormal ($Md = 19.75$). A summary of differences on social relations between groups can be found in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19. Summary of the Differences among Groups on the Perceived Relations of Pupils

	Social Relations		
	Teachers	**Peers**	**TAs**
Typical	✘	✓	✘
SEMH	✘	✓	✘
MLD	✘	✓	✘
Other SEN	✘	✘	✘
TotaDiffic_Normal	✓	✓	✓
TotalDiffic_Border	✓	✓	✓
TotalDiffic_Abnormal	✓	✓	✓
Internal_Normal	✓	✓	✘
Internal_Border	✓	✓	✘
Internal_Abnormal	✘	✓	✘
External_Normal	✓	✓	✘
External_Border	✓	✓	✘
External_Abnormal	✓	✓	✘

Note. ✘ = no differences between groups, ✓ = there were differences between groups.

4.2.4.2.2   Differences in Social Relations between Specific Groups

Research question: Is there a difference in social relations with teachers, teaching assistants, and pupils between specific groups of pupils?

In the section above overall differences in social relations between different pupils were presented. In this section, the nature of those differences is examined in a little more detail, comparing specific pairs. A series of independent sample *t*-test was conducted to compare the mean scores of two different groups of pupils on their perceived social relations and to explore group differences in response scores. The aim was to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of two specific groups on their perceived social relations with teachers, TAs, and peers.

4.2.4.2.2.1 Relations with Teachers

Table 4.20 Independent Group T-test on Social Relations with Teachers

	M (SD)	Relations with Teachers		Comparisons
		t-test	η^2	
Girls	35.68 (6.1)	2.17*	.004	Girls>Boys
Boys	34.91(6.3)			
Typical	35.47 (6.1)	2.28*	.004	Typical>Pupils with SEN
Pupils with SEN	34.37 (6.8)			
SEMH	32.83 (6.0)	-1.78	-0.028	
MLD	35.16 (6.2)			
MLD	37.03 (5.1)	8.71**	0.25	MLD>Abnormal_exter
Abnormal_exter	30.42 (5.3)			
Abrnomal_inter	37.02 (5.7)	7.01**	0.19	Abnormal_inter>Abnormal_exter
Abnormal_exter	30.63 (5.4)			

Note. *p < .05, **p < .001

Comparing responses from different groups of pupils on their perceived relations with teachers indicates statistically significant differences for the majority of the results, as can been seen in Table 4.20. Differences in perceived relations with teachers were observed between gender $t(1239) = 2.168$, $p = .030$, with girls ($M = 35.68$, $SD = 6.1$) scoring higher than boys ($M = 34.91$, $SD = 6.3$), and between type of SEN status $t(320.972) = 2.276$, $p = .024$, with typical pupils ($M = 35.47$, $SD = 6.1$) scoring higher than those identified as having SEN ($M = 34.37$, $SD = 6.7$).

Comparisons between groups of pupils with different categories of SEN also revealed statistically significant differences in mean scores between groups. One exception was that between pupils identified in the school registers as having SEMH and MLD, where investigation of scores regarding their perceived relations with teachers revealed no statistically significant difference. However, when pupils identified as having MLD were

compared with those who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale, a statistically significant difference was found, $t(232) = 8.706$, $p < .001$, with pupils identified as having MLD ($M = 37.03$, $SD = 5.1$) scoring higher on their perceived relations with teachers than those who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale ($M = 30.42$, $SD = 5.3$). A statistically significant difference in perceived relations with teachers was also observed between those pupils who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ internalising difficulties scale, and those who did so on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale, $t(209) = 7.014$, $p < .001$. Pupils who reported having anxiety or depression difficulties scored higher in their perceived relations with teachers ($M = 37.02$, $SD = 5.7$) than those who reported as having emotional and/or behavioural difficulties (M = 30.63, $SD = 5.4$).

4.2.4.2.2.2   Relations with Pupils

Table 4.21 Independent Group T-test on Social Relations with Peers

	M (SD)	Relations with Peers		Comparisons
		t-test	η^2	
Boys	38.14(5.5)	1.45	.002	
Girls	37.65 (5.8)			
Typical	38.25 (5.5)	4.49**	.018	Typical>pupils with SEN
Pupils with SEN	36.21 (6.0)			
SEMH	34.12 (6.9)	-1.10	-0.011	MLD>SEMH
MLD	35.76 (5.5)			
MLD	35.84 (5.7)	.447	0.00	
Abnormal_exter	35.47 (5.6)			
Abrnomal_inter	32.26 (5.7)	-3.97**	-.09	Abnormal_inter>Abnormal_exter
Abnormal_exter	35.98(5.3)			

Note. *$p < .05$, **$p < .001$

A series of independent samples t-tests was also conducted to compare the social relations with peers among different groups of pupils. As shown in Table 4.21, statistically significant differences for perceived relations with peers were observed only between typical pupils ($M = 38.25$, $SD = 5.5$), and those identified as having SEN ($M = 36.21$, $SD = 6.0$); ($t(292.996) = 4.49$, $p < .001$) with typical pupils scoring higher than those identified as having SEN, as well as between those who classified themselves as abnormal on SDQ internalising difficulties scale ($M = 32.26$, $SD = 5.7$), and those who were abnormal on SDQ externalising difficulties scale ($M = 35.98$, $SD = 5.3$) $t(192) = -3.969$, $p < .001$.

4.2.4.2.2.3   Relations with Teaching Assistants

Finally, differences in the perceived relations with TAs were also examined by using an independent sample t-test. In cases where the number of received responses between sub-groups was small, the respective non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was run. Comparing the responses regarding the perceived relations with TAs among specific groups of pupils reveals statistically significant differences only between gender, with girls ($M = 44.07$, $SD = 5.5$) scoring higher than boys ($M = 34.73$, $SD = 10$); ($t(42.579) = 4.031$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.27$). No statistically significant differences between different groups of pupils were found for their perceived relations with their TAs.

4.2.4.3 Synopsis

To sum up, no statistically significant difference was found on the perceived relations of pupils with their teaching assistants and peers between the three school settings, apart from the observed differences in these with teachers. In particular, pupils attending School 1 rated their perceived relations with teachers lower than pupils attending School 2, while the perceptions of pupils attending School 3 was found to be in between. With regards to social relations with teachers, statistically significant differences were found among groups, with girls rating their perceived relations with teachers higher than boys, typical pupils scored them higher than those identified as having SEN, and pupils identified as having MLD as well as those who classified themselves as abnormal on the internalising difficulties scale rating these relations higher than those who considered themselves as abnormal, according to the SDQ externalising difficulties scale. Regarding the social relations with peers, the findings have shown that typical pupils scored their perceived relations with peers higher than those identified as having SEN, and pupils who

classified themselves as abnormal on internalising difficulties higher than pupils classified themselves as abnormal on externalising difficulties. Finally, with regards to social relations with TAs, the findings suggest that girls held better perceptions regarding their relations with TAs than boys, and pupils classified themselves as borderline on the SDQ total difficulties scale scored higher than those who classified themselves as abnormal or normal.

4.2.5 Interrelationship of Perceived Ethos with Belonging and Social Relations

4.2.5.1 Correlations between Measures

The interrelationship between the perceived ethos of pupils identified as having SEN with their sense of school belonging, as well as their perceived social relations with teachers, peers, and teaching assistants were analysed using Pearson's correlation coefficient (r). Before performing a correlation analysis, a scatterplot was generated to check for violation of the assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity. Where the assumptions were not met, the non-parametric Spearman rho was used. Interpretation of the Pearson correlation coefficients and the Spearman rho values involved following Cohen's (1988, p.79-81) suggested guidelines.

Research question: Is there a relationship between pupils with SEN's perceptions on ethos with their sense of school belonging, and social relations?

Table 4.22 Correlations of Perceived Ethos with Belonging and Social Relations

Measure	Belonging	RelTeachers	RelTAs
Ethos	.575**	.456**	.529**

Note. Rel = relations with, **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Perceived ethos, as measured by pupils themselves, was significantly correlated with all measures (i.e. belonging, and social relations). There was a strong positive relationship between the perceived ethos of pupils identified as having SEN and their sense of school belonging (r = .575, n = 1321, p < .001), thus suggesting that the more positive perceptions pupils identified as having SEN hold about their school ethos, the more likely he/she is to score high in their sense of school belonging. It was a medium correlation: 33% of the variation was explained. Ethos was also positively correlated with social

160

relations with teachers ($r = .456$, n = 1251, $p < .001$), and teaching assistants ($r = .521$, n = 45, $p < .001$). Perceived ethos helps to explain 21% of the variance in the respondents' scores regarding social relations with teachers, and 27% with TAs, whilst the correlations between variables is small. Finally, the correlation between the perceived ethos of pupils identified as having SEN and their relations with peers was found to be weak and not statistically significant.

Research question: Is there a relationship between pupils with SEN's perceptions on social relations (i.e. with teachers, TAs, and peers) with their sense of school belonging?

Table 4.23: Correlation between Social Relations and Belonging

Measure	RelTeachers	RelatTAs	RelPeers
Belonging	.475**	.367**	.269**

Note. Rel = relations with, **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The perceived sense of school belonging of pupils identified as having SEN was significantly correlated with all measures of social relations. There was a positive correlation between the perceived sense of school belonging of pupils identified as having SEN with their social relations with teachers (r = .475, n = 1251, $p < .001$). The correlation had a small effect and explained nearly 23% of the variance in pupils identified as having SEN scores on their perceived belonging, the highest of all in their social relations. A positive correlation was also found between the perceived sense of school belonging of pupils identified as having SEN with their relations with TAs (r = .367, n = 45, $p < .001$). It is a small correlation: 13% of the variation is explained. Finally, the interrelationship between perceived relations with peers and sense of school belonging indicates a positive correlation between variables (r = .269, n = 1163, $p < .001$), with high levels of perceived relations with pupils associated with high levels of perceived belonging. The correlation had a medium effect and explained nearly 7% of the variance in pupils identified as having SENs' score on their perceived sense of school belonging.

4.2.5.2 Synopsis

Overall, it has been found that the perceived school ethos of pupils identified as having SEN was positively associated with their sense of school belonging, as well as their

perceived social relations with TAs and teachers, but not with peers. The findings have also shown a strong positive association between the sense of school belonging of pupils identified as having SEN with all their perceived relations. In particular, it emerged that the perceived relations with teachers, followed by that with TAs helped to explain most of the variance in the respondents' scores on their perceived sense of school belonging, while their relations with peers were found to be weak in terms of an explanatory variable.

4.2.6 Summary of the Questionnaire Data

Identification

- A large majority of the typical pupils (68.5%), as registered in school reports, were found to classify themselves as abnormal on all scales of the SDQ (i.e. externalising, internalising, and total difficulties scales) as compared to those identified by school records as having SEMH.

- Conversely, almost 60% of pupils identified by school registers as having SEMH classified themselves as normal on the SDQ total difficulties scale, 50% on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale, and almost 75% on the SDQ internalising difficulties scale, thus suggesting a very limited agreement in the identification of SEMH between school registers and pupils' self-reports.

- The findings also revealed a link between school settings and identification of SEMH. In particular, School 3 was found to have the highest proportion of pupils with SEMH, while School 2 had the highest percentage of pupils classifying themselves as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale. No significant differences among settings were found among groups of pupils who scored on the SDQ internalising difficulties scale.

School Ethos

- Analysis of ethos revealed statistically significant differences among all settings, in particular, between School 3 and School 2 — with the former scoring lower and the latter higher for all measures (i.e. ethos, BM, inclusivity) as consensually agreed by both educational staff and pupils, apart from educational staff's perceived inclusivity, no statistically significant difference between the settings was found.

- Investigation on the inclusivity of the school settings revealed a mismatch between the objective and subjective measures.

- Differences among the groups of educational staff indicated that TAs were found to score higher the behaviour management of schools than teachers, and staff with other professional roles. Whilst teachers were found to rate their perceived inclusivity of schools higher than staff with other professional roles and senior managers were in between the two.

- Differences among groups suggested that the higher the scores of pupils in the SDQ externalising difficulties scale the less likely it was to rate high their perceived school ethos in all measures. In particular, pupils who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale scored their perceived ethos lower than those who came out as abnormal on the SDQ internalising difficulties scale as well as those identified as having MLD.

- It was also found that pupils rated their perceived school ethos, behaviour management and inclusivity higher than did educational staff.

Sense of School Belonging

- Consistent with the differences regarding the perceived school ethos of pupils observed between settings, pupils attending School 3 scored their perceived sense of school belonging lower than those attending School 2, while the scores of pupils attending School 1 were found to be in between these two.

- Differences among pupils have shown that boys rated their perceived sense of school belonging higher than girls, typical pupils scored this higher than pupils identified as having SEN, and pupils identified as having MLD and those classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ internalising difficulties scale scored higher than those classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale. Finally, among the pupils who filled in the externalising scale, those who scored in the abnormal range were less likely to score high for their sense of belonging as compared to those who were in the borderline or normal range, according to their responses.

Social Relations

- Differences in social relations among the settings were also observed, but only with regards to pupil-to-teacher relations. Pupils attending School 1 rated their perceived relations with teachers lower than pupils in School 2, while the perceptions of pupils in School 3 were found to be in between.

- Differences among groups of pupils revealed that those who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale were more likely to give negative responses in their perceived relations with teachers than those who came out as borderline or normal. It was also found that girls rated their perceived relations with teachers higher than boys; typical pupils were higher for this than pupils identified as having SEN; and pupils identified as having MLD and those classifying themselves as abnormal on SDQ internalising scale were higher than pupils classifying themselves as abnormal on SDQ externalising difficulties scale.

- With reference to pupil-to-pupil relations, the findings suggest that pupils who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ internalising, externalising and total difficulties scales were more likely to rate their perceived relations with peers negatively. It was also found that typical pupils scored their relations with peers higher than those identified as having SEN, and pupils who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ internalising difficulties scale, scored higher than those who considered themselves as abnormal on SDQ externalising difficulties scale.

- With regards to pupil-to-TA relations, those pupils who classified themselves as borderline scored higher in their perceived relations with TAs than those who labelled themselves as abnormal or normal. The findings have also shown that girls perceived their relations with TAs more positively than did boys.

Interrelationship

- Analysis of the interrelationship of the variables revealed a strong positive association between the perceived ethos of pupils identified as having SEN with both their sense of school belonging, and their social relations with teachers and TAs.

- The findings have also shown a positive association between the perceived sense of school belonging of pupils identified as having SEN with all their social relations.

4.3 Analysis of the Interview Data

As explained in the methodology chapter, interview data were used as a supplementary method to the self-descriptive questionnaires for addressing the research questions. This section presents the results of the thematic analysis of the interview data collected to address possible differences in inclusion between school settings, and among groups of pupils. Some of the codes and categories generated after conducting a thematic analysis with the use of NVivo were theory-driven, whilst others were data-driven and emerged in the inductive phase. A theory-to-codes model (Saldaña, 2013) is presented in Figure 4.3, where the themes, and related subthemes are illustrated.

The three main themes, *School Ethos, Belonging to an Institution,* and *Social Relations* and their related subthemes are introduced by providing a summary, along with a thematic map, and are analysed on two levels: between schools, and among groups of pupils. Interview narratives using verbatim quotes are presented in tables to give further insight into pupils' perspectives. The emerged themes were derived from all data sets, across schools and types of pupil, with the aim being to present the majority view of the participants. The main story captures the perceived schooling experiences of pupils identified as having SEN and witnesses how their perspectives about school ethos is related with their sense of school belonging and their social relations with teachers, teaching assistants, and peers.

Figure 4.3 Theory-to-Codes Model of the Analysis
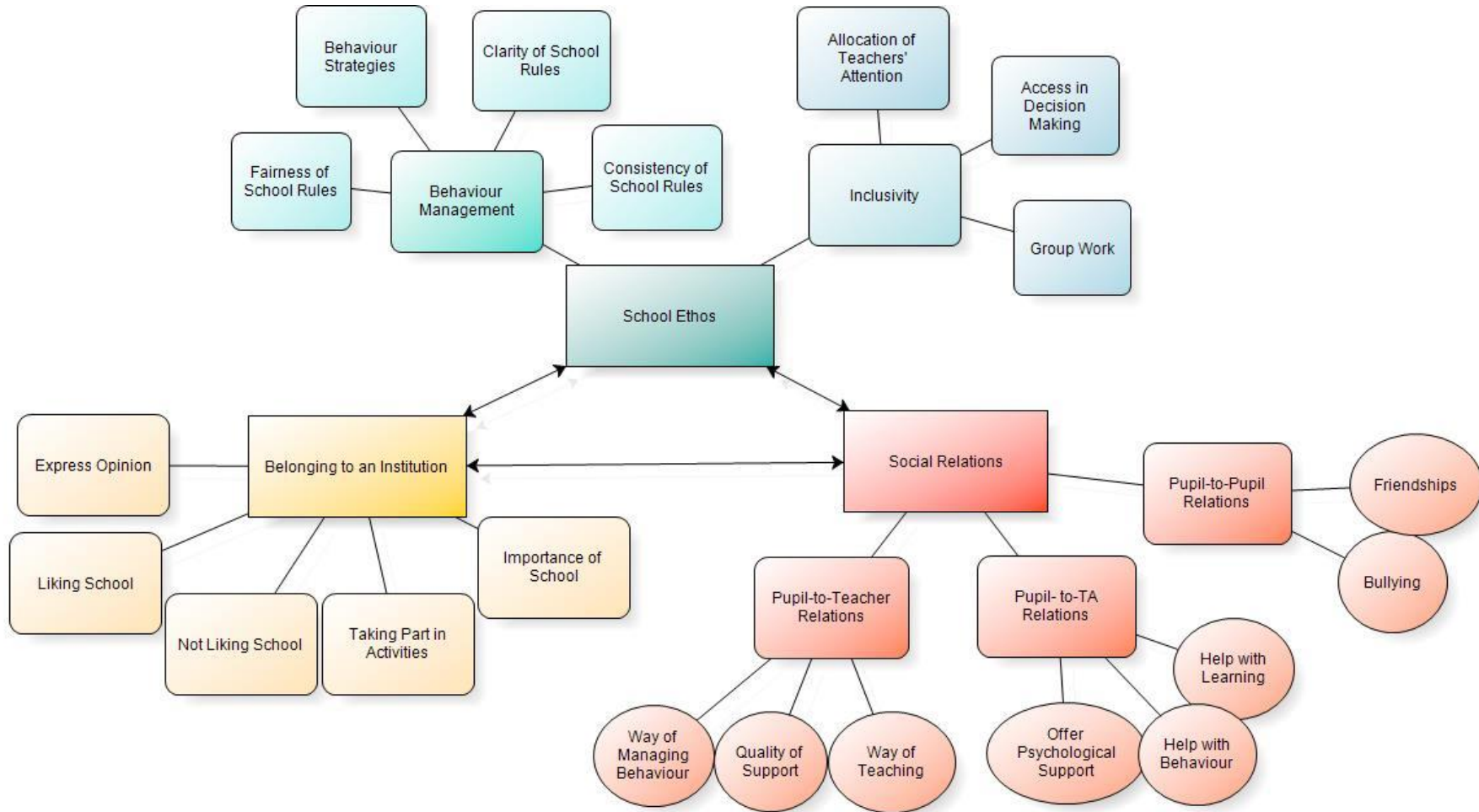
4.3.1 Theme 1: School Ethos

This major theme was engaged so as to "capture" the way inclusion is implemented in a school setting. It comprises two overarching sub-themes: *behaviour management*, and *inclusivity.* The implementation of behaviour management is further explained in four codes, and sub-codes: behaviour strategies; clarity of school rules; consistency and fairness of school rules. Inclusivity is also explained further by using three codes, and sub-codes; namely, allocation of teachers' attention, group work, and access to decision making. Figure 4.4 presents the thematic mind map of school ethos. School ethos, and its sub-themes are analysed on two levels. Firstly, differences are explored between school settings, and secondly among groups of pupils.

Figure 4.4 Diagram of Theme 1: School Ethos and Related Subthemes
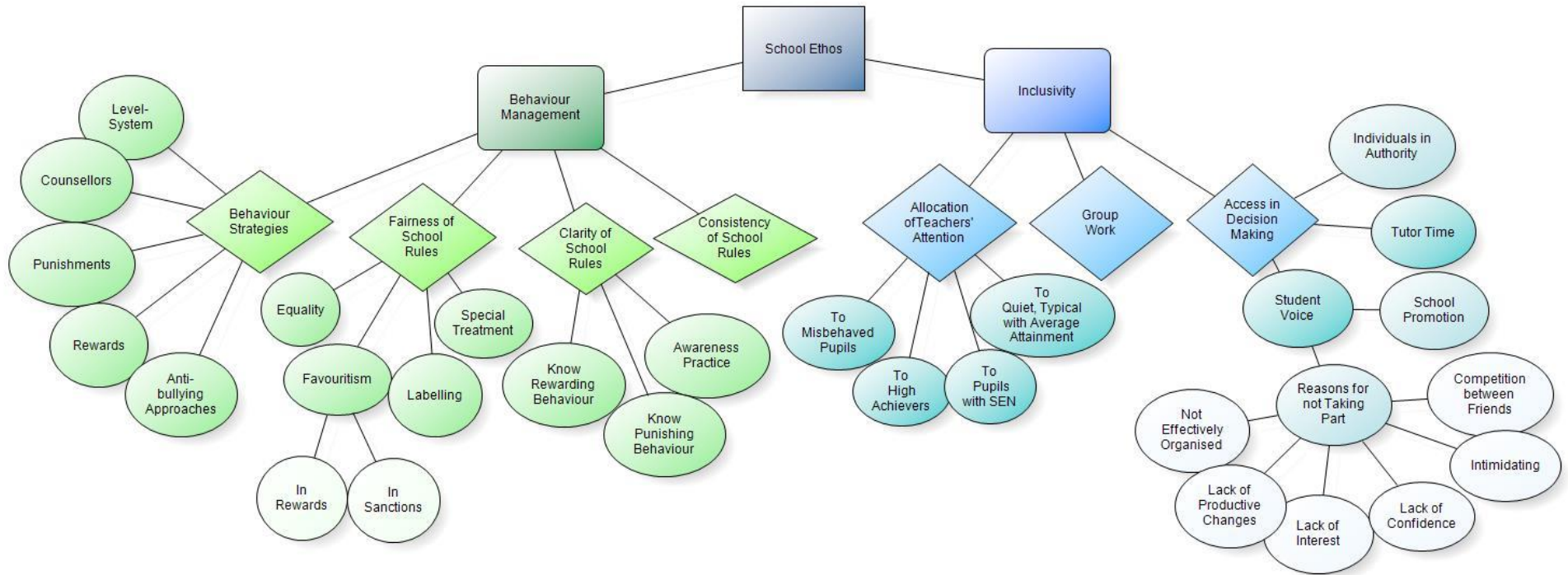
4.3.1.1 School Ethos between Settings

4.3.1.1.1   School 1

4.3.1.1.1.1   Subtheme I: Behaviour Management

School 1 was the only one implementing a practice to raise pupils' awareness of school rules from the early days of their attendance. In particular, pupils were obliged from the beginning of their registration to become aware of the school rules by signing a contract, and repeating it aloud. Indeed, all pupils were found to know well which behaviour would get them into trouble, and which would result in reward. Reflections on pupils' interviews revealed that School 1 was located in a deprived area with much juvenile delinquency going on. Therefore, the school made an effort to teach pupils afresh what acceptable behaviour is, and also the consequences that unacceptable activity would have, as a way to inhibit criminal activities at school. For instance, bullying was forbidden and many anti-bullying approaches were used to raise pupils' awareness. A wide range of rewards, namely, verbal, material, or even financial were provided as stimulants to encourage pupils' good behaviour, commitment to learning, and attendance.

Within class, a three-level strategy was used to manage their behaviour, which was found to be successful when it was properly administered, for two reasons: It raised pupils' awareness of their behaviour, and provided them with the opportunity to improve it. However, as reported by some pupils, the three-level strategy, as explained below, was not consistently implemented by all teachers, and at times, pupils were sent out of class without a warning. School rules were not consistently and fairly applied either. Besides the individualised support provided to pupils with ADHD, as prescribed by the inclusive practice, School 1 was found to make greater accommodations for those who misbehaved e.g. in the form of behaviour management policies, as well as in the way both rewards and sanctions were administered. It seems that School 1 was putting so much effort into including pupils who misbehaved that acceptable behaviour was praised more, and unacceptable behaviour was often ignored.

Table 4.24 School 1-Example Quotes for Subtheme I: *Behaviour Management*

Theme 1: School Ethos	
Subtheme I	**Behaviour Management**
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils Attending School 1**
Clarity	
Awareness of Practice	Before we came to the school, there's this contract with a lot of papers we had to sign. Yeah […] They made us repeat it as well.
Know Punishing Behaviour	If you're in a fight in school, if you bring a knife, drugs, like not being as used to work to the school rules, you get permanent excluded, you won't come back. And if you bring back home like somebody outside of school to come here […], and if you have a fight, you get excluded.
Know Rewarding Behaviour	Being resilient, working hard, trying your best, be ready for learning.
Consistency	
	Some teachers will give you merit if you do good work but others just say, "yeah, well done." That's it.
	Sometimes, the teachers will call my behaviour, the next time they will just start to shout […].
Behaviour Strategies	
Level-System	They actually manage it really good because they do these levels. So, if you have a level one it's a warning. So, then you know you are actually doing something wrong and so you change your behaviour. A level 3 is a 20-minute detention.
Rewards	They just give us merits and that's all. If it's like attendance, they'll give someone like a bike and that's it. Or if you're good here, then whoever has the most merits will get like a 5 Pound or 10 Pound voucher.
Punishments	Some people get detention and some people get excluded or sent home a year or some people get punished […].
Anti-bullying Approaches	I think there was this assembly once where they would talk, the people who were being bullied, they blurred their faces, and they spoke up what happened to them, the teacher, she spoke with everyone afterwards, and now they have friends, and everything is fine.
Fairness in School Rules	
Special Treatment	The people with ADHD, treat us different than others. Like they always give us time-out.
Favouritism in Sanctions	Some kids are bad but they are still treated better than others. If they were to do something, like swear, the teachers wouldn't do anything, but if it were other people, they would probably do something. […] If it's the upper pupils, the teachers will not give them no detention, they'll just leave them a note […] because they want them to stay in school […] they won't say anything because they've been working with them since Year Six or Year Seven.

4.3.1.1.1.2 Subtheme II: Inclusivity

Special treatment towards misbehaving pupils was also reported in the learning process from the way the support provided from teachers was allocated among pupils. Increased support was also found to be provided to those pupils who struggle with learning, to such an extent that the high achievers interviewed made complaints about inequality in the way help was allocated. Conversely, the least attention from teachers was found to be paid to those pupils who were quiet, typical and with average attainment. The effort of School 1 to create an inclusive environment was also reflected in participants' experiences where group work was often used as an opportunity to increase social interaction between classmates and thus, create a friendly atmosphere. Reflection of this effort is captured in the following sentence "*Because this school always says, 'we are as a family'*." Pupils' active involvement in decision making was also encouraged through Tutor Time or Student Voice[24], but neither of these was reported as being successful. As some pupils put it, in Tutor Time only a few of their voices were listened to, whilst regarding Student Voice, most of the pupils were reported to be unwilling to put themselves forward as representatives. Three main reasons were identified: lack of interest, lack of confidence, and lack of effectiveness in the implementation of decisions taken.

---

[24] Student Voice was also found termed as Student Council, or Pupil Voice. However, in the current thesis the term Student Voice will be used instead.

Table 4.25 School 1-Example Quotes for Subtheme 2: *Inclusivity*

Theme 1: School Ethos	
Subtheme II	**Inclusivity**
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils Attending School 1**
Allocation of Teachers' Attention	
To Naughty Pupils	My science teacher he always like, every time he sees a bad person, he starts the time later so we have to stay back later after school, but if they stay, we also stay so it's not fair to the good people.
To Pupils with SEN	The thing is, if somebody is really struggling, then they do get the patience for other teachers, then there's the smart ones that they'll start saying, "Why is he always getting support?" because they are smart so they don't really need, they need some support, but not enough for the other people.
To Quiet, Typical with Average Attainment	Because sometimes there's the quiet ones and there's the really loud ones, and I don't think they pay much attention to the people who are usually quiet.
Group Work	
	They're doing it like every day now. They encourage other people to work together so we get to know each other much more. But do the work some a bit together then we do it by ourselves.
Access in Decision Making	
Tutor Time	They do, they ask sometimes in assembly or in tutor time, they ask us, they give us sheets and questions like "what do you think of the school?" We give our opinions, but then you know –obviously, they listen to us, but I would say that it's pretty average how they deal with us. It's not fantastic, because they don't listen to everybody, but it's not bad either. They manage us well.
Student Voice	
Lack of Confidence	I don't know. I just don't. I've never liked really speaking in front of people.
	I'm good but I could be unsettled by them. They always choose smart people or the people like the "Ms. Perfects" or whatever to Student Voice […].
Lack of Interest	I'm not really into the whole taking part in the Student Voice thing. I wouldn't mind considering it because I've never done it before, but it's not my type of thing to do.
Lack of Productive Changes	Because I know, I'm not certain, but I don't want to go to a club and give my opinion, and then nothing to be done about it.

4.3.1.1.2   School 2

4.3.1.1.2.1   Subtheme I: Behaviour Management

School 2 was also found to lay great emphasis on the applied behaviour management. It was the only school that provided special counsellors for misbehaving pupils, where they effectively supported them to become aware of their behaviour, and learn strategies regarding how to control themselves. In class, a three-level system was implemented for controlling pupils' behaviour, and provide them with the opportunity to improve unacceptable behaviour. Teachers reported having clear boundaries and showing tolerance of misbehaviour to a degree. If their behaviour surpassed the acceptable limits, misbehaving pupils automatically received detention or were sent out to another class or another room to calm down. The opinions expressed suggested that consistency in school rules was found to be mostly related to the personality of a teacher, rather than to the prescribed rules of a school. Controversial perspectives among peers were expressed with regard to the fairness of the school rules. Whilst for some, they were equally applied to all, there were others reporting teachers' favouritism towards older pupils, as well as those who were well-behaved. There were a few voices who reported teachers being stricter towards misbehaving pupils. School 2 appeared to set clear boundaries on misconduct, and firmly to praise acceptable behaviour.

Table 4.26 School 2-Example Quotes for Subtheme I: *Behaviour Management*

Theme 1: School Ethos	
Subtheme I	**Behaviour Management**
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils Attending School 2**
Behaviour Strategy	
Counsellors	There is something called mentors at this school […] Well the teachers that normally manage my behaviour, which is technically my head of year or my formal keeper, they're normally just calm and they just talk-sometimes my counsellor comes in and I talk to him about it.
Positive Effects of Having a Counsellor	I don't have particularly the best behaviour. I do act up and I do lash out a lot and I do have anger problems […] I guess that teachers, towards me, they know that I do take time to calm down and actually accept what I've done […] I get to talk about it, and then whatever punishment happens, I just have to take one and have to do it.
Level-System	One warning, second warning, third warning. One warning is one warning, second warning is they let you off, and third one is detention.
Rewards	If you do something well, all they say is well done […].
Consistency	
	Some teachers are strict in the way they manage pupils' behaviour and some of them are not that strict in the way they punish people.
Fairness in School Rules	
Favouritism in Sanctions/Labelling	If you are better behaved pupil then you are more likely to get more chances if you misbehave, but if you are badly behaved pupil, then they're going to react differently towards you.
Equality	Yeah, they punish people in the same way. It's a matter of what the problem is, if it really bothers them what you're doing or something.

4.3.1.1.2.2 Subtheme 2: Inclusivity

School 2 was also found to engender an inclusive environment. Whilst contradictory opinions among groups of pupils were expressed regarding who received more teachers' support, in fact, all pupils, namely those with learning difficulties, high achievers, as well as misbehaving pupils, were to be equally supported by teachers in class. Interview data suggested that in School 2, perhaps pupils were misbehaving just to gain a bit more attention. These data also indicated that group work was limited, and rarely chosen by teachers, as pupils often misused such opportunities to chat with their friends. Opinions expressed by the pupils suggested they had restricted access to decision making, underlining the dominant role that people in authority (i.e. teachers, head teacher) had in taking important decisions. Student Voice was reported to be the only opportunity provided to all pupils independently, to express their opinion, by writing what they thought about the school. However, whilst the majority of the pupils, even those with SEN, were aware of its existence, most of them reported being unwilling to accept candidacy as a student representative. Three reasons were found for holding them back: i) lack of interest, ii) lack of organisation, as very few meetings were happening, and iii) perceived a lack of effectiveness, as no change ever happened. Fierce criticism was also expressed about the role of Student Voice in the school, with some claiming that its existence was only so as to improve its image on the website.

Table 4.27 School 2-Example Quotes for Subtheme II: *Inclusivity*

Theme 1: School Ethos	
Subtheme II	**Inclusivity**
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils Attending School 2**
Allocation of Teachers' Attention	
Pupils with SEN	You know the not so clever, the people who got low levels, the dumb people. The teachers give more attention to them.
Quiet, Typical with Average Attainment/	Teachers go for the ones that are high and the ones that are bad.
High Achievers	A lot of high achievers get a lot attention, get a lot of treats, and a lot of stuff because they're obviously high achievers.
Naughty Pupils	I've seen people working hard, but all the teachers' attention goes towards the bad pupils that they don't realise what the good pupils are doing. It frustrates me, because the good pupils aren't doing anything, but all their attention is not focused on the goodness of what they're doing, but on what the bad pupils are doing.
Group Work	
	But I think sometimes we as pupils can abuse that, because we're just going to go to our friends and we're not going to do any work because we're just talking to friends.
Access in Decision Making	
Individuals in Authority	Normally the teachers take it on their own […] they don't really address it to the pupils, they just take it on board, see what the head teacher says, and if she finds it okay, then she will just say yes.
Student Voice	We do it sometimes in certain lessons […] Basically it's just they'll tell you what you enjoyed about that certain subject, and we just write it down and give it in. We can do that in almost every subject, just write down what you like, sometimes you write down what you like about school, and then they take that and put it on the website.
School Promotion	I've heard of it, but that's the website. They make it sound more exciting on the website than it actually is in real life!
Not Effectively Organised	I think they do it either at the end of the school year or at the end of the term.
Lack of Productive Changes	It's in place but I've never seen anything that they've changed.
Lack of Interest	No, I don't like doing that.

4.3.1.1.3   School 3

4.3.1.1.3.1   Subtheme 1: Behaviour Management

Finally, School 3 appeared to be the least tolerant of misconduct, with any behaviour disturbing other pupils' learning being eliminated. In class, the applied behaviour strategy was found to be rather more punitive than helpful, as misbehaving pupils were deprived of any opportunity to improve their behaviour. In particular, when they started to be disruptive, they were directly sent out of the class in order to prevent any disturbance of other pupils' learning and if they were sent out twice, they were given lunch duty. There did not appear to be any approach to dealing with bullying. However, when acceptable behaviour was displayed, rewards in the form of cards were given to the pupils.

Interview data suggest teachers' inconsistency in the way school rules were applied, with some reported as being more lenient than others. There appeared to be a link between school rules administration and teachers' individual approach to behaviour management. Unfairness was also expressed in the way school rules were applied among pupils. That is, the teachers seemed to be displaying labelling, and biased behaviour towards misbehaving pupils. As some pupils who had previously misbehaved explained, teachers were always putting the blame on them for any noise happening in class, and handing them out harsher punishments. This view was consistent with a report provided by a typical pupil, who felt that teachers rewarded those who were well-behaved, and were unjust to those who misbehaved. However, other typical pupils held contradictory views, claiming that teachers administered stricter punishments to well-behaved pupils, even if they exceeded the limits just once and they accused them of providing misbehaving pupils with better rewards. In sum, it seems that School 3 showed no tolerance towards misbehaviour, and some naughty pupils complained about labelling. However, a degree of inconsistency was perceived, with some pupils reporting that the teachers rewarded misbehaving pupils more readily and had a lower threshold for misbehaviour in well-behaved pupils.

Table 4.28 School 3-Example Quotes for Subtheme I: *Behaviour Management*

Theme 1: School Ethos	
Subtheme I	**Behaviour Management**
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils Attending School 3**
Behaviour Strategies	
On Call-System	Well, if you're being disruptive […] teacher has to stop, [as] it's distracting everyone else's learning so then [disruptive pupils] have to get removed from the class. If you get sent out then teachers come around and they write your name down, and if you get two of them, you get lunch duty and I think that's quite good.
Rewards-Know Rewarding Behaviour	If you behave in the classroom and you've done really well or good work, they give you quick notes, which are little stiff cards.
Anti-bullying Approaches	I don't think they are hard enough on bullying, because they think we're just children and it will get sorted out within a day or two days. Normally it doesn't, normally it can stick with you for life. […] So, I think punishment on bullying should be a lot harder.
Consistency	
	Some of them are all right and some of them I feel […] will react more harshly toward punishment than others. Let's say if you're running, the normal thing would be for the teacher to say, "Oh, stop running," and scold you and then you walk, but then some teachers will be as I say extra or they'll give you a detention.
Fairness in School Rules	
Labelling	It's like teachers remember when you've been rude to them, so they're always going to carry the stigma of "That's that rude child, and he's going to do that again, so now I have to be even more harsh on him." Because, to be fair, even though they'll deny it, if someone throws something and it's that rude child who you had that argument with a few days ago or that child who's never done anything, they're going to go for you, and that's just how it is.
Favouritism in Rewards	No, because there's this thing called East Side and that was all the naughty people and they were meant to be going to the cinema because they were good, but the people who were actually good in class don't get a reward or anything. There's only one reward at the end of the year, and that's when you get to choose to go somewhere. But, I don't think it's really fair that the naughty people get to go on trips.

4.3.1.1.3.2   Subtheme II: Inclusivity

Contradictory views among pupils were also reported regarding where the attention of teachers was mainly focused. According to the experiences of some pupils, high achievers were those who attracted more teachers' attention in class. As also expressed by them,

being a good student, could be a double-edged sword, as one could either be supported or ignored. There were a few who stated that the misbehaving ones were those who gained more of the attention of teachers. On the other hand, pupils who were quiet, typical and with average attainment said that they got no attention at all, and compared to those who misbehaved, usually suffer in silence.

Group work was found to be rarely implemented in School 3, as pupils often appeared to misbehave, and so teachers avoided it for fear of losing control of the class. Another reason that hindered the implementation of group work was the academic skills of the group that someone would be allocated to. Pupils' access to decision making seemed to be limited, as teachers and the head teacher appeared to be the only ones who had that responsibility. The role of Student Voice at school was also reported to be restricted. The opinions expressed regarding it suggested that the majority of pupils were not sure of its role at school, and those who knew of its existence admitted that they had never been a student representative, nor did they wish to be. The main reason that pupils appeared to be unwilling to take part in Student Voice was lack of confidence, and that response was mainly prevalent among pupils with SEN. As one typical pupil explained, the main reason that pupils with SEN stepped back was simply the fear that no one would vote for them. Other reasons expressed as to why pupils preferred to abstain from participating in Student Voice were related with the whole process of elections, which, according to their experiences, fostered competition and bad feelings amongst friends. Others also highlighted the negative perspective that being a student representative had among peers, comparing it to being "a teachers' pet". Lack of effectiveness in changing things was an additional reason found. Overall, the pupils denounced its role, and expressed the view that the only reason that school had it was to improve its image.

Table 4.29 School 3-Example Quotes for Subtheme II: *Inclusivity*

Theme 1: School Ethos	
Subtheme II	**Inclusivity**
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils Attending School 3**
Allocation of Teachers' Attention	
To high Achievers	[…] I think they put more effort in the pupils that are already smart, which is really not a good thing. There can be two sides to it. If you're really good, then they like you, but they kind of ignore you because they expect you to get on with the work, they expect you to do more.
To Misbehaved	The ones who annoy because the good ones the teacher just trusts them and leave them to get on with the work, but the ones who are not so good, the teachers will come up to them.
To Quiet, Typical with Average Attainment	If you misbehave they're more likely to notice you and spend time on you and help you get through the work. If you're well behaved, they think that you understand already, but lots of people are struggling and they don't talk much, because they don't want to get in trouble, but they also really want some help.
Group Work	
	I think they don't really like you doing group work because you can mess around in a group. It takes forever to get into groups and then some of the groups we're in they just don't do any work.
Access in Decision Making	
Individuals in Authority	I think that's all up to the head teacher and the teachers when they have their meetings, like how to perform the lessons.
Student Voice-Lack of Confidence	I feel like the disability holds them back because they feel like no one will vote for them in a way because of it, and that's not the case. I mean, they just don't have the confidence, and it shouldn't be like that.
Competition between Friends	You're just competing with all of your other friends, and you make it hard for all your friends.
Lack of Productive Changes	They just ask you questions, and then when you answer it, in like five months, they still haven't done anything about it.
Intimidating	I feel like it can be seen as well as uncool like if you're a [student representative], you're a bit of a loser. That's how it could be seen.
School promotion	I think the teachers just have it so that when officers come they can say, "Oh, yeah we have a Student Voice thing" but it's just to make the school look good. They don't really listen.

4.3.1.2 Synopsis of Ethos — between School Settings

- School 2 was the only one reported as robustly praising acceptable behaviour, setting clear boundaries and providing special counsellors in order to teach misbehaving pupils strategies to control themselves. It was also the only one where allocation of teachers' support was equally provided to all pupils independently of their type of need.

- School 1 was reported to put much effort to include misbehaving pupils to such an extent that their challenging behaviour was often ignored and instead of denouncing misbehaviour, seemed to condone it. A similar picture was reported regarding inclusivity, whereby teachers' attention was mainly paid to misbehaving pupils, and those with learning difficulties, while high achievers and quiet, typical pupils were often ignored.

- School 3 was the one reported as implementing the most punitive behaviour strategies, aimed at, on the one hand controlling the challenging behaviour of misbehaving pupils, and on the other hand, to quelling any possible disruption to other pupils' learning. According to the accounts of the pupils, School 3 was the only one of the three where the attention of teachers was mainly given to high achievers.

- Group work was found to be regularly applied to School 1 where it was seen as an opportunity for pupils to socialise, while School 3 and School 2 were found to avoid its implementation for fear of losing class control.

- The majority of the pupils across the settings reported their access to decision making was very limited. Also, most were found to be unwilling to put themselves forward as representatives of Student Voice due to the ineffectiveness of the process and/or lack of confidence, the latter reason being prevalent among pupils identified as having SEN. School 2 was the only one where pupils identified as having SEN did not mention lack of confidence as a reason for keeping them back, thus indicating an inclusive environment was present

4.3.1.3 School Ethos among Groups of Pupils

4.3.1.3.1   Pupils Identified as Having SEMH

4.3.1.3.1.1   Subtheme I: Behaviour Management

Interview data suggested that pupils identified as having SEMH had negative perspectives on the applied strategies used by schools to control their behaviour. As they explained, making noise for many pupils was seen as way to escape lessons, for this meant being sent out of class. Teachers failed to instruct pupils about what proper behaviour is and instead, the implementation of alternative strategies was suggested. Additionally, it was found that pupils identified as having SEMH accused teachers of labelling and discriminatory implementation of school rules against them. Conversely, pupils identified as having ADHD, a sub-group of SEMH, reported making use of that label in order to demand different treatment from teachers. Finally, pupils identified as having SEMH were the only group who, besides punishments, referred to the rewards they get from teachers, indicating the importance of both for improving their behaviour.

Table 4.30 SEMH — Example Quotes for Subtheme I: *Behaviour Management*

Theme 1: School Ethos	
Subtheme I	**Behaviour Management**
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils identified as having SEMH**
Behaviour Strategies	
	I think that the teachers do need to be a bit more strict, because people, pupils can get quite rude to them and they kind of just let it go so it doesn't really teach them anything about what they're doing is wrong. But, it's normally just they get sent out and they come back in. It's not really learning nothing and I think pupils, try to be rude just to get out of class so they don't have to do the work, but I think many teachers could be a bit more strict and actually punish them instead of just sending them out.
Rewards	They just give us merits and that's all. If it's like attendance, they'll give someone like a bike and that's it. Or if you're good here, then whoever has the most merits will get like a 5 Pound or 10 Pound voucher.
Consistency	
	As I said before, some teachers take it in a different way than other teachers so it's kind of hard […]. Say if I'm talking, another teacher would probably send me out of the classroom or tell me to stop talking. Other teachers, umm…
Fairness in School Rules	
Labelling	If you had a bad reputation in your old school, because they have the form, they'll pass it on to your next school and then you have that reputation […] basically you become a label in their eyes. And because probably, I don't know, every teacher gets that, so if you do something, they'll think is you or if you do something, they'll take it in a more serious punishment.
Special Treatment	The other teachers, they know that I have ADHD and that I might be hyper sometimes, and that if I'm hyper, give me a break so I can come down and get on with my education. The rest of the teachers, they just do with me what they do with other people.

4.3.1.3.1.2   Subtheme II: Inclusivity

With regards to the educational support provided at school, contrasting opinions amongst pupils identified as having SEMH were reported. Some of them expressed the view that teachers provide them with a lot of support, and encouragement. The support they received from their TAs was also reported to be satisfactory, while they expressed their preference to be educated in smaller classes, where they gain more individualised support. Conversely, fierce criticism and frustration was articulated towards teachers who instead of praising their good behaviour and participation in class, all their attention was paid to misbehaving pupils, which made some of them wonder what did the teachers really want.

With regards to group work, pupils identified as having SEMH mentioned two obstacles to their successful participation in group work; the first pertained to their difficulty in socialising with other peers and the second, related to their finding it hard to control themselves and stop misbehaving. According to these pupils, their involvement in decision making was very limited and it was those individuals in authority were those who reported as having by far the greater responsibility for taking decisions. Negative perspectives were also expressed about the Student Voice in that they felt excluded from the opportunity to be voted for as student representative. The main reason holding them back was found to be their lack of confidence, as they believed that the most popular pupils would be those who other peers would vote for.

Table 4.31 SEMH-Example Quotes for Subtheme II: *Inclusivity*

Theme 1: School Ethos	
Subtheme II	**Inclusivity**
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils Identified as having SEMH**
Allocation of Teachers' Attention	
To Misbehaving Pupils	[…] They give us as much attention as possible. So, sometimes they bring TAs and assistants to help us, especially when we're in the lower set, then specially we have that good attention, because there's less of us in a group so we get more attention than if we had 40 people in the classroom.
	I'm not a bad student, but I do speak in class–it annoys me because I've seen people working hard, but all the teachers' attention goes towards the bad pupils […]. It frustrates me because the good pupils aren't doing anything, but all their attention is not focused on the goodness of what they're doing, but on what the bad pupils are doing.
Group Work	
	It can be a bit of a disaster because I have trouble understanding, I have trouble socially sometimes. I think sometimes we as pupils can abuse that […] we're just going to go our friends and we're not going to do any work.
Access in Decision Making	
Individuals in Authority	I think that's all up to the head teacher and the teachers when they have their meetings, like how to perform the lessons.
Lack of Confidence	Say it was three people, and one had a few mates and the other one was really popular and the other one had no friends, the really popular one, I think, would get it because they've got more friends.

4.3.1.3.2 Pupils Identified as Having MLD

4.3.1.3.2.1 Subtheme 1: Behaviour Management

Pupils identified as having MLD were one of the groups who appeared to show empathy for their misbehaving peers, and denounced teachers for excluding them from school. In their view, the applied behaviour strategies used by teachers were ineffective and instead, the implementation of alternative methods was recommended. Criticism was also expressed towards teachers for the inconsistent way that they administered not only punishments, but also rewards. Contrasting opinions pertaining to the fairness of school rules were expressed amongst pupils identified as having MLD, with some accusing teachers of favouritism towards high achievers, whilst others reported the view that the school rules were equally implemented among pupils.

Table 4.32 MLD — Example Quotes for Subtheme I: *Behaviour Management*

Theme 1: School Ethos	
Subtheme I	**Behaviour Management**
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils identified as having MLD**
Behaviour Strategies	
	Sometimes they can be a bit unfair when they exclude them from the school, but I get sending them to a different class or sending them out of the classroom, because I feel that's a good thing.
Consistency	
Inconsistency in Sanctions	Yeah, some teachers take things more differently to other teachers. Say, if I was late to a lesson, one teacher might give you an hour, the next teacher might say, "Oh, don't be late."
Inconsistency in Rewards	The teachers say they will but they don't do it. Because last time I've done something good in class they said "I'll call your parents," so I asked my mom if someone called and she said no.
Fairness in School Rules	
Favouritism in Sanctions	If I did something wrong, I'll get in trouble like detention, but if it's the upper pupils, the teachers will not give them no detention, they'll just leave them a note.

4.3.1.3.2.2 Subtheme 2: Inclusivity

With reference to those receiving more support from teachers, pupils identified as having MLD reported that whilst teachers tended to be harsher with misbehaving pupils, they also interacted

most with them. In their view, a lot of attention was paid to high achievers and, those who struggled with their learning, but not misbehaving, received less. With regards to group work, the majority of pupils identified as having MLD expressed the view that group work was seen as an opportunity to socialise with other peers. Positive perspectives were also expressed with regards to their access in decision making in that they not only believed that their opinions were listened to, but also that all pupils could equally decide about important things at school. However, it needs to be mentioned that the majority of pupils seemed to lack awareness of what Student Voice was, and those who were, were unwilling to take part due to lack of interest or more importantly, lack of confidence. Disappointment with regards to the limited amount of changes that took place was another reason that led to their decision to abstain from being a student representative.

Table 4.33 MLD — Example Quotes for Subtheme II: *Inclusivity*

Theme 1: School Ethos	
Subtheme II	**Inclusivity**
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils identified as having MLD**
Allocation of Teachers' Attention	
To Misbehaving pupils	The people that sort of mess around and don't really care about their education […] the teacher always tells them off. But then it turns out that the teacher gets to know them more than the people they don't mess around […] because they're quiet and the rest of them are really loud so they know them more.
To High Achievers	I think they put more effort in the pupils that are already smart, which is really not a good thing.
To Pupils with SEN	Naughty ones and people who struggle with learning.
Group work	
	And group work, more group work. They're doing it like every day now. They encourage other people to work together so we get to know each other much more […].
Access in Decision Making	
Lack of Confidence	I have to speak in front of the whole school and I just don't like that.
Lack of Interest	I don't find it's important to me. It sort of doesn't interest me at all […] I come to school to learn, I don't really care about what else is going on, just to learn.
Lack of Productive Changes	[…] Nothing really happens.

4.3.1.3.3   "Abnormal" Pupils (SDQ Terminology, Based on SDQ Difficulties)

4.3.1.3.3.1   Subtheme 1: Behaviour Management

Almost all pupils classified as "abnormal" on the SDQ total difficulties scale were well aware of the behaviour strategies used by teachers to manage pupils' behaviour, along with the consequences of each action. The majority complained about teachers' inconsistency in managing their behaviour, and accused them of being stricter than they should be. At the same time, they also complained about the unfairness in the way rewards and punishments were administered to misbehaving pupils. Some supported the view that teachers were tougher than they should be with these pupils and others claimed that they were too lenient.

Table 4.34 "Abnormal" — Example Quotes for Subtheme I: *Behaviour Management*

Theme 1: School Ethos	
Subtheme I	**Behaviour Management**
Code	**Perceptions of "Abnormal" Pupils**
Behaviour Strategies	
	One warning, second warning, third warning. One warning is one warning, second warning is they let you off, and third one is detention.
Consistency	
	Let's say if you're running, doing a thing, and the normal thing would be for the teacher to say, "Oh, stop running," and scold you and then you walk, but then some teachers will be as I say extra or they'll give you a detention.
Fairness in School Rules	
Favouritism in Rewards	No, because there's this thing called East Side and that was all the naughty people and they were meant to be going to the cinema because they were good, but the people who were actually good in class don't get a reward or anything.

4.3.1.3.3.2   Subtheme 2: Inclusivity

According to pupils who classified themselves as "abnormal" on SDQ total difficulties scale, most of the attention of teachers was given to misbehaving pupils, and those with learning difficulties, and to a lesser extent to high achievers. Having to work with unknown pupils and not with their friends, was the main reason reported for not liking group work. Regarding their access to decision making, most expressed that the teachers were those who had the authority to decide about important things. Negative perspectives were also reported about the Student

Voice as, according to them, being elected as student representative was seen as sucking up to the teachers.

Table 4.35 "Abnormal" — Example Quotes for Subtheme II: *Inclusivity*

Theme 1: School Ethos	
Subtheme II	**Inclusivity**
Code	**Perceptions of "Abnormal" Pupils**
Allocation of Teachers' Attention	
To Misbehaved	The ones who annoy, because the good ones the teacher just trusts them and they just leave them to get on with the work, but the ones who are not so good, the teachers will come up to them and stuff.
To pupils with SEN	Probably, it depends. You know the not so clever, the people who got low levels, the dumb people. The teachers give more attention to them.
To High Achievers	And the people who are high ability, who get high levels, the teachers wouldn't –I understand that the teachers want to help them get to a higher level, but they should do that on breaks or lunch or something, they should treat everyone equally.
Group Work	
	No, because I moved to a different form a couple of months ago and now I don't know anyone in my new form. It probably doesn't work out and just ends in awkward silences most of the time…because you don't know them, you don't hang out with them.
Access in Decision Making	
Individuals in Authority	No, I think that the teachers decide.
Lack of Effectiveness in Changes	[Student Voice] is just a waste of your time. You get a badge. You go to meetings. You talk about stuff but you never get anything done.
Intimidating	Because I think people look at you differently if you're part of that. They'll just be like "What are you doing that for? Why do you want to be on the [Student Voice]?"

4.3.1.3.4   Typical pupils

4.3.1.3.4.1   Subtheme 1: Behaviour Management

Typical pupils were the only group who praised the applied behaviour management and some explained that the implementation of the level-system made them aware of their behaviour, as it sets limits. In these people's view, pupils who misbehaved deserve to be punished as they

were not following the rules, and were disturbing others who were trying to learn. Finally, they accused the teachers of being inconsistent in their administration of punishments to pupils and complained about the special treatment misbehaving pupils received from them.

Table 4.36 Typical-Example Quotes for Subtheme I: *Behaviour Management*

Theme 1: School Ethos	
Subtheme I	**Behaviour Management**
Code	**Perceptions of Typical Pupils**
Behaviour Management	
	They actually manage it really good because they do these levels […] So then you know you are actually doing something wrong and so you change your behaviour. When they're bad, they send them outside. Yeah, that's what they do, and you carry on learning.
Consistency	
	Because you could be in class and get detention for talking, and the next day one person is talking and they don't get detention for it.
Fairness in Schools Rules	
Favouritism in Rewards	They usually pay more attention to the people who are usually bad, and if they do one thing good, they will give them a merit, but people who are usually always good don't get the merits.

4.3.1.3.4.2   Subtheme 2: Inclusivity

According to the insights of typical pupils, most of the attention of teachers was given to misbehaving pupils. Although they admitted that high achievers also capture attention, they explained that in many occasions someone could be neglected with the claim that "he is doing fine". In their view, those who were the most neglected were the quiet ones with average attainment. Typical pupils were the only group who acknowledged the positive effects of group work for their learning, and identified two main difficulties that hindered its implementation in class: (i) the necessity for all pupils to behave properly, and (ii) that it only worked if they were allocated to a good group. With regards to access to decision making pupils reported their limited role in taking decisions at school. Negative perspectives were also expressed about the Student Voice, where lack of effective changes, and fear of being intimidated for being obsequious towards school staff were the main reasons identified for being unwilling to take part.

Table 4.37 Typical — Example Quotes for Subtheme II: *Inclusivity*

Theme 1: School Ethos	
Subtheme II	**Inclusivity**
Code	**Perceptions of Typical Pupils**
Allocation of Teachers' Attention	
To Pupils with SEN	I feel like, for example in science, I'm really good, but then people that need help get more attention than me.
To High Achievers	There can be two sides to it. If you're really good, then they like you, but if you're really good as well, they kind of ignore you because they expect you to get on with the work [...].
To Quiet, Typical with Average Attainment	If you're really bad in the lesson, then the teacher will give you more attention. If you're one of the people that are really good, and you talk a lot, and you're also really good at work, then you also get attention. But if you're in the middle, like you don't put your hand up that much, and maybe you're not the best at the subject, you don't really get that much attention.
Group Work	
	I prefer it because you get to –you're not just sitting on your own. You get to hear other people's opinions and views on whatever you're doing. It kind of gives you more ideas, in a way -say if you're doing an essay, it gives you more ideas of your own and give them idea. It's kind of like helps each other out. Some of the groups we're in they don't do any work. So, it depends on the groups they usually put us.
Access in Decision Making	
Student Voice	
Lack of Productive Changes	I think it's stupid. They don't do anything. They just ask you questions, and then when you answer it, in like five months, they still haven't done anything about it.
Intimidating	I feel like it can be seen as well as uncool like if you're a representative, you're a bit of a loser. It's seen as a teacher's pet thing, and –I don't think it's stupid to be honest, because it does look better on your CV or whatever you want to decide, but say some people do have it, they'll be like "Oh my god."

4.3.1.4 Synopsis of Ethos — among Different Groups of Pupils

▪ Pupils identified as having SEMH reported the ineffectiveness of the applied behaviour strategies to teach them what appropriate behaviour was and accused the teachers of labelling as well as discriminatory behaviour against them. Whilst they characterised their received support from teachers as satisfactory, they expressed their preference to be educated in smaller classes. Difficulty in controlling themselves, and socialising with other peers were the main reasons reported for failing to participate in group work, while lack of confidence was the main reason expressed for not taking part in Student Voice.

- Pupils identified as having MLD criticised teachers for excluding misbehaving pupils on the one hand, and displaying favouritism towards high achievers, on the other. According to them, those behaving badly and high achievers received more teachers' support. Group work was often seen as providing opportunities to socialise with other peers, and whilst they expressed a lack of confidence in taking part in Student Voice, they believed that their opinions were listened to.

- Contradictory views about behaviour management was expressed by pupils who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ total difficulties scale, with some reporting that teachers were harsher than they should be towards misbehaving pupils, and others stating that they were too lenient. In their view, most of the attention of the teachers was paid towards those who behaved badly and those with learning difficulties, and to a lesser extent, to high achievers. Difficulty in socialising with others was the main reason reported for not liking group work, while fear of not being intimidated by others for acting like a teacher's pet was the main reason for avoiding taking part in Student Voice.

- Typical pupils were the only ones supporting the effectiveness of behaviour strategies, and criticised teachers for displaying favouritism towards misbehaving pupils. They expressed the view that high achievers along with those misbehaving were more likely to attract the attention of teachers in class, while quiet pupils with average attainment were more likely to be neglected. Typical pupils were the only ones found to value the importance of group work for their learning.

4.3.2   Theme 2: Belonging to School as an Institution

The theme *Belonging to school as an Institution* is concerned with the reflections of pupils with regards to how well they fit within the school they attend. The preferences and the challenges that secondary pupils encounter at school are reflected in the subthemes *Reasons for Liking* and *Reasons for not Liking* School while, the reasons influencing pupils *to Express their Opinion* in class, and *Take Part in Activities* were also explored as separate subthemes. Finally, the motives for which secondary pupils consider school as important for their lives are presented in the subtheme *Importance of School*.

Figure 4.5 Thematic Map of Belonging to an Institution
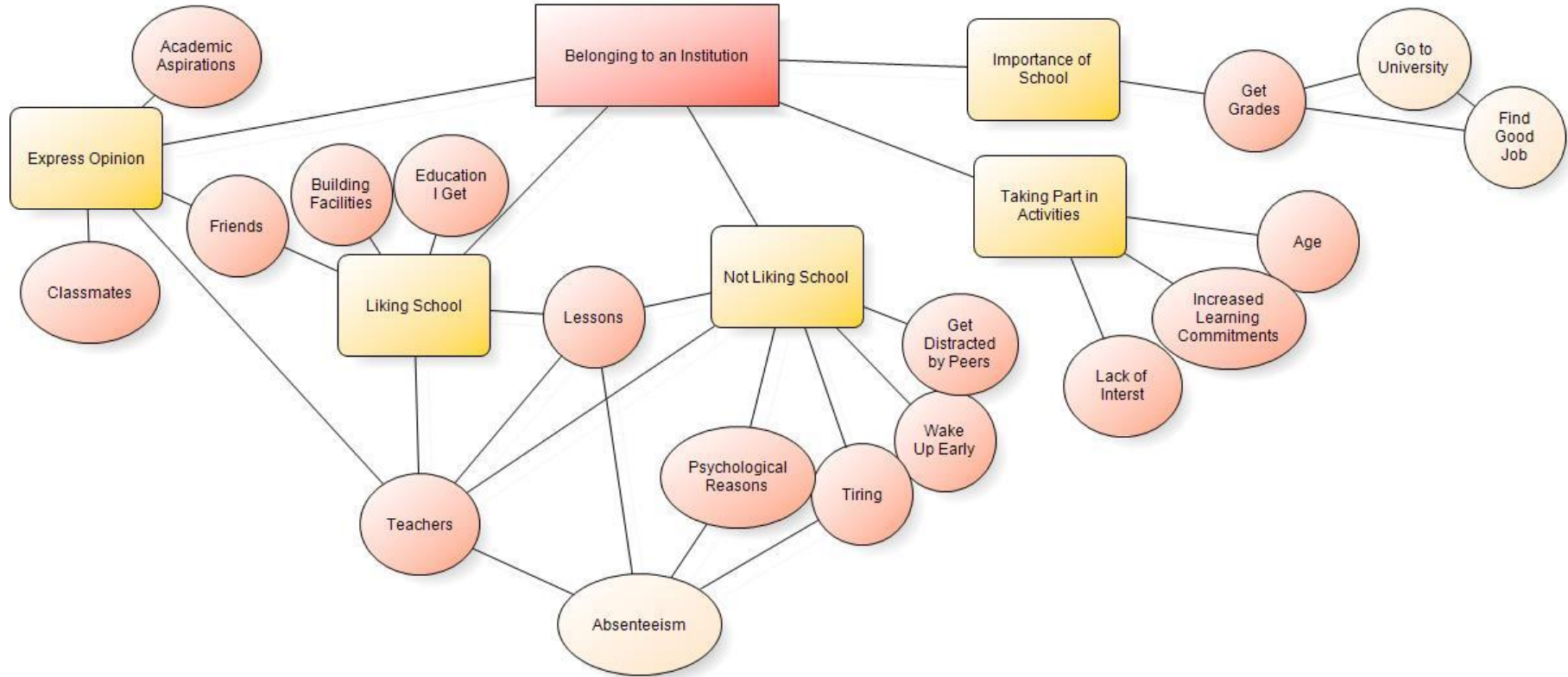
4.3.2.1 Belonging to School as an Institution between Settings

4.3.2.1.1 School 1

All pupils in School 1, independently of their SEN status or type of need, were found to value the education they received at school and having a better life in the future was one of the main reasons for feeling this way. Socialising with friends, as well as the building facilities offered were other positive things they felt about the school. However, poor relations with teachers was a negative aspect reported by all pupils and particularly those identified as having SEMH. "Boring" lessons and the obligation of waking up early every day to go to school were some additional reasons reported for not liking school.

Among the reported reasons that stimulated pupils to express their opinion in class were their willingness to let teachers know that they were interested in the lesson, which was mainly expressed by typical pupils. Bullying by peers was one of the main reasons found that prevented pupils identified as having SEN voicing their opinion in class. Participation in extracurricular school activities was also limited among pupils and their desire to take part decreased with age when studying took priority. All pupils considered school to be very important for their lives as by getting good grades they would have better job opportunities and a better quality of life in adulthood.

Table 4.38 School 1 — Example Quotes for Theme 2: *Belonging to an Institution*

Theme 2: Belonging to an Institution	
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils Attending School 1**
Reasons for Liking School	
Received Education	So, I can get education, and so I can be who I want to be when I'm older.
Friends	And why I also like school is because I have my friends here.
Building Facilities	The library.
Reasons for not Liking School	
Boring lessons	Sometimes it's boring, and it's not useful for when I'm older. The lessons are fun when they teach us stuff that we'll need when we are older…like what mortgages are, how to keep a house and house duties, stuff like that.
Tiring/Wake up Early	So, I don't mind school, but you know, sometimes, to wake up in the mornings to do homework, it can be a bit tiring, so I get stressed, but I don't hate school.
Teachers	I just, I'm just not into the teachers […] Because a lot of teachers think they can tell you what to do. Even if they're wrong, they still try to tell you what to do.
Express Opinion	
Show Interest	Because I want the teacher to learn that I know what I'm doing.
Relations with Peers	I am really shy to raise my hand because I don't want –I'm scared in case the people in the class might think of me, might say, "Oh she's really stupid, she doesn't understand anything," so I'm really nervous about what people may think if I put my hand up. I only really put my hand up if I'm sure my answer is correct or if I want to know something.
Take Part in Activities	
Age	It does. I used to go to chess club, I think. It was in this school but I thought it was year seven.
Increased Learning Commitments	Because I'm more focused on my learning than activities.
Importance of School	
Find a better job	I feel school is good for life. Everyone has to go to school, have to work hard, and participate, […] get high grades so you can get a good jobs in the future.

4.3.2.1.2 School 2

All pupils attending School 2 were also found to praise the education they received. In particular, one of the most important reasons for liking school was reported to be those lessons for which interactive teaching strategies were adopted by the teachers. A link was also identified between pupils' preference for specific subjects and teaching strategies used in lessons. Socialising with their friends, particularly having friends with the same cultural background, meeting new people, as well as the building facilities offered, were some additional reasons reported for liking school, as expressed by almost all pupils independently of their SEN status or type of need.

Conversely, "boring" lessons, defined as the ones where didactic teaching was used, was identified to be one of the main reasons reported by all pupils for not liking school. "Boring" lessons were also linked with difficulty in learning for pupils identified as having MLD, while being tired and desire for absenteeism for those identified as having SEMH. Misbehaving pupils who distracted them from their learning was another reason reported from pupils for not liking school, to such an extent that one pupil suggested the division of forms into misbehaving and well-behaved pupils. Most of the pupils attending School 2, reported their willingness to express their opinion in class, for two main reasons: i) to exchange ideas and ii) to share opinions with other peers, thus revealing the existence of a friendly atmosphere. Almost all pupils attending School 2 admitted that it was very important for their lives, because if they achieved good grades, they would have the opportunity to go to university and have better job prospects.

Table 4.39 School 2-Example Quotes for Theme 2: *Belonging to an Institution*

Theme 2: Belonging to an Institution	
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils Attending School 2**
Reasons for Liking School	
Received Education	I Like education as a whole.
Funny Lessons	Like doing group work, making presentations, doing research, makes the lesson fun.
Preference on a Lesson-Teaching	My maths teacher. We play games at the start of the lesson, and P.E. teacher, we play games and he makes us laugh.
Strategies Used	He is an English teacher and he is always making lessons fun and using examples […] he literally drew in what we're doing, like right now we're doing Mac Beth […] he's making facts about Shakespeare, and making us feel more knowledgeable about the whole thing.
Building Facilities	The building is nice.
Meet New People	You get to meet new people.
Friends	But it's also nice to talk to your friends and meet your friends.
Friends-Culture	I'm Asian. This school has a lot of Asians, so I feel I belong. If you're in the same culture, you understand people better.
Reasons for Not Like School	
Boring Lessons	
Lack of Fun Activities	A bad lesson is when we're doing boring work all the time and we don't have time to communicate or do fun activities.
Absenteeism	Sometimes, when I've got boring lessons, I'd rather stay at home than come to school.
Difficulty to Learn	It's hard to learn if you're just getting told information. You have to make it a bit more interactive.
Disturbing Pupils-Affect Learning	The children, they talk a bit too much and I can't learn. […] All the badly behaved people can be in one class, so if they don't really care about learning, they shouldn't be allowed to affect other people.
Tiring	Long hours, you have to stay for a lot and it's really tiring to go to school every day.
Express Opinion	
Academic Progress	Because I think some other people's opinion or my opinion are interesting.
Relations with Friends	Let's say when I'm comfortable with the class, then I will speak up — let's say if in the class, it's mainly my friends or people that I don't mind speaking or saying wrong answers, but if it's with the loud pupils who are in the class, then I just stay quiet.
Importance of school	
	Because you need an education to get somewhere in life, get grades. And I obviously want to go to university.

4.3.2.1.3   School 3

Pupils attending School 3 also laid emphasis on education, and reported that the use of interactive teaching methods made lessons more fun and less boring. According to their perspectives, some of the reasons that they did not like school were "boring" lessons, which they defined as those that last a long time and those for which a large volume of homework was given. Another reported reason for not liking school, was found to be misbehaving pupils, who distracted them from learning and stopped them enjoying the lesson. Being in a bad mood, attending "boring" lessons, and being tired at school due to the length of the school day were some of the reasons reported by pupils identified as having SEMH for not liking school, but also links to their desire to be absent from school.

The main incentive reported for pupils willing to voice their opinion was academic engagement. Participating in classroom was reported to provide them with the opportunity to receive or provide feedback from teachers, make academic progress and show interest in the lesson. However, poor social relations at school was found to be associated with the lack of willingness of pupils to express themselves in class. In particular, some of the reasons that held them back were fear of being mocked by peers either for making a mistake or expressing a different opinion as well as being ignored by teachers. A link between desire for participation in after school activities and age was found. In particular, as the pupils got older their interest in participating waned. Finally, for the majority of pupils the importance of school was related to their entrance to university and better job opportunities in the future.

Table 4.40 School 3- Example Quotes for Theme 2: *Belonging to an Institution*

Theme 2: Belonging to an Institution	
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils Attending School 3**
Reasons for Liking School	
Funny Lessons	I like when I have a fun day. When I have enjoyable lessons that I don't get bored in.
Meet New People, Friends	I like school because I can talk to my friends. By meeting different people.
Building Facilities	At the gym, I have a locker.
Reasons for not Liking School	
Boring Lessons	That's when you get a lot of homework. When I have double lessons […].
Absenteeism	If I have double lessons […] I don't really like coming to school because it's boring.
Disturbing Pupils-Not Enjoy the Lesson	Because in art we were doing these masks that were really cool […] But because some people were messing around the teacher stopped it completely, and we've been doing pop art for the past two months which is really boring.
Tiring	Normally we would have a double, a double, and two singles, or two singles, double, double, it's so much quicker, the day goes faster. But when it's a single, single, single, it's just so long. It's tiring.
Wake Up Early	The worst about it is just having to wake up that much earlier just to get into school.
Psychological Mood-Absenteeism	When I'm in a bad mood I don't want to come to school because it won't change anything.
Express Opinion	
Academic Aspirations	I do like expressing my opinion because it shows what I think is right or what I care about in the class. I find by expressing my opinion the teachers found what you think of what you're doing, so they can improve on it.
Relations with Teachers	Sometimes, some teachers just don't listen to you and ignore you. Once there was a teacher who just ignored some of us when we asked for help, and there was this boy who just told […] in front of us […] that he didn't feel connected in the learning.
Relations with Peers	The people in it, if I say something or I have a different view, people just think, "that's weird, that's different, we don't like you, you're not equal. I don't want to get the answer wrong, it's kind of embarrassing so I don't like speaking in class unless the teacher makes me.
Take Part in Activities	
Age	I used to but I'm not really interested in them anymore because it's mainly the year sevens and year eights who are into that sort of thing. As you get older, you kind of don't care about it anymore, because there are other things that your priorities.
Importance of School	
University-Better Job	If you want to go to like sixth year and university […] so I think school is a big part.

4.3.2.2 Synopsis of Belonging—between Different School Settings

- All pupils across settings had consensually reported value for education as the main reason for liking school, followed by socialising with friends, and building facilities. All pupils independently of the school they attended, their SEN status and type of need acknowledged the importance of finishing school as an opportunity for a better life in the future.

- For pupils attending School 1, education was also seen as an opportunity to improve their life conditions in the future and thus it was highly valued. The main reasons for not liking school were found to be "boring" lessons, ones that were devoid of life skills, poor relations with teachers, and having to wake up early. A link was also found between the unwillingness of pupils to express their opinion and being bullied by their peers.

- Lessons where the teachers adopted interactive teaching strategies was one of the main reasons that pupils attending School 2 reported for liking school. Conversely, "boring" lessons described as the ones that involved didactic teaching strategies was reported to be the main reason by almost all pupils reported for not liking school. For those identified as having SEMH, "boring" lessons were also linked with their desire for absenteeism. Misbehaving pupils that distracted them from their learning was another reason reported. Finally, it was also found that the willingness of pupils attending School 2 to express their view came from their desire to exchange ideas and opinions with their peers in school.

- All pupils attending School 3 expressed their value for the received education especially when interactive teaching strategies were adopted in lesson delivery. For pupils identified as having SEMH, bad mood, being tired, and "boring" lessons —ones that last a long time and for which a large volume of homework was given—were some of the reasons reported for not liking school, and this was also linked with their desire for absenteeism. For the rest of the pupils, one of the reasons reported for not enjoying school was their misbehaving peers who disrupted their learning. Academic aspirations were found to be the only incentive why pupils wanted to express their opinion, but receiving bullying by peers or being ignored by teachers were some of the reasons for holding them back.

4.3.2.3 Belonging to an Institution among Groups of Pupils

Reasons for not enjoying school was the only subtheme where significant differences among groups of pupils were found.

4.3.2.3.1 Pupils Identified as Having SEMH

As most pupils identified as having SEMH voiced, one of the prevalent reasons for not liking school was their poor relations with teachers. As they explained, the ineffective way that teachers managed their behaviour along with their unfair way of allocating punishment, were some of the reported reasons that perpetuated their bad relations. Psychological reasons, poor relations with teachers, the obligation to wake up early, "boring" and long lasting lessons (e.g. double period) were some of the reasons reported by pupils for not liking school and linked with their desire for being absent.

Table 4.41 SEMH-Examples Quotes for Theme 2: *Belonging to an Institution*

Theme 2: Belonging to an Institution	
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils identified as having SEMH**
Reasons for Not Liking School	
Teachers	There's not even a reason, it's just that we don't get along", "the teachers here they are sometimes annoying".
Teachers-Unfair treatment	The teachers say they treat their pupils all fair, but they don't.
Teachers-Absenteeism	I don't like coming to school because sometimes it's the teachers. Sometimes there's some of these teachers that you don't like, and if I'm in a bad mood, like angry or upset or something like that, I don't like coming to school because then it's just going to be work, work, work, and no one is going to ask you, "Are you okay?" or anything, because they say that school is coming for learning so this frustration that you get, you have to leave it outside the classroom.
Psychological Reasons-Absenteeism	When I'm in a bad mood, that's when I don't want to come to school.
Tiring-Boring-Absenteeism	If I have double lessons I don't really enjoy then I don't really feel like coming to school because it's boring.

4.3.2.3.2   Pupils Identified as Having MLD

One of the reasons pupils identified as having MLD reported for not liking school was being distracted by misbehaving peers, who negatively influence their progress. Another was the limited support they received from teachers, as according to their reports most of the attention of teachers was given to pupils who behaved badly.

Table 4.42 MLD-Examples Quotes for Theme 2: *Belonging to an Institution*

Theme 2: Belonging to an Institution	
Code	Perceptions of Pupils with Perceptions of Pupils with
Reasons for Not Liking School	
Get Distracted by Peers	The children, they talk a bit too much and I can't learn.
Limited Support Provided	There's a couple, like Maths and Science, where the teachers are always tending to the bad people so you don't get really to learn as much because it's only 50 minutes a lesson […] it sort of shortens the time for the people that want to learn and get on with the work.

4.3.2.3.3   "Abnormal" Pupils (SDQ terminology, Based on the SDQ Difficulties Scale)

Most pupils who classified themselves as "abnormal" on the SDQ total difficulties scale reported "boring" lessons were the main reason for not liking school. Instead of the use of didactic teaching strategies that made the lesson "boring", and learning less effective, pupils suggested the use of more interactive teaching strategies as an alternative. The need for schools to provide life skills, instead of just academic education was also highlighted. As with pupils identified as having MLD, they also perceived the distraction of misbehaving pupils as an obstacle to their learning as well as an additional reason for not liking school. Finally, being tired was another reason mentioned.

Table 4.43 "Abnormal"-Examples Quotes for Theme 2: *Belonging to an Institution*

Theme 2: Belonging to an Institution	
Code	Perceptions of Pupils Scored as "Abnormal" in SDQ Total Difficulties
Reasons for Not Liking School	
Boring Lessons	I would suggest that more fun ways to learn rather than just boring lessons... It's hard to learn if you're just getting told information. You have to make it a bit more interactive.
Lessons-Life Skills	Just leave us alone and to teach us lessons that we really need when we're older.
Get distracted by Peers	If other people aren't paying attention to it and just being naughty and throwing stuff around, how are you going to stay concentrated? You know what I mean?
Tiring	Long hours, you have to stay for a lot and it's really tiring to go to school every day, and you don't get much time to yourself because you have to keep studying.

4.3.2.3.4   Typical Pupils

Finally, typical pupils, as registered in school reports, also cited "boring" lessons as one of the main reasons for not liking school. Specifically, they linked "boring" lessons with didactic teaching strategies, and fun lessons with interactive teaching approaches. Another reason for not liking school was found to be their poor relations with teachers.

Table 4.44 Typical-Examples Quotes for Theme 2: *Belonging to an Institution*

Theme 2: Belonging to an Institution	
Code	Perceptions of Typical Pupils
Reasons for Not Liking School	
Lessons	A bad lesson is when we're doing boring work all the time and we don't have time to communicate or do fun activities, because I, in my opinion, like doing group work or making presentations making the lesson fun.
Teachers	Just, I'm just not into the teachers. That's it.

4.3.2.4 Synopsis of Belonging—among Different Groups of Pupils

- All pupils independently of their SEN status and type of need reported interactive lessons as one of the main reasons for liking school.

- Among the reasons that pupils identified as having SEMH reported for not liking school, and being also associated with their desire for absenteeism were: i) their poor relations with teachers, ii) their psychological problems, iii) "boring" lessons and iv) a tiring schedule consisting of long lasting lessons, i.e. double periods.

- According to the perspectives of pupils identified as having MLD, the main reasons for not liking school were: the distraction of misbehaving peers during lessons and the limited support received from teachers.

- Pupils who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ total difficulties scale, reported "boring" lessons as the main reason for not liking school, which, according to their reports, also negatively affected their learning. Distractions by their misbehaving peers and tiredness were some additional reasons found for not enjoying school.

- Finally, typical pupils reported "boring" lessons and bad relations with teachers.

4.3.3   Theme 3: Social Relations

This theme focuses on the social relations of pupils with other individuals at school and the subthemes are presented in Figure 4.6 below. It involves exploring the perceived relations of pupils with their *Teachers, Teaching Assistants*, and *Peers*. Three subthemes that appear to explain the reasons influencing pupil-to-teacher relations at school emerged, namely, teachers' personality, the way teachers taught, and the way they managed pupils' behaviour. Relations with peers is explained by focusing on two emergent subthemes: friendships and bullying incidences experienced by pupils. No significant differences were found in relations with TAs among the schools and hence, no reference will be made in the following comparison between settings. However, the results between different groups of pupils are presented in the relevant subsection.

Figure 4.6 Thematic Map of Pupils' Social Relations
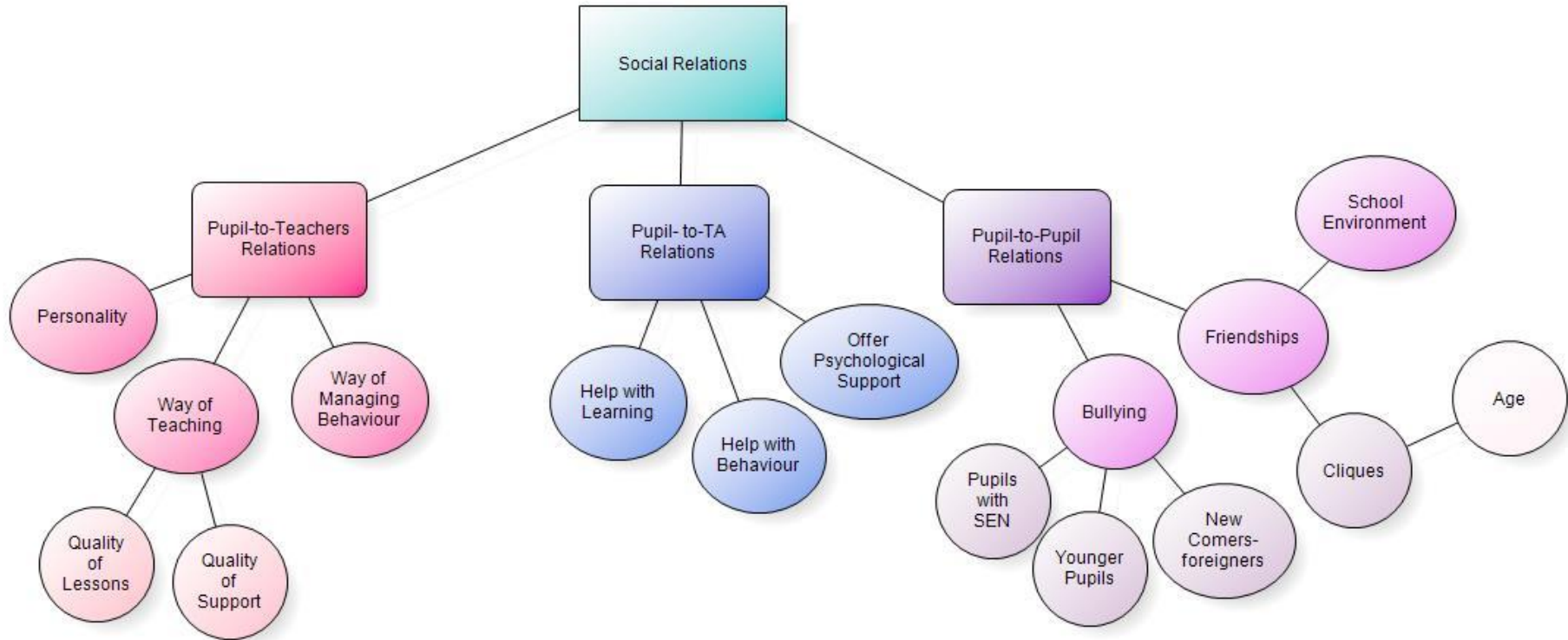
4.3.3.1 Social Relations between School Settings

4.3.3.1.1 School 1

4.3.3.1.1.1 Relations with Teachers

Overall, most of the pupils attending School 1 expressed their disappointment about their perceived relations with teachers. According to the insights of pupils identified as having SEMH, the main thorn in their relationship was found to be the ineffective strategies used by teachers to manage their behaviour. Two approaches were highlighted. Firstly, the irresponsible way teachers allocated punishments i.e. punishing at random without being certain who was really at fault, and secondly, the teachers' reluctance to listen to their individual point of view. As some pupils explained, it was their inability to defend themselves that made them often overreact towards teachers. Some of the pupils reported their seething hatred, others showed a willingness to argue, whereas some even stated that physical harassment may occur towards teachers. Conversely, the pupils who expressed more positive feelings towards their teachers were those who liked the teachers' personality. Two characteristics that pupils reported as praising strongly in teachers were approachability and compassion.

Table 4.45 School 1 Example Quotes for Subtheme I: *Relations with Teachers*

Theme 3: Social Relations	
Subtheme I	**Relations with Teachers**
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils Attending School 1**
Way of Managing Behaviour	
Unfair Blame	The teachers […] they need to start making sure they are correct before they start to tell people. The majority of the time, they don't know who it is to blame for, and sometimes you get accused for things you're not responsible for.
Bad Reactions	I hate them, but I think if from the beginning they didn't lie and were more supportive and willing to listen to my side before making, jumping to conclusions, then maybe I would like them more.
	Because some of the pupils, […] they'll get angry at the teachers and they'll start swearing. The teacher is trying to assert after they hit them, and then they'll start punching the teacher.
Personality	
	You can joke around with them. They make conversation, they want to know about our personality.

4.3.3.1.1.2   Relations with Pupils

School 1 appeared to be a school that tried to foster a caring and friendly atmosphere among its pupils, "*Because this school always says, 'We all learn as a family, a whole family, and we feel safe'.*" Bullying was also found to be discouraged, through assemblies that were specifically aimed at raising pupils' awareness about the way victims felt. Videos of pupils who had experienced bullying at school were used as a strategy to sensitise them. However, whilst for some pupils, making friendships at school was found to be relatively easy, for others, most of whom had been identified as having SEN, social interactions with peers appeared to be more problematic. For instance, there were many pupils identified as having SEN who reported having experienced name calling, other disparaging remarks and fights. A link was also found between feelings of being unsafe in the school environment and reluctance in forming friendships at school for fear of being negatively influenced by delinquent peers.

Table 4.46 School 1 Example Quotes for Subtheme II: *Relations with Pupils*

Theme 3: Social Relations	
Subtheme	**Relations with Pupils**
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils Attending School 1**
Friendships	
	Yes, I think everyone has friends because people are brilliant.
	It's easy, it's quite easy.
Bullying	
	Sometimes it's hard to make friends […] they get annoying when they start bullying you and frighten you about something. I don't feel comfortable to talk to them, because they're going to start swearing at me […] I got beat up […] so that's why I said school is not actually good.
School Environment-Friendships	There are sometimes places there are no teachers, so anything can just happen around campus…it's hard to make friends […] well some people have negative thinking, and if you have them as friends, they might be thinking negative about you […] so, I don't have friends.

4.3.3.1.2 School 2

4.3.3.1.2.1 Relations with Teachers

In School 2, pupils reported to have overall better relations with teachers, though there were some who expressed a different opinion. Three reasons were reported by pupils as influencing their perceived relations with teachers at school: 1) the personality of a teacher, ii) the method of teaching, and iii) the behaviour strategies used to manage misbehaviour in class. Regarding the matter of personality, pupils attending School 2 reported having trustworthy relationships with their teachers, and acknowledged those who respected their privacy. In class, they reported as liking teachers who taught in a fun way, by using interactive teaching strategies that motivated them to learn more. In addition, positive perspectives were also expressed about the quality of the support they received from teachers, with almost all appearing to be satisfied. With reference to behaviour management, pupils admitted that they liked teachers who knew how to handle a class by distinguishing when to have fun and when to set boundaries. However, they expressed their disapproval of teachers who tried to impose strictness on a class. They also reported their dislike of those teachers who behaved badly towards them and who showed a lack of compassion.

Table 4.47 School 2 Example Quotes Subtheme I: *Relations with Teachers*

Theme 3: Social Relations	
Subtheme I	Relations with Teachers
Code	Perceptions of Pupils Attending School 2
Personality	
Caring	She's always there, and if there's a problem you can speak to her.
	When I have something bad happening or good happening she respects it…she doesn't need me to tell her. She doesn't force me like other teachers.
Indifferent	They always shout their anger off. I think a lot of teachers don't understand pupils and they don't really get along well with them.
Way of Teaching	
Quality of Lessons	I like my math teacher. She does fun lessons. We play games at the start of the lesson. I like those who] teach in a different way, so you learn better. They are more energetic and have different approaches to teaching.
Quality of Support	If I'm stuck on work or anything like that, they'll help me.
	If you have a problem she will ask, well every teacher does that, but she is really kind.

Way of Managing Behaviour	
Positive Perspective	I guess a good teacher to me is someone that can manage a class correctly [...] they are strict and they get everyone to do work, and they have their moments when they're serious and they have their moments when they're funny, and they know when to do it.
Negative Perspective	She'll give you like an hour detention or something. She's really, really strict. Everyone just hates her.

4.3.3.1.2.2 Relations with Pupils

In School 2, the majority of typical pupils and those identified as having SEN, reported as having trustworthy friendships in general, many of which consisted of groups of three or more. However, there were some groups of pupils who said that they had difficulties forming intimate relations with peers, among which were pupils identified as having SEN, girls and new pupils. As some girls explained, being part of a friendship group did not always mean that all members were close, trusted one another or shared all secrets. Interestingly, whilst pupils identified as having SEN were found to have overall good relationships with peers, problems in making friendships were mainly reported for new pupils, especially foreign ones. With regards to new pupils and especially foreigners, the interview data revealed that some of those pupils experienced racism due to their difficulties in speaking English. An additional reason that was found to prevent new pupils from making friends easily, especially those being in the older year groups, were the pre-existing friendships between peers, which some called cliques.

Table 4.48 School 2 Example Quotes Subtheme II: *Relations with Peers*

Theme 3: Social Relations	
Subtheme II	Relations with Peers
Code	Perceptions of Pupils Attending School 2
Friendships	
Small number of friends	I have like three from here that I can trust.
	Everyone tells secrets, and then they tell secrets back, it's like a group, friendship group, so I can trust all of them.
Girl Friendships-Reserved on trust	Because is where you have like tons of people, and you can tell someone something, even if they are your close friend […] it might spread so I'm really cautious as to what I will say to someone, because if I say something really personal, I don't want everyone to know about, so I'd rather just keep it to myself.
Cliques	Say someone joined now this late, and all of us have known each other for like four years, it's going to be harder for someone new to actually engage, because everyone at this stage has their own friendships…I guess there are certain people that would accept that they're new, and bring them into their group and actually be nice and help them.
Bullying	
	People bullying each other on the Internet and getting brought into school, and fighting over stupid stuff. […] People think it's just easier to bully someone, I don't know why…
Bullying of foreigners	If they're from abroad, people in our school they wouldn't treat them equally, as a normal British person. For example, if a Saudi or Romanian came to our school, our pupils would bully them and say, "Oh you freshy!" or "You illegal immigrant!". If you don't speak English it's hard for you to communicate with other people…because when you start talking they might talk back to you but if you… they don't understand, it's quite hard.

4.3.3.1.3 School 3

4.3.3.1.3.1 Relations with Teachers

Pupils attending School 3 expressed mixed feelings about their relations with teachers. According to their descriptions, there were teachers to whom they felt really close, and others that they could not even bear to look at due to their personality. Positive perspectives were expressed regarding those teachers who were funny and taught in an interesting way, as well as those who could control those misbehaving in class. On the other hand, many pupils expressed their aversion towards teachers who were angry all the

time and tried to keep them strictly under control. From their point of view, having extremely strict teachers was discouraging, rather than encouraging for their learning. Another reason why most pupils identified as having SEN expressed their disappointment, was the limited support they received from teachers at school.

Table 4.49 School 3 Example Quotes for Subtheme I: *Relations with Teachers*

Theme 3: Social Relations	
Subtheme	Relations with Teachers
Code	Perceptions of Pupils Attending School 3
Personality	
	I like teachers that when you're talking to them, they don't make you feel awkward. You can have a joke with and laugh whenever you see them, you can sort of mess around, but then other teachers…you look down whenever you see them, they're sort of scary.
Way of Teaching	
Quality of Lessons	They're funny and they make learning easier, they don't make it strict, they make it easy for you to learn by having little bits of fun in it.
Quality of Support	I like the teachers that explain the work well so you know what you're doing. Part of being a teacher is to help you how to learn, they don't help you how to learn.
Way of Managing Behaviour	
	My old P.E. teacher, she was really nice, because she wasn't so relaxed with us that we could all go over to her, but she wasn't really strict so she was nice to us. There's this teacher, she's sort of -she always tells people off for no reason…She's always angry and miserable, and it seems that she takes her anger out on pupils all the time, so she's not really a nice teacher. No one really likes her.

4.3.3.1.3.2 Relations with Pupils

Negative perspectives about their relations with peers were also reported among pupils attending School 3. According to their accounts, they appeared to be divided into small cliques, regarding which, after they were formed, no one was able either to leave or be included in them. Friendly relationships among girls were also reported to be problematic. In addition, harassment from older pupils towards younger ones, and from typical towards pupils identified as having SEN, were reported. The only pupils who were able to make new friendships at school and change membership of a group, were those who were in

the youngest year groups (i.e. Year 7). As these pupils explained, during that period it was easier for someone who was not satisfied with their friends to change group, and make new ones, since cliques were not yet well established and pupils were open to meeting new people. However, as pupils moved on to higher year groups cliques would start to become established, a fact that made it even more difficult for a new pupil to adjust and make new friends at school. Finally, whilst the majority of pupils identified as having SEN reported having a few close friends at school, there were some of them who admitted that making friends was really hard especially at the beginning, as they had to force themselves to change in order to become more likable.

Table 4.50 School 3 Example Quotes for Subtheme II: *Relations with Peers*

Theme 3: Social Relations	
Subtheme II	**Relations with Peers**
Codes	**Perceptions of Pupils Attending School 3**
Friendships	
Cliques	It's not like it was in the old days when you could go just up to someone and say "Hi" and you're automatically friends […] When you're in year seven, no one knows each other so everyone talks to each other and then you have the groups and once you set in your groups, that's it. No one goes out of their groups. If you argue with your group, don't hang out with your group any more, you have to find another set of friends, have to go before the whole year seven thing ends. But now, where as everyone is in their groups, no one wants to bring you into their groups since people don't really like changes.
Cliques-Age	I think it was okay at the start, but now everyone has kind of got their friend groups all sorted out. I think it's much more difficult if you were to join now…because there was a boy who joined just before we had two weeks off, but the year nines –he was year nine- the year nines kept not really playing with him, and he wouldn't really fit in with them, so we let him come and play football with us, and he's started playing with us now.
Girl Friendships	They'll be really nice to them in their face but then afterwards, they'll be like, "oh, she's so annoying," or something like that. That's a big thing between girls here so you sort have to be careful who you're friends with.
Negative Perspectives	I'd rather be able to talk to everyone instead of there being just like this imaginary line between everyone.
Bullying	
Between older-younger pupils	But outside of the year, when there's year tens and elevens when you walk past them, they're quite intimidating, because they say stuff at you sometimes.

	We find year sevens annoying because they're in the way. When you're in year nine, year ten, year eleven, we don't really- we just respect towards each other. Is just friends.
Between typical and pupils with SEN	I found it difficult to make friends
	I was a bit too shy…Just too shy to make friends.
	At first they just ignored me, wandered off, they just didn't listen to me, and then afterwards, in year nine and year ten they became friends with me.

4.3.3.2 Synopsis of Social Relations—between Different School Settings

▪ Pupils attending School 1 reported as having the most problematic relations with teachers. Two main reasons were found: 1) teachers' unfair way of punishment, and 2) unwillingness to listen to individual pupils' views, thus resulting in them having bad reactions towards them. Those identified as having SEN reported the greatest difficulty in forming intimate relations with their peers. An association was also found between pupils' feelings of being in an unsafe environment, and their reluctance to make friends.

▪ Pupils attending School 2, on the other hand, said that they generally had good relations with teachers, but there were some exceptions. In particular, they expressed preference for those teachers who were trustworthy, provided them with enough support, adopted interactive teaching strategies and were able to control the class. Their perceived relations with peers were reported as mainly positive, but there were two underlying problems mentioned: 1) racism towards foreigners who could not communicate in English; and 2) difficulties for new pupils in older classes to make friendships due to pre-existing cliques.

▪ Finally, pupils attending School 3 were reported to have mixed feelings towards their teachers. They liked those who used interactive teaching strategies, and knew how to control a class. On the other hand, they disliked those who treated them harshly and did not provide them with enough support. According to some pupils, their relations with peers were perceived to be quite challenging, as there was harassment by the older pupils to younger ones, and negative attitudes towards those identified as having SEN. Relationships among girls were also reported to be challenging. One of the main hindrances reported was with regards to cliquish exclusive friendship groups that refused to accept new members as they progressed through the school years.

4.3.3.3 Social Relations among Groups of Pupils

4.3.3.3.1 SEMH

4.3.3.3.1.1 Relations with Teachers

Pupils identified as having SEMH were found to have good relations with those teachers who had fun, taught in a way that enabled them to learn, and who had the skills to manage their misbehaviour tactfully. Conversely, negative perspectives were expressed about those teachers who lacked compassion about their feelings and who mainly focused on their academic attainment. In class, they heavily criticised the teaching methods applied by some teachers who ignored their individual needs, fail to provide them with second chances and did not give them enough time to complete the work, or process information. Finally, negative views were expressed about those teachers who were unable to control a class.

Table 4.51 SEMH Example Quotes for Subtheme I: *Relations with Teachers*

Theme 3: Social Relations	
Subthemes I	**Relations with Teachers**
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils Attending School 1**
Way of Teaching	
Positive Perspective	They explain it. They break it down so then I understand what they're saying.
Negative Perspective	It would be better if they give me a second chance to think about it and come back to me.
	Basically, they'll tell us to do one thing, then a minute after they'll tell us to do another thing, and then when they check our book and ask, "Have you finished the first thing?" and if you say, "no because I haven't been able to because you gave us a little bit of time", and then they'll give you a detention. That's happened to me, but I never went to my detention.
Way of Managing Behaviour	
Positive Perspective	He is a good teacher and he teaches you just right. You have fun and games sometimes, but sometimes he tells you when to stop. You know when to stop. He's just a fun teacher.
Negative Perspective	So, a bad teacher is just someone who can't control the class. I guess it just comes more with the experience. If you have less experience, you're still working out how you're going to control the class and how you're going to teach. If you have more experience, you're going to know how pupils are going to act, because you've done it for a long time.

Social Relations-Absenteeism	Sometimes there's some of those teachers that you don't like, and if I'm in a bad mood, like angry or upset or something like that, I don't like coming to school because then it's just going to be work, work, work, and no one is going to ask you, "Are you okay?" or anything, because they say that school is coming for learning so this frustration that you get, you have to leave it outside the classroom.

4.3.3.3.1.2 Relations with Teaching Assistants

With reference to their perceived relations with TAs, pupils identified as having SEMH were those who expressed the most contrasting views. On the one hand, some expressed positive perspectives on the support they received with their work, on helping them to regain control of their behaviour as well as in providing them with psychological support. Whilst on the other hand, a few other pupils expressed their indirect resentment of not getting enough support and some even complained about the quality of help they received, depreciating the responsibilities that TAs have in class.

Table 4.52 SEMH Example Quotes Subtheme II-*Relations with TAs*

Theme 3: Social Relations	
Subtheme III	Relations with Teaching Assistants
Code	Perceptions of Pupils Attending School 1
Help them with Learning	
Positive Perspective	If it was a teacher, then it has like thirty kids in the classroom and is not really watching everywhere, whereas a TA -because there's going to be two teachers in the classroom- is going to help you more, because you're putting your hand up and she or he sees you.
Negative Perspective	TAs are there only for a certain student or a certain amount of pupils, so you would just have to work with the teacher and you wouldn't want to interrupt them because they're working with someone else.
Negative Perspective	They can sometimes be a bit annoying, because when you don't need help they come over…
	They don't know what you're doing or what the teacher is teaching so it's kind of like you're teaching them.
	I think it's good but I don't see what she does. She just opens the door in the morning and lets us come into class, and she just signs our books. She doesn't really do anything.
Offer Psychological Support	

Caring	Because they are understanding, they listen, and if I need help with anything, they help me with the question, they're there if I have any trouble in school. They're like that. They're very supportive.
Help them with Behaviour	
	She is good, she helps a lot […] Especially when kids like me, I'm messing about or something, she helps me calm down or switches me places to sit by myself or away from people…

4.3.3.3.1.3 Relations with Peers

Pupils identified as having SEMH's perceptions of their peers were found to be generally negative with some reporting the bullying incidences they had experienced and the difficulties they encountered in forming relationships. Conversely, there were a few who expressed positive feelings about their relations with other peers at school.

Table 4.53 SEMH Example Quotes for Subtheme III-*Relations with Peers*

Theme 3: Social Relations	
Subtheme	**Relations with Peers**
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils with SEMH**
Bullying	
	Whenever you say something, someone always has to disagree. There are quite a lot of insults and people think that they're better than you, so it makes you feel quite nervous and upset.
	At first, they just ignored me, wandered off, they just didn't listen to me, and then afterwards, in year nine and year ten they became friends with me.
Friendships	
	[…] Mostly they have their own friends and that's it, they don't make any more. They just make like three friends.
	I just stay there, I don't play with friends…I'm like… I'm doing –I don't know how to say this but… My mom says half of the friends that I have they have a bad future, so I don't have friends just to talk to.

4.3.3.3.2   MLD

4.3.3.3.2.1   Relations with Teachers

According to pupils identified as having MLD, their perceived relations with teachers appeared to be generally positive. Good teachers were described as those who supported them in the lessons, were approachable to talk about things and who respected their privacy. They also praised those who were funny, and taught via interactive lessons. However, they expressed their dislike towards teachers who behaved badly towards pupils, and appeared to be ignorant of their feelings.

Table 4.54 MLD Example Quotes for Subtheme I-*Relations with Teachers*

Theme 3: Social Relations	
Subtheme I	**Relations with Teachers**
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils with MLD**
Personality	
Positive Perspective	It's a person that if you want to talk to him about something, he will be there.
	She will just speak to you calmly and sort it out and she won't tell anybody else.
Negative Perspective	She's always angry and miserable, and it seems that she takes her anger out on
	pupils all the time, so she's not really a nice teacher. No one really likes her.
Way of Teaching	
Quality of Teaching	Because they're funny and they make learning easier, they don't make it strict,
	they make it easy for you to learn by having little bits of fun in it.
Quality of Support	If I'm stuck on work or anything like that, they'll help me.
Way of Managing Behaviour	
	They're just shouting for no reason, and then sometimes they'll start calling me
	names, calling me, "oh, you're stupid."

4.3.3.3.2.2   Relations with Teaching Assistants

Pupils identified as having MLD reported generally positive relations with their TAs. They unanimously expressed their gratitude towards them for the educational support they provided, the encouragement to improve their behaviour, and their compassion when they had problems.

Table 4.55 MLD Example Quotes for Subtheme II-*Relations with TAs*

Theme 3: Social Relations	
Subtheme	Relations with Teaching Assistants
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils with MLD**
Help them with Learning	
	Sometimes, when I'm stuck at work, the assistant helps me
Help them with Behaviour	
	He helps me do the work and then so… I don't get detention and stuff.
Offer Psychological Support	
Caring	She's okay. I can tell her anything, but she says if I am at risk she has to tell other people, so I say okay. She's very supportive, but, yeah.

4.3.3.3.2.3 Relations with Peers

Pupils identified as having MLD were also reported to have close friendships at school. Developing new friendships, for some, was considered to be easy. However, not all pupils in this category shared the same experiences, for there were some who reported to be severely bullied due to their learning difficulties.

Table 4.56 MLD Example Quotes for Subtheme III: *Relations with Peers*

Theme 3: Social Relations	
Subtheme	Relations with Peers
Code	**Perceptions of Pupils with MLD**
Friendships	
	"Yeah, it's quite easy to get friends…Yeah, you just start speaking to them and they'll start speaking back, and then you're friends".
Bullying	
	People swear at me possibly because I'm different…when I came to class, and I start reading, people start passing me because I can't do the reading…then I get bullied, then I get sad because they're going to start swearing at me.

4.3.3.3.3 "Abnormal" Pupils (SDQ terminology, Based on SDQ difficulties)

4.3.3.3.3.1 Relations with Teachers

Contrasting views about their perceived relations with teachers were found among pupils who classified themselves as "abnormal" on the SDQ total difficulties scale. Pupils who expressed their positive views about their teachers reported a preference for those who showed an interest in their feelings, tried to meet their individual needs and who taught via interactive lessons. Pupils who held negative views about their teachers expressed their disappointment towards those who were ignorant of their feelings, lacked the ability to clearly explain the lesson, and who failed to meet their individual needs.

Table 4.57 "Abnormal" Example Quotes for Subtheme I: *Relations with Teachers*

Theme 3: Social Relations	
Subtheme I	**Relations with Teachers**
Code	**Perceptions of "Abnormal" Pupils**
Way of Teaching	
Quality of Teaching	They teach in a different way, so you learn better…Some teachers, they make you learn but you learn in more fun like activity ways and stuff.
Personality	
Positive Perspectives	If I'm annoyed and I walk into a class - I just wanted to go stand in the back so I didn't have to talk to people - and he was just like, "Yeah, all right then. That's fine," but a normal teacher would just be like "No, you're in class now. Do the work."
Negative Perspectives	I think a lot of teachers don't understand pupils and they don't really get along well with them. Some teachers in this school I honestly think are just mean for just extra, for the sake of being extra.
Way of Teaching	
Negative Perspective	Because they'll start teaching and never ask, and if anybody talks to them, they'll still report on them to the teacher, on their behaviour. [...] If you're naughty in class, then normally, when you fail, they're just like "Oh, you weren't listening, so I'm not helping you," when I was listening, I just don't understand it.

4.3.3.3.3.2   Relations with Teaching Assistants

All the pupils who classified themselves as "abnormal" declared that they had positive relations with their TAs. In particular, they praised the help they received from their TAs to such an extent that some even reported that the support they received from them transcended that of teachers.

Table 4.58 "Abnormal" Example Quotes for Subtheme II: *Relations with TAs*

Theme 3: Social Relations	
Subtheme	Relations with TAs
Code	Perceptions of Pupils
Help with Learning	
Help more than Teachers	I like some of them because they stand in the place where I normally sit and they'll just come up to me and say, "Are you all right?" and stuff, and then they normally help me.
	Are more helpful than the main teachers… The teachers do as well, but when TAs are in the room then they do more.
	I think they're quite good considering the teacher -it's just someone else they can just come and help you quickly.

4.3.3.3.3.3   Relations with Peers

Difficulty in social interactions with peer was expressed by some pupils who scored as "abnormal" on the SDQ total difficulties scale, often reporting bullying incidents with peers. However, there were quite a few who expressed that they had good friends at school.

Table 4.59 "Abnormal" Example Quotes for Subtheme II: *Relations with Peers*

Theme 3: Social Relations	
Subtheme	Relations with Peers
Code	Perceptions of "Abnormal"
Friendships	
	I would tell all my secrets to – because my friends, there's like nine, ten people, girls and everyone tells secrets, and then they tell secrets back, it's like a group, friendship group, so I can trust all of them.

	People's attitudes towards opinions, groups, and... I'd rather I'd be able to talk to everyone instead of there being just like this imaginary line between everyone.
Bullying	
	Because some people are smart asses so if I say something, you'll be laughed at or something, because you're not as smart as everyone else.

4.3.3.3.4 Typical

4.3.3.3.4.1 Relations with Teachers

Finally, most typical pupils reported positive relations with their teachers. In particular, they expressed a preference for those who were friendly, willing to discuss things, taught through interactive lessons, and were able to control the class without being heavy handed. Regarding those few pupils who expressed negative perspectives, they reported their dislike towards those teachers who were hostile, unfriendly, and who they thought were liars.

Table 4.60 Typical Example Quotes for Subtheme I: *Relations with Teachers*

Theme 3: Social Relations	
Subtheme	**Relations with Teachers**
Code	**Perceptions of Typical Pupils**
Personality	
Positive Perspective	You can be yourself around them, you don't have to be quiet or anything, you can just be you. That's the best teachers.
Negative Perspective	You look down whenever you see them because they're sort of scary.
	They just get so frustrated and start to argue all the time.
Way of Managing Behaviour	
Positive Perspective	She was really nice, because she wasn't so relaxed with us that we could all go over her, but she wasn't really strict so she was nice to us.
Negative Perspective	No one really messes around in his class.
Way of Teaching	
	But he literally drew in [on the board] what we're doing [...] he's making, getting facts about Shakespeare, for example, and making us feel more knowledgeable about the whole thing.

4.3.3.3.4.2　Relations with Peers

Typical pupils also reported generally positive views about their relations with peers. All typical pupils said they had trustworthy friends at school, and claimed that making new friendships was easy. The only problem that was mentioned was a tension in the relations between younger and older pupils. Other than that, they had not had any bad experiences, but some said they had witnessed bulling towards pupils with SEN.

Table 4.61 Typical Example Quotes for Subtheme III: *Relations with Peers*

Theme 3: Social Relations	
Subtheme	**Relations with Peers**
Code	**Perceptions of Typical Pupils**
Friendships	
	Just start a conversation with someone. Then, relate to this, talk about this, talk about that. Bam you've got yourself a friend".
Bullying	
Towards Pupils with SEN	They have stutters when they talk, because they have a speech impediment or something like that, they'll be laughing at them and mimicking a little bit.
Older towards Younger Pupils	But outside of the year, when there's year tens and elevens when you walk past them, they're quite intimidating, because they say stuff at you sometimes.

4.3.3.4　Synopsis of Social Relations—among Different Groups of Pupils

- The majority of pupils identified as having SEMH reported negative views about their perceived relations with their teachers, TAs and peers. In particular, most expressed their dislike towards teachers, especially those who were harsh with them, failing to meet their educational needs and most importantly, who could not manage their behaviour effectively. More contrasting views were expressed about their perceived relations with their TAs, with some praising their role in class, while others downplayed or even questioned their usefulness. Finally, most of these pupils expressed their difficulty in forming relations with peers, and said that they were often the victims of bullying.

- Conversely, insights of pupils identified as having MLD revealed generally more positive perceptions about their social relations at school. In particular, most expressed their satisfaction regarding their relations with teachers, with some expressing their preference towards those who provided them with enough

support, adopted interactive teaching methods to teach, and who respected their privacy. Their relations with their TAs were found to be in the main positive, as well as their perceived relations with peers, apart from a few exceptions where pupils reported having been victims of bullying.

- Pupils who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ total difficulties scale talked about having positive relations with their TAs, while mixed views were expressed with respect to their relations with teachers and peers, with few reporting their difficulty in making friends.

- Finally, typical pupils were the only group found to express unanimous positive relations with peers. With regards to their perceived relations with teachers, whilst the majority of them were content with these, there were a few who expressed great disappointment in them.

4.3.4   Summary of Interview Data

School Ethos

- Thematic analysis on the perceived behaviour management of pupils across settings revealed that School 1 and School 2 implemented more inclusive practices to control misbehaving pupils' behaviour, in comparison with School 3 which was found to implement more punitive practices, and thus appeared to be the "least" inclusive of all. Similar differences were also reported in relation to the perceived inclusivity of pupils attending School 1 where most of the educational support provided from teachers was reported to be given to badly behaved pupils, and those with learning difficulties, often at typical pupils' expenses. In School 3, attention was reported as being mainly given to high achievers at the expense of other groups of pupils, while School 2 was the only setting found to allocate support equally among pupils regardless of their SEN status or type of SEN.

- Differences in the perceived ethos were also revealed among different groups of pupils. In particular, typical pupils were found to praise the effectiveness of the applied behaviour strategies used by teachers to control misbehaviour in class. Pupils identified as having SEMH expressed their fierce opposition to these, as from their point of view those used were not only ineffective for tackling their

misbehaviour, but also inadequate for teaching them what appropriate behaviour was. In a similar vein, pupils identified as having MLD complained about teachers' exclusionary practice, and advocated the need for more alternative methods to be used. With regards to inclusivity, most groups of pupils reported that those who attracted most of teachers' attention in class were those who were displaying challenging behaviour, followed by high achievers and those with learning difficulties, while less or no attention at all was reported to be given to those who were quiet, typical and with average attainment.

▪ Contrasting perspectives among groups of pupils were also expressed with regards to group work. Pupils identified as having SEMH were those found to report most of the difficulties in taking part in group work due to their struggle to control their behaviour, and interact socially with others. Similar difficulties in working with unknown peers were also expressed by "abnormal" pupils. Pupils identified as having MLD were the only group found to perceive group work as an opportunity to socialise with other peers and typical pupils as an opportunity to improve their learning so long as there was no misbehaviour in class, or they were not allocated to a dysfunctional group.

▪ Finally, pupils from all groups consensually reported their limited access to decision making at school, with different reasons being given as to why they were unwilling to take part in Student Voice. Regarding which, for pupils identified as having SEMH, and MLD the main reason expressed was lack of confidence, while for typical and "abnormal" pupils fear of being treated in a disparaging way by other peers was reported as being the cause.

Sense of School Belonging

▪ All pupils across settings unanimously reported the education they were receiving as the main reason for liking school. Socialising with friends, meeting new people and provision of building facilities offered were some of the additional reasons mentioned. "Boring" lessons, on the other hand, were reported to be one of the most prevalent reasons for pupils across settings reporting that they not like about school. Exploration of the pupils' responses revealed significant differences in the perceived definition of "boring" lessons across settings. In particular, in School 1, "boring" lessons were said to be those devoid of life skills teaching, while in

School 3, it was those that lasted a long period of time and for large volumes of homework were given. In School 2, such lessons were perceived as being the ones where didactic teaching methods were used.

▪ Differences were also observed in the reasons given for pupils being willing to express their opinion among settings. In School 2, pupils reported that they expressed their opinions in order to share their views with their peers, in School 1 to show interest for the lesson, while in School 3, mainly to show academic aspirations e.g. gain feedback. Fear of being bullied by peers or being ignored by teachers were the most common reasons reported by pupils attending School 1 and 3 for being unwilling to express their opinion in class.

▪ All pupils across settings consensually expressed the significance of finishing school, but for School 1, education was solely perceived as a passport to better job opportunities and a better quality of life in the future. Conversely, for pupils attending Schools 2, and 3 the education being received was mainly associated with ambitions to go to university life, and thus have better career opportunities in adulthood.

▪ Differences among groups of pupils were identified with regards to what they did like about school. In particular, while pupils identified as having SEMH reported the main reason for not liking school was the ineffective way in which teachers managed their behaviour, those identified as having MLD reported that the main reasons were the limited support provided by teachers and having their learning distracted by misbehaving pupils. "Boring" lessons, being tired and having their learning distracted by misbehaving peers were some of the reasons expressed by "abnormal" pupils. Finally, "boring" lessons and poor relations with teachers were the main reasons that typical pupils reported for not liking school.

Social Relations

▪ Analysis of the interview data revealed significant differences in pupil-to-teacher relations, with pupils attending School 1 reporting the most negative perspectives about their perceived relations with teachers, mainly due to the unfair way that teachers attributed punishments among their peers. Mixed feelings about their perceived relations with teachers were expressed among pupils attending School

3, while pupils attending School 2 were reported to have the most positive relations of all. Regarding pupil-to-pupil relations, peer relationships were found to be problematic in School 3 due to the reported harassment by older ones to younger ones. In addition, it emerged that typical pupils were hostile to those identified as having SEN, and new pupils found it very difficult to form friendships due to pre-existing cliques. Among pupils attending School 1, those identified as having SEN encountered the greatest difficulty in forming intimate relations with peers. Finally, in School 2, most of the pupils identified as having SEN were reported to have generally positive relations with peers and it was the new foreigners with poor communication skills in English language who were the ones who found to have most difficulty in forming close relations with peers.

- Differences in their perceived social relations with teachers, TAs and peers were also expressed among different groups of pupils. The most negative perspectives about their social relations with these cohorts were reported by those pupils identified as having SEMH. Conversely, the majority of pupils identified as having MLD expressed positive views about their perceived relations, not only with their TAs, and teachers but also with their peers, apart from few exceptions. For pupils who classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ total difficulties scale, their relations with TAs were reported to be better than those with teachers, while they reported quite negatively regarding their perceived relations with peers. Finally, typical pupils were found to express positive relations with both peers and teachers, with a small number of exceptions to this.

In this chapter, the quantitative and qualitative findings of this study were presented. The discussion chapter which follows answers the research questions in relation to previous research and relevant literature.

Chapter Five

Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of the current study has been to examine whether a school with an inclusive ethos enhances the sense of school belonging and encourages the social relations with teachers, TAs and peers of pupils identified as having SEMH and MLD. To investigate pupils' voices, the researcher employed a sequential mixed methods approach using self-completed questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

The overall finding of this study is that a school with an inclusive ethos can, indeed, facilitate the sense of school belonging of pupils identified as having SEN and enable them to develop positive social relations. Specifically, the quantitative analysis has shown that School 2, among the three participating schools, scored the highest on pupils' perceived school ethos as well as receiving the highest score in the perceived sense of school belonging and social relations. In addition, the interview responses across the focal settings revealed that pupils attending School 2 described their perceived schooling experiences more positively than those attending School 1 and School 3. This finding was reinforced by the perceived views of the schools' educational psychologists.

It should be noted that the quantitative difference on the inclusive ethos between School 1 and School 2 was not statistically significant. However, the qualitative data did suggest that the ethos of School 2 was significantly more inclusive. This discrepancy can be explained by the difficulty in defining the term school ethos (e.g. Allder, 1993; Deal & Peterson, 1999; McLaughlin, 2005) and thus, being complex to be measured quantitatively. School ethos is not a tangible term - it is "the 'feeling' of the organisation" (Solvason, 2005, p. 85) - and consequently, the interview responses of pupils were able to uncover more distinct differences between the ethos of the school settings than the self-completed questionnaires.

To discuss further the findings and implications of this study Farrell's model (2004) of inclusion was employed. Farrell's model was chosen due to its practical relevance for schools as it could be used to audit their provision in relation to inclusion and then for forward planning. Drawing from the findings of the current study, Farrell's model is analysed and elaborated to indicate ways in which evaluation of inclusion and planning for further improvement could be facilitated.

As have previously mentioned in the Methodology chapter (see section 3.17, p. 117) Farrell argued that for a school to be "truly" inclusive all pupils, irrespective of their SEN status, ethnicity, social class or gender should: 1) be present at school by attending lessons in mainstream settings; 2) feel accepted and welcomed as equal members of the school community by both staff and pupils; 3) be active participants by contributing in all the school's activities; and 4) have a sense of achievement that is formed through learning and developing of positive views about themselves. According to Farrell, for inclusion to be achieved all four conditions, as presented in Figure 5.1, should apply to all pupils:

It is not […] sufficient for children to simply be present in a school. They need to be accepted by their peers and by staff, they need to participate in all the school's activities and they need to attain good levels of achievement in their work and behaviour. (p. 8–9, original emphasis)

Figure 5.1. Farrell's Four Conditions that Lead to Inclusion
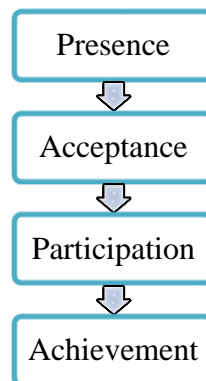
An elaboration of Farrell's model is presented in Figure 5.2.

The elaboration of the model of inclusion adopts the four conditions (i.e. presence, acceptance, participation, achievement) proposed by Farrell and builds on these, by placing emphasis on the processes that a school should follow in order to achieve inclusion, along with the outcomes that can be achieved following these processes. For an explanation of the new model, a brief reference to some of the findings of this study is made followed by an extensive discussion in the main analysis below.

Figure 5.2. New Proposed Model of Inclusion
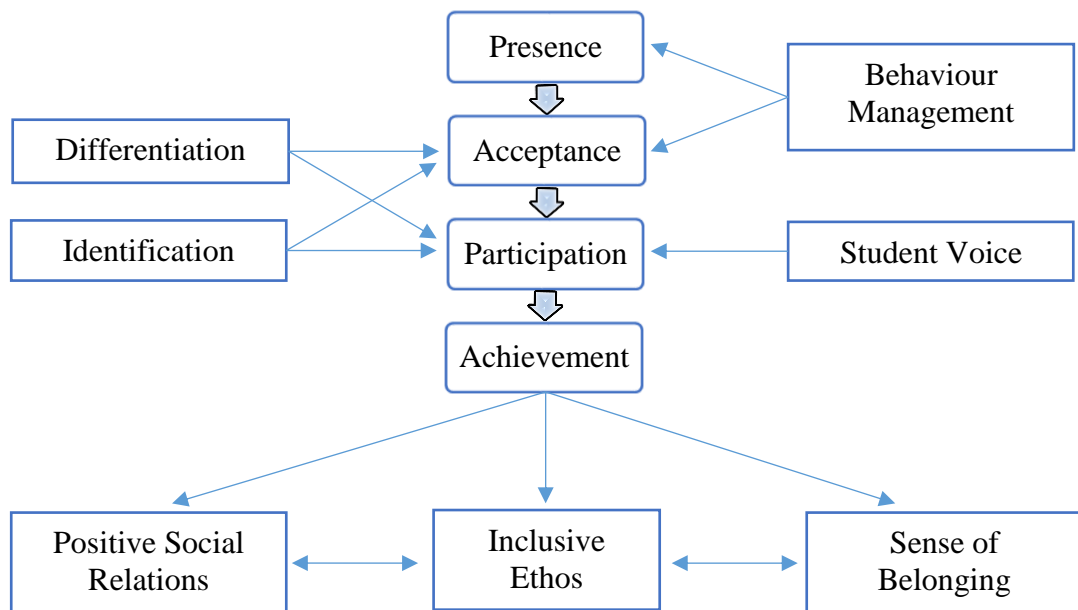
According to Farrell's model, presence is the first condition of inclusion. It is deemed necessary for mainstream settings to accept, provide education to and to retain pupils identified as having special educational needs (SEN) within the educational environment. Whilst all the three participating schools in the current study accepted a substantial percentage of pupils identified as having SEN, some were found to be less inclusive than others. This indicates that presence of pupils identified as having SEN within a mainstream setting, does not necessarily mean that the school is inclusive. It is also essential for the school to find ways to retain pupils within the educational environment by minimising its exclusions. One process that shields pupils identified as having SEN presence at school, as emerged from the qualitative data of this study, is the implementation of effective behaviour management strategies, such as consistency, clarity and fairness in the school rules (for further information see Figure 4.4, p.168).

The second condition of inclusion, as proposed by Farrell is, acceptance. For a pupil to be accepted, it is essential for the school to be both knowledgeable about his/her characteristics and individual needs as well as being aware of *how* to accommodate these. The research outcomes of the current study indicate accurate identification as one of the two main processes a school has to follow in order to meet the individual needs of pupils. The other process, as emerged from the qualitative data, is differentiation. This means that for a school to achieve acceptance, it is essential to identify accurately the individual

needs of pupils in order to be in the position of responding to their diversity by differentiating its educational practices and behaviour management strategies.

Accurate identification and differentiation are two processes that also facilitate the achievement of the third condition of inclusion, which according to Farrell, is Participation. One process that schools employ to involve pupils' active involvement in school decision making is Student Voice. Qualitative data of the current study indicate that one of the main reasons that pupils identified as having SEN reported their unwillingness to put themselves forward as representatives for Student Voice was lack of confidence, for example, they were required to stand and talk in front of an audience (for further information see Figure 4.4, p.168). This suggests the ineffectiveness of the applied mechanisms used in Student Voice to address the individual needs of pupils successfully. It highlights importance of applying accurate identification and differentiation processes to accommodate for pupils' needs better, as well as to facilitate their participation in school decision making through the implementation of more efficient mechanisms.

Fulfilment of the first three conditions in Farrell's model, results in the accomplishment of the final condition, namely, achievement. The outcome that can be produced from the effective implementation of the processes mentioned above is a school with an inclusive ethos that accommodates the individual needs of all pupils and enables them TO feel a high sense of school belonging as well as developing positive social relations.

The findings of the current study are discussed with reference to these conditions in section 5.3 presents the ways in which this study contributes to existing knowledge on both a theoretical and a methodological level, which is followed by section 5.4, where the implications for policy-makers, educational staff and schools are explored. The limitations of this study are critically presented along with suggestions for future research in sections 5.5 and 5.6, respectively. The chapter ends with consideration of some final thoughts, in section 5.7.

5.2   Discussion of the Findings

The findings of the current study suggest four processes (i.e. effective behaviour management, accurate identification, differentiation, and Student Voice) that support a

school's achievement of presence, acceptance, participation and achievement, i.e. the four conditions proposed by Farrell.

5.2.1   Presence

According to Farrell, the first condition for inclusion is for pupils identified as having SEN to be present within mainstream settings. School census statistics provided by the DfE (2011) have shown that some schools enrol a higher percentage of pupils identified as having SEN than others. Additionally, it was found that some schools also have fewer exclusions. It can thus be hypothesised that such schools are more inclusive than the ones that intentionally choose to accept fewer pupils and have higher rates of exclusions.

In light of this, as explained in the methodology chapter (see section 3.13), School 3 was found to be the most inclusive, when compared to School 1 and School 2, as it fulfilled both "inclusivity characteristics": having a relatively high proportion of SEN pupils and a relatively low rate of exclusions (43% and 0.032%, respectively). School 2, which was in the same LEA as School 3, was found to be less inclusive on both these counts (27% and 0.142%, respectively). School 1 had a higher proportion of SEN pupils than School 2, but it was the least inclusive in terms of exclusions (39% and 0.398%, respectively). However, when comparing the subjective measures of inclusivity (see section 4.2.2.1.1), contrasting outcomes were revealed: School 2 was perceived to be the most inclusive, followed by School 1, while School 3 was perceived to be the least so. This finding was also supported by the interview responses of pupils as well as the telephone interview conducted with the school educational psychologists.

While the objective "inclusivity characteristics" represent a direct measure of presence, the subjective ones of inclusivity measure the inclusive ethos as perceived by pupils and hence, reveal the school in which they want to be present. Thematic analysis identified two main themes that influence pupils' perceptions about school ethos: inclusivity and the effectiveness of the applied behaviour strategies in managing misbehaving pupils. In particular, Figure 4.4 (p.164) reflected the views expressed by pupils about how a school with an inclusive ethos should be. According to them, an inclusive school was perceived as being the one where teachers allocate equal attention to all pupils irrespective of their SEN status and type of need. It is one which sets clear limits, applying punishments and rewards fairly to all pupils as well as offering provision of special counsellors to those who misbehave in order to help them built positive relations with teachers, manage their

behaviour and realise their mistakes. In theory, a school that provides adequate support to all pupils and applies effective strategies to include those who misbehave is expected to have fewer exclusions (Hatton, 2013), i.e. there seems to be a positive association between the subjective characteristics of inclusivity and the objective ones. However, this study has demonstrated that inclusivity cannot be effectively evaluated by simply relying on statistical data.

For example, whilst School 3 scored highly on the objective "inclusivity characteristics" (it had a relatively high number of pupils identified as having SEN and low rates of exclusions), the subjective measures (i.e. both qualitative and quantitative data collected by pupils and educational staff) indicated that School 3 was the least inclusive regarding the behaviour management strategies it applied. Thematic analysis demonstrated that pupils attending School 3 believed that their school implemented the most punitive strategies; any pupil with disruptive behaviour was automatically sent out of class, without a warning, in order to safeguard other pupils' learning. Pupils identified as having SEMH expressed the view that this strategy was an ineffective way to manage their behaviour, as pupils often purposely made noise so as to miss class and thus, skip having to work. By not being in class, even if pupils are not officially excluded from school, presence —Farrell's first condition of inclusion— is not satisfied.

A comparison of the schools' inclusive ethos, signifies the importance of teachers' allocation of attention and behaviour management in retaining pupils within the schooling environment. Using rewards more frequently than sanctions was found by Hatton (2013) to be a characteristic of an inclusive school. However, over-praising good behaviour of normally misbehaving pupils and too much overlooking when they are being disruptive, as the qualitative data in School 1 indicated, provides undesirable effects. This can create an environment of loose boundaries, where pupils lose the sight of the appropriate measures of misbehaviour. It is therefore deemed reasonable to hypothesise that this is one of the explanations for the high rates of exclusions observed in School 1. In addition, as the qualitative data demonstrated, paying too much attention to a certain group of pupils, such as the normally misbehaving ones at School 1 or the high achievers in School 3, creates imbalances. For instance, in a school where teachers focus on high achievers and mostly praise attainment, pupils identified as having SEN could lose interest, which in turn promotes misbehaviour aimed at either seeking attention and/or being excluded from the class, as also pointed out by Cefai and Cooper (2010). From the above, it can be

seen noticed that typical quiet pupils with average attainment could often be overlooked by teachers, thus indicating that pupils identified as having SEN are not the only vulnerable group that can fail to gain teachers' attention. It can be concluded, that at the class level striking a balance in distributing attention and in using punishments and rewards is essential. However, equally important is the implementation of inclusive strategies at the school level. For example, the provision of special counsellors, such as at School 2, to help misbehaving pupils realise their mistakes, was found by Rupani, Haughey and Cooper (2012) to improve behaviour and levels of overall inclusion, thus, in turn, arguably leading to the likelihood of lower rates of exclusion. In addition, the thematic analysis of the current study appears to indicate that schools perceived to be more inclusive tend to apply behaviour management strategies consistently throughout school, whereby the behaviour policies are comprehensively clear for both staff and pupils. As such, pupils know which behaviour would lead to them being excluded (Hatton, 2013).

According to the objective "inclusivity characteristics", accepting a large proportion of pupils identified as having SEN could be presumed as being an inclusive practice. However, from the qualitative and quantitative data of this study, it can be observed that School 1 and School 3, which accepted around 50% more registered SEN than School 2, were found to be the least inclusive. This observation raises the question as to whether there is an optimum proportion of pupils that a school could accommodate and successfully include. However, with such a small sample size, generalisations cannot be made and even with the aforementioned inclusive strategies in place, School 2's relatively high rate of exclusions indicates that there is still room for improvement.

5.2.2   Acceptance

The second condition of inclusion, as proposed by Farrell, is acceptance. The research outcomes of this study indicate that there are two main processes that facilitate this: accurate identification and differentiation.

5.2.2.1 Identification

Having an accurate identification process is very important as it permits a school to understand the individual characteristics of a pupil, which in turn, can provide guidance on how to meet his/her needs and facilitate his/her adjustment to the school environment. This requirement is supported by the qualitative data of the current findings, whereby the

two SEN groups involved described an ideal inclusive school differently, which stresses the diversity of their needs. However, the accurate identification of certain categories of SEN is arguably challenging, in particular, in relation to that of SEMH owing to its dual nature involving externalising and internalising difficulties (e.g. Cooper, 1996; Cunningham & Suldo, 2014; Ellis & Tod, 2012; Soles et al., 2008).

The results of this study have verified such challenges, whereby there was little agreement found between the identification of SEMH provided by school reports and the quantitative data from the pupils' self-reporting questionnaires. Specifically, there was a much lower proportion of pupils identified by schools as having SEMH (2.6%) than those identified as "abnormal" on the SDQ total difficulties scale (8.4%). This disagreement could be explained by the differences in the identification process followed. SDQ is a diagnostic tool completed by pupils at a single point in time, while the identification provided by schools is the outcome of a lengthier process. Another contributing factor lies within the definition of SEMH, as the 2014 Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years does not include pupils that have conduct disorder within the term SEMH. It is thus possible that a number of pupils identified by the SDQ results as "abnormal" would fall under the conduct disorder category and as such, would naturally be ignored by the school's SENCO.

Another challenge in the identification of SEMH is the detection of pupils with internalising difficulties. The current study outcomes have demonstrated that there is a large discrepancy between the questionnaire responses in the SDQ internalising scale and the school records. Specifically, only 5.7% of the pupils that scored "abnormal" in the SDQ internalising scale, were registered as having SEMH by the participating schools. This finding could be explained by the fact that young adolescents with internalising difficulties have the tendency to keep quiet and suffer on their own. Consequently, since they do not have an apparent outward displaying of difficulties, it makes it especially hard for teachers and SENCOs to detect them. This view is reinforced by the research outcomes of several other studies, which found an inability for teachers to identify those experiencing internalising difficulties accurately (Auger, 2004; Cunnigham & Suldo, 2014; Moor et al., 2007), particularly in secondary schools, owing to the limited time they spend with pupils and the less intimate relations they are likely to form with them (Auger, 2004).

The above findings support the importance of a multidimensional identification process, such as that suggested by the DfE (2016), which in addition to the contribution of a school's SENCO, also suggests the use of: a) an "effective pastoral system"; b) pupil data, such as attainment, attendance and behaviour; and c) the SDQ diagnostic tool. An improved identification accuracy of SEMH would enable schools to provide individualised support to those that really need it.

The questionnaire data also indicated differences in the schooling experiences between pupils that were classified by the SDQ questionnaire as "abnormal", according to the internalising and externalising scales. Specifically, those classified as having internalising difficulties were found to be better adjusted, as they scored statistically significantly higher in terms of perceived school ethos, sense of belonging and social relations, than those classified as having externalising difficulties. This finding raises the question as to whether the two SEMH sub-groups should share the same descriptor, or alternatively, in order to address their needs better, perhaps these need to be separated.

5.2.2.2 Differentiation

Differentiation is arguably the main challenge of inclusion, as it requires schools to respond successfully to diversity within the academic and behavioural domains in order to make all pupils feel "equally" accepted. However, as Avramidis and Norwich (2002) indicated, one of the key barriers to inclusion is teachers' negative attitude. This is supported by the questionnaire responses of the current study, whereby the educational staff rated their perception of school ethos (i.e. behaviour management and inclusivity) lower than did the pupils. One possible explanation for this result might be the teachers' perceived inability and lack of knowledge in relation to fulfilling the responsibility of implementing inclusion (see Ainscow, 1999; Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2002; Booth, & Ainscow, 2002; Hatton, 2013; Rouse & Florian, 1996).

Training is an effective way to enable teachers to shift their attitudes and become more positive towards inclusion, as demonstrated by Male (2011) and Campbell, Gilmore and Cuskelly (2003). Successful training enables them to respond to diversity by implementing suitable behaviour strategies, and allocating equal educational opportunities to all pupils. As a first step, it is essential for teachers to become acquainted with the individual needs of each SEN group and how they can be addressed. The qualitative data of pupils identified as having SEMH and MLD demonstrated the teaching

and behavioural practices that an inclusive school should implement in order to meet their needs. The main themes yielded by the interview responses were that pupils identified as having SEMH perceived as inclusive a school that has an effective behaviour management policy, where teachers know how to: control a class, administer punishments with fairness, set clear limits, and apply school rules with consistency. It is also a school that provides a special counsellor to those who misbehave and educates them in small classes, where knowledgeable teachers respond to their individual needs. Conversely, less inclusive are perceived to be those schools where teachers implement inappropriate behaviour management policies (i.e. that lack consistency, fairness and clarity) and make use of punitive strategies and authoritarian attitudes to gain control over classes. The interview responses of pupils identified as having MLD indicated an inclusive school as one in which teachers give equal attention to pupils and build a learning environment devoid of any disturbances, as misbehaviour is effectively handled. In their ideal school, teachers also know how to support them academically, by delivering interactive lessons and creating a suitable learning environment. By contrast, a less inclusive school is perceived to be one where teachers use exclusion as a disciplinary strategy, and mainly allocate their attention to high achievers and/or to misbehaving pupils.

The thematic analysis of the current study highlighted the importance for teachers to differentiate their teaching and behaviour strategies, with the aim being to meet the individual needs of pupils. Engendering an inclusive ethos enables pupils identified as having SEN to perceive the school ethos more positively, which in this study has been found to be linked with a higher sense of school belonging. This is consistent with the research outcomes of several other studies in the field involving typical pupils (e.g. Cemalcilar, 2010; Ma, 2003; Smerdon, 2002). This association also emerged as existing between SEN groups. For example, the questionnaire responses indicated that pupils identified as having SEMH, who perceived their school ethos more negatively than those identified as having MLD, also scored lower in their perceived sense of school belonging; a result which is consistent with the research outcomes of McCoy and Banks (2012). As SEMH are mostly affected by behaviour management strategies, it could be argued that schools are less successful in applying differentiation regarding this cohort.

5.2.3 Participation

The third condition of engendering a school with an inclusive ethos is the prerequisite that all pupils are active participants in their school community. As Finn (1989), in his participation-identification model has argued, the extent to which pupils participate at school determines their perceived belonging within it. It is contended that for schools to shape pupils' sense of school belonging it is essential, firstly, to provide them with suitable opportunities to participate and secondly, to encourage their willingness to take part. One way in which pupils can participate in class is through interactive lessons. For, the interview responses from both typical pupils and pupils identified as having SEN revealed that the attendance of such lessons is one of the main reasons for liking school. It was also found that pupils perceived as better teachers those who encouraged all pupils to participate in class. The presence of this trait would appear to be one reason why pupils attending School 2 rated their perceived ethos, sense of school belonging and social relations with teachers as higher than those pupils attending School 1 and School 3. It is noteworthy to mention that interactive lessons were referred to by pupils of School 2 more than any other aspect of their learning.

A school mechanism that provides pupils with the opportunity to be active participants and take part in school's decision making is Student Voice. Thematic analysis indicated that almost all the pupils across the settings reported their unwillingness to take part in decision making or to put themselves forward as representatives of Student Voice. As the researcher noted, pupils spoke freely during the interviews, indicating that their unwillingness to participate was not owing to simply not liking to express their opinions. That is, according to the voices of pupils, there were other reasons for shunning Student Voice. Lack of confidence was one of the main reasons reported, especially among pupils identified as having SEN attending School 1 and School 3. Pupils revealed that the process with which they had to participate and express their opinion simply did not work for them. Characteristically, one pupil commented:

> I have to speak in front of the whole school and I just don't like that. I'm good but I could be unsettled by them. They always choose smart people or the people like the "Ms. Perfects" or whatever to Student Voice […].

However, there are mechanisms that a school can use in order to circumvent this problem, as applied in School 2. That is, instead of having pupils stand up in front of an audience

to express their opinion, they were asked to write their views on paper, and then all the different opinions were discussed as a group. This would appear to explain why lack of confidence was not one of the reasons reported by pupils at that school for not being willing to participate in Student Voice.

Moreover, the majority of pupils across settings reported the voting process as another reason that increased their reluctance to stand for Student Voice. In particular, they described the process as unfair since it favoured 'popular' pupils being selected as representatives, while it hindered the less 'popular'. An enlightening explanation was provided by one pupil in the following comment:

> Say it was three people, and one had a few mates and the other was really popular and the other one had no friends, the really popular one, I think, would get it because they've got more friends.

Similar research outcomes were reported by Quinn and Owen (2016), who found that less popular pupils were unwilling to participate in Student Voice due to the competitive process of elections.

Pupils' perceived lack of structure and most importantly the belief that no change resulted, since their voices are not listened to, were the main reasons they perceived their involvement in Student Voice as being pointless. In a similar vein, several international studies involving typical pupils have shown that despite pupils being found to have insightful ideas and could actively contribute in the improvement of their school, almost none of their views were actually implemented in practice (see Fleming, 2013; Messiou, 2006; Mitra, 2004; Quinn & Owen, 2016). It can thus be concluded that there is an urgent need for schools to redesign the applied mechanisms, as well as train the teachers involved, if Student Voice is to successfully encourage the involvement of all pupils in school decision making and to assist in the implementation of their suggestions.

5.2.4   Achievement

Achievement is the final condition proposed by Farrell. The findings of the current study indicate that the fulfilment of all the above conditions with the facilitation of the suggested processes produces three outcomes: i) it engenders a school with an inclusive

ethos, ii) it enhances pupils' sense of school belonging and iii) it encourages the development of positive social relations.

5.2.4.1 Inclusive Ethos

As the current study has demonstrated, all the pupils, independent of their SEN status, type of need and school setting that they attended, perceived school to be very important for their lives. Among the most prevalent reasons reported during interviews for finishing school, were the prospect of going to university and most importantly, having better job opportunities in life for the foreseeable future. Instilling high aspirations in all pupils can be assumed as being a way to increase their desire to finish school.

However, understanding the importance of school does not necessarily provide the means or drive to graduate. It is essential to create an environment where pupils are willing to learn and constantly progress both in an academic and behavioural way. As previously noted, an inclusive school should implement suitable behaviour management strategies, i.e. school rules need to be applied with clarity, consistency and fairness, as well as providing school-based counselling to those who need it. This has been elicited as being crucial for enabling pupils to control their anger better, acknowledge their mistakes, and to understand others' perspectives, which in turn will support their social skills and enable them to remain within the school environment. As previously suggested, it is also important for an inclusive school to provide accurate identifications in order to understand first and accommodate accordingly, the individual needs of pupils through differentiation of educational resources. Finally, an inclusive school has to provide pupils with the opportunity to and promote their desire to participate actively in decision making processes. This can be realised by implementing suitable mechanisms that will enable the voices of all pupils to be listened to, thereby helping them to develop positive views about themselves and thus, increasing their confidence in expressing their opinions.

5.2.4.2 Sense of School Belonging

In the current study, sense of school belonging was a scale developed to measure pupils' perceived attachment to school, where a high score means that the school accommodated a pupil's needs successfully. Indeed, analysis of quantitative findings has shown that among the three participating schools, pupils attending School 2, which was perceived to be the most inclusive, scored the highest in their perceived sense of school belonging when compared to those attending School 1 or School 3.

Whilst the questionnaire responses indicated highly significant differences in the sense of school belonging scores between schools, the qualitative data demonstrated that the reasons expressed by pupils for liking school were common across the three settings. In particular, the thematic analysis identified perceived value for education as the main reason, followed by socialising with friends. All pupils regardless of the school they attended, their SEN status and type of need, acknowledged the importance of finishing school as an opportunity for a better life in the future. This finding is in agreement with the research outcomes of an American qualitative study conducted by Mouton et al. (1996). It can thus be concluded that, besides promoting peer relations at school, instilling a value for education and the importance placed on finishing school could be a crucial component in the efforts made by schools to keep all pupils, even those with a low sense of belonging, engaged with their schooling.

The quantitative findings of the current study have also indicated that the pupils who were more likely to score low in their sense of school belonging were those identified as having SEN. This finding is also supported by the qualitative data of this study and is aligned with the research outcomes of several other international studies, which also found that pupils identified as having SEN have a lower perceived sense of school belonging compared to their typical counterparts (see McCoy & Banks, 2012; Murray & Greenberg, 2001; Nepi et al., 2013).

Differences in the sense of school belonging were also found between the two groups of SEN. Questionnaire responses indicated that pupils identified as having SEMH scored a lower sense of school belonging than those identified as having MLD. This finding could be explained by the qualitative data of this study, which indicated that pupils identified as having SEMH have more difficulties in dealing with school e.g. control their anger and behave appropriately, develop positive relations with others. Specifically, the interview responses of these pupils revealed that the main reasons for not liking school and being also associated with a desire for absenteeism were: i) their poor relations with teachers, ii) their psychological difficulties, i.e. mood changes, iii) lessons that are perceived to be boring, and iv) a tiring schedule, consisting of lengthy lessons, i.e. double periods. In contrast, pupils identified as having MLD perceived the main reasons for not liking school to be the distraction of misbehaving pupils during lessons and the perception of limited support received from teachers.

5.2.4.3 Social Relations

The development of positive social relations is another constructive outcome of inclusion. Several scholars, focusing on typical pupils, have shown a positive link between pupils' perceived social relations at school and their sense of school belonging (see Cemalcilar, 2010; Drolet, Arcand, Ducharme & Leblanc, 2013; Mouton, Hawkins, McPherson & Copley, 1996; Nichols, 2008; Ryan, Stiller & Lynch, 1994). This finding was replicated by the current study for pupils identified as having SEN, as shown by both the quantitative and qualitative data.

Questionnaire responses revealed that pupils perceived their relationship with their teachers to be more positively associated with their sense of school belonging than that with TAs or peers. This finding was also supported by qualitative data, which reflected pupils' views about the key role teachers play in school life. Teachers seem to influence pupils forming either positive or negative perceptions about school. For example, the following comments are characteristic of this association:

> I like school. I like education as a whole. I like my math teacher. She does fun lessons. [I like those] who teach in a different way so you learn better

> I don't like coming to school because sometimes it's the teachers […] it's just going to be work, work, work, and no one is going to ask you, 'are you ok?' or anything

The above findings suggest that, on the one hand, the essential need for pupils identified as having SEN to have more intimate relations and positive social interactions with their teachers in class and on the other hand, the marked responsibility that teachers have in shaping positive schooling experiences for pupils. Consequently, it is important for teachers to distribute their attention evenly amongst the class.

Perceived relations with teachers were found to vary between pupils with different SEN status. Questionnaire responses indicated a statistically significant difference, with pupils identified as having SEN scoring lower than their typical counterparts on their perceived relations with teachers. This could be explained by the differences in views expressed between typical pupils and pupils identified as having SEN, with the latter putting emphasis on the insufficient support and limited attention teachers provide to them. This is consistent with the research outcomes of several other studies in the field (e.g. Cefai &

Cooper, 2010; Murray & Greenberg, 2001; Wise & Upton, 1998). It is therefore likely that one of the reasons that pupils identified as having SEN scored lower on their sense of school belonging than their typical counterparts, is due to the formers' negative perception of their relationship with teachers.

Variations in pupils' perceived satisfaction with teachers were also found within the SEN group, supported by both quantitative and qualitative data. In particular, questionnaire responses indicated that significantly more pupils identified as having SEMH rated their relations with teachers lower than those identified as having MLD. The thematic analysis also identified a difference between groups of pupils, with those identified as having MLD expressing overall more positive views than those identified as having SEMH. Insights regarding pupils identified as having SEMH revealed two main reasons that would appear to perpetuate their problematic relations with teachers: 1) the unfair way of administering punishments; and 2) the authoritarian way of gaining control over the class. An example of the former, was when the teachers labelled a pupil as misbehaving and they then would see him/her as being responsible for every noise in the class. An example of the latter, was when the teachers deprived them of the opportunity to express or defend their view of events. As they explained, it was their inability to defend themselves, which made them often overreact towards teachers. On the other hand, one could argue that pupils identified as having SEMH have by definition difficulties in controlling their behaviour and thus, teachers inadvertently respond in an authoritarian and punitive manner. Since it is difficult to separate the cause from the effect, the negative pupil-to-teacher relations regarding those identified as having SEMH are considered by scholars to be reciprocal (for more information see Cafai & Cooper, 2010; Desforges, 1995; Goodman & Burton, 2010). However, despite the fact that the majority of pupils perceived their relations with teachers in a negative way, the fact that a few reported forming quite positive relations with certain teachers, indicates that there are actions that teachers can take in order to improve their relations with them. Both SEN groups described a good teacher as being one who with a 'good' personality, meaning approachable and trustworthy, which enabled them to feel comfortable to discuss with him/her whatever they wish, including personal matters. Moreover, it is one who knows how to control a class and teach in a way perceived to be effective in promoting learning. Finally, it is one who is able to make jokes in the class whilst at the same time being serious and respectable, makes all pupils feel equal, and inspires them to learn.

It was also found that the positive way in which TAs socialised with pupils identified as having SEN was indeed valued by them. Questionnaire responses indicated a positive association between pupils identified as having SEN relations with their TAs and the perceived school ethos. In other words, the more positive pupils identified as having SEN perceived their relations with TAs, the more likely they were to score high on their perceived school ethos. This result could be explained by the fact that pupils identified as having SEN gained more attention and care from TAs, rather than their teachers within a mainstream class, as demonstrated by Webster and Blatchford (2013). Thus, it is logical to expect that the relationship with TAs is the one that contributes most to a pupil's perception about school. This finding is also supported by qualitative data of the current study. Interview responses of pupils identified as having MLD indicated that the support given by TAs often surpassed that of teachers, which vindicates the position adopted by many scholars that TAs act as facilitators of inclusion (Groom & Rose, 2005; Logan, 2006; Norwich & Kelly, 2004; Webster et al., 2010). By contrast, pupils identified as having SEMH expressed more negative views about their relations with TAs, downplaying both the responsibility that TAs held in class as well as the educational support they were able to provide. This was not unanticipated, as the analysis in this study revealed that pupils identified as having SEMH perceived all their social relations (with teachers, TAs and peers) more negatively than pupils identified as having MLD. One possible explanation is provided by Frostad and Pijl (2007), who found that pupils identified as having SEMH often lack social skills, which in turn negatively affects their ability to form intimate relations.

In addition, variation was also found in the perceived social relations with peers between pupils with different status of SEN. Questionnaire responses indicated a significant difference in the perceived relations with peers between the two groups, with pupils identified as having SEN scoring lower than typical pupils. Interview responses also indicated that pupils identified as having SEN believed they ran a higher risk of being the victims of bullying (see Norwich & Kelly, 2004; Wise & Upton, 1998) and being socially rejected by their typical counterparts (see Frostad & Pijl, 2007; Monchy, Pijl, & Zandberg, 2004). Clique formation is another barrier they encounter when aiming to form intimate social relations with peers, as the thematic analysis of this study's outcomes also revealed (for further information see Figure 4.6, p. 201). In particular, qualitative data indicated that existing cliques within the schools made it hard for pupils to start up friendships, whereby they reported how, usually, no one is allowed to "get in" or "get

out" of a clique without a good reason. Moreover, as some pupils reported, developing new friendships becomes even harder as they get older owing to the fact that cliques became more solid, which hinders further the assimilation of newcomer students. Despite the fact that cliques "seem synonymous to adolescence" (Brown & Klute, 2006, p. 339), one possible solution to this is to make all pupils come together through group activities that challenge cliquishness.

As mentioned earlier, pupils' sense of school belonging, which is a measure of willingness to be part of the class and school levels, was found to be positively linked with their perceptions regarding school ethos. Social relations were found to be associated with the perceptions on ethos (particularly those with TAs) as well as with the sense of school belonging (particularly in respect of those with teachers). This creates an interrelationship triangle, whereby a school that engenders an inclusive ethos, enhances the sense of belonging and social relations, which in turn, fosters a sense of belonging. However, caution should be applied in the interpretation of the suggested interrelationship so as to not imply causality, as this study was not longitudinal.

5.3 Contribution to Knowledge

The present study makes a genuine and original contribution to knowledge by demonstrating the existence of a strong positive association between the inclusive ethos of a school setting and the sense of school belonging, as well as the social relations of pupils identified as having SEN. This suggests that the more inclusive the ethos of a school is, then the more likely it is for pupils to develop a high sense of school belonging and to form intimate social relations within mainstream settings. This finding is very important in the field of special education, as it implies that there are not difficult categories of SEN (i.e. SEMH that cannot be included within mainstream settings), but rather, ineffective schools that fail to meet the individual needs of pupils identified as having SEN.

Second, this study contributes to the field of knowledge indicating the ambiguous nature of an inclusive ethos. It has shown that the inclusivity of a school ethos is a challenging term to define and measure, either objectively or subjectively. For instance, the use of objective measures, such as that of School Census Statistics, have been found to be highly ineffective in measuring the inclusivity of a school setting. Notably, the school

objectively found to be more inclusive was perceived by pupils, educational staff and the school's educational psychologist to be the least inclusive. The employment of subjective measures such as interviews, could better capture the inclusivity of a school, as ethos is mainly experienced. However, ethos can have different implications for different groups within the same school. Thus, it does not seem to have a single definition, but can have multiple definitions in terms of what is effective for one might not be so for another.

Additionally, this study makes a contribution to understanding differences in the individual needs between pupils identified as having SEMH and those identified as having MLD within mainstream secondary English settings. According to pupils identified as having SEMH, an inclusive school is perceived to be the one that has an effective behaviour management policy, where teachers are knowledgeable about controlling a class by administering sanctions with fairness, setting clear limits and applying school rules consistently. It is also a school that provides a special counsellor to those who show challenging behaviour in order to help them learn strategies to control their anger and improve their behaviour; however, according to pupils identified as having MLD, an inclusive school is one where teachers give equal attention to all pupils and build a learning environment devoid of any disturbances, as misbehaviour is effectively handled. It is also a school where teachers know how to support them academically by delivering interactive lessons. The current study has empirically demonstrated that the needs of each SEN 'group' can differ significantly. This highlights the necessity for schools to differentiate their educational practices at a behavioural and academic level, as well as to listening to pupils' voices in order to improve inclusive practice.

The findings of the current study also contribute to the field of educational knowledge relating to pupils' perceptions about their schooling experiences. For example, a number of international studies have found that pupils' satisfaction of their perceived relations with teachers was a stronger predictor for their sense of belonging at school (see Cemalcilar, 2010; McCoy & Banks, 2012; Nichols, 2008). This finding was also replicated in the current study conducted in the English educational system. Additionally, several scholars around the world have established that pupils identified as having SEN are more likely to have a lesser sense of belonging and more negative social relations than their typical counterparts (see McCoy & Banks, 2012; Monchy, Pijl & Zandberg, 2004; Murray & Greenberg, 2001; Vaughn, Elbaum & Schumm, 1996; Nepi et al., 2013). This finding was consistent with research outcomes of the current study involving young

adolescents identified as having SEN attending a secondary mainstream setting in England. Finally, a number of studies involving typical pupils investigating school approaches towards Student Voice, found that, whilst pupils were found to have insightful ideas and could actively contribute in the improvement of their school, almost none of their views were actually implemented into practice (Fleming, 2013; Messiou, 2006; Mitra, 2004; Quinn & Owen, 2016). The current study found similar research outcomes by focusing on pupils identified as having SEN. As the above findings supported results from various studies conducted in different international settings, it can be hypothesised that they can be generalised to mainstream educational systems around the globe.

An additional contribution of the current study is the development of an elaborated model of inclusion (see Figure 5.2) which could serve as a practical, self-evaluation resource for schools to audit current provision in relation to inclusion (e.g. 'where are we now?') and inform forward planning (e.g. 'where do we want to be?', 'how could we get there?').

On a methodological level, the development of the main questionnaire (see section 3.5.2.2) is another significant contribution of this study. In the extant literature, several studies have used various scales to measure quantitatively the sense of school belonging as well as the social relations with teachers and peers of typical pupils, but none has examined the notion of belonging in an institutional sense (see section 3.5.1.1) as well as the social relations (see section 3.5.1.3) and the school ethos (see section 3.5.1.2). The researcher has thus contributed by developing new scales specifically adjusted to measure the individual difficulties that pupils identified as having SEMH and MLD encounter within mainstream settings.

5.4   Implications of the Results

The findings of this study have demonstrated the importance of a school to have an inclusive ethos, for this has been demonstrated to enhance the sense of school belonging and encourage the social relations of pupils identified as having SEN. To achieve this, constructive advice needs to be available and accessible to the key stakeholders responsible for the implementation of inclusion. With this consideration in mind, the following recommendations would help schools engender an inclusive ethos and improve the schooling experiences of all pupils identified as having SEN.

- Schools would improve their inclusive ethos by implementing suitable behaviour management policies and providing equal educational opportunities to all pupils. Behaviour management policies, such as clarity and consistency in school rules, fairness in distribution of rewards and punishments, and provision of school counsellors, would enable pupils to improve their behaviour, and help schools to retain them within the school environment. The provision of equal educational opportunities and fair allocation of teachers' attention to all pupils —including quiet typical pupils with average attainment, which are often overlooked— would enable them to feel equal members of the school community and be motivated in the learning process.

- To be inclusive, schools should encourage the participation of all pupils, irrespective of their SEN status and type of need, in all school activities. At the class level, pupils could be encouraged to participate through the use of interactive lessons. At the school level, pupils could actively be involved in decision making, such as through Student Voice. Care should be taken such that suitable mechanisms are in place to include even timid pupils. In addition, pupils will only be willing to participate if educational staff actively try to listen to and implement their constructive suggestions.

- Differentiation in the behavioural and educational levels should be encouraged as a requirement for responding to diversity. Since SEN categories are not homogeneous, pupils identified as having SEMH and MLD encounter different difficulties. Thus, differentiation is essential to accommodate their individual needs and to enable them to reach their full potential.

5.5   Limitations of the Study

The current study, like any other, has its limitations due to the characteristics of the sample, the data collection process and its applied methods, which need to be taken into consideration when interpreting the findings.

A major limitation of this study was the identification of an "ideal pair of schools", one inclusive and one less inclusive, based on five criteria, as described in subsection 3.2.2.2, of the methodology chapter. However, despite the rigorous identification process that followed, all schools that had been detected by the researcher as being less inclusive

refused to take part in this study and consequently, the researcher had to relax the criteria for the identification of participating schools. It could be argued that the findings would have been different, if an ideal pair of schools had been recruited.

It is also important to bear in mind that, despite this study having involved employing various methods to establish the inclusivity of school settings, the analysis revealed that none of the three participating schools had reached agreement between the objective and subjective measures of inclusivity. This suggests that statistical data might not be an effective measure to capture inclusivity, and it is thus possible that the ideal pair of schools cannot be identified using the followed identification process.

Another limitation of this study was the SEMH sample recruitment in terms of not only the challenges in securing a relatively large sample size, but also in the process of safeguarding its validity. In particular, while the three participating schools had been initially identified as having on their school registers a relatively high number of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (i.e. BESD), this number fell after the introduction of the 2014 SEND Code of Practice, which brought significant changes in the descriptors, with most importantly, the dropping of conduct disorder in the definition. The initial identified sample size of the study shrunk, because the Code of Practice was enacted just prior to this researcher's fieldwork. Another factor that challenges the validity of the sample is lack of clarity in the SEMH definition, which leaves a pupil's behaviour open to subjective interpretations.

The definition change that occurred with the introduction of the 2014 SEND Code of Practice might have also affected the validity of the findings. It will be recalled that a large percentage of pupils registered as typical in school reports, classified themselves as abnormal on the SDQ externalising difficulties scale. It, therefore could be suggested that pupils who consistently displayed challenging behaviour and had once been identified as having SEN under the BESD terminology, after the definition changes introduced by the 2014 SEND Code of Practice (i.e. removal of the conduct disorder and the introduction of SEMH), those pupils would have probably been registered as typical. However, whilst definition changes might have contributed to the disagreement in the SEMH identification between school registers and pupils' self-reports, it is suggested that this factor alone cannot fully account for the degree of false identification observed in the present study. That is, there are other factors that might have also contributed to this inconsistency, such as inaccurate SEMH identification in school registers due to the largely subjective and

250

interpretable criteria, what Cooper (1996) calls "ill-defined" descriptors (p. 147). Another factor that might have also influenced the validity of the findings and might account for the poor level of agreement between school registers and pupils' self-reports on the SDQ internalising difficulties scale, is the positive bias that is often linked with self-report questionnaires, implying that pupils who experience mental health difficulties intentionally choose to underreport them.

A final limitation of the current study is that, whilst every effort was made to ensure that the three participating schools and the interviewees were as representative as possible, due to the small total sample size, caution must be applied as not all[25] findings might be able to be generalised to a wider population.

5.6   Future Directions

The current study has thrown up many questions in need of further investigation. Some suggestions for future research are the following.

- What is now needed is to replicate the current study involving a larger number of schools to establish the interrelationship between inclusive ethos, sense of belonging and social relations.
- Further research might involve investigating this interrelationship longitudinally to establish causality between variables.
- As interactive lessons were particularly stressed as a reason for pupils liking school, it would be interesting to examine the association between interactive lessons and pupils' sense of belonging as well as which differentiation strategies have the largest impact.

5.7   Final Thoughts

The current study investigated the schooling experiences of pupils identified as having SEMH and MLD attending mainstream secondary schools in England. The research

---

[25] Some findings could arguably be generalised to a wider population. For further information see Section 5.3.

outcomes revealed that some of the challenges of the practical implementation of inclusion are: the difficulty in accurately identifying pupils with externalising and/or internalising difficulties; the lack of effective differentiation in educational practices; the ineffective mechanisms of Student Voice that lead to pupils being unwilling to participate; the challenge of teachers being able to allocate their attention and support amongst pupils evenly; the challenging relations between teachers and pupils identified as having SEMH; and the phenomenon of cliquishness that prevents pupils from making new friends.

To address the aforementioned issues, the following are recommended:

- A review of teacher training and professional development so as to identify accurately pupils in need. Better identification will help teachers provide more individualised support to pupils with special educational needs, raise their attainment and improve their behaviour;
- Ensure Student Voice creates an environment where all pupils feel confident to participate. It is also important for constructive recommendations voiced by pupils to be put into practice to demonstrate that their ideas are listened to and valued;
- Safeguard differentiation of school practices at an academic and behavioural level to meet the individual needs of all pupils, and provide them with equal opportunities to be retained at school and to succeed academically;
- Provide staff who are skilled in counselling to all pupils, and particularly to those who show challenging behaviour, to teach them strategies to control their behaviour, as well as develop social skills that will help them create and maintain good relationships;
- Use a variety of interactive teaching activities to engage all pupils in the learning process and actively provide opportunities for social interaction between peers.

It is suggested that the implementation of all the above recommendations will enable practitioners not only to evaluate, but also, to achieve inclusion within mainstream schools.

References

Abbott, L. (2006). Northern Ireland head teachers' perceptions of inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *10*(6), 627–643. http://doi.org/10.1080/13603110500274379

Achenbach, T. (1982). Assessment and taxonomy of children's behavior disorders. *Advances in Clinical Child Psychology*, *5*, 1–38. Retrieved from http://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-4613-9811-0_1

Ainscow, M. (1999). *Undestanding the Development of Inclusive Schools*. London: Falmer.

Allan, J. (2015). Waiting for inclusive education? An exploration of conceptual confusions and political struggles. In F. Kiuppis & R. S. Hausstätter (Eds.), *Inclusive education twenty years after Salamanca*. New York: Peter Lang.

Allan, J., & Slee, R. (2008). *Doing inclusive education research*. Rotterdam: Sense.

Allder, M. (1993). The Meaning of "School Ethos." *Westminster Studies in Education*, *16*(1), 59–69.

American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5®)*. American Psychiatric Pub.

Archambault, I., Janosz, M., Fallu, J.-S., & Pagani, L. S. (2009). Student engagement and its relationship with early high school dropout. *Journal of Adolescence*, *32*(3), 651–70. http://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2008.06.007

Askew, S. (1989). Aggressive behaviour in boys: To what extent is it institutionalized? In D. P. Tattum & D. A. Lane (Eds.), *Bullying in Schools* (pp. 59–71). Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, UK: Trentham Books.

Auger, R. W. (2004). The Accuracy of Teacher Reports in the Identification of Middle School Students With Depressive Symptomatology. *Psychology in the Schools*, *41*(3), 379–389. http://doi.org/10.1002/pits.10164

Avramidis, E. (2013). Self-concept, social position and social participation of pupils with SEN in mainstream primary schools. *Research Papers in Education*, *28*(4), 421–442. http://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2012.673006

Avramidis, E., Bayliss, P., & Burden, R. (2002). Inclusion in action: an in-depth case study of an effective inclusive secondary school in the south-west of England. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *6*(2), 143–163. http://doi.org/10.1080/13603110010017169

Avramidis, E., & Norwich, B. (2002). Teachers' attitudes towards integration / inclusion: a review of the literature. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, *17*(2), 129–147. http://doi.org/10.1080/08856250210129056

Bailey, J. (1998). Australia: inclusion through categorisation. In T. Booth & M.

Ainscow (Eds.), *From Them to Us: An International Study of Inclusion in Education*. London: Routledge.

Banerjee, R., Weare, K., & Farr, W. (2014). Working with "Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning" (SEAL): associations with school ethos, pupil social experiences, attendance, and attainment. *British Educational Research Journal*, *40*(4), 718–742. http://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3114

Battistich, V., Solomon, D., Watson, M., & Schaps, E. (1997). Caring school communities. *Educational Psychologist*, *32*(3), 137–151. http://doi.org/10.1207/s15326985ep3203_1

Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, *117*(3), 497–529.

Black, D. S., Grenard, J. L., Sussman, S., & Rohrbach, L. A. (2010). The influence of school-based natural mentoring relationships on school attachment and subsequent adolescent risk behaviors. *Health Education Research*, *25*(5), 892–902. http://doi.org/10.1093/her/cyq040

Blatchford, P., Russell, A., & Webster, R. (2012). *Reassessing the impact of teaching assistants: How research challenges practice and policy*. UK, USA, Canada: Routledge.

Booth, T. (1999). Viewing Inclusion from aDistance: Gaining Perspective from Comparative Study. *Support for Learning*, *14*(4), 164–168. http://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9604.00124

Booth, T., & Ainscow, M. (2002). *Index for Inclusion: developing learnings and participation in schools*. Bristol: CSIE.

Bowlby, J. (1969). *Attachment and loss: Vol. 1. Attachment*. New York: Basic Books.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(3), 77–101. http://dx.doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Breakwell, G., Hammond, S., Fife-Schaw, C., & Smith, J. (2006). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Research methdos in psychology*. London: SAGE.

Brown, B. B., & Klute, C. (2006). Friendships, Cliques, and Crowds. In G. R. Adams & M. D. Berzonsky (Eds.), *Blackwelll Handbook of Adolescence*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd. http://doi.org/10.1002/9780470756607.ch16

Brown, J., Busfield, R., O'Shea, A., & Sibthorpe, J. (2011). School ethos and personal, social, health education. *Pastoral Care in Education*, *29*(2), 117–131. http://doi.org/10.1080/02643944.2011.573491

Bryman, A. (2004). *Social Research* (third). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bunch, G., & Valeo, A. (2004). Student attitudes toward peers with disabilities in inclusive and special education schools. *Disability & Society*, *19*(1), 61–76.

http://doi.org/10.1080/0968759032000155640

Campbell, J., Gilmore, L., & Cuskelly, M. (2003). Changing student teachers' attitudes towards disability and inclusion. *Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disability*, *28*(4), 369–379. http://doi.org/10.1080/13668250310001616407

Carter, C. (2002). Schools Ethos and the Construction of Masculine Identity: Do schools create, condone and sustain aggression? *Educational Review*, *54*(1), 27–36. http://doi.org/10.1080/00131910120110857

Cassidy, W. (2005). From zero tolerance to a culture of care. *Education Canada*, *45*(3), 40–42.

Cefai, C., & Cooper, P. (2010). Students without voices: the unheard accounts of secondary school students with social, emotional and behaviour difficulties. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, *25*(2), 183–198. http://doi.org/10.1080/08856251003658702

Cemalcilar, Z. (2010). Schools as socialisation contexts: Understanding the impact of school climate factors on students' sense of school belonging. *Applied Psychology*, *59*(2), 243–272. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1464-0597.2009.00389.x

Christenson, S., & Anderson, A. R. (2002). Commentary: The centrality of the learning context for student's academic enabler skills. *School Psychology Review*, *31*(3), 378. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/docview/219652820?accountid=14511

Clark, C., Dyson, A., Millward, A., & Skidmore, D. (1995). *Innovatory practice in mainstream schools for Special Educational Needs*. HMSO.

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences*. (L. Erlbaum, Ed.) (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research Methods in Education*. London: Routledge/Falmer.

Coolican, H. (2009). *Research Methods and Statistics in Psychology*. London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd.

Cooper, P. (1996). Giving it a name: the value of descriptive categories in educational approaches to emotional and behavioural difficulties. *Support for Learning*, *11*(4), 146–150. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9604.1996.tb00249.x

Cooper, P. (2005). Biology and behaviour: the educational relevance of a biopsychosocial perceptive. In P. Claugh, P. Garner, J. T. Pardeck, & F. Yuen (Eds.), *Handbook of emotional & behavioural difficulties* (pp. 105–122). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Creswell, J. W. (2002). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative*. New Jersey: Upper Saddle River.

Creswell, J. W., Plano Ckark, V. L., Gutmann, M. L., & Hanson, W. E. (2003).

Advanced mixed methods research designs. *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioral Research*, 209–240.

Cunningham, J. M., & Suldo, S. M. (2014). Accuracy of Teachers in Identifying Elementary School Students Who Report At-Risk Levels of Anxiety and Depression. *School Mental Health*, *6*(4), 237–250. http://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-014-9125-9

De Los Rayes, A., & Kazdin, A, E. (2005). Informant Discrepancies in the Assessment of Childhood Psycholpathology: A Critical Review, Theoretical Framework, and Recommendations for Further Study. *Psychological Bulletin*, *131*(4), 483–509.

Deal, T., & Peterson, K. (1999). *Shaping School Culture: The Heart of Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. New York: Plenum.

Deci, E. L., Vallerand, R. J., Pelletier, L. G., & Ryan, R. M. (1991). Motivation and Education: The Self-Determination Perspective. *Educational Psychologist*, *26*(3-4), 325–346. http://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.1991.9653137

Denzin, N. K. (1970). *The Research Act in Sociology: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods*. London: Butterworths.

Department for Education. (2001a). *Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001*. Retrieved May 20, 2016 from http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2001/10/contents

Department for Education. (2001b). *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice*. Annesley, Nottinghamshire: DfES Publications.

Department for Education. (2011). *Statement on school absence statistics for Spring term*. Retrieved February 3, 2013 from https://www.gov.uk/government/news/statement-on-school-absence-statistics-for-spring-term-2011

Department for Education. (2013). *Special educational needs in England January*. Retrieved November 27, 2013 from https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england-january-2013

Department for Education. (2014). *Special educational needs in England: January 2014-Publications-GOV.UK*. Retrieved May 17, 2016, from https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england-january-2014.

Department for Education. (2015). *Special educational needs in England: January 2015-Publications-GOV.UK*. Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england-january-2015

Department for Education. (2016). *Mental health and behaviour in schools:*

256

Departmental advice for school staff. Retrieved May 17, 2016, from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/508 847/Mental_Health_and_Behaviour_-_advice_for_Schools_160316.pdf

Department for Education & Department of Health. (2014a). *Children and Families Act 2014*. Retrieved May 19, 2016 from http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted

Department for Education & Department of Health. (2014b). *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years- Publications-GOV.UK*. Retrieved May 18, 2016, from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

DES. (1978). *Special Educational Needs: Report of the Committee of Enquiry in the Education of Handicapped Children and Young People (The Warnock Report)*. HMSO.

DES. (1981). *Education Act 1981 (repealed 1.11.1996)*. HMSO. Retrieved from http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/60/enacted

Desforges, C. (1995). *Introduction to Teaching: Psychological Perspectives*. USA, UK, Australia: Wiley-Blackwell.

DfE. (1994). *Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs*. London: Department for Education.

DfEE. (1997a). *Excellence for All Children: Meeting Special Educational Needs*. London: Department for Education and Employment.

DfEE. (1997b). *Excellence in Schools*. London: Department for Education and Employment.

DfES. (2004). *Every child matters: Next Steps*. London: Department for Education and Skills.

Donnelly, C. (2000). In Pursuit of School Ethos. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, *48*(2), 134–154. http://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8527.t01-1-00138

Donnelly, C. (2004). Constructing the ethos of tolerance and respect in an integrated school: the role of teachers. *British Educational Research Journal*, *30*(2), 263–278. http://doi.org/10.1080/0141192042000195254

Donnelly, V., & Watkins, A. (2011). Teacher education for inclusion in Europe. *PROSPECTS*, *41*(3), 341–353. http://doi.org/10.1007/s11125-011-9199-1

Drolet, M., Arcand, I., Ducharme, D., & Leblanc, R. (2013). The Sense of School Belonging and Implementation of a Prevention Program: Toward Healthier Interpersonal Relationships Among Early Adolescents. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, *30*(6), 535–551. http://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-013-0305-5

Ellis, S., & Tod, J. (2012). Identification of SEN: Is consistency a realistic or worthy aim? *Support for Learning*, *27*(2), 59–66. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9604.2012.01514.x

Emerson, E. (2003). Prevalence of psychiatric disorders in children and adolescents with and without intellectual disability. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research*, *47*(1), 51–58. http://doi.org/10.1046/j.1365-2788.2003.00464.x

Evans, J., & Lunt, I. (2002). Inclusive education: are there limits? *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, *17*(1), 1–14. http://doi.org/10.1080/08856250110098980

Farrell, P. (2000). The impact of research on developments in inclusive education. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *4*(2), 153–162. http://doi.org/10.1080/136031100284867

Farrell, P. (2004). School Psychologists: Making Inclusion a Reality for All. *School Psychology International*, *25*(1), 5–19. http://doi.org/10.1177/0143034304041500

Field, A. (2013). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics* (fourth). London: SAGE.

Finn, J. D. (1989). Withdrawing from School. *Review of Educational Research*, *59*(2), 117–142.

Fleming, J. (2013). Young People's Participation - Where Next? *Children & Society*, *27*, 484–495. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1099-0860.2012.00442.x

Florian, L. (1998). Inclusive practice; what, why and how? In C. Tilstone, L. Florian, & R. Rose (Eds.), *Promoting inclusive practice*. London, New York: Routledge.

Frostad, P., & Pijl, S. J. (2007). Does being friendly help in making friends? The relation between the social position and social skills of pupils with special needs in mainstream education. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, *22*(1), 15–30. http://doi.org/10.1080/08856250601082224

Fullarton, S. (2002). Student engagement with school: individual and school-level influences. *LSAY Research Reports. Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth Research Report; n.27.*

Garland, R. (1991). The mid-point on a rating scale: Is it desirable. *Marketing Bulletin*, *2*(1), 66–70.

Goodenow, C. (1991). The sense of Belonging and Its Relationship to Academic Motivation among Pre-and Early Adolescent Students. *Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago.*

Goodenow, C. (1993). The psychological sense of school membership among adolescents: Scale development and educational correlates. *Psychology in the Schools*, *30*(1), 79–90.

Goodman, R. (1997). The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire: A Research Note. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, *38*(5), 581–586. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-7610.1997.tb01545.x

Goodman, R. (2001). Psychometric Properties of the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, *40*(11), 1337–1345. http://doi.org/10.1097/00004583-200111000-

00015

Goodman, R. L., & Burton, D. M. (2010). The inclusion of students with BESD in mainstream schools: teachers' experiences of and recommendations for creating a successful inclusive environment. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *15*(3), 223–237. Retrieved from http://www-tandfonline-com.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/doi/abs/10.1080/13632752.2010.497662?src=recsys

Gray, D. (2004). *Doing Research in the Real World*. London: SAGE Publications.

Groom, B., & Rose, R. (2005). Supporting the inclusion of pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in the primary school: the role of teaching assistants. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, *5*(1), 20–30. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-3802.2005.00035.x

Hatton, L. A. (2013). Disciplinary exclusion: the influence of school ethos. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *18*(2), 155–178. http://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2012.726323

Hawkins, J. D., Guo, J., Hill, K. G., Battin-pearson, S., & Abbott, R. D. (2001). Long-Term Effects of the Seattle Social Development Intervention on School Bonding Trajectories, *5*(4), 225–236.

Hodkinson, A. (2006). Conceptions and misconceptions of inclusive education - one year on: A critical analysis of Newly Qualified Teachers' knowledge and understanding of inclusion. *Research in Education*, *76*(-1), 43–55. http://doi.org/10.7227/rie.76.4

Hogan, P. (1984). The question of ethos in schools. *The Furrow*, *35*(11), 693–704.

Jamal, F., Fletcher, A., Harden, A., Wells, H., Thomas, J., & Bonell, C. (2013). The school environment and student health: a systematic review and meta-ethnography of qualitative research. *BMC Public Health*, *13*(1), 798. http://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-13-798

Kane, J., Lloyd, G., McCluskey, G., Maguire, R., Riddell, S., Stead, J., & Weedon, E. (2009). Generating an inclusive ethos? Exploring the impact of restorative practices in Scottish schools. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *13*(3), 231–251. http://doi.org/10.1080/13603110701412950

Karcher, M. J., & Lee, Y. (2002). Connectedness among taiwanese middle school students: a validation study of the hemingway measure of adolescent connectedness. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, *3*(1), 92–114. http://doi.org/10.1007/BF03024924

Kidger, J., Donovan, J. L., Biddle, L., Campbell, R., & Gunnell, D. (2009). Supporting adolescent emotional health in schools: a mixed methods study of student and staff views in England. *BMC Public Health*, *9*, 403.

Koster, M., Pijl, S. J., Nakken, H., & Van Houten, E. (2010). Social Participation of Students with Special Needs in Regular Primary Education in the Netherlands. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, *57*(1), 59–75. http://doi.org/10.1080/10349120903537905

Krosnick, J. A., & Presser, S. (2010). Question and questionnaire design. *Handbook of Survey Research*, *2*, 263–314.

Kumar, R. (2011). *Research Methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners* (third). Los Angeles; London; New Delhi; Singapore; Washington DC: SAGE Publications.

Lewis, T. J., & Newcomer, L. . (2005). Reducing problem behavior through school-wide systems of positive behaviour support. In P. Clough, P. Garner, J. T. Pardeck, & F. Yuen (Eds.), *Handbook of emotional and behavioural difficulties* (pp. 261–272). London: SAGE.

Libbey, H. (2004). Measuring Student Relationships to School: Attachment, Bonding, Connectedness, and Engagement. *The Journal of School Health*, *74*(7), 274–83.

Lindsay, G. (2007). Educational psychology and the effectiveness of inclusive education/mainstreaming. *The British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *77*(Pt 1), 1–24. http://doi.org/10.1348/000709906X156881

Linna, S. L., Moilanen, I., Ebeling, H., Piha, J., Kumpulainen, K., Tamminen, T., & Almqvist, F. (1999). Psychiatric symptoms in children with intellectual disability. *European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, *8*(S4), S77–S82. http://doi.org/10.1007/PL00010704

Logan, A. (2006). The role of the special needs assistant supporting pupils with special educational needs in Irish mainstream primary schools. *Support for Learning*, *21*(2), 92–99. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9604.2006.00410.x

Lohmeier, J. H., & Lee, S. W. (2011). A school connectedness scale for use with adolescents. *Educational Research and Evaluation*, *17*(2), 85–95. http://doi.org/10.1080/13803611.2011.597108

Lunt, I., & Norwich, B. (1999). *Can effective schools be inclusive schools?* London: University of London, Institute of Education.

Ma, X. (2003). Sense of Belonging to School: Can Schools Make a Difference? *The Journal of Educational Research*, *96*(6), 340–349. http://doi.org/10.1080/00220670309596617

MacBeath, J., Meuretz, D., Schratz, M., & Jakobsen, L. B. (1999). *Evaluating Quality in School Education: A European Pilot Project. Final Report*. Brussels: European Commision.

Male, D. B. (1996). Who goes to MLD schools ? *British Journal of Special Education*, *23*(1), 35–41.

Male, D. B. (2011). The impact of a professional development programme on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. *Support for Learning*, *26*(4), 182–186. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9604.2011.01500.x

Markham, W. A., Young, R., Sweeting, H., West, P., & Aveyard, P. (2012). Does school ethos explain the relationship between value-added education and teenage substance use? A cohort study. *Social Science & Medicine (1982)*, *75*(1), 69–76.

http://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2012.02.045

Maslow, A. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, *50*(4), 370–96.

Mayer, G. R. (2001). Antisocial Behavior: Its Causes and Prevention Within Our Schools. *Education and Treatment of Children*, *24*(4), 414–429. http://doi.org/10.1353/etc.2012.0008

McCoy, S., & Banks, J. (2012). Simply academic? Why children with special educational needs don't like school. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, *27*(1), 81–97. http://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2011.640487

McLaughlin, T. (2005). THE EDUCATIVE IMPORTANCE OF ETHOS. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, *53*(3), 306–325. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8527.2005.00297.x

Mertens, M. D. (2005). *Research and Evaluation in Education and Pyschology: Integrating Diversity with Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods* (second). Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Messiou, K. (2006). Understanding marginalisation in education: The voice of children. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, *21*(3), 305–318. http://doi.org/10.1007/BF03173418

Mitra, D. L. (2004). The Significance of Students: Can Increasing "Student Voice" in Schools Lead to Gains in Youth Development? Teachers College Record, 106(4), 651–688. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9620.2004.00354.x

Monchy, M. de, Pijl, S. J., & Zandberg, T. (2004). Discrepancies in judging social inclusion and bullying of pupils with behaviour problems. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, *19*(3), 317–330. http://doi.org/10.1080/0885625042000262488

Moor, S., Ann, M., Hester, M., Elisabeth, W. J., Robert, E., Robert, W., & Caroline, B. (2007). Improving the recognition of depression in adolescence: Can we teach the teachers? *Journal of Adolescence*, *30*(1), 81–95. http://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2005.12.001

Moran, A., & Abbott, L. (2002). Developing inclusive schools: the pivotal role of teaching assistants in promoting inclusion in special and mainstream schools in Northern Ireland. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, *17*(2), 161–173. http://doi.org/10.1080/08856250210129074

Morris, A. B. (1995). The Catholic School Ethos: its effect on post-16 student academic achievement. *Educational Studies*, *21*(1), 67–83. http://doi.org/10.1080/0305569950210106

Morrison, G. M., You, S., Sharkey, J. D., Felix, E. D., & Griffiths, A. J. (2012). Mediation of school bonding and peer norms on the reciprocal effects of friend victimization and problem behavior. *School Psychology International*, *34*(1), 101–120. http://doi.org/10.1177/0143034312440214

Mortimore, P., Sammons, P., Stoll, L., Ecob, R., & Lewis, D. (1988). The effects of school membership on pupils' educational outcomes. *Research Papers in Education*, *3*(1), 3–26. http://doi.org/10.1080/0267152880030102

Mouton, S. G., Hawkins, J., McPherson, R. H., & Copley, J. (1996). School Attachment: perspectives of low-attached high school students. *Educational Psychology*, *16*(3), 297–304. Retrieved from http://www-tandfonline-com.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/doi/abs/10.1080/0144341960160306

Munn, P. (2003). Ethos and Discipline in the Secondary School. In T. G. K. Bryce & W. M. Humes (Eds.), *Scottish Education: Post-devolution* (Second, pp. 429–437). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Murray, C., & Greenberg, M. T. (2001). Relationships with teachers and bonds with school: Social emotional adjustment correlates for children with and without disabilities. *Psychology in the Schools*, *38*(1), 25–41. http://doi.org/10.1002/1520-6807(200101)38:1<25::AID-PITS4>3.0.CO;2-C

Naylor, P., & Cowie, H. (1999). The effectiveness of peer support systems in challenging school bullying: the perspectives and experiences of teachers and pupils. *Journal of Adolescence*, *22*, 467–479. http://doi.org/10.1006/jado.1999.0241

Nepi, L. D., Facondini, R., Nucci, F., & Peru, A. (2013). Evidence from full-inclusion model: the social position and sense of belonging of students with special educational needs and their peers in Italian primary school. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, *28*(3), 319–332. http://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2013.777530

Newmann, F. M. (1992). *Student engagement and achivement in American secondary schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Nichols, S. L. (2008). An Exploration of Students' Belongingness Beliefs in One Middle School. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, *76*(2), 145–169.

Norwich, B. (2004). Moderate Learning difficulties and inclusion: the end of a category. In *Paper presented at the British Educational Research Association Annual Conference, University of Manchester* (pp. 16–18).

Norwich, B., & Kelly, N. (2004). Pupils' views on inclusion: moderate learning difficulties and bullying in mainstream and special schools. *British Educational Research Journal*, *30*(1), 43–65. http://doi.org/10.1080/01411920310001629965

O'Connor, M., Hodkinson, A., Burton, D., & Torstensson, G. (2011). Pupil voice: listening to and hearing the educational experiences of young people with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD). *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *16*(3), 289–302. http://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2011.595095

Oliver, M. (1983). *Social Work with Disabled People*. Basingstoke: MacMillan.

Osterman, K. F. (2000). Students' Needs for Belonging in the School Community. *Review of Educational Research*, *70*(3), 323–367. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/1170786

Pallant, J. (2013). *A step by step guide to data analysis using IBM SPSS: Survival Manual* (fifth). Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Education.

Pijl, S. J., & Frissen, P. H. A. (2009). What Policymakers Can Do to Make Education Inclusive. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, *37*(3), 366–377. http://doi.org/10.1177/1741143209102789

Pijl, S. J., Frostad, P., & Flem, A. (2008). The Social Position of Pupils with Special Needs in Regular Schools. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, *52*(4), 387–405. http://doi.org/10.1080/00313830802184558

Pivik, J., McComas, J., & Laflamme, M. (2002). Barriers and Facilitators to Inclusive Education. *Exceptional Children*, *69*(1), 97–107. http://doi.org/10.1177/001440290206900107

Quinn, S., & Owen, S. (2016). Digging deeper: Understanding the power of "student voice." *Australian Journal of Education*, *60*(1), 60–72. http://doi.org/10.1177/0004944115626402

Reschly, A. L., & Christenson, S. L. (2006). Prediction of dropout among students with mild disabilities: A case for the inclusion of student engagement variables. *Remedial and Special Education*, *27*(5), 276–292.

Rescnick, M. D., Bearman, P. S., Blum, R. W., Bauman, K. E., Harris, K. M., Jones, J., … Udry, J. R. (1997). Protecting adolescents from harm: findings from the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health. *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, *278*(10), 823-832.

Reyes, M. R., Brackett, M. A., Rivers, S. E., White, M., & Salovey, P. (2012). Classroom emotional climate, student engagement, and academic achievement. *Journal of Educational Psychology2*, *104*(3), 700–712. http://doi.org/10.1037/a0027268

Robson, C. (2002). *Real World Research: a resource for social scientists and practioner-researchers*. Victoria: Blackwell Publishing.

Robson, C. (2011). *Real World Research* (third). UK: Wiley.

Rodkin, P. C., & Hodges, V. E. (2003). Bullies and victims in the peer ecology: Four questions for psychologists and school professionals. *School Psychology Review*, *32*(3), 384–400. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/docview/219654202?accountid=14511

Roeser, R. W., Midgley, C., & Urdan, T. . (1996). Perceptions of the School Psychological Environment and Early Adolescents' Psychological and Behavioral Functioning in School: The Mediating Role of Goals and Belonging. *Journal of Educational Psychology2*, *88*(3), 408–422.

Rogers, C. (2007). Experiencing an "Inclusive" Education: Parents and Their Children with "Special Educational Needs." *Britisch Journal of Sociology of Education*, *28*(1), 55–68. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/30036184

Rouse, M., & Florian, L. (1996). Effective Inclusive Schools: a study in two countries. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *26*(1), 71–85. http://doi.org/10.1080/0305764960260106

Rupani, P., Haughey, N., & Cooper, M. (2012). The impact of school-based counselling on young people's capacity to study and learn. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, *40*(5), 499–514. http://doi.org/10.1080/03069885.2012.718733

Rutter, M., Maughan, B., Mortimore, P., Ouston, J., & Smith, A. (1979). *15,000 hours: Secondary schools and their effects on children*. Shepton Mallet: Open Books.

Ryan, R. M., Stiller, J. D., & Lynch, J. H. (1994). Representations of Relationships to Teachers, Parents, and Friends as Predictors of Academic Motivation and Self-Esteem. *The Journal of Early Adolescence*, *14*(2), 226–249. http://doi.org/10.1177/027243169401400207

Saldaña. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (second). Los Angeles; London: SAGE.

Sarantakos, S. (2005). *Social Research* (third). Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Sebba, J., & Sachdev, D. (1997). *What works in inclusive education?* Barnardo's.

Sellman, E. (2009). Lessons learned: student voice at a school for pupils experiencing social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *14*(1), 33–48. http://doi.org/10.1080/13632750802655687

Sikes, P., Lawson, H., & Parker, M. (2007). Voices on: teachers and teaching assistants talk about inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *11*(3), 355–370. http://doi.org/10.1080/13603110701238819

Simonoff, E., Pickles, A., Chadwick, O., Gringras, P., Wood, N., Higgins, S., Moore, A. (2006). The Croydon Assessment of Learning Study: prevalence and educational identification of mild mental retardation. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, and Allied Disciplines*, *47*(8), 828–39. http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-7610.2006.01630.x

Smerdon, B. A. (2002). Students' perceptions of membership in their high schools: a Magazine of Theory and Practice. *Sociology of Education*, *75*(4), 287–305.

Smith, D. (2006). *School Experience and Deliquency at Ages 13 to 16*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Centre for Law and Society.

Soles, T., Bloom, E. L., Heath, N. L., & Karagiannakis, A. (2008). An exploration of teachers' current perceptions of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *13*(4), 275–290. http://doi.org/10.1080/13632750802442201

Solvason, C. (2005). Investigating specialist school ethos … or do you mean culture? *Educational Studies*, *31*(1), 85–94. http://doi.org/10.1080/0305569042000310985

Stephenson, P., & Smith, D. (2002). Why some schoold don't have bullies. In M. Elliott (Ed.), *Bullying: A Practical Guide to Coping for Schools* (third, pp. 12–25). Great

Britain: Pearson Education.

Symes, W., & Humphrey, N. (2012). Including pupils with autistic spectrum disorders in the classroom: the role of teaching assistants. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, *27*(4), 517–532. http://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2012.726019

Tashakkori, A., & Teddlie, C. (1998). *Mixed methodology: Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. Applied Social Research Methods Series (Vol. 46).* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Torrington, D., & Weightman, J. (1993). The Culture and Ethos of the School. In M. Preedy (Ed.), *Managing The Effective School* (pp. 44–55). London: The Open University.

Turner, E., & Waterhouse, S. (2003). Towards inclusive schools. Sustaining normal in-school careers. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *8*(1), 19–31.

UNESCO. (1994). *Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education*. Paris: UNESCO.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). (1989). UN General Assembly Resolutions 44/25.

Vaughn, S., Elbaum, B. E., & Schumm, J. S. (1996). The Effects of Inclusion on the Social Functioning of Students with Learning Disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *29*(6), 599–608. http://doi.org/10.1177/002221949602900604

Voelkl, K. E. (1996). Measuring Students' Identification with School. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, *56*(5), 760–770. http://doi.org/10.1177/0013164496056005003

Voelkl, K. E. (1997). Identification with School. *American Journal of Education*, *105*(3), 294–318. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/1085508

Warnock, M. (1978). *Report of the committe of enquiry into the education of handicapped children*. London: HMSO.

Webster, R., & Blatchford, P. (2013). The educational experiences of pupils with a Statement for special educational needs in mainstream primary schools: results from a systematic observation study. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, *28*(4), 463–479. http://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2013.820459

Webster, R., & Blatchford, P. (2015). Worlds apart? The nature and quality of the educational experiences of pupils with a statement for special educational needs in mainstream primary schools. *British Educational Research Journal*, *41*(2), 324–342. http://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3144

Webster, R., Blatchford, P., Bassett, P., Brown, P., Martin, C., & Russell, A. (2010). Double standards and first principles: framing teaching assistant support for pupils with special educational needs. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. Retrieved from http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/08856257.2010.513533

Wedell, K. (2003). Concepts of special educational need. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, *3*(2), 104–108. http://doi.org/10.1111/1471-3802.00002

Weems, G. H. (2007). Reverse scaling. In *Encyclopedia of Measurement and Statistics* (pp. 843–846). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

West, P., Sweeting, H., & Leyland, A. (2004). School effects on pupils' health behaviours: evidence in support of the health promoting school. *Research Papers in Education*, *19*(3), 261–291. http://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2004.10058645

Whitty, G., & Wisby, E. (2007). Whose voice? An exploration of the current policy interest in pupil involvement in school decision-making. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, *17*(3), 303–319. http://doi.org/10.1080/09620210701543957

Wilson, S., & MacLean, R. (2011). *Research methods and data analysis for psychology*. McGraw-Hill Higher Education.

Wise, S., & Upton, G. (1998). The Perceptions of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties of their mainstream schooling. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, 3*(3), 3–12. Retrieved from http://www-tandfonline-com.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/doi/abs/10.1080/1363275980030302

Yoneyama, S., & Naito, A. (2003). Problems with the Paradigm: The School as a Factor in Understanding Bullying (With Special Reference to Japan). *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, *24*(3), 315–330.

Youngstrom, E., Loeber, R., & Stouthamer-Loeber, M. (2000). Patterns and Correlates of Agreement Between Parent, Teacher, and Male Adolescent Ratings of Externalizing and Internalizing Problems. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *68*(6), 1038–1050.

Appendix I

Organisation of Statements: Questionnaire for Pupils

Theme	Item
Belonging	**(9 items)**
Liking	1
Participation in activities	2-4
Liking in expressions one's opinion	5
Equality	6
Values of school	7-9
Inclusive ethos	**(17 items)**
Behaviour management	*6 items*
Consistency	10-12
Clarity	12-14
Fairness in school rules	15
Inclusion	*11 items*
School's value of students	16
Access to decision making	17-19
School encouragement	20
Encouragement from others	21-22
Praise of pupils' academic attainment	23
Praise of pupils' academic effort	24
Access to equal opportunities	25-26
Social relations	**(30 items)**
Relations with teachers	*10 items*
Pupils' beliefs about their teachers	27-29
Pupils' behaviour towards their teachers	30-31
Pupils' perspectives about teachers' beliefs about them	32-24
Pupils' perspectives about teachers' behaviour towards them	35-36
Relations with teaching assistants	*10 items*
Relations with my (i.e. individual) TA	(5 items)
Pupils' beliefs about one's TA	37
Pupils' behaviour towards one's TA	38
Pupils' perspectives about one's TA beliefs about them	39
Pupils' perspectives about one's TA behaviour towards them	40-41
Relations with the TAs in class	(5 items)

Pupils' beliefs about their TAs	42
Pupils' behaviour towards their TAs	43
Pupils' perspectives about TAs' beliefs about them	44
Pupils' perspectives about TAs' behaviour towards them	45-46
Relations with pupils	*(10 items)*
Pupils' beliefs about their peers	47-50
Pupils' behaviour towards their peers	51-52
Pupils' perspectives about peers' beliefs about them	53-54
Pupils' perspectives about peers' behaviour towards them	55-56

Appendix II

Organisation of Statements: Questionnaire for Staff

Inclusive ethos	(26 items)
Behaviour management	*12 items*
Consistency	1-3
Clarity	4-6
Behaviour management strategies	7-8
Responsibility	9
Beliefs about reducing exclusions	10-11
Fairness in school rules	12
Inclusion	*14 items*
Beliefs about inclusion	13-14
Respect between staff and pupils	15-16
Access to decision making (autonomy)	17-18
School encouragement	19-20
Encouragement from others	21-23
Praise of pupils' academic attainment	24
Praise of pupils' academic effort	25
Access to equal opportunities	26

Appendix III

Questionnaire for Educational Staff

Pupils' sense of school belonging and the role of their social relations with peers and school staff

Study of a PhD research

What is the research about?

The research aims to investigate the overall schooling experience of SEN and typical developing pupils. It will assess pupils' sense of school belonging as well as their social relations with peers, teachers and teaching assistants. Results of this research project will enable schools to improve their inclusive policies for the benefit of all pupils.

What do I have to do?

The school ethos questionnaire consists of twenty six statements. You should rate each statement from 1 to 4 based on your beliefs, according to the following:

1= strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Agree, 4= Strongly Agree.

It would help us if you answered all items as best you can even if you are not absolutely certain or the item seems daft!

For example**:**

In this school, all pupils are treated the same:

1	2	③	4

In this example, the participant chose "Agree". Please choose the statement which better describes your opinion.

How will my answers be treated?

Anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained for all your responses.

What should I do after I complete it?

When you complete the questionnaire, put it inside the envelope provided, seal it and return it to the SENCO/AENCO. The questionnaires will be then collected by the researcher.

Tick as appropriate:

I agree to take part in the study: Yes ☐ No ☐

School Ethos Questionnaire for Inclusion and Behaviour Management

I am a… (tick more than one if appropriate)

Teacher ☐   Teaching Assistant ☐   Member of a senior management team ☐

Governor ☐   Admin team ☐   Other role (please state) _____

Behaviour management **In this school…**	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. Each member of staff is consistent in the way they manage pupil behaviour (in both recognition of good behaviour and discipline of challenging behaviour).	1	2	3	4
2. Staff throughout school respond to pupil behaviour in the same way.	1	2	3	4
3. Expectations for how pupils should behave are quite different for each individual member of staff.	1	2	3	4
4. There is a clear behaviour policy, understood by all staff.	1	2	3	4
5. Pupils have a clear understanding of the behaviour that will result in a sanction.	1	2	3	4
6. Pupils have a clear understanding of the behaviour that will result in a reward.	1	2	3	4
7. Strategies to improve pupil behaviour are targeted at a whole school level.	1	2	3	4
8. Positive behaviour management strategies are used much more frequently than sanctions.	1	2	3	4
9. Teachers take responsibility of the behaviour of all pupils in school (not just those in their class).	1	2	3	4
10. We would have fewer disciplinary exclusions if we received more funding.	1	2	3	4
11. 1:1 support is the most effective way of reducing the frequency of disciplinary exclusions.	1	2	3	4
12. Behaviour policies are implemented equally to all pupils.	1	2	3	4

Inclusion In this school….	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
13. We can find a way to meet the needs of all children in this environment.	1	2	3	4
14. The needs of some of our pupils would be better met in a specialist setting.	1	2	3	4
15. Staff treat pupils with respect.	1	2	3	4
16. Pupils' views are taken into consideration when decisions are made in school.	1	2	3	4
17. Teachers and pupils plan things together in this school.	1	2	3	4
18. There is a student council (or student body) here that can decide on some really important things.	1	2	3	4
19. Students with SEN should be provided with opportunities to participate in a meaningful way in the full range of activities in the classroom.	1	2	3	4
20. Students with SEN should be provided with opportunities to participate in student council (or student body).	1	2	3	4
21. Students with SEN in class do not receive the attention they deserve from the class teacher.	1	2	3	4
22. In this school, students learn collaboratively.	1	2	3	4
23. Students with SEN are the responsibility of the learning support team.	1	2	3	4
24. Inclusion of students with SEN in mainstream classroom holds back the academic achievement of the rest of the class.	1	2	3	4
25. Teachers value the effort of children more than the marks they receive.	1	2	3	4
26. Teachers change their teaching approaches to accommodate students with SEN.	1	2	3	4

Thank you!

Appendix IV

Questionnaire for Pupils

Pupils' sense of school belonging and the role of their social relations with peers and school staff

Study of a PhD research

What is the research about?

I want to know more about what makes you feel good about school and included within it.

What do I have to do?

The questionnaire has fifty-six statements. For each statement, you should circle the number from 1 to 5 that best describes your feelings, according to the following:

1= strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neither agree nor disagree, 4= Agree, 5= strongly agree

For example:

In this school pupils are treated the same:	1	2	3	④	5

In this example, the pupil chose "**Agree**".

It would help me if you answered all items as best you can even if you are not absolutely certain or the item seems daft!

Who can see my answers?

All your answers are confidential, only I (the researcher) will see your questionnaire. This means that I'll make sure that all information collected will be kept strictly between you and me. No one else, such as your parents, teachers or other students, will know what you have written or said.

What should I do after I complete it?

When you complete the questionnaire, put it in the provided envelop and close it. In this way, no one will be able to see what you have written.

Tick as appropriate:

I agree to take part in the study: Yes ☐   No ☐

Please write in **CAPITALS,** for example:

| J | O | H | N | | | |

NAME:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |

SURNAME:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |

I am a   Boy ☐ Girl ☐   (tick as appropriate)

I am in   Year 8 ☐   Year 9 ☐   Year 10 ☐   (tick as appropriate)

Would you like to take part in an interview? (tick as appropriate)

YES ☐   NO ☐

Please answer the questions below. There are no right or wrong answers. Please circle the number that best describes your feelings.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1. **I like school**	1	2	3	4	5
2. **I like to take part in lots of school-organised activities (i.e. clubs, teams).**	1	2	3	4	5
3. **I like to take part in class discussions and activities.**	1	2	3	4	5
4. **I like to take part in student council (or student body).**	1	2	3	4	5
5. **I like to express my opinion/ ideas in the classroom.**	1	2	3	4	5
6. **I feel equal to other pupils in this school.**	1	2	3	4	5
7. **School is a waste of time.**	1	2	3	4	5
8. **School teaches me things that will help me in later life.**	1	2	3	4	5
9. **Working hard at school is important to me.**	1	2	3	4	5

In this school...	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
10. All of my teachers reward my good behaviour in the same way.	1	2	3	4	5
11. All of my teachers punish my bad behaviour in the same way.	1	2	3	4	5
12. All pupils in this school understand how they are expected to behave.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I have a clear understanding of the behaviour that will get me into trouble.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I have a clear understanding of the behaviour that will get me a reward.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Rules at this school applied equally to all pupils.	1	2	3	4	5
16. My needs are met in this school.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Teacher and pupils plan things together in this school.	1	2	3	4	5
18. There is a student council (or student body) here that I can decide on some really important things that goes on in this school.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I have the chance to start up my own clubs in this school.	1	2	3	4	5
20. In this school, I am encouraged to take part in class discussions and activities just like other pupils.	1	2	3	4	5
21. In the class, I am encouraged to ask questions when I don't understand something in the material we are studying.	1	2	3	4	5

In this school…	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
22. In lesson, I am often encouraged to work with other pupils in pairs and small groups.	1	2	3	4	5
23. In this school, teachers only care about the clever pupils.	1	2	3	4	5
24. In this school teachers praise my effort not the marks I receive.	1	2	3	4	5
25. My school helps me to be the best I can be.	1	2	3	4	5
26. In the classroom, teachers try to meet the learning needs of all pupils by helping them learn in different ways.	1	2	3	4	5
27. I like my teachers this year.	1	2	3	4	5
28. My teachers are impatient towards me.	1	2	3	4	5
29. My teachers are supportive when I don't understand something in the lesson.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Behaving badly is a way to show my teachers I don't understand.	1	2	3	4	5
31. I listen carefully to what my teachers say to me.	1	2	3	4	5
32. My teachers think I am not clever.	1	2	3	4	5
33. My teachers think I am a troublemaker.	1	2	3	4	5
34. My teachers respect me for what I am.	1	2	3	4	5
35. My teachers ignore me in class.	1	2	3	4	5
36. My teachers give me extra help when I need it.	1	2	3	4	5

Do you have your own Teaching Assistant (TA)? (tick as appropriate)

YES ☐   If **YES** please fill in the following questions (37 to 41)

NO ☐   If **NO** please leave out items 37 to 41

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
37. **My TA is very supportive.**	1	2	3	4	5
38. **I listen carefully to what my TA says to me.**	1	2	3	4	5
39. **My TA respects me for what I am.**	1	2	3	4	5
40. **My TA helps me to progress.**	1	2	3	4	5
41. **My TA understands my needs.**	1	2	3	4	5

Do you work with a Teaching Assistant (TA) in any of your classes? (tick as appropriate)

YES ☐   If **YES** please fill in the following questions (42 to 46)

NO ☐   If **NO** please leave out items 42 to 46, and move to item 47

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
42. **The TA in my class is very supportive.**	1	2	3	4	5
43. **I listen carefully to what the TA in my class says to me.**	1	2	3	4	5
44. **The TA in my class respects me for what I am.**	1	2	3	4	5
45. **The TA in my class helps me to progress.**	1	2	3	4	5
46. **The TA in my class understands my needs.**	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
47. I have a close friend in this school who I can trust.	1	2	3	4	5
48. Pupils in this school are impatient towards me.	1	2	3	4	5
49. Pupils in this school are very friendly.	1	2	3	4	5
50. It's hard for me to make friends in this school.	1	2	3	4	5
51. I ignore most of the pupils in this school.	1	2	3	4	5
52. I am nice to most pupils in this school.	1	2	3	4	5
53. Pupils think of me as not fitting in with any group.	1	2	3	4	5
54. My classmates think I am not clever.	1	2	3	4	5
55. My classmates help me in class when I am stuck with my work.	1	2	3	4	5
56. My classmates ignore me.	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you!

Appendix V

Ice Breaking Activity

The researcher said to pupils four statements about herself, as follows:

- I did bungee jamming from 150 feet.
- In my free time, I work as a singer in a rock band.
- English is my first language.
- I have a snake as a pet.

The researcher pinpointed that only one is true. Pupils were then had to guess the correct one. After finishing that activity, it was their turn to give four statements about themselves, and researchers turn to guess.

Appendix VI

Questions of the Semi-Structured Interviews

Questions	Themes
Pupils' sense of School Belonging	
Do you like school?	SOSB[liking]
What do you like most about (being at) school?	SOSB[liking]-probes
What you don't like about (being at) school?	SOSB[liking]
Do you like taking part in school activities?	SOSB[participation in school activities]
Do you like expressing your opinion in class? What about school?	SOSB[Express opinion]
What do you think about student council (body)? Do you like taking part?	SOSB [participate in school]
Do you feel that you are treated as everyone else in this school?	SOSB[equality]
How important do you think school is for your life?	SOSB[students' value of school]

Pupils' perspectives of their school ethos	
Pupils' beliefs of behaviour management of school	
How would you describe the way your teachers or other members of the school staff manage your behaviour?	BM[consistency]
Do all teachers reward your good behaviour in the same way?	BM[consistency]
Do all teachers punish you in the same way when you misbehave?	BM[consistency]
Do you know about the school rules?	BM[clarity]
For example: Do you know which behaviour will get you into trouble? Do you know which behaviour will get you a reward?	

In your opinion, do you think school rules apply equally to all pupils?	BM[Fairness in school rules]
Pupils' feelings of school efforts to encourage their participation	
Do you have the opportunity to decide about important things at your school?	I[Access to decision making and autonomy]
Does school encourage you to take part in school activities?	I[School encouragement]
Does school encourage you to work with other students in pairs and small groups?	
Is there anyone in your school who you think encourage your learning?	I[Encouragement from others]
Do you think some students get more teachers' attention than others in the class?	I[Praise of academic attainment]
What do you think school rewards more on pupils? (Effort? attainment? Good behaviour?)	I[Praise of academic effort]
Do you think you have equal attention from your teachers, to other pupils?	I[Access to equal opportunities]
Are there times that you don't understand something in lesson?	I[Access to equal opportunities]
Have you ever been absent because you don't understand during the lesson?	

Pupils' perspectives of their social relations	
Social relations with teachers	
With whom do you feel close at school?	
What do you think about your teachers? Why? Do you like them…	[Students' beliefs about their teachers]

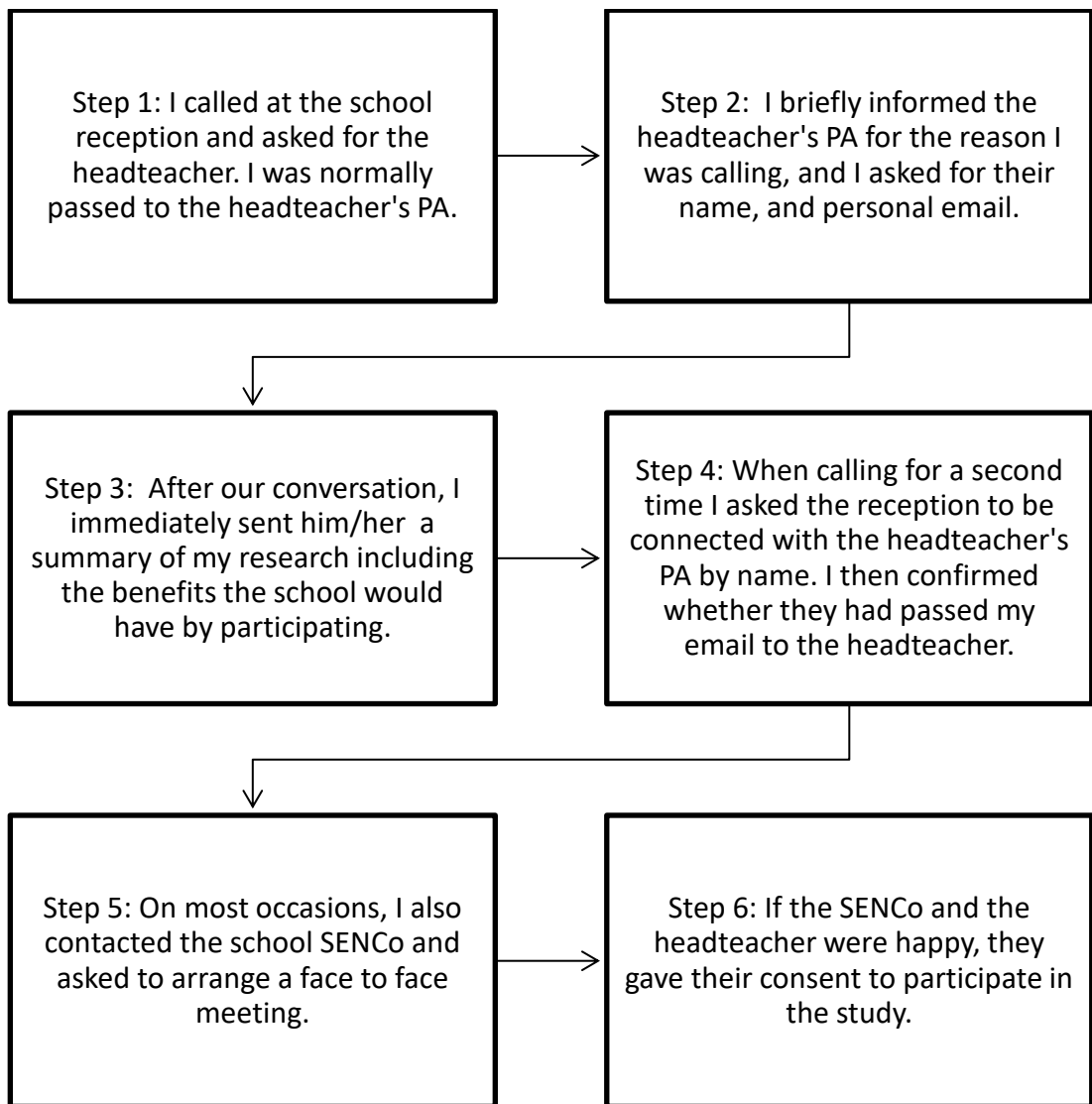|	
How do you behave toward them? Why?	[Students' behaviour towards their teachers]
Social relations with teaching assistants	
Do you have a Teaching assistant?	
Do you have a TA in any of your classes?	
How do teaching assistants behave towards pupils?	[Students' general perspectives about the TA-student relations in school]
What do you think about your teaching assistants?	[Students' beliefs about their TAs]
How is your behaviour towards them?	[Students' behaviour towards their TAs]

Social relations with pupils	
What do you think about the pupils at your school?	[Pupils' beliefs about their peers]
How do you behave towards them?	[Pupils' behaviour towards their peers]
Is it easy to make friends at school?	
Is there a pupil that you can trust in this school?	
Overall, how well do you feel you belong or fit in, at your school?	[belonging]
If you had the power to change something at this school what would that be?	

Appendix VII

Flowchart: Strategy of Recruiting Schools

Step 1: I called at the school reception and asked for the headteacher. I was normally passed to the headteacher's PA.	Step 2: I briefly informed the headteacher's PA for the reason I was calling, and I asked for their name, and personal email.
Step 3: After our conversation, I immediately sent him/her a summary of my research including the benefits the school would have by participating.	Step 4: When calling for a second time I asked the reception to be connected with the headteacher's PA by name. I then confirmed whether they had passed my email to the headteacher.
Step 5: On most occasions, I also contacted the school SENCo and asked to arrange a face to face meeting.	Step 6: If the SENCo and the headteacher were happy, they gave their consent to participate in the study.

Appendix VIII

Consent Forms for Educational Staff

Information leaflet for school staff

Dear Educational Practitioner,

Your school is contributing to an Institute of Education research project being conducted by Eleni Dimitrellou, a doctorate student in Psychology of Education, supervised by Dr Jane Hurry, and Dr Dawn Male.

The aim of the research is to examine the overall schooling experience of all students, looking specifically into how pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) can feel more included in mainstream schools, by focusing on their personal feeling of inclusion (sense of school belonging). We consider this to be an important, but under-researched area. Gaining a greater understanding of the reasons that pupils with or without SEN are likely to receive fixed-term exclusions or choose to be absent from school could make a valuable contribution to support further the inclusive development of mainstream schools.

I would like to sample pupils from Years 7, 8 and 9. Pupils will be asked to complete two questionnaires in class (perhaps during tutor time) the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire to screen for pupils' behavioural and emotional difficulties, and one main questionnaire for examining pupils' sense of belonging, school ethos and social relations (max 15 and 30 minutes respectively). I would also like to interview a small number of pupils (max. 30 minutes each). I will make every effort to limit the level of disturbance and minimise the withdrawal of pupils from their lesson/s.

You are asked to complete the school ethos questionnaire consisting of 26 items, which will take approximately 10 minutes. Your participation is voluntarily. However, your contribution would be highly appreciated.

If you **do not** want to participate, please sign the enclosed Consent Form and return in the provided envelope to the SENCO.

The research has been reviewed and approved by the Research Ethics Committee at the Institute of Education. A Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) clearance has been obtained. If you have any queries, or are interested in finding out more about our research, please contact Eleni Dimitrellou (edimitrellou@ioe.ac.uk) or Dr Jane Hurry ((j.hurry@ioe.ac.uk).

Yours sincerely,
Eleni Dimitrellou
Jane Hurry

Name of educational practitioner_____

I have read the project leaflet and I am aware of the study's aims, research activities envisaged and the degree of involvement required from me.

Tick as appropriate:

I am willing to participate in this research:

I am not willing to participate in this research:

Signed_____   date_____

(by teacher)

Signed_____   date_____

(by researcher)

Appendix IX

Consents Forms to Parents/Guardians

Letter to Parents/Guardians

Your child's school is contributing to an Institute of Education research project being conducted by Eleni Dimitrellou, a doctoral student, supervised by Dr Jane Hurry, and Dr Dawn Male. The researcher has enhanced DBS clearance. Our project is investigating pupils' sense of school belonging and the role of their social relations with peers and school staff.

The aim of the research is to examine the overall schooling experience of all students, looking specifically into how pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) can feel more included in mainstream schools. This research contributes by focusing on pupil's own feelings towards school. The results will help educational practitioners understand the reasons that pupils with or without SEN are likely to receive fixed-term exclusions or be absent from mainstream schools.

We will ask pupils from year 7 to year 9 to complete the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire and the sense of school belonging questionnaire (perhaps during tutor time). Following this, the researcher will interview a few willing pupils to hear about their opinions in their own words.

In case you **do not** wish your child to participate, please fill in the slip below and return to their class teacher.

If you have any queries, or are interested in finding out more about our research, please contact:

Eleni Dimitrellou (edimitrellou@ioe.ac.uk, telephone: 0758 710 8693), Dr Jane Hurry (j.hurry@ioe.ac.uk, telephone: 0207 612 6931), or Dr Dawn Male (Dawn.Male@ioe.ac.uk, telephone: 020 7612 6284)

Thank you very much for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

Eleni Dimitrellou
Jane Hurry
Dawn Male
Institute of Education, University of London

I **do not** wish my child to participate in the research project being undertaken by the Institute of Education, University of London.

Child's name:
Parent/Guardian's name:
Parent/Guardian's signature:
Date:

I **do not** wish my child to participate in the research project being undertaken by the Institute of Education, University of London.

Appendix X

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)

Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire

For each item, please mark the box for Not True, Somewhat True or Certainly True. It would help us if you answered all items as best you can even if you are not absolutely certain or the item seems daft! Please give your answers on the basis of how things have been for you over the last six months.

Your Name .... Male/Female

Date of Birth...

	Not True	Somewhat True	Certainly True
I try to be nice to other people. I care about their feelings	☐	☐	☐
I am restless, I cannot stay still for long	☐	☐	☐
I get a lot of headaches, stomach-aches or sickness	☐	☐	☐
I usually share with others (food, games, pens etc.)	☐	☐	☐
I get very angry and often lose my temper	☐	☐	☐
I am usually on my own. I generally play alone or keep to myself	☐	☐	☐
I usually do as I am told	☐	☐	☐
I worry a lot	☐	☐	☐
I am helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill	☐	☐	☐
I am constantly fidgeting or squirming	☐	☐	☐
I have one good friend or more	☐	☐	☐
I fight a lot. I can make other people do what I want	☐	☐	☐
I am often unhappy, down-hearted or tearful	☐	☐	☐
Other people my age generally like me	☐	☐	☐
I am easily distracted, I find it difficult to concentrate	☐	☐	☐
I am nervous in new situations. I easily lose confidence	☐	☐	☐
I am kind to younger children	☐	☐	☐
I am often accused of lying or cheating	☐	☐	☐
Other children or young people pick on me or bully me	☐	☐	☐
I often volunteer to help others (parents, teachers, children)	☐	☐	☐
I think before I do things	☐	☐	☐
I take things that are not mine from home, school or elsewhere	☐	☐	☐
I get on better with adults than with people my own age	☐	☐	☐
I have many fears, I am easily scared	☐	☐	☐
I finish the work I'm doing. My attention is good	☐	☐	☐

Your signature .... Today's date ....

Thank you very much for your help