



Restoring relationships: An investigation into the effect that behaviour approaches have on teacher-student relationships

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Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology

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Abstract

A substantial research base indicates that the relationships between teachers and students significantly affect outcomes for children including emotional wellbeing, academic achievement and behaviour. As a trainee educational psychologist (EP) working in schools I have observed that some discipline procedures appear to be at odds with the development and maintenance of positive teacher-student relationships.

Chapter 1: The Systematic Review - A systematic review of the literature examined the effect of disciplinary actions on students' perceptions of their teachers, and the teacher-student relationship. Six articles fulfilled the inclusion and exclusion criteria. These tended to be large scale data from international sources using questionnaire and observation measures. The systematic review identified that behaviourist discipline procedures were associated with various negative measures of teacher-student relationships.

Chapter 2 : Bridging Document - The bridging document reflected the transition between the findings of the systematic review and the empirical study. Discussion was had around the need for research in the area of teacher-student relationships and teachers' responses to student behaviour. The conceptual framework that underlined my research was described, including reflections of my axiology, ontology, epistemology and methodology.

Chapter 3 : The Empirical Research - A mixed-methods case study investigated the consequence-based behaviour system of a primary school which centred upon missing playtime to dissuade unwanted behaviours. The introduction of a restorative conversation, inspired by the restorative justice movement, was explored as an alternative approach to addressing behaviour. This approach aimed to maintain or even promote teacher-student relationships. As a piece of action research, this project brought together a wide variety of information gathering approaches including: examining school data and policies, staff interviews, observations, and questionnaire measures of two interpersonal teacher behaviour factors of 'influence' (management / leadership) and 'proximity' (warmth / closeness). The research recognised that when experiencing the school's traditional approach to behaviour students may have perceived less emotional warmth and leadership from their teachers. Nevertheless, a restorative conversation had a positive effect upon teacher-student

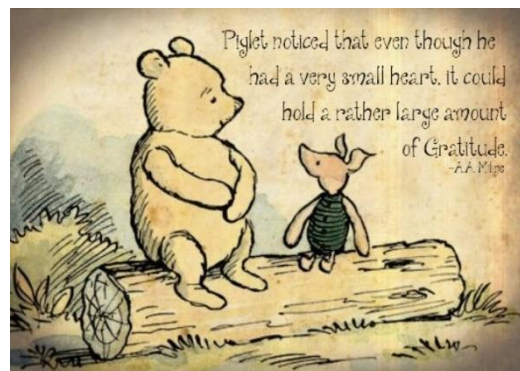
relationships, and in doing so may have enabled better outcomes for children who have demonstrated unwanted behaviours.

This research has appreciated the practice of teachers in this primary school and has contributed to the development of a behaviour approach that promotes teacher-student relationships. My contribution to the changes in this primary school indicates the role that EPs may play in addressing school policy and practice. This research concludes with a plea to establish the restoration of relationships as the primary focus of behaviour approaches within schools.

Thanks

When you come to the end you are often tempted to think back to the beginning. I wanted to be an educational psychologist to make a difference, but I also wanted to challenge myself, to build a career, to make my family proud, and to be the best me I could be. It is fair to say that my motivations have changed often during this course; at times the enthusiast drives I had when I started, at times just the motivation to get to the end! Regardless of my motivations, the people I owe my doctorate to have remained the same.

- To the psychologists and writers that have inspired me through the papers I read for letting me stand on your shoulders;
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Chapter 1. Systematic review:

What is the effect of disciplinary actions on students' perceptions of their teachers, and the teacher-student relationship?

Abstract

On the advice of the UK government, schools have established whole-school discipline procedures to address unwanted student behaviours. Overwhelming research evidence indicates that positive teacher-student relationships improve student outcomes in terms of learning, future behaviour and students' experiences of school (e.g. Bozkurt and Ozden, 2010; O'Connor, 2010; Newberry, 2013; Breeman *et al.*, 2014; McGrath and Van Bergen, 2015). As such, it is useful to consider if teachers' response to student behaviour affects their relationship. This systematic review answers the question: what is the effect of disciplinary actions on students' perception of their teachers, and the teacher-student relationship?

The systematic review structure proposed by Petticrew and Roberts (2008) was followed. In addition there was an emphasis on the context and mechanisms of correlations inspired by the ideas of realist evaluation (Pawson and Tilley, 1994; Pawson *et al.*, 2005). Six studies were identified by the systematic search. The characteristics of these studies, including the participants, context, design, analysis, purpose and measures were described in detail. The findings of the studies were considered in light of the weight of evidence based upon the effect sizes reported and the quality of the studies. This systematic review concluded that the discipline approach used to address unwanted behaviour has an effect on students' perceptions of their teacher and the teacher-student relationship.

Introduction

Background

Student behaviour is a significant concern for schools and teachers. Education secretary, Nicky Morgan recently claimed that minor misdemeanours cost students an average of 38 days of learning each year (Mason, 2015). By establishing Tom Bennet as the new 'Tsar' for behaviour, the current UK government demonstrated that student behaviour should be a significant focus for modern education. Student behaviour has a significant effect not only on children's achievement (Hattie and Yates, 2013), but also on the experiences of teachers (O'Connor, 2010; Tsouloupas *et al.*, 2010). Given that the outcomes for children who are identified as having behaviour difficulties are 'dismal' (Mihalas *et al.*, 2009), how teachers respond to, and attempt to reduce, unwanted behaviours is an important issue for educationalists.

In addressing behaviour head teachers have been encouraged by the Department for Education (2014) to adopt a behaviour policy which outlines the whole-school discipline procedures. This commonly includes the use of a stepped consequence system, internal exclusions, removal from the classroom, and loss of privileges. In addition to the use of school-wide strategies, teachers may have their own personal approach to discipline with differing use of behaviours such as discussion, recognition, hinting, coercion, humiliation, humour, shouting or ignoring (e.g. Chiu and Chow, 2011; Roache and Lewis, 2011b; Hattie and Yates, 2013).

Government guidance recommends that reward systems are put in place alongside sanctions (Department for Education, 2014), however, the emphasis of behaviour policies tends to be more upon extinguishing unwanted behaviours than on the development of wanted behaviours. There is extensive research around the effectiveness of different discipline approaches as was apparent in the meta-analysis of behaviour interventions by Wilson and Lipsey (2007). In their research Wilson and Lipsey considered over two hundred intervention studies dated from 1950 onwards. The authors reported that the effectiveness of different approaches is primarily (and sometimes exclusively) judged upon the reduction of unwanted behaviours, such as those that are aggressive or disruptive behaviours.

An initial exploration of the literature suggested that there was a lack of consideration of other outcomes of behaviour management or of students' views of such choices. There is

overwhelming research evidence that having a positive relationship between teachers and students improves student outcomes in terms of learning, future behaviour and students' experiences of school (e.g. Bozkurt and Ozden, 2010; O'Connor, 2010; Newberry, 2013; Breeman *et al.*, 2014; McGrath and Van Bergen, 2015). Hattie and Yates (2013) concluded that outcomes for students were more greatly affected by teacher-student relationships than by many other factors including teacher training, professional development and teacher expectations. There is a bi-directional interaction within the teacher-student relationship as the behaviour of both can affect the relationship (Sutherland *et al.*, 2013). As such, it is hypothesised that how a teacher responds to a student's behaviour has an effect on the student's perception of the teacher and, subsequently, the teacher-student relationship.

Focus of the review

This review aims to identify and examine the research that will explore the ill-attended relationship between teacher behaviour and students' experiences. My approach to this research is associated with my critical realist perspective which assumes that though we can understand social phenomenon through investigating it, this cannot be done in a 'self-evident, unmediated fashion' (Willig, 2013, p. 16). Further to this I recognise that my values, interests and experiences influence the review question that I ask, as well as how I answer it. This systematic review of literature addresses the question: what is the effect of disciplinary actions on students' perception of their teachers, and the teacher-student relationship?

Throughout the review the term *disciplinary action* is used to describe any behaviour that teacher displays in response to students' use of unwanted behaviour. These teacher behaviours do not necessarily need to be part of a schools' formal discipline procedure and may refer to the individual actions of teachers. This paper does not focus on student behaviour or how they should be judged, as the interest lies in how teachers respond to any behaviour that they decide they do not want in their classroom or school. As such I am viewing 'good' or 'bad' behaviour as social constructs that are dependent upon the views of those who are in a position to judge the behaviour (Danforth, 2007; Orsati and Causton-Theoharis, 2013). Similarly, I am not making a judgement regarding how teacher-student relationships should be operationalised, but instead will be interested to discover what researchers on the topic choose to measure when identifying students' perceptions of their teacher and the teacher-student relationship.

Method

Petticrew and Roberts (2008) proposed structure (summarised in Table 1) was used to conduct the systematic review of literature. Additionally my approach was inspired by the ideas of realist evaluation (Pawson and Tilley, 1994). A realist systematic review, as described by Pawson *et al.* (2005), considers not only causation but also the *context* and the *mechanisms* for change. Although I am not assessing the effectiveness of an intervention, as in a typical systematic review, I am keen to understand the conditions under which correlations can be identified. Thus the aim is not to ‘provide simple answers to complex questions’ (Pawson *et al.*, 2005, p. 21) but to create rich and detailed understanding on the current literature which addresses this question.

Table 1: Petticrew and Roberts' systematic review structure (2008, p.27)

| Systematic review steps |
|---|
| 1. Clearly define the review question in consultation with anticipated users |
| 2. Determine the type of studies needed to answer the question |
| 3. Carry out a comprehensive literature search to locate these studies |
| 4. Screen the studies found using inclusion criteria to identify studies for in-depth review |
| 5. Describe the included studies to ‘map’ the field, and critically appraise them for quality and relevance |
| 6. Synthesise studies’ findings |
| 7. Communicate outcomes of the review |

The initial search and systematic screening of literature was conducted between 06.11.13 and 27.02.14.

Initial search

A clear review question was established by considering challenges presented in professional practice and through an initial exploration of relevant literature. This question guided me to the types of studies that would be needed, and thus the initial inclusion criteria and search terms (including synonyms) that would be used (Table 2). It was recognised that the review

may suffer from ‘the file draw effect’ given the inclusion of only published articles, nevertheless, only including peer reviewed published articles may provide a degree of quality assurance (Petticrew and Roberts, 2008). Limits, such as the language and timespan, were chosen pragmatically to identify accessible and recent literature, with survey searches indicating that there was little research over ten-years old on this topic. Whilst several words could be used to refer to the target group (e.g. pupils, children, students, teenagers, learner, etc.), inclusion of these varied terms in initial survey searches resulted in an unmanageable quantity of research. As a pragmatic choice, I decided to use the word ‘students’ as survey searches revealed that many articles referred to the term ‘teacher-student relationships’, which was central to the systematic review question. I recognise that this may be viewed as a limitation and that other, different literature may have been reached had I included other terms for the target group.

Table 2: Search terms used for the initial search

| Factor A | Factor B | Context | Limits |
|--|--|---|---|
| TITLE OR ABSTRACT OR KEYWORDS (“teacher-student relationship” OR “student-teacher relationship” OR relationship) | TITLE OR ABSTRACT OR KEYWORDS (discipline OR punishment OR consequence OR behaviour management OR classroom management OR behaviour) | TITLE OR ABSTRACT OR KEYWORDS (School OR classroom) | LANGUAGE: English TIMESPAN: 2004-current |

Databases that were likely to yield relevant studies, including two generic (Web of Knowledge; Scopus) and two discipline-specific databases (ERIC; PsychInfo), were selected (Petticrew and Roberts’ stage 3).

Systematic screening

The systematic screening method proposed by Petticrew and Roberts (2008) involves a somewhat subjective process of identifying studies that should be considered for the in-depth review: ‘sift through retrieved studies, decide which ones look as if they fully meet the inclusion criteria, and thus need more detailed examination and which do not’ (p.27). In order to do this I established three exclusion criteria through which I hoped to further remove irrelevant literature (table 3).

Table 3: Systematic screening exclusion criteria

| Exclusion criteria | Examples from excluded studies |
|---|---|
| 1. Inappropriate context | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-compulsory education settings • Pre-school settings • Behaviour outside of education (i.e. criminal behaviour) • Behaviour of families • Health behaviour |
| 2. Incorrect factor arrangement or involvement of factors other than A and B | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Studies exploring the impact of teacher-student relationship on student behaviour • Studies exploring the impact of discipline on student behaviour • Studies exploring the impact of discipline on student's perceptions of their own behaviour or identity as a learner |
| 3. Not an empirical study | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opinion pieces • Literature reviews • Policy documents |

Full text review

The second exclusion criteria used in the systematic screening aimed to leave only studies which had the correct arrangement of factors to appropriately answer the review question. Nevertheless, I found that these factors (*teacher-student relationship* and *disciplinary action*) were highly interwoven and, as such, several studies passed the screen despite not directly answering the systematic review question. An additional process was added to Petticrew and Roberts' stage 4 in which I carefully read and paraphrased each individual article that had passed the systematic screen to clarify whether or not the study should have been abandoned at systematic screening exclusion criteria 2. Only five studies were returned by this process. 'Snowballing' (Pawson *et al.*, 2005), whereby the studies referenced by successful articles are screened, returned an additional study that fulfilled all exclusion and inclusion criteria.

Identifying studies for in-depth review

Table 4 demonstrates how the in-depth articles were identified through the initial search, systematic screening and full text review process. Some studies were identified through more than one database, thus are repeated in the table.

Table 4: Process of initial search, systematic screening and full text review (following Petticrew and Roberts, 2008, stage 3 and 4)

| | | Online database sources | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| | | ERIC | PSYCH Info | Web Of Knowledge | Scopus |
| Articles returned by initial search | | 60 found | 41 found | 40 found | 33 found |
| Systematic screening exclusion criteria (overlap present) | 1. Inappropriate context | 42 excluded | 34 excluded | 26 excluded | 14 excluded |
| | 2. Incorrect factor arrangement | 17 excluded | 8 excluded | 13 excluded | 15 excluded |
| | 3. Not an empirical study | 4 excluded | 1 excluded | 1 excluded | 3 excluded |
| Articles remaining after systematic screening | | 1 remaining | 2 remaining | 4 remaining | 7 remaining |
| Articles remaining after full text review | | Lewis et al., 2008 | Mitchell & Bradshaw, 2013 Roache & Lewis, 2011 | de Jong et al., 2013 Mitchell & Bradshaw, 2013 | de Jong et al., 2013 Lewis et al., 2008 Lewis et al., 2012 |
| | | Snowballing from papers remaining after full text review | | | |
| Articles returned by search | | 27 found | | | |
| Articles remaining after screening and full text review | | Mainhard et al., 2011 | | | |

Detailed descriptions of studies in the in-depth review

The six identified studies were critically appraised following Petticrew and Roberts' stage 5 guidelines. This was presented within a detailed descriptive table (see p.24) which explored the following study characteristics:

STUDY – The publication year indicated how recent the research was. It was of particular importance that the authors were named as several papers involved repeated authors. The national context of the papers was also stated.

PARTICIPANTS and CONTEXT – The number of participants indicated the extensiveness of the research. As the review question addressed the interaction between teachers and students it was useful to identify which of these groups were considered the main participants. Previous literature indicates that the designation of the school (i.e. primary or secondary) could significantly influence the teacher-student interactions, thus the context was stated.

DESIGN AND ANALYSIS, and PURPOSE – The nature of the data and how it was handled inform the types of results that could be expected. The purpose of the study recognised the aims of the researchers and their focus.

MEASURES – All variables were recorded regardless of the extent to which they related to the review question. The measures were reported to clarify whether or not the same tools were being used in different studies. This section also stated who completed the measure (i.e. students, teachers or researchers).

SIGNIFICANT RESULTS – All significant results were stated. ‘Significant’ refers to results in which the difference between groups is more than would be expected by chance. This was reliant upon the level of significance set by the authors (i.e. $p < 0.05$ or $p < 0.01$). Results that directly addressed the review question were highlighted.

EFFECT SIZE OF SIGNIFICANT AND RELEVANT RESULTS – Effect sizes inform the value that can be placed on the studies’ findings during the systematic review synthesis. Standardised effect sizes are scaled to address variability within the sample population. This can include both d and r families which differ by the sensitivity of the effect size to the group’s base rate (Baguley, 2009). If reported by the author *Cohen’s d* and *Pearson’s r* were used to identify if the effects (positive or negative) were small, medium or large.

Quality and weight of evidence

Following the detailed description of the studies, I assessed the evidence given by the studies through the use of the EPPI-Centre (2007) Weight of Evidence (WoE) tool. This tool uses three

criteria to inform an overall judgement of the weight of the study in answering the systematic review question. These judgements are largely subjective. The basis of these judgements is described in Table 5. Unlike judgement A, which considered the studies on their individual merit, judgements B and C took into account the aims of this systematic review.

Table 5: Weight of evidence judgements

| Judgement | Basis of judgement |
|--------------------|---|
| Judgement A | The soundness of the studies based on ethics, participation, justification for research design, procedure, reporting and providing explanations on 'drop-out', validity of tools, clarity over analysis, triangulation of results, exploration of negative findings, coherence and warrant. |
| Judgement B | The appropriateness of the design and analysis in answering the systematic review question. |
| Judgement C | The relevance the study had in addressing the systematic review question, given the purpose, participants, context, design and measures used. |
| Judgement D | The overall weight of the studies taking into account judgements A, B and C. |

In-depth review of studies: Analysis and findings

In this section I examine the studies identified through the systematic review search process. Firstly, there will be a detailed description table of the studies and comparisons and contrasts of the studies' characteristics, concepts, and design and analysis. A discussion of the role of axiology and epistemology in the evaluation of these studies will follow a detailed quality assessment. The WoE tool, with an analysis of the overall value of each study, will conclude this section.

Whilst the outcomes of the studies are central in showing *what* answers the studies gave to the review question, following a realist evaluation approach (Pawson *et al.*, 2005) this section also aims to explain *how* studies have answered the systematic review question.

Detailed description of studies

Table 6 describes the methodological features and outcomes of the studies. Please note that this table continues across several pages due to the detail required.

Table 6: Table of in-depth descriptions of articles identified through the systematic review process

| Participants and context | Design, Analysis and Purpose | Measures | Significant Results (*p<0.05; **p<0.01) – results most relevant in answering the review question are highlighted | Effect size of significant and relevant results |
|---|---|--|---|--|
| De Jong, Mainhard, van Tartwijk, Veldman, Verloop and Wubbles (2013) How pre-service teachers' personality traits, self-efficacy, and discipline strategies contribute to the teacher-student relationship (The Netherlands) | | | | |
| 120 Pre-service Teachers (f:49) who taught a variety of secondary subjects. One class of secondary students per teacher (N=2506 students) also completed a questionnaire. | <p><u>Design and analysis:</u> Multivariate multilevel models based on questionnaire data.</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> To investigate the impact of pre-service teachers' self-reported background, personality traits and self-efficacy, as</p> | <p>1. The 'Big Five' questionnaire (<i>Friendliness, Extraversion</i>) measured by pre-service teachers on 12 items with a 7-Likert scale.</p> <p>2. 'Teacher's sense of self-efficacy scale' measured by pre-service teachers on 12 items with a 5-point Likert scale.</p> <p>3. 'Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction' (<i>influence, affiliation</i>) measured by students on 50 items with a 5-point Likert scale.</p> | <p>Significant associations for <i>affiliation</i> and background information (Model 2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On <i>gender</i> $B = - 0.19^{**}$ On <i>start date</i> (start of academic year or half way through) $B = - 0.19^{**}$ <p>Significant associations for <i>affiliation</i> and discipline strategies (Model 3):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On <i>recognition and reward</i> $B = 0.54^{**}$ On <i>aggression</i> $B = - 0.66^{**}$ <p>Significant associations for <i>influence</i> and discipline strategies (Model 3):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On <i>punishment</i> $B = 0.37^{**}$ On <i>recognition and reward</i> $B = 0.30^{**}$ On <i>aggression</i> $B = - 0.32^{**}$ | <p>A standardised regression coefficient has been reported with β. This can be considered as equivalent to r (Baguley, 2009) and effect sizes will be judged as such.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Punishment</i> with <i>influence</i> $B = 0.37$, $p < 0.01$, $\beta = 0.53$ (<u>large positive association</u>) <i>Punishment</i> and <i>gender interaction with affiliation</i> $B = - 0.33$, $p < 0.01$, $\beta = 0.35$ (<u>medium negative association</u>) |

| Participants and context | Design, Analysis and Purpose | Measures | Significant Results (* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$) – results most relevant in answering the review question are highlighted | Effect size of significant and relevant results |
|--------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| | <p>well as student reported use of different discipline strategies, on the influence and affiliation within the teacher-student relationship.</p> | <p>4. 'Use of discipline strategies scales' (<i>punishment, recognition and reward, hinting, aggression</i>) measured by students on 16 items with a 5-point Likert scale.</p> | <p>Significant associations for <i>affiliation</i> and the interaction between <i>discipline strategies and gender</i> (Model 4):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On <i>gender and punishment</i> $B = -0.33^{**}$ (with a greater negative effect for females). • On <i>gender and aggression</i> $B = -0.58^{**}$ (with a greater negative effect for females). <p>Significant associations for <i>influence</i> and the interaction between <i>discipline strategies and gender</i> (Model 4):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On <i>gender and punishment</i> $B = -0.28^*$ (with a greater negative effect for males). • On <i>gender and hinting</i> $B = -0.43^*$ (with a greater negative effect for females). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Punishment and gender interaction with Influence</i> $B = -0.28$, $p < 0.05$, $\beta = 0.40$ (<u>medium negative association</u>) |

| Participants and context | Design, Analysis and Purpose | Measures | Significant Results (*p<0.05; **p<0.01) – results most relevant in answering the review question are highlighted | Effect size of significant and relevant results |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| Lewis, Romi, Katz and Qui (2008) Students' reactions to classroom discipline in Australia, Israel, and China (Australia, Israel, and China) | | | | |
| Secondary aged students in Australia (4183, f:52), Israel (836, f:48) and China (502, f:49) | <p><u>Design and analysis:</u> Multivariate analysis of variance of questionnaire data.</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> To examine international differences in the impact of teachers' classroom discipline approaches on students' attitudes towards their teachers and their school work.</p> | <p>1. 'Use of discipline strategies scales' (<i>rewarding, punishing, involvement in decision making, discussion, hinting, aggression</i>) measured by students on 24 items with a 6-point Likert scale.</p> <p>2. 'Student reactions to teacher discipline' (<i>negativity, justification, distraction</i>) measured by students on 10 items with a 5-point Likert scale.</p> | <p>Significant main effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>National setting</i> (NS) $F = 20.14^{**}$ • <i>Year level</i> $F = 5.20^{**}$ • <i>Student misbehaviour</i> $F = 11.03^{**}$ <p>Significant interactions effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>NS and year level</i> $F = 3.94^{**}$ • <i>NS and year level and teacher gender</i> $F = 3.02^{**}$ <p>Significant associations for <i>negativity towards teacher</i> in Israel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On <i>punishment</i> $r = .29 (.15)^*$ • On <i>discussion</i> $r = -.27 (-.10)^*$ • On <i>recognition</i> $r = -.32 (-.20)^*$ • On <i>aggression</i> $r = .39 (.24)^*$ <p>Significant associations for <i>negativity towards teacher</i> in China:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On <i>punishment</i> $r = .29 (.11)^*$ • On <i>discussion</i> $r = -.16 (-.06)^*$ • On <i>recognition</i> $r = -.17 (-.12)^*$ • On <i>aggression</i> $r = .40 (.29)^*$ | <p>The authors report both simple and partial correlations. Only the simple correlations will be reported here as this raw correlation identifies the overall relationship between the teachers' use of a punishment and the students' negativity towards their teacher, rather than explores variance between different discipline strategies.</p> <p><i>Punishment with negativity towards teacher:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Israel $r = 0.29$ (<u>small/medium positive association</u>) |

| Participants and context | Design, Analysis and Purpose | Measures | Significant Results (* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$) – results most relevant in answering the review question are highlighted | Effect size of significant and relevant results |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------|--|--|
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On <i>involvement</i> $r = -.15 (-.08)^*$ <p>Significant associations for <i>negativity towards teacher</i> in Australia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On <i>punishment</i> $r = .19 (.08)^*$ • On <i>discussion</i> $r = -.24 (-.12)^*$ • On <i>recognition</i> $r = -.26 (-.14)^*$ • On <i>aggression</i> $r = .51 (.41)^*$ <p>Significant associations for <i>distraction</i> in Israel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On <i>punishment</i> $r = .25 (.04)^*$ • On <i>discussion</i> $r = -.17 (-.08)^*$ • On <i>recognition</i> $r = -.22 (-.20)^*$ • On <i>aggression</i> $r = .43 (.30)^*$ <p>Significant associations for <i>distraction</i> in China:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On <i>punishment</i> $r = .28 (.13)^*$ • On <i>recognition</i> $r = -.15 (-.13)^*$ • On <i>aggression</i> $r = .35 (.24)^*$ <p>Significant associations for <i>distraction</i> in Australia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On <i>punishment</i> $r = .18 (.08)^*$ • On <i>recognition</i> $r = -.15 (-.07)^*$ • On <i>aggression</i> $r = .39 (.28)^*$ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • China $r = 0.29$ (<u>small/medium positive association</u>) • Australia $r = 0.19$ (<u>small positive association</u>) <p>Effect size not directly discussed by authors</p> |

| Participants and context | Design, Analysis and Purpose | Measures | Significant Results (* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$) – results most relevant in answering the review question are highlighted | Effect size of significant and relevant results |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------|--|---|
| | | | <p>Significant associations for <i>justification of teacher</i> in Israel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On <i>discussion</i> $r = .20$ (- .04)* • On <i>recognition</i> $r = .26$ (.15)* • On <i>involvement</i> $r = .23$ (.17)* • On <i>hinting</i> $r = .17$ (.08)* <p>Significant associations for <i>justification of teacher</i> in China:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On <i>discussion</i> $r = .23$ (.06)* • On <i>recognition</i> $r = .24$ (.11)* • On <i>involvement</i> $r = .25$ (.12)* <p>Significant associations for <i>justification of teacher</i> in Australia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On <i>discussion</i> $r = .24$ (.07)* • On <i>recognition</i> $r = .23$ (.10)* • On <i>aggression</i> $r = -.17$ (- .14)* • On <i>involvement</i> $r = .17$ (.01)* • On <i>hinting</i> $r = .17$ (.06)* | |

| Participants and context | Design, Analysis and Purpose | Measures | Significant Results (*p<0.05; **p<0.01) – results most relevant in answering the review question are highlighted | Effect size of significant and relevant results |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| Lewis, Romi and Roache (2012) Excluding students from classroom: Teacher techniques that promote student responsibility (Australia) | | | | |
| <p>Students who had received classroom exclusions from 7 Australian secondary schools. Schools submitted 302 exclusion questionnaires in total, equating to between 8 and 109 (median 42, f: 2-33%) for each school. NB: Some students will have completed more than one</p> | <p><u>Design and analysis:</u> Multivariate analysis of variance on questionnaire data.</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> To investigate the views of students excluded from the classroom, and the extent to which their experiences of teacher behaviour during a previous exclusion experience</p> | <p>1. 'Reason for exclusion' (<i>impact of behaviour on others, impact of behaviour on teacher, lack of concentration, passivity</i>) measured by students on 11 items with a 4-point Likert scale.</p> <p>2. Question: Had they received smaller punishments or an explanation before their exclusion? Measured by students on 2 items with binary yes / no options.</p> | <p>Student's understanding of why they were excluded from the classroom (given in a percentage of agreement for each exclusion):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'I made the teacher angry' – 71% • 'the teacher hates me' – 47% • 'the teacher just picks on me' – 47% • 'I argued with the teacher' – 45% • 'I ignored the teacher's instructions' – 44% • 'I distracted other students from their work' – 38% • 'I made too much noise' – 35% • 'I did not have equipment for class' – 16% • 'I hurt the feelings of other students' – 10% • 'I arrived late to class' – 8% • 'I made other people feel unsafe' – 7% <p>This study also reported on significances of p<0.001 noted as ***</p> <p>Significant associations of <i>student responsibility</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On receiving an explanation for exclusion $T = 3.000^{**}$ | <p>It was not appropriate to calculate effect sizes for the percentage of agreement for statements around exclusion.</p> <p>Researchers state the presence of medium to strong effect sizes for the associations</p> <p>Effect of having a discussion around exclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Receiving an explanation for exclusion with teacher's fault</i> $T = -4.490, p < 0.000, d = 0.60$ (<u>medium negative association</u>) |

| Participants and context | Design, Analysis and Purpose | Measures | Significant Results (*p<0.05; **p<0.01) – results most relevant in answering the review question are highlighted | Effect size of significant and relevant results |
|---------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| exclusion questionnaires. | promoted their sense of responsibility. | 3. Question: Had they had any previous exclusions? Had they received smaller punishments or an explanation that time? Measured by students on 3 items with binary yes / no options. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On receiving other punishments prior to exclusion $T = 4.281^{***}$ On receiving an explanation during previous exclusion $T = 2.834^{**}$ On receiving other punishments prior to previous exclusion $T = 2.625^{**}$ On receiving a follow up conversation after previous exclusion $T = 2.928^{**}$ <p>Significant associations of teacher's fault:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On receiving an explanation for exclusion $T = -4.490^{***}$ On receiving an explanation during previous exclusion $T = -5.864^{***}$ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receiving an explanation during previous exclusion with teacher's fault $T = -5.864$, $p < 0.000$, $d = 0.87$ (<u>medium negative association</u>) |
| | | 4. 'Teacher's behaviour during previous exclusions' measured by students with 6 items with binary yes / no options. | <p>Significant associations of student responsibility when teacher discussion behaviour around exclusion included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negative impact of misbehaviour on other students' learning $T = 2.34^*$ Made other students feel uncomfortable $T = 2.62^*$ Recognition that they had done 'the wrong thing' $T = 2.04^*$ <p>Significant associations of teacher's fault when teacher's discussion behaviour around exclusion included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition of behaviour as unacceptable $T = -3.90^{***}$ | <p>Teacher discussion including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition of behaviour as unacceptable on teacher's fault $T = -3.90$, $p < 0.000$, $d = 1.07$ (<u>very large negative association</u>) Recognition that they had done 'the wrong thing' on teacher's fault $T = -0.353$, $p < 0.01$, $d = 1.23$ (<u>very large negative association</u>) |

| Participants and context | Design, Analysis and Purpose | Measures | Significant Results (* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$) – results most relevant in answering the review question are highlighted | Effect size of significant and relevant results |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------|---|--|
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recognition that they had done 'the wrong thing'</i> $T = -0.353^{**}$ • <i>Understand better ways to behave</i> $T = -2.83^{**}$ • <i>Just telling off</i> $T = 3.25^{**}$ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Understand better ways to behave on teacher's fault</i> $T = -2.83$, $p < 0.01$, $d = 0.76$ (<u>medium/large negative association</u>) • <i>Just telling off on teacher's fault</i> $T = 3.25$, $p < 0.01$, $d = 0.89$ (<u>large positive association</u>) |

| Participants and context | Design, Analysis and Purpose | Measures | Significant Results (*p<0.05; **p<0.01) – results most relevant in answering the review question are highlighted | Effect size of significant and relevant results |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| Mainhard, Brekelmans, and Wubbles (2011) Coercive and supportive teacher behaviour: Within- and across-lesson associations with the classroom social climate (The Netherlands) | | | | |
| <p>The classes of 48 secondary school teachers (f:26) were involved in the research totalling 1208 students between 12 and 17 years old (mean 14.09 years, SD = 1.47, f: 53.88%). Teachers had on average 10.44 (SD = 8.60) years of teaching and taught different subjects.</p> | <p><u>Design and analysis:</u> Multilevel process analysis of questionnaire and observation data.</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> To explore how classroom climate (according to aggregated student interpersonal perceptions) varies between lessons following</p> | <p>1. 'Classroom social climate' using the Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction (QTI) (<i>influence, proximity</i>) measured collectively by students with 64 items on a 5-point Likert scale.</p> <p>2. 'Teacher Behaviour Observation Checklist' (TBOC) (<i>coercive behaviour, supportive behaviour</i>) measured by students on 8 items with a 3-point Likert scale.</p> | <p>Significant associations for <i>influence</i> within lessons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on <i>social climate</i> one week earlier $B = 0.86^{**}$ on <i>supportive teacher behaviour</i> in current lesson $B = 1.73^*$ <p>Significant associations for <i>influence</i> across lessons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on <i>social climate</i> one week earlier $B = 0.85^{**}$ on <i>coercive</i> teacher behaviour in current lesson $B = 6.97^*$ on <i>coercive</i> teacher behaviour one week earlier $B = -9.12^{**}$ <p>Significant associations for <i>proximity</i> within lessons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on <i>social climate</i> one week earlier $B = 0.60^{**}$ on <i>coercive teacher behaviour</i> in current lesson $B = -49.65^{**}$ on <i>supportive teacher behaviour</i> in current lesson $B = 28.20^{**}$ <p>Significant associations for <i>proximity</i> across lessons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on <i>social climate</i> one week earlier $B = 0.48^{**}$ | <p>A standardised regression coefficient has been reported with β. This can be considered as equivalent to r (Baguley, 2009) and effect sizes will be judged as such.</p> <p>Effect size is not directly discussed by the authors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Influence</i> across lessons on <i>coercive teacher behaviour</i> in current lesson $B = 6.97$, $p < 0.05$, $\beta = 0.07$ (<u>very weak positive association</u>) <i>Influence</i> across lessons on <i>coercive teacher behaviour</i> one week earlier $B = 9.12$, |

| Participants and context | Design, Analysis and Purpose | Measures | Significant Results (* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$) – results most relevant in answering the review question are highlighted | Effect size of significant and relevant results |
|--------------------------|---|----------|--|--|
| | incidents of either 'supportive' or 'coercive' teacher behaviour. | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on <i>coercive teacher behaviour</i> in current lesson $B = -45.93^{**}$ • on <i>supportive teacher behaviour</i> in current lesson $B = 26.52^{**}$ • on <i>coercive teacher behaviour</i> one week earlier $B = -14.50^*$ • on <i>supportive teacher behaviour</i> one week earlier $B = 14.95^*$ | <p>$p < 0.01$, $\beta = -0.09$ (<u>very weak negative association</u>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Proximity</i> within lesson on <i>coercive teacher behaviour</i> in current lesson $B = -49.65$, $p < 0.01$, $\beta = -0.25$ (<u>small negative association</u>) • <i>Proximity</i> across lesson on <i>coercive teacher behaviour</i> in current lesson $B = -45.93$, $p < 0.01$, $\beta = -0.24$ (<u>small negative association</u>) • <i>Proximity</i> across lesson on <i>coercive teacher behaviour</i> one week earlier $B = -14.50$, $p < 0.05$, $\beta = -0.07$ (<u>very weak negative association</u>) |

| Participants and context | Design, Analysis and Purpose | Measures | Significant Results (*p<0.05; **p<0.01) – results most relevant in answering the review question are highlighted | Effect size of significant and relevant results |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Mitchell and Bradshaw (2013) Examining classroom influences on student perceptions of school climate: The role of classroom management and exclusionary discipline strategies (USA) | | | | |
| <p>1902 fifth-grade students (f:929) and their 93 homeroom teachers. Participants came from 37 elementary schools, of which 21 had received SWPBIS (school-wide positive behavioural interventions and supports) training and 16 had not. School</p> | <p><u>Design and analysis:</u> Multilevel structural equation modelling analysis on questionnaire data.</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> To explore the association between student-perceived school climate and teachers' use of classroom management</p> | <p>1. 'School climate' using elementary versions of the School Climate Survey (<i>fairness, order and discipline, student-teacher relations, achievement motivation</i>) measured by students on 31 items with binary agree / disagree options.</p> <p>2. 'Student and teacher demographic information' (<i>gender, race, age</i>) given by students and teachers and binary coded for male/female, white/non-white, and (for teachers) age above/below 30 years old.</p> | <p>This study also reported on significances of $p < 0.001$ noted as ***</p> <p>Significant positive associations found between all latent variables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fairness on order and discipline</i> $r = 0.72^{***}$ • <i>Fairness on student-teacher relationship</i> $r = 0.79^{***}$ • <i>Fairness on achievement motivation</i> $r = 0.66^{***}$ • <i>Order and discipline on student-teacher relationship</i> $r = 0.67^{***}$ • <i>Order and discipline on achievement motivation</i> $r = 0.61^{***}$ • <i>Student-teacher relationship on achievement motivation</i> $r = 0.89^{***}$ <p>Significant associations for <i>fairness</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>On percentage of students receiving exclusions</i> $r = -0.21^*$ | <p>Following multilevel structural equation modelling of the associations between classroom context (manifest study variables) and climate (latent variables) at the between-classroom level the authors were able to identify coefficients for statistically relevant associations. The authors stated that these coefficients could be interpreted as effect sizes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Order and discipline on student-teacher</i> |

| Participants and context | Design, Analysis and Purpose | Measures | Significant Results (*p<0.05; **p<0.01) – results most relevant in answering the review question are highlighted | Effect size of significant and relevant results |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| <p>populations were between 223 and 791 students and were a mixture of rural, urban, and suburban.</p> | <p>strategies, whilst taking into account teacher and student demographic characteristics.</p> | <p>3. 'Teacher use of positive behaviour supports' using the Effective Behaviour Support Survey (Sugai, Todd, et al., 2000) – Classroom subscale, measured by teachers on 12 items with binary 'in place' / 'not in place' options for various positive behaviour supports.</p> | <p>Significant associations for <i>order and discipline</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On <i>percentage of students receiving exclusions</i> $r = -0.57^{***}$ On <i>use of positive classroom management supports</i> $r = 0.27^*$ <p>Significant associations for <i>student- teacher relationship</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On <i>teacher ethnicity</i> $r = 0.26^{***}$ <p>Significant associations for <i>achievement motivation</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On <i>use of positive classroom management supports</i> $r = 0.29^{**}$ | <p><i>relationships</i> $r = 0.67$ (<u>medium positive association</u>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Fairness on percentage of students receiving exclusions</i> $r = -0.21$ (<u>small negative association</u>) |
| | | <p>4. 'Teacher use of exclusionary discipline strategies' as a percentage of students 'sent to the principal's office' per month reported by the teacher.</p> | <p>Significant associations for <i>percentage of students receiving exclusions</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On <i>use of positive classroom management supports</i> $r = -0.31^{**}$ On <i>teacher age</i> $r = 0.23^*$ (with younger teachers giving more exclusions) | |
| | | <p>5. 'Class size' as calculated by researcher by summing students in each class.</p> | | |

| Participants and context | Design, Analysis and Purpose | Measures | Significant Results (*p<0.05; **p<0.01) – results most relevant in answering the review question are highlighted | Effect size of significant and relevant results |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Roache and Lewis (2011) The carrot, the stick, or the relationships: what are the effective discipline strategies? (Australia) | | | | |
| <p>1975 students aged 12 to 16 years old participated. Students judged teachers from 85 classes in 8 different secondary schools. Students completed questionnaires regarding the behaviour of one of their teachers from a range of subjects.</p> | <p><u>Design and analysis:</u> Multivariate analysis of variance on questionnaire data.</p> <p><u>Purpose:</u> To investigate how classroom management approach (as perceived by students) affects: student's view of the teacher and their classroom management, student attitude and</p> | <p>1. 'Classroom management' (<i>rewarding, punishing, involvement in decision making, discussion, hinting, aggression</i>) measured by students on 25 items with a 6-point Likert scale.</p> <p>2. 'Reactions to classroom management' (<i>negativity, justification, distraction</i>) measured by students on 9 items with a 5-point Likert scale.</p> <p>3. 'Attitude and interest in subject' (<i>subject interest, subject importance</i>) measured by</p> | <p>Due to the high number of factors being considered the significance was set at p<0.01, as such other results may have been significant at p<0.05 but cannot be reported.</p> <p>Significant associations for <i>negativity towards teacher</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On <i>discussion</i> $F = - 0.54^{**}$ • On <i>recognition</i> $F = - 0.46^{**}$ • On <i>hinting</i> $F = - 0.43^{**}$ • On <i>aggression</i> $F = 0.73^{**}$ <p>Significant associations for <i>distraction from work</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On <i>discussion</i> $F = - 0.45^{**}$ • On <i>hinting</i> $F = - 0.45^{**}$ • On <i>aggression</i> $F = 0.72^{**}$ <p>Significant association for <i>interest in subject on aggression</i> $F = - 0.58^{**}$</p> <p>Significant associations for <i>misbehaviour</i> (given that <i>responsibility</i> was equal):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On <i>recognition</i> $F = - 0.41^{**}$ | <p>Effect size is not discussed by the authors.</p> <p>Authors do not provide the data necessary to calculate standardised effect sizes.</p> |

| Participants and context | Design, Analysis and Purpose | Measures | Significant Results (* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$) – results most relevant in answering the review question are highlighted | Effect size of significant and relevant results |
|--------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| | interest in the subject, student's judgement on the misbehaviour of themselves and their class, the students' sense of personal and communal responsibility, and students' connectedness and wellbeing. | students with a 4-point Likert scale. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On aggression $F = 0.49^{**}$ <p>Significant associations for <i>communal responsibility</i> (given that <i>misbehaviour</i> was equal):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On <i>punishment</i> $F = 0.49^{**}$ On <i>hinting</i> $F = 0.45^{**}$ On involvement $F = 0.41^{**}$ <p>Significant associations for <i>connectedness</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On <i>discussion</i> $F = 0.42^{**}$ On <i>hinting</i> $F = 0.51^{**}$ On <i>aggression</i> $F = -0.58^{**}$ | |
| | | 4. 'Misbehaviour levels' (<i>own misbehaviour, class misbehaviour</i>) measured by students with a 4-point Likert scale. | | |
| | | 5. 'Responsibility' (<i>personal responsibility, communal responsibility</i>) measured by students on 17 items on a 6-point Likert scale. | | |
| | | 6. 'Connectedness and wellbeing' measured by students on 12 items on a 4-point Likert scale. | | |

Basic characteristics of studies

Several of the studies included in the systematic review involved the same authors. Romi, Mainhard, Wubbles and Roache each contributed to two of the papers, and Lewis was involved in three. Only one of the studies (Mitchell and Bradshaw, 2013) involved entirely independent authors. Having found so few papers through the systematic search process, indicating a limited research pool, it may be unsurprising that some of the studies were authored by the same researchers. Nevertheless, this may have unforeseen consequences in the form of biases. Researchers may be more likely to confirm their earlier published findings, or may be over-reliant on literature they have used previously. This challenge was particularly apparent in Roache and Lewis (2011b) in which the article repeatedly quoted former studies by Lewis and, in doing so, failed to explain the design and analysis of their study as an independent piece of research. Despite these challenges, including studies by similar authors has aided comparison as their research tends to involve similar contexts, measures, and data analysis (e.g. Mainhard *et al.*, 2011; de Jong *et al.*, 2014).

There was high cultural variation between the studies which were conducted in the USA (Mitchell and Bradshaw, 2013), the Netherlands (Mainhard *et al.*, 2011; de Jong *et al.*, 2014), and Australia (Roache and Lewis, 2011b; Lewis *et al.*, 2012), with one study conducted across Australia, Israel and China (Lewis *et al.*, 2008b). This cultural variation presents many challenges. de Jong *et al.* (2014) stated the need for more than one of their tools to be 'translated and then back-translated' (p.8). In translating their tool into Hebrew and Chinese the researchers used their own cultural awareness to decide whether or not the questionnaire items would provide 'potentially culturally relevant measures of students' reaction to discipline in each respective country' (p.718). Whilst the researchers recognised that the measurements of these constructs across culture is 'problematic' (p.717) and constructs cannot be considered equivalent, the process through which they addressed this was not fully described in the article.

De Jong *et al.* (2014) make reference to the impact of culture in their study by suggesting that 'these differences are greater in egalitarian cultures such as the Dutch culture' (p.5). By comparison Lewis *et al.* (2008b) provided little discussion of how each nations' social expectations and traditions may have influenced the teacher-student relationship. Given the inclusion of such disparate cultural contexts for their study it would have been valuable to

consider this in greater detail. It seems likely that how a culture conceptualises children and views punishment in their society will influence researchers investigations into this area.

Participant characteristics

The studies included in the in-depth review involved several different groups of participants. Whilst some studies explored the experiences of individual students or teachers, participant information also referred to larger comparison groups, for example whole classes (e.g. Mainhard *et al.*, 2011), schools (e.g. Mitchell and Bradshaw, 2013) or even nations (i.e. Lewis *et al.*, 2008b). Regardless of the way the participants were grouped, the scale of the studies were extensive. Between 303 to 5521 students (mean=2012, SD=1307) completed questionnaires across the studies. Studies which focused upon teachers (Mainhard *et al.*, 2011; Roache and Lewis, 2011b; Mitchell and Bradshaw, 2013; de Jong *et al.*, 2014) involved either by completing questionnaires on their practice or being the subject of student questionnaires, included between 48 and 120 teacher participants (mean=87, SD=30).

The contexts in which these studies took place were primarily secondary schools (or international equivalents). Only Mitchell and Bradshaw (2013) involved primary-aged students aged 10 to 11 years. The inclusion of mostly secondary-aged students may be a pragmatic choice, as the most common data collection tool (i.e. questionnaires) requires a degree of literacy that may make the tools inaccessible to younger students. Despite this, it is somewhat surprising that so many studies focused on older students to explore this research area, given that secondary contexts tend to involve different teachers for each subject, resulting in multiple teacher-student interactions for each individual involved.

In addition to variations in culture across the studies (as mentioned previously), the backgrounds and socio-economic status of the student participants may have also differed. Several studies commented on the inclusion of rural, urban and suburban schools in their studies. Studies tended to take place across several schools, with participants consisting of all students in attendance. Lewis *et al.* (2012) was an exception to this approach as their study only involved students who had been excluded from the classroom. One study drew comparisons between different schools according to whether or not they had received student-wide positive behaviour interventions and supports training (Mitchell and Bradshaw, 2013). In other studies the multiple schools were not needed for comparison but rather for access to more student participants (e.g. Mainhard *et al.*, 2011). It is apparent that contextual

variations need to be taken into account when comparing and considering the studies' findings.

Research strategy

The studies in this in-depth review had many similarities in terms of their research strategy. All of the studies used questionnaires for information gathering, usually involving Likert scales or binary 'yes/no' questions. Many studies collected demographic data regarding gender, age and ethnicity of students, however, for the most part the studies viewed the students as a homogenous group whose views on teacher discipline could be generalised. Nearly all of the studies included a measure of teachers' behaviour and use of disciplinary action, however, as appropriate to the review question, this was assessed by the students. Students also shared their views on topics such as how they related to the teachers, their sense of connectedness, the behaviour of other students in their class, and their response to teacher discipline.

Given the type of data generated by the measures, all of the studies used either multilevel modelling (Mitchell and Bradshaw, 2013; de Jong *et al.*, 2014) or multivariate analysis of variance (Lewis *et al.*, 2008a; Mainhard *et al.*, 2011; Roache and Lewis, 2011a; Lewis *et al.*, 2012). These data analysis approaches identified the associations between teacher disciplinary action and students' perceptions of their teacher.

Concepts used by studies

As identified during the initial search (see page 17) many different terms are present in the literature regarding what I am referring to as *disciplinary action*. The most common term used in the studies in the in-depth review was *punishment* which was identified as a variable in half of the studies (Lewis *et al.*, 2008b; Roache and Lewis, 2011b; de Jong *et al.*, 2014). Despite this, the exact nature of the *punishment* was rarely described in great detail making comparisons difficult. The concept of *coercive* teacher behaviour (in Mainhard *et al.*, 2011) was included in the in-depth study because it explicitly stated that this concept was inclusive of 'punishment' (p.346), however, punishment was not clearly differentiated from other coercive teacher behaviours such as 'sarcasm, yelling in anger, [and] embarrassing students' (p.346). There was also a lack of clarity over the variety of terms used by Mitchell and Bradshaw (2013) which included 'use of positive behaviour supports' and 'order and discipline'.

Even when more specific disciplinary actions were identified, for example the use of 'exclusion' by Lewis *et al.* (2012) and Mitchell and Bradshaw (2013), there remains a lack of clarity over what such a disciplinary action might involve. Variations may be present, not only internationally, but also within the culture and traditions of the specific school. As such the term 'exclusion' may include deviations between studies for example: in the professionals involved, the length of the exclusion, whether the exclusion is internal or external, or the students' emotional response to exclusion. Although the focus of the studies were on the teacher-student relationship none of the studies stated whether or not the discipline is carried out by the same professional as the teacher who originally ascribed it to the student.

In addition to the variation in the terms used to represent disciplinary action, there was also a lot of variation in the factors that were considered by the researchers when identifying students' perceptions of their teachers or the teacher-student relationship. The tools and measures used by the researchers included the following terms: *influence* (Mainhard *et al.*, 2011; de Jong *et al.*, 2014), *affiliation* (de Jong *et al.*, 2014), *proximity* (Mainhard *et al.*, 2011), *negativity* (Lewis *et al.*, 2008b; Roache and Lewis, 2011b), *justification* (Lewis *et al.*, 2008b; Roache and Lewis, 2011b), *fairness* (Mitchell and Bradshaw, 2013), and *teacher-student relationship* (Mitchell and Bradshaw, 2013).

Interestingly, the authors of these studies conceptualised disciplinary action and student perceptions of their teachers very differently. The lack of clear operationalisation in the majority of studies make comparisons difficult.

Quality assessment (to inform WoE judgement A)

The quality assessment of the studies in the in-depth review can be seen in Table 7. The shading used indicates the degree to which I felt the study leads to a positive judgment of the quality (i.e. lightest indicates high trust, darkest identified low trust or area of concern). As such, whilst some questions (e.g. ethical concerns) may be answered with a 'no' this can be positive for the quality judgement as this question refers to a potentially negative attribute of the study.

Table 7: EPPI quality assessment

| | de Jong et al., 2013 | Lewis et al., 2008 | Lewis et al., 2012 | Mainhard et al., 2011 | Mitchell and Bradshaw., 2013 | Roche and Lewis, 2011 |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| 1. Are there ethical concerns about the way the study was done? | No mention of issues of consent, harm to participants or privacy, but no obvious ethical concerns | Clearly considers the need for anonymity and assurances that the children's view of the teacher won't impact their relationship | No mention of ethical issues. Concern over the extent to which participation was voluntary, and requirement for students to complete questionnaire when in a highly emotive state | Clearly considers the need for anonymity and assurances that the children's view of the teacher won't impact their relationship | Clear attendance to ethical issues that address consent, voluntary participation and any financial incentives | Lack of reference to ethical issues and no apparent procedure to address issues of anonymity, but no obvious ethical concerns |
| 2. Were students and/or parents appropriately involved in the design or conduct of the study? | Research was a 'done to' rather than 'done with' approach. Participants not apparently involved in process | Research was a 'done to' rather than 'done with' approach. Participants not apparently involved in process | Research was a 'done to' rather than 'done with' approach. Participants not apparently involved in process | Although research appeared to be 'done to' the student participants, authors recognised pragmatic concerns and allowed teacher participants flexibility | Research was a 'done to' rather than 'done with' approach. Participants not apparently involved in process | Research was a 'done to' rather than 'done with' approach. Participants not apparently involved in process |
| 3. Is there sufficient justification for why the study was done the way it was? | No discussion of potential biases or the impact of research perspective | Fit within context well. Clear reference to the development of the tool and the challenges of different cultures/contexts | Some discussion regarding the context, and design challenges but lack of recognition of potential biases or the impact of the researchers' perspectives | Clear justification for the use of tools and context. Considers how the researchers' phenomenological perspective lead them to view children as best placed to judge social climate | Clarity over the use of the tools to explore factors. Explanation of how the research fits within the context of a wider piece of research | Lack of discussion regarding justification of method or reasons for why that research population was chosen. Appears reliant on evidence from the author's previous research |

| | de Jong et al., 2013 | Lewis et al., 2008 | Lewis et al., 2012 | Mainhard et al., 2011 | Mitchell and Bradshaw., 2013 | Roche and Lewis, 2011 |
|---|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| 4. Was the choice of research design appropriate for addressing the research question(s) posed? | Emphasis on the need to cross reference findings with the use of 'multiple observers' (p.7) including valuing children's perspectives | Clear aims and research questions asked. Some useful discussion of limitations of research | Clear aims and research questions. Justification for some decision made regarding procedure (i.e. including not restricting exclusion questionnaires to one per child | Hypotheses clearly stated, and used as justification for the method. Clarity over the use of different tools and multiple perspectives to triangulate findings | Hypotheses stated, and clearly informed the research design and analysis. Justification for the usefulness of the analysis with reference to previous research | Approach similar to that used by other researchers but a lack of discussion regarding the appropriateness of the design |
| 5. Have sufficient attempts been made to establish the repeatability or reliability of data collection methods or tools? | Some discussion regarding tools validity and usage across a variety of cultures. However, little detail on procedure and impact of having an external researcher collecting data | Lack of clarity over procedure used. Some explanation regarding use of tools | Some clarity regarding the procedure used, but little discussion regarding the development and use of the tools | Clarity over the procedure including process of randomisation and how they provided students with trust in their anonymity. Some concern that there was no discussion of 'drop out' rates | Clarity over the procedure used and research evidence given to justify the use of the research tools. States participation and 'drop out' rates | Tools external consistency explored. Lack of information regarding procedure, and no clarity in the role of the researcher (i.e. Who collected children's views on the teacher?) |
| 6. Have sufficient attempts been made to establish validity or trustworthiness of data collection tools and methods? | No discussion of how 'real life' research may have affected the findings. Lack of clarity on procedure, but useful discussion on the use of the tools | Internal consistency of tools assessed. Some discussion regarding the challenges of constructs being viewed differently in each culture/language | It is unclear where the tools originated from but definite attempts made to establish internal validity | Establish internal validity of tools. Authors demonstrate importance of agreement between student scores due to the use of a collective measure for judgements | Clear attempts to establish internal validity of tool, and use of tools that had previously found to be useful in previous research | Evidence given of the usefulness of the tools when used in previous research. No discussion regarding how 'real life' research may have affected the findings |

| | de Jong et al., 2013 | Lewis et al., 2008 | Lewis et al., 2012 | Mainhard et al., 2011 | Mitchell and Bradshaw., 2013 | Roche and Lewis, 2011 |
|--|---|---|--|--|---|--|
| 7. Have sufficient attempts been made to establish the repeatability or reliability of data analysis? | Clarity over data analysis and justification of any interactions explored | Clarity over data analysis and justification of any interactions explored | Some description of data analysis, but lacks some clarity. | Clarity over data analysis and justification of any interactions explored | Justification for the 'novel' analysis procedure is given clearly. Efforts made to explain the analysis process in great detail | Lack of description of data analysis |
| 8. Have sufficient attempts been made to establish the validity or trustworthiness of data analysis? | Unpacking of some surprising findings, but lack of recognition of the need for a variety of perspectives | Some considerations of surprising findings | Limited discussion on this topic. Lack of recognition of having a variety of perspectives used. No apparent triangulation of results | Clear triangulation between student views. Some attention to surprising findings and clear 'unpacking' of findings | Discussion on alternative explanations for findings and emphasis on the avoidance of identifying causality from correlations. Clear exploration of surprising results | Limited discussion on this topic. Lack of recognition of having a variety of perspectives used. No apparent triangulation of results |
| 9. To what extent are the research design and methods able to rule out any other sources of error/bias which would lead to alternative explanations for the findings? | Recognition of possible biases and their impact on the findings. Lack of clarity over how participants followed procedure. Wide variety of factors considered | Some consideration of possible biases and their impact on the findings. Lack of exploration of negative findings or reference to missing coverage | Limited consideration of missing coverage, biases and exploration of negative findings | Some useful consideration of negative findings, but a lack of reference to the role of bias | Discussed missing data and reasons for this (i.e. child moved schools, parents did not consent, etc.). Did not explore any biases that may have affected the data | Lack of exploration of negative findings. No discussion of possible biases or their impact on the findings |

| | de Jong et al., 2013 | Lewis et al., 2008 | Lewis et al., 2012 | Mainhard et al., 2011 | Mitchell and Bradshaw., 2013 | Roche and Lewis, 2011 |
|--|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| 10. How generalisable are the study results? | Useful discussion of the different culture context within the Dutch classroom (i.e. lower teacher-student power differential). Provides insight into generalisability | Inclusion of several different cultures suggests wide generalisation. Wide range of schools involved (i.e. based on school's size, socioeconomic area, etc.) also adds to generalisability | Some useful exploration of the limitations of the research. Clarity over context of research to inform generalisability. Links made to other research | Extensive discussion regarding the limitations of the research. Clarity over the specific context in which the research was conducted allows for judgement of generalisation based on similarly of reader's context | Clarity over the context of the research and recognition that results may differ with older or younger children who may receive different discipline strategies. Clear considerations of research limitations | Little discussion regarding how generalisable the findings are and some lack of clarity of context to enable reader to make a judgement on this |
| 11. In light of the above, do the reviewers differ from the authors over the findings or conclusions of the study? | Clear coherence and links to the literature | Clear coherence and links to the literature | Clear coherence and links to the literature | Clear coherence and links to the literature | Clear coherence and links to the literature | Some coherence, but, literature explored seems to be primarily the authors previous studies and uses concepts not directly explored in this study |
| 12. Have sufficient attempts been made to justify the conclusions drawn from the findings, so that the conclusions are trustworthy? | Conclusion appear to lead on well from the findings. Clear conceptual links between their results and the findings of others | Conclusion appear to lead on well from the findings. Some conceptual links between their results and the findings of others, however, limited exploration of alternative explanations | Lack of address to negative findings, but clear attempts to explore findings within literature and discussion of some alternative explanations | Attempts made to explore why one of their hypotheses yielded a surprising result, and clear conceptual links between their results and the findings of other researchers | Attempts made to explore surprising findings and hypothesise on this based on additional literature. Clear conceptual links between their results and the findings of others | Many conclusions drawn referred to coercive teacher behaviour which had limited relevance to the study's findings, and as such lack warrant |

Axiology and epistemology

None of the studies directly refer to the authors' epistemologies or preferred psychological stance, however, the research designs used may indicate something about this. The heavy reliance on quantitative approaches and the lack of open questions may suggest a somewhat positivist epistemological stance.

The lack of attention to authors' epistemological positions (question 3 in Table 7) meant the presence of multiple unexplored assumptions. Furthermore, this led to a lack of recognition of the role of the researchers in the study or consideration of any possible resulting biases. A possible exception to this may be Mainhard *et al.* (2011) in which the authors made reference to their preference for using a phenomenological approach in identifying social climate with the assumption that the students, as opposed to external researchers, would be best placed to make this judgement.

Whilst the authors' axiology (including concepts such as ethics and values) were also not addressed in the articles, it is something that I consider of importance. The quality assessment indicated that many studies had ethical issues, particularly regarding consent, identity protection and the involvement of participants. Whilst these issues may have been considered by the researchers, ethical concerns were only sufficiently addressed in studies by Mainhard *et al.* (2011), Mitchell and Bradshaw (2013), and Lewis *et al.* (2008b). The concerns over ethics that I have identified may not have been recognised as a significant concern by others completing the same systematic review. My personal values and beliefs regarding person-centred practice, the importance of the rights of the child, and the need for participatory research has influenced how I have read these studies. This systematic review and the judgements I make within it cannot be separated from my own axiology.

Weight of evidence

Table 8 describes the weight of evidence for each study based on their quality, appropriateness and relevance to the systematic review question. The trust attributed to the quality (judgement A) is based on the quality assessment (Table 7), whereas the appropriateness and relevance to the systematic review (judgements B and C) are based on the full text reviews and descriptive table.

The EPPI-Centre (2007) quality assessment (Table 7) showed that studies varied significantly in quality. The low trust in quality for Roache and Lewis (2011b) was due to the presence of an unclear procedure, and a poor justification for the research approach they took. In contrast to this, Mainhard *et al.* (2011) used triangulation of different participant groups when answering their research question, and clearly identified the need to consider the experiences of the participants.

Table 8: Weight of evidence

| Study | Judgement A: <i>Quality assessment</i> | Judgement B: <i>Appropriateness for addressing the systematic review</i> | Judgement C: <i>Relevance of study focus for the systematic review</i> | Judgement D: <i>Overall weight of evidence</i> |
|------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| de Jong et al., 2013 | Medium trustworthiness | Medium-High trustworthiness | Medium-High trustworthiness | Medium-High trustworthiness |
| Lewis et al., 2008 | Medium – high trustworthiness | High trustworthiness | High trustworthiness | High trustworthiness |
| Lewis et al., 2012 | Medium trustworthiness | Medium-High trustworthiness | Medium-Low trustworthiness | Medium trustworthiness |
| Mainhard et al., 2011 | High trustworthiness | High trustworthiness | Medium trustworthiness | Medium-High trustworthiness |
| Mitchell and Bradshaw, 2013 | High trustworthiness | Medium trustworthiness | Medium-High trustworthiness | Medium-High trustworthiness |
| Roache and Lewis, 2011 | Low trustworthiness | Medium trustworthiness | Medium-Low trustworthiness | Medium-Low trustworthiness |

Within the WoE (Table 8) studies tended to score highest on judgement B, in which the design and approach are considered for their appropriateness in answering the review question. The consistency of approaches between the studies, despite the use of different terminology, demonstrated the effectiveness of using large scale questionnaire data to answer the review question.

A majority of the studies also scored well in trustworthiness for Judgement C, ranging between medium-low and high relevance to the focus of this review in terms of conceptual focus,

context, sample and measures. The stringent exclusion criteria applied during the systematic screening and full text reviews (see page 18) assured that the studies in the in-depth review were appropriate to answer the systematic review question. The two studies that scored medium-low on this judgement (Roache and Lewis, 2011b; Lewis *et al.*, 2012) had conceived discipline differently to the other studies, with a focus on ‘student responsibility’, leading to fewer comparable results.

Overall value of the studies taking into account effect sizes

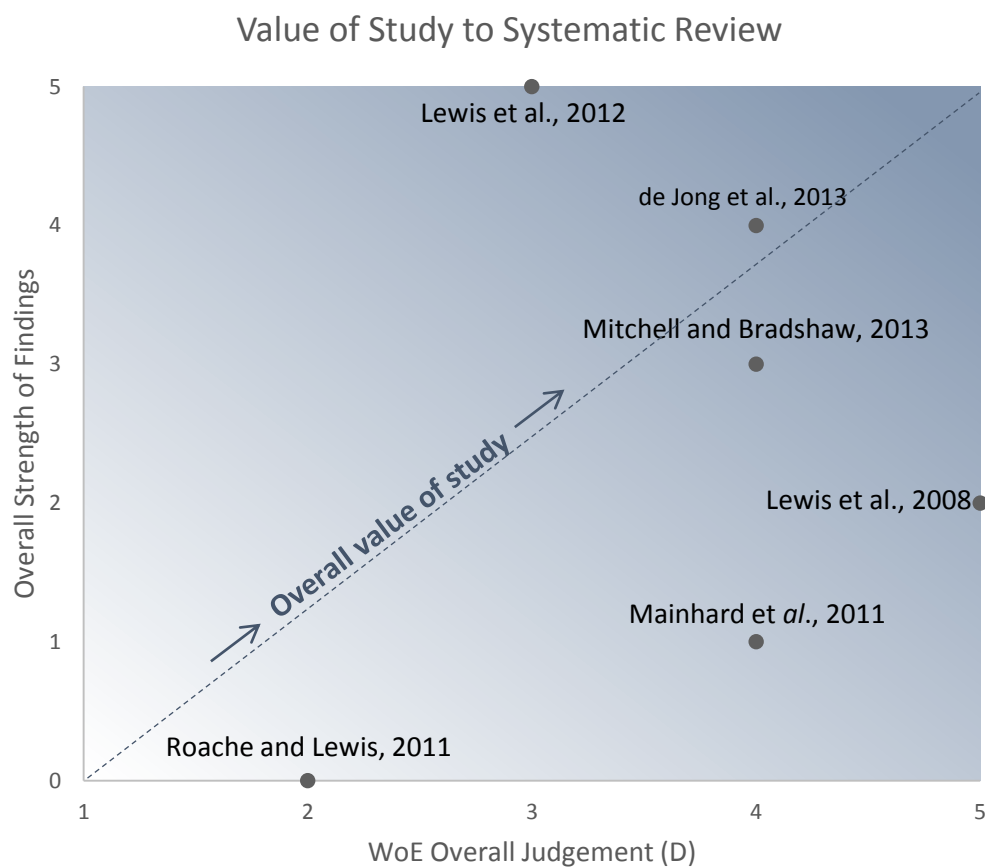


Figure 1: Overall value of studies in answering the research question

In addition to the weight of evidence (WoE) assessment, the overall value of the studies to this review should also consider the effect sizes of relevant findings (as reported in Table 6). Studies closest to the top-right hand corner of Figure 1 are judged to be the most valuable to the systematic review taking into account both the WoE judgement D (1-5 representing low-high trustworthiness) and the overall strength of findings (1-5 representing small-large effects).

The medium to large effect sizes and medium-high WoE means that Mitchell and Bradshaw (2013) and de Jong *et al.* (2014) become highly credible and helpful in answering the systematic review question. By comparison Mainhard *et al.* (2011) is demonstrated to be less helpful given that the effect sizes of significant results are very small. Whilst the WoE had already identified Roache and Lewis (2011b) to carry low weight of evidence, the overall value of the study is reduced further by failure to provide effect sizes or the data needed to calculate them.

The overall value of the studies will be taken into account when synthesising the findings from this systematic review.

Discussion

Having investigated the studies in detail and assessed their value to this systematic review, I will now conclude what the current literature reveals about student's perceptions of their teachers following disciplinary actions. Finally, the limitations and recommendations of this systematic review will be stated.

Synthesis of the systematic review findings

The studies in this systematic review identified correlations between discipline and students' perceptions of their teachers, thus it is necessary to be cautious to avoid inferring causation.

All but one of the studies included in the in-depth review identified some correlations between teachers' use of disciplinary action and students' views of their teacher. The extensive international study by Lewis *et al.* (2008b) found that across Australia, China and Israel, despite the different cultures and conceptualisation of children and discipline, there was a small to small-medium association between teachers' use of punishment and students' feelings of negativity towards their teacher. Mitchell and Bradshaw (2013) identified a positive relationship between the order and discipline recognised by students, and how the students characterised their relationship with their teacher. Unlike the other studies Roache and Lewis (2011a) did not find an association between teachers' reported use of punishment and students' negativity towards the teacher. This appears to contradict evidence from other

pieces of research but doubt may be placed on these results given the poor weight of evidence and lack of effect size reporting.

De Jong *et al.* (2014) report a large positive association between the use of punishment and an increase in influence within the teacher-student relationship. Nevertheless this pattern did not emerge for the second factor in interpersonal teacher behaviour (proximity) suggesting that the use of discipline was associated with students' perceptions of their teachers control and competency but not their emotional warmth. Mainhard *et al.* (2011) found that coercive behaviour has a small association with students' perception of proximity within their teacher-student relationship. Interestingly, coercive behaviour was associated positively with influence when the behaviour had occurred in that lesson, but negatively when students recalled coercive behaviour in a previous lesson; though it should be noted that these effects were very weak.

Mitchell and Bradshaw (2013), a highly trusted study, reported a medium negative effect on students' views of the classroom's order and discipline when teachers reported using more exclusionary disciplines. An increased use of exclusion was also associated with students' perceptions that the teacher was unfair. Lewis *et al.* (2012) further explored the specific discipline of classroom exclusion. They found that, whilst students blamed teachers for their exclusions, this was reduced by particular teacher behaviours such as giving clear reasons why the student was excluded and discussing what the student could have done differently.

The context and specific individual characteristic were found to mediate how students perceived teachers' disciplinary actions. Lewis *et al.* (2008b) reported significant differences between how the students in Australia, China and Israel evaluated their teachers' behaviour, but also found differences between how each year group responded. De Jong *et al.* (2014) found that gender had an effect on how students responded to different disciplinary actions. Mitchell and Bradshaw (2013) found that use of discipline can be linked to the age of the teacher, though not necessarily to their level of experience. Interestingly, this did not seem to continue to the extent of individual personalities, as Lewis *et al.* (2008b) did not find correlations between teacher-student relationships or teachers' disciplinary actions and teachers' scores on different personality factors.

Based on the value of all the studies in the systematic review, taking into consideration trustworthiness and effect size, there is a strong indication of an association between

teachers' use of discipline and students' perceptions of their teachers and the teacher-student relationship. Findings suggest that when teachers use disciplinary actions in response to students' behaviour, students perceive the teacher and the teacher-student relationship more negatively. Studies found that teachers' use of disciplinary actions such as exclusions, punishment and coercive behaviours lead students to feel that their teachers were unfair, not emotionally warm or were at fault in the interaction. Previous research has not directly explored the question of this review and thus cannot be compared. Nevertheless, the findings do support the argument of Sutherland *et al.* (2013) that there is a cyclical interaction between the teacher and student behaviour, and relationships. As such, when students display unwanted behaviours and teachers respond to this by punishing, the teacher-student relationship may be damaged, making it more likely that the child will display additional unwanted behaviours, and continuing the negative cycle of interaction and relationships.

In terms of implications for professionals, the findings of this systematic review suggest that professionals must consider discipline approaches in terms of their impact on teacher-student relationships. With the continuing popularity of behaviourist approaches to behaviour (e.g. 'assertive discipline' and 'positive discipline') it is important that educators evaluate such interventions, not just in terms of their successful reduction of unwanted behaviours, but also in terms of the effect of the discipline procedure on students' perceptions of their teachers and the teacher-student relationship. This systematic review fits closely with the 2014 code of practice which has suggested a move away from focusing on unwanted behaviours to supporting positive wellbeing and interactions, with the category of special educational needs changing from 'social, emotional and behavioural needs' to 'social, emotional and mental health'. The findings of this systematic review supports the change in narrative, and provides further evidence of the need to consider children and their needs holistically.

Limitations and recommendations of this systematic review

The question asked in this systematic review question reflected my own values and interests and thus was framed within my personal axiology, epistemology and ontology (as will be discussed in Chapter 2). In addition, some pragmatic decisions I have made, for example the dates of the literature search and the variations of terms used, will have affected the studies identified in this review. This included the decision described in the method regarding the choice of the term 'students' to identify the target group. The complexity of the interaction between teacher-student relationships and the topic of discipline meant that there were very

few relevant papers identified that precisely answered the research question. This limited the scope of the study. Finally, the very different ways in which the research addressed the systematic review question, exploring different concepts and based in different cultures, made comparisons very challenging.

The commonality of certain measures across the literature search, for example the questionnaire on teacher interaction, provides tools which future research can utilise to extend this research area. Nevertheless, the current methods proposed, primarily large-scale survey data, do not explore the experiences of individuals, suggesting the need to consider different research methods. The current literature appears to be preoccupied with identifying current patterns in teacher-student relationships relating to discipline procedure but, for this research area to progress, it is necessary to attempt to *change* practice in response to these findings. In moving forward it would be beneficial to explore alternative approaches to discipline, for example those that better support teacher-student relationships, and which in turn will improve outcomes for children.

Final thoughts

Although a great deal of literature exists on the topics of teacher-student relationships and on student behaviour, there is a limited research base addressing the question: what is the effect of disciplinary actions on students' perceptions of their teachers, and the teacher-student relationship? The research that does address this question has some similarities in the approach to the question, for example asking students to answer questionnaires regarding their perceptions of their teachers' behaviour and teachers' use of different disciplinary approaches. The studies identified varied in quality, context, and reported effect sizes. Nevertheless, having taken account of the value of the studies to the research question, this systematic literature review confirms the hypothesis that how a teacher responds to students' unwanted behaviour has an effect on the students' perception of the teacher and the teacher-student relationship. As such, the discipline procedures chosen to address unwanted student behaviour should be considered for the impact they will have on the teacher-student relationship.

Chapter 2. Bridging document:
Justifying my research and
establishing a conceptual
framework

Abstract

In this bridging document I explore the decisions I have made in the empirical study with reference to the findings of the systematic review. In justifying the need for research on the topic of teacher-student relationships and teachers' responses to student behaviour, I argue that this is valuable due to the effect of these issues upon outcomes for children, as well as the experiences of teachers. I also relate the topic to my own research interests, and illustrate how my personal values and preferred psychologies support the use of restorative justice as a relational alternative to address unwanted behaviours. The context of the empirical research is discussed. The school in which this research took place was going through a time of significant transition when this study was conducted, and the challenges of supporting change are thus explored. Finally, I explain how my contextual framework, including my axiology, ontology, epistemology and methodology, affect the research that I undertook. This bridging document concludes by describing how this research is specific and personal to me as an academic, a psychologist and a person.

Preface

I had been asked to hold a consultation with a newly qualified teacher regarding several children in her class about whom she had concerns. Over several sessions we talked about specific difficulties she was having with the behaviour of individual children. She talked about the dynamic of the group and how she perceived that their lack of motivation affected their learning and behaviour; “I don’t think they want to do well”. She described how she disliked shouting but felt that she resorted to it daily. When describing her discipline approach she said: “I was told to go in harsh. I thought I had but apparently it wasn’t enough”. She described how her relationship with the children was challenging as she “just [didn’t] seem to get along with them” and how she felt like a failure as a teacher; “I can’t get them to do the work”. As we started to discuss her expectations of teaching and her school, she described behaviour as the “biggest challenge” of being a teacher.

During my third meeting with her she told me that she was leaving the school and was not waiting until the end of the term to do so. After she had explained to her students that she was leaving the teacher described feeling surprised that all of them, even those she didn’t feel she had a positive relationship with, seemed disappointed and upset that she was going.

Introduction

In this chapter I will discuss the *why* of my research – why *this* research focus, in *this* context, researched in *this* way? As a piece of research that I have been dedicated to for two years, it is indisputably very personal. As such, much of the justification for the research choices I have made are associated with who I am as an academic, as a psychologist and as a person.

Firstly, I will discuss why the interaction between relationships and behaviour are worth systematic review and empirical research, as well as why I felt that a restorative justice approach could be appropriate in providing a relational behaviour intervention. I will then describe the context of the empirical research, specifically the importance of recognising my relationship to the school and the research as the school’s trainee educational psychologist (EP). Finally, I will explore how my underlying conceptual framework, including my axiology and ontological, epistemological and methodological views, shape my empirical research.

Justifying my research

I will first consider why this research area is worth researching given current concerns in education as well as within my practice as a trainee EP. I will explain why restorative justice was considered as a possible intervention, before describing why this research was appropriate for this school during a time of transition.

Research area

As the opening example showed, behaviour in schools is a significant concern for teachers and, as O'Connor *et al.* (2011) found, can contribute to staff stress, workload and turn over intentions. Due to the impact on teachers I have wondered whether or not children whose behaviour affects others may be the most excluded group in education. This may be due to the sense of blame that is attached to behaviour difficulties (Singh, 2004) or how the emotional load experienced by teachers affects their relationship with, and attitude towards, such students (Newberry and Davis, 2008).

Concerns over behaviour, and particularly the impact that it has on the learning of all children, has been emphasised by the department of education. Most recently this has been by the introduction of a so-called 'Tsar for behaviour' (Mason, 2015), Tom Bennett, who has been charged with reducing low level disruption within education. When schools receive finite involvement from an EP I have found that it is often the case that they prioritise involvement in cases which are causing the greatest challenge and emotional strain for school staff and are having the largest impact on the learning and experiences of other children in the school. In my practice as a trainee EP more than a third of my current referrals are for children who are described as demonstrating 'challenging behaviour' or a 'behaviour problem'. It is apparent that behaviour is a current concern for education and EPs, and thus worth addressing in research.

In addressing behaviour concerns schools often report using a behavioural approach which is consistent across all students and is reliant on external rewards and sanctions to change behaviour. This approach is not personal and does not address an individual's experiences. Nevertheless, the systematic review identified that certain disciplinary actions had a negative impact upon individual students' perceptions of their teachers and the teacher-student

relationship. Given that research evidence strongly suggests positive relationships can significantly improve student outcomes (e.g. Bozkurt and Ozden, 2010; O'Connor, 2010; Newberry, 2013; Breeman *et al.*, 2014; McGrath and Van Bergen, 2015), it is concerning that the behaviourist approach used to address behaviour can be detrimental to these relationships. Due to the value I personally place on relationships, I was keen to consider alternative behaviour approaches which could support, rather than degrade, the development of positive teacher-student relationships.

An intervention based on restorative justice

One approach, restorative justice, considers behaviour in terms of relationships (Mullet, 2014). Restorative justice encourages individuals to think of themselves as relational beings (Pranis, 2007), and supports those who have caused hurt to consider how their behaviours have affected others and to decide on actions to make up for this. This approach speaks to me as an individual as well as a psychologist. I am interested in ecosystemic approaches (e.g. Bronfenbrenner, 1992) which look to social systems and consider how these effect the experiences of the individual. Similarly, restorative justice supports children to recognise themselves within their social context. By connecting more with other children may develop an increased sense of belonging, one area of psychological need according to Deci and Ryan's psychological needs model (2008).

By helping children see themselves in this way, individuals may have new opportunities to think about and reframe their behaviour, possibly moving them further towards planning for change (Prochaska and Diclemente, 1986). A personal approach may help develop children's internal motivation to better themselves which, according to self-determination theory (Ryan and Deci, 2000; Deci and Ryan, 2008) may be more successful than external motivators at changing behaviour. Furthermore, restorative justice fits closely with my solution oriented perspective as it seeks to encourage those involved to find solutions rather than focus primarily on past behaviours; restorative justice is hopeful. Finally, many of the values that underlie restorative justice (Pranis, 2007; Vaandering, 2014a) are consistent with my own values, particularly the importance of empowerment, voice and respect.

Research context

The newly qualified teacher described in the introduction to this chapter was working in a school that had been going through a period of significant transition. The school had

experienced an unsuccessful OFSTED inspection (OFSTED, 2013) which had resulted in changes of senior staff. This involved a new head teacher and a senior leader responsible for behaviour. Both of these new staff were from a partnered school chosen by the local authority following an outstanding OFSTED report. During this transition the behaviour policy from the previous school was introduced but was responded to with resistance by many of the staff who were upset by the OFSTED judgement and the subsequent school changes. It was during this time of transition and tensions that I began working with the school.

Through individual case work with children I had built relationships with members of staff throughout the school, and was described by the head teacher as a member of the 'school community'. The role of the EP had placed me in the position of being a critical friend for senior staff, for example querying with the SENCo and head teacher the impact of having inconsistent TA support for a class with several children with medical and physical needs. This followed concerns from a teacher who did not feel able to come forward with her frustration, and who asked for support to explore this with school decision-makers. Having worked in this way, with teaching assistants and teachers delivering support, and with decision-makers in the school, I felt that I was able to support change both at the systems level (Fox, 2009) and from the 'bottom up' (e.g. Balchin *et al.*, 2006). It was within this context that I began discussing and challenging the school's behaviour policy. When the senior leader for behaviour said that she wanted to explore alternatives, negotiations began for a piece of case study-based action research (Baumfield *et al.*, 2008; Thomas, 2012; Yin, 2013) in which I was researching within my own practice as a trainee EP.

Research for change

As a practitioner it was of great importance to me that the research supported positive change for those involved. Nevertheless, as recognised in the quality assessment in chapter 1, I also felt that it was valuable for research to be done *with* rather than *to* the participants. As such I recognised the teachers in the school as agents of change. This affected the intervention that was possible. Although many teachers and the senior leaders were keen to try alternatives to the behaviour policy, they seemed wary of a dramatic change. This may have been due to the recent changes in structure that the school had been through. Ideally I would like to have introduced a whole-school restorative justice approach starting with the underlying values and seeping into everyday practice. In reality this would require a significant commitment from many member of staff, as well as management, given the additional time needed.

Furthermore, this approach would likely place me as the driving force, reducing the likelihood that the change would be self-sustained by the school. Instead, I felt that it would be more powerful for me to support a much smaller change, something that Vaandering (2014a) critically calls *restorative justice lite*.

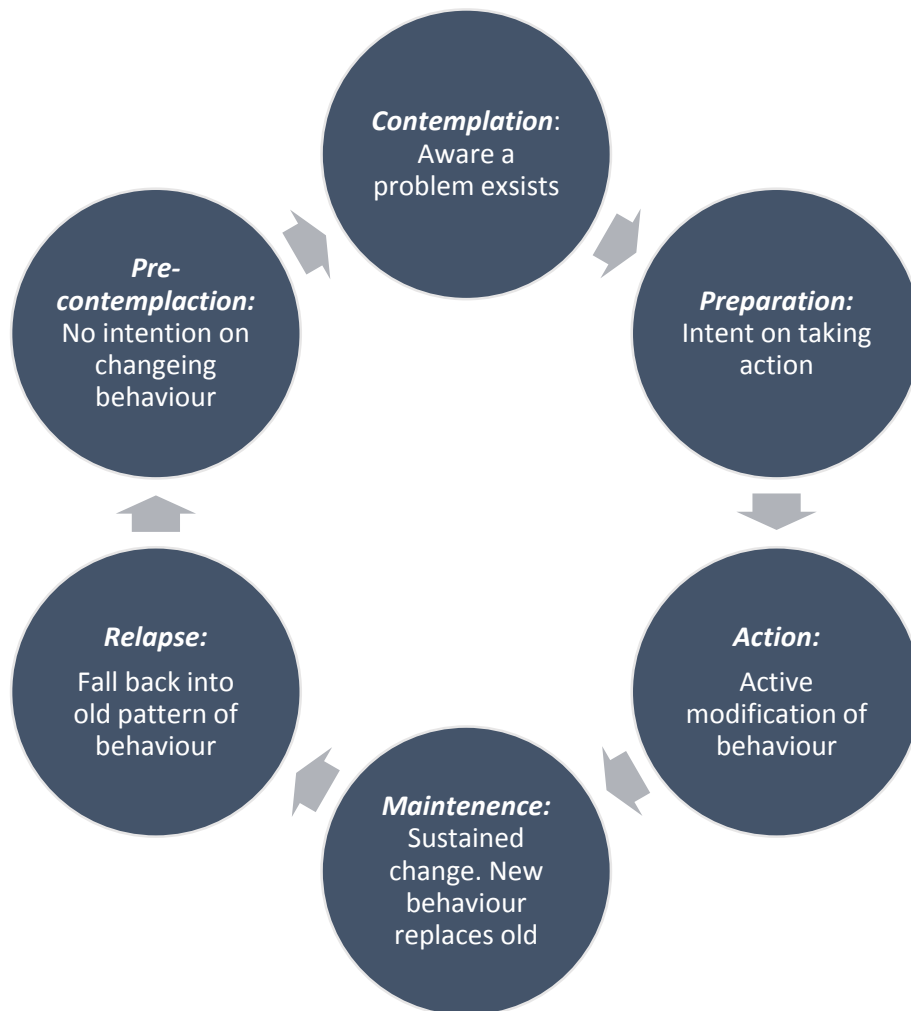


Figure 2: Prochaska and Diclemente (1986) comprehensive model of change

My hope was that this research would involve a few individuals across the school, including teachers, teaching assistants and the senior leader responsible for behaviour. By supporting them to make manageable changes to how they conducted their behaviour policy, I hoped to encourage dialogue, and engage those involved to think critically about the behaviour policy. This relates to the model of change from Prochaska and Diclemente (1986) (Figure 2). From when I initially recognised that some staff were uncertain about the policy, to negotiating what changes we would make, to carrying out the intervention, I hoped that I could support the school community in moving through the stages of change. Whilst those involved may be

in different places in their progress, I believe that making change in an unthreatening and more manageable way allows those involved to consider and plan for bigger changes, hopefully continuing with the idea of restorative justice and relational behaviour approaches.

Establishing a conceptual framework

‘There is no such thing as a view from nowhere’ (Willig, 2013) Having justified my area of research above in terms of identifying a current need and being personally interested, I would also like to explain how my underlying ethics, values and understanding of the world lends itself to the empirical research in Chapter 3. I will answer questions proposed by Parker (2013) to describe how the building blocks of practice as research (Figure 3) relate to each other and form my personal contextual framework.

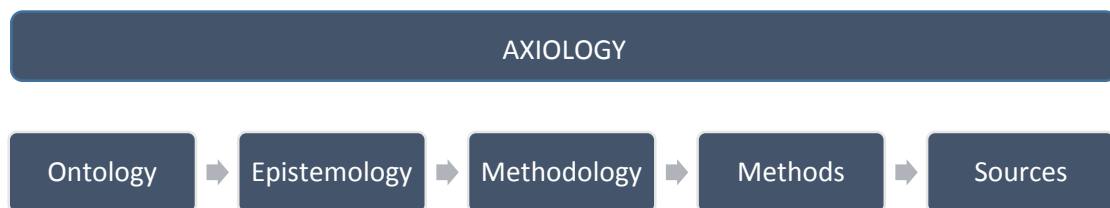


Figure 3: Building blocks of practice as research developed from Parker, 2014.

Whilst I have made attempts to explain my perspective in answering the questions posed by Parker (2014) I would like to note that I continue to develop my thinking on these issues. I can say that this is my current understanding of the axiology, ontology, epistemology and methodology that has led to the methods and sources selected in this research as well as in my wider practice.

Axiology

‘Fundamental views; value systems, both personal and professional; ethics’ (Parker, 2014, p.90).

My practice is influenced by codes of conduct and ethical frameworks relevant to my profession including but not limited to: the British Psychological Society, the Association of

Educational Psychologists, the Health and Care Professionals Council and the British Education Research Association. Finally I recognise that ethical decision making is also influenced and framed by the UN convention on the rights of the child and the profession-specific framework proposed by Lindsay (2008).

Nevertheless, as indicated in Parker (2014), identifying external guidelines may not be sufficient to an understanding of our axiology. As such, much of my above description regarding why I chose the area of research (i.e. behaviour and relationships) demonstrates values that I focus on within my practice. This includes the values with which I have endeavoured to conduct the empirical research: authenticity, responsibility and respect.

Ontology

'What is the world? What is it to be human? What is it to be a professional?' (Parker, 2014, p.90).

My ontological position is neither entirely realist nor entirely relativist. I recognise that a physical world, independent of interpretation, exists but that this Truth (with a capital 'T') is limited. A majority of entities and structures (particularly social phenomenon) cannot be separated from the interpreter. What makes a human a human, or a professional a professional is socially constructed and highly dependent on context. Entities are viewed as transformational, emergent and relational. The nouns that we refer to are a way of grouping entities by similar characteristics, but that these grouping are formed by society, culture and language. This position may be described as 'critical realism'.

Epistemology

'How can we know things? What is the relationship between the enquirer and the things s/he want to know?' (Parker, 2014, p.90).

My view is that it is not the aim of a research practitioner to identify a singular 'Truth'. I think that research can allow us to explore the different 'truths' (with a small 't') that are held by individuals, and thus I accept that there is a place for judgemental relativism (or 'multiple realities'). As a research practitioner my understanding of entities is heavily influenced by my own experiences and beliefs, as well as the specific context within which I am investigating. My epistemological position recognises the fragility of knowledge.

My epistemological perspective influences how I understand entities such as 'yellow', which though viewed as relatively stable, is also affected by culture, language and individual experiences. For example tribes in the Sahara have been found to identify many more colours within the wavelength that western cultures generally call 'yellow', furthermore, I imagine that the different types of 'yellow' recognised by a car salesperson would differ from those referred to by a paediatrician.

Methodology

'How can we go about gathering that knowledge? What is the available 'menu' – what can we do and what can we not do?' (Parker, 2014, p.90).

My intention when gathering knowledge is not to make predictions, but rather to uncover and understand causal mechanisms. This relates to concepts such as relativist evaluation which suggests that outcomes and change need to be considered in relation to both the mechanisms involved, but also the context in which change occurs (Pawson and Tilley, 1994; Pawson *et al.*, 2005).

I recognise the value of methodological pluralism. From my critical realist perspective I appreciate a range of methods can contribute to understanding. This can include both qualitative and quantitative tools, but my view is that these serve different purposes (i.e. theory generation vs. theory testing) and thus my preference is for triangulation of a variety of tools (e.g. Thomas, 2012; Yin, 2013). I recognise the need to consider methodological challenges such as generalizability and the validity or reliability of measures, however agree with Flyvberg (2004) that these terms may need to be adapted to the different contexts and purposes of case study research.

Methods and sources

'What do we pick from the menu, given the current purpose? (methods) and what types of 'data' can we collect or generate? (sources)' (Parker, 2014, p.90).

Like Thomas (2012) I argue that the methods used should be 'servant of your research question' (p.131). This means a somewhat pragmatic view of research tools which can include both quantitative and qualitative approaches: 'if your research questions demands an inquiry that uses number and simple statistics, it is these you should use' (p.131). Whilst, in my view a measure cannot accurately describe an entity, but rather form a socially constructed and

imperfect description, I also consider measures valuable in answering some types of questions and believe that they can provide a helpful starting point for further investigation (i.e. now we think there is a correlation, what does it mean to those involved)?

The particular methods and sources that are used in this research constitute only some of the possible approaches that I could have used to research this area. Based on my ontology and epistemology I can imagine many different ways in which I could go about investigating the research question I have set myself. The method and sources I used will be described in detail in the empirical research in Chapter 3.

In conclusion...

In this bridging document I have justified the need to research the topic of teacher-student relationships and approaches to unwanted behaviour. I discussed the current context of research into student behaviour and relationships, and have explained how the needs of one school in particular became a catalyst for research that enables change. Given the systematic review findings that the discipline approach used by teachers has an effect on how children perceive their teachers and the teacher-student relationship, a relational approach to discipline was pursued. Ideas from restorative justice were considered based on how they addressed the challenges of the school as well as my own values and interests. The decisions I made as a researcher were explored through my conceptual framework, which explained *why who* I am, as an academic, as a psychologist, and as a person, shaped the research presented here.

Chapter 3. Empirical research:
What effect can a restorative
conversation have upon teacher-
student relationships when
addressing unwanted behaviour?

Abstract

Given the findings of the systematic review, that discipline approaches affect teacher-student relationships, this empirical study attempts a restorative justice-based intervention to address unwanted behaviour with a relational approach.

Through negotiation and dialogue with a member of the senior leadership team, I investigate the school's behaviour policy and practice, before supporting change through a new intervention: the restorative conversation. By supporting staff to carry out a restorative conversation during missed play, children in Years 1 to 4 (aged 6 to 9 years old) are enabled to think about their behaviour in terms of harm done rather than rules broken. An age-appropriate version of the questionnaire on teacher interaction was used to explore students' perceptions of their teachers' interpersonal behaviour; specifically their influence and proximity.

Findings indicate that a restorative conversation has a positive effect on students' perceptions of their teachers, and improved the teacher-student relationship.

Introduction

This empirical research developed organically from my practice as a trainee educational psychologist (EP) and explores the behaviour policy in one primary school. In this research I will tell the story of my involvement with staff to adapt policy and practice to better meet the needs of children who are displaying behaviours that are unwanted by staff. In this section I will introduce the school and its context as well as the theoretical frameworks within which the research takes place.

Unwanted behaviour

There are many ways of describing behaviour including: *challenging behaviour*, *problem behaviour*, *serious misconduct*, *misbehaviour* and *deviant behaviour* (Orsati and Causton-Theoharis, 2013). Many of these terms have negative connotations and imply that the difficulty is inherently within the child rather than considering the child in relation to other people and the systems that surround them (Danforth, 2007). This is not cohesive with my view of children. As such, for the purpose of this research the term ‘unwanted behaviours’ will be used to refer to the behaviours that students display that school staff do not want in their school or classroom. This term recognises that acceptable or unacceptable behaviour is socially constructed (Orsati and Causton-Theoharis, 2013) and context-dependent, with the ‘ideal student’ differing from school to school (Hempel-Jorgensen, 2009).

The story of behaviour policy at Bow Lane Primary

Bow Lane Primary School¹ has just over two hundred children and, according to the school’s RAISEonline (2014) profile, has twice the national mean proportion of children identified with special educational needs. Bow Lane is located within a socially deprived area of the North East of England with 47.7% of the children eligible for free school meals compared to the national average of 26.6% (RAISEonline, 2014).

Following an OFSTED inspection in January 2013 Bow Lane was placed in special measures leading to a period of significant transition. The school received ‘inadequate’ for ‘behaviour and safety of pupils’ based upon low attendance and the high incidence of students being

¹ Pseudonyms for the school, as well as the individuals involved have been used to protect identities.

'bored and disruptive' (OFSTED, 2013, p. 4). A nearby school was identified to provide support to Bow Lane, involving the secondment of a senior member of staff, Theresa, to address the school's behaviour concerns. Theresa brought the behaviour policy from her previous school to Bow Lane, having deemed it successful in addressing behaviour as evidenced from the school's OFSTED report. This policy outlined a procedure to discourage unwanted behaviours which involved students receiving a sequence of increasingly serious verbal warnings before missing play for continued unwanted behaviour.

As the trainee EP for the school I have contributed to numerous pieces of individual case work relating to behaviour, as well as consulting with teachers struggling with differentiation and behaviour. During this involvement several teachers described reservations regarding the policy and I wondered the extent to which practice was in accord with policy. Through negotiations with senior staff I was encouraged to explore alternative practices. It was hoped that by adapting the missed play procedure to include aspects of restorative justice we could support teacher-student relationships and better meet the aims of the school policy.

Establishing a baseline of policy and practice

Following the school's behaviour policy staff record each time a child misses play due to unwanted behaviour. Data from the first ten weeks of term were analysed to explore how the missed play procedure was being used. In all classes there were many children who had never missed play (Figure 4). The reason that these children never missed play cannot be identified. It may be that these children were responding to the verbal warning they received, or that they were activity avoiding missing play. Alternatively, these children may not be presenting behaviour that were unwanted by the school regardless of the consequence system in place. For around a third of the students, missing play may have been effective, as they had experienced missed play but had rarely repeated this. Missing five play times was a trigger point in the school's behaviour monitoring and lead to a meeting between parents and staff to discuss a child's unwanted behaviour. Thus for the children who missed more than five play times it appears as though the school's behaviour policy may have been an ineffective, with no apparent changes to the quantity of unwanted behaviours.

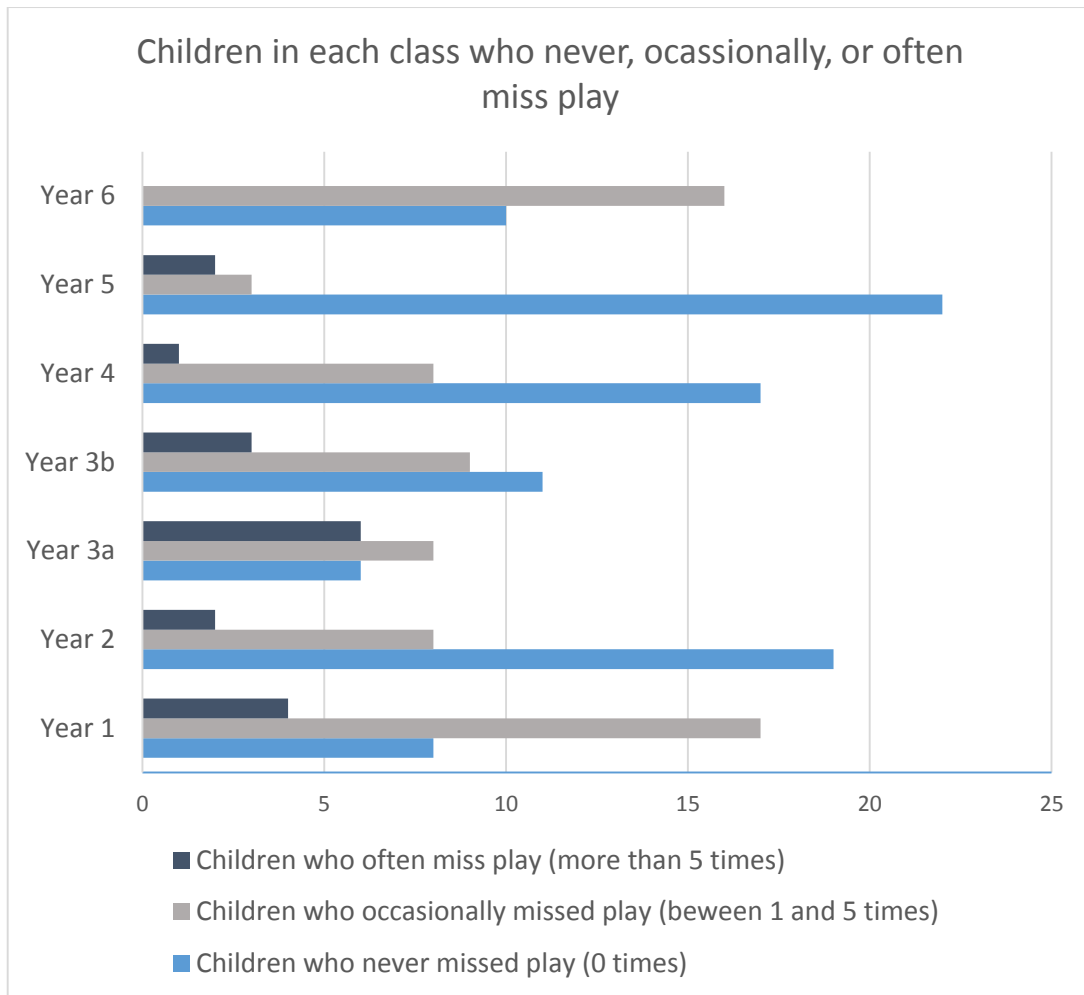


Figure 4: Children in each class who never, occasionally, or often miss play

There appears to be substantial variation between the proportions of children in each class who never, occasionally or often miss play. For example, no children from year 6 surpassed the missed play trigger point, and only a third of children in years 1 and 3a never missed a play time. The variation between year groups may be explained by various factors. Children's development in term of social and emotional maturity, understanding of cause and effect, and problem solving skills may all contribute to how different aged children may interact with the policy (e.g. Benedict *et al.*, 2007; Mihalas *et al.*, 2009). As was apparent in the systematic review, studies reported differences in how teachers responded to student behaviour based on individual teacher characteristics. These include their age (Mitchell and Bradshaw, 2013), level of experience (de Jong *et al.*, 2014), ethnicity (Mitchell and Bradshaw, 2013), gender (Lewis *et al.*, 2008a; de Jong *et al.*, 2014), and personalities (de Jong *et al.*, 2014). Finally, I wonder much of the variation in missed play between classes is a consequence of having teachers with different 'individual philosophies' around behaviour (Benedict *et al.*, 2007, p.

190), and is effected by the many factors which effect the relationship between teachers and students (Newberry and Davis, 2008; Newberry, 2013).

To better understand the missed play records I examined the school's behaviour policy and discussed this with Theresa, who had considered the policy successful in her previous school. During our dialogue regarding possible alternatives to the policy Theresa indicated that she had hoped to bring elements of restorative justice into the policy. Thus the school's policy was considered in relation to the ideas of restorative justice. For further detail on the policy see Appendix A.

The policy explicitly stated what it sought to avoid: 'this policy is not primarily concerned with rule enforcement'. This echoes the restorative justice literature which argues that the simple application of 'rules' supresses empowerment, personalisation and creativity (e.g. Danforth, 2007; Orsati and Causton-Theoharis, 2013). The policy described many ways in which to address unwanted behaviour (through consistency, control, discipline procedures), but only one way (rewards) of promoting positive behaviours. The policy suggested a move away from focusing on unwanted behaviours, however, the procedure outlined a consequence-based punitive approach rather than a preventative approach that encourages wanted behaviours (Benedict *et al.*, 2007; Mihalas *et al.*, 2009). Theresa emphasised the need for staff to "*follow the system*", for example by using the specific language of 'verbal' and 'final' warnings. The policy recognised that children may have different needs, but emphasised the need for consistency in addressing behaviour.

Theresa stated that behaviour concerns at Bow Lane were "*very rarely around being physically or verbally aggressive to others ... it was more around behaviour for learning*". The ethos of the policy emphasised the importance of student rights: 'to learn well' and 'to enjoy'. I felt that this closely aligned with the restorative justice premise that discipline is not an end in itself (Orsati and Causton-Theoharis, 2013). To a lesser extent the policy stated social and emotional development aims. Theresa described how certain children required support to develop emotional literacy, however, this was viewed as a targeted intervention rather than a universal feature of the school's behaviour approach. The social aims of the policy related to respect and sense of community and thus to 'socialising', or possibly 'conforming', rather than becoming a 'relational being' (Pranis, 2007).

Evidence from the missed play records suggested that the behaviour approach used in the school was ineffective for many of the children. From examination of the policy and discussions with Theresa it was found that, whilst Theresa had hoped to involve ideas from restorative justice, this did not appear to be supported by the policy or practice. Given the findings of my systematic review that punitive approaches can negatively affect teacher-student relationships I was concerned that the delivery of the behaviour policy did not support teacher-student relationships and could thus be detrimental to the children's social and emotional development and learning. As such, Theresa and I agreed that ideas from restorative justice might be explored to identify alternative approaches and adaptations to the policy in order to promote teacher-student relationships when addressing unwanted behaviour at Bow lane.

Theoretical frameworks

Understanding of teacher-student relationships is dependent on the theoretical stance taken (Mihalas *et al.*, 2009). Commonly attachment or motivation perspectives are used (for a review see Davis, 2003). Nevertheless, given my personal value in considering children within a social system (as in Chapter 2) this research will adopt an interpersonal perspective, which examines teacher-student relationships through students' perceptions of teacher behaviour (Wubbels and Levy, 1991). The interpersonal perspective identifies two factors to explain how a teacher relates to their students: '*proximity*' and '*influence*' (Wubbels *et al.*, 1990; Fiske *et al.*, 2007; Fisher, 2011; Den Brok *et al.*, 2013). Proximity describes the emotional warmth or personal bond in a relationship, and is associated in the literature to increasing a child's sense of belonging and closeness. Influence relates to teacher's competency in their role and sense of management. In the literature the proximity continuum is referred to as opposition to cooperation, and influence as between submission to dominance (Sivan and Chan, 2013; Van Uden *et al.*, 2014), According to the interpersonal perspective, the student's perceptions of these teacher behaviours form the nature of the teacher-student relationship. This is illustrated in Figure 5 based on the model by Wubbels and Levy (1991).

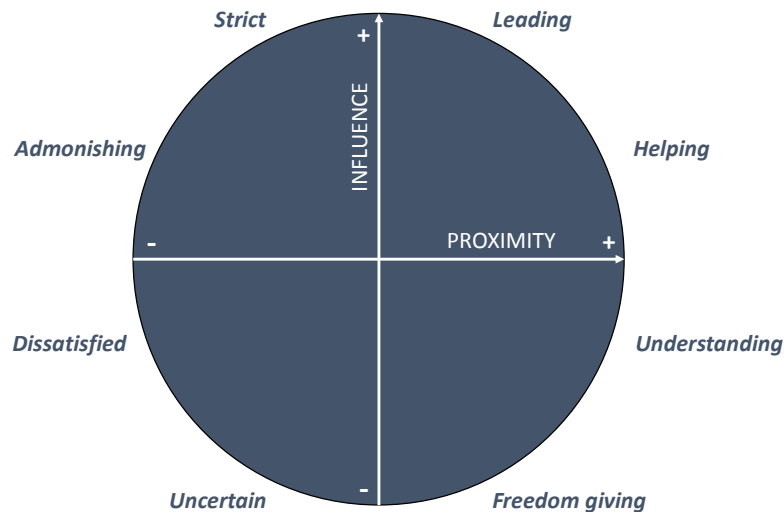


Figure 5: Influence and proximity in interpersonal teacher behaviour

Interpersonal teacher behaviour has been identified as a more accurate indicator of student engagement than teacher motives, self-efficacy and attitude (Van Uden et al., 2014). Similarly, measures of proximity and influence have been closely associated with a variety of cognitive and affective outcomes for children (Den Brok et al., 2013). Literature suggests that the most effective teachers score highly in both proximity and influence (Van Uden et al., 2014); giving the students a sense of leadership and friendliness (see Figure 5). Teacher interpersonal behaviour is commonly measured through versions of the questionnaire on teacher interaction (QTI). The QTI was originally developed in Dutch and has since been translated into many languages and been used across a wide international context (Sivan and Chan, 2013). Wubbels and Levy (1991) conclude that the QTI in English satisfactorily fulfilled reliability and validity expectations, with the two dimensions of interpersonal behaviour identified as separate and independent factors. The reliability and validity of the measure was also recognised in the early elementary version of the QTI that will be used here (Zijlstra et al., 2013)

The concept of restorative justice also addresses intersubjectivity as individuals are recognised as 'profoundly relational' (Pranis, 2007). Whilst behaviourist approaches to discipline draw on punitive approaches to extinguish behaviours that have been constructed as negative, restorative justice focuses on helping individuals recognise how they (and their actions) relate to others (Vaandering, 2014a); getting *well* rather than getting *even* (Mullet, 2014). In the restorative justice process children identify those who were affected by their

behaviour, listen and talk with them, and to establish how they can make up for the harm they have caused (Figure 6).



Figure 6: Focuses of restorative justice (Mullet, 2014)

By encouraging children to think about the *harm done*, as opposed to *rules broken* (Vaandering, 2014b) children learn to consider their intersubjectivity and may be motivated to change. Making up for previous choices also has the natural consequence of having the child become more accepted and better liked by others (Mullet, 2014). Through promoting the humanistic principle of empathy these conversations can establish a caring environment (Mihalas *et al.*, 2009; Bozkurt and Ozden, 2010). Thus the practice of restorative justice can allow for a positive cycle of improving behaviours and improving relationships, despite the catalyst being unwanted behaviours. Whilst the phrase ‘harm done, not rules broken’ was used in the intervention to refocus adult conversations regarding behaviour, the term ‘harm’ was sensitively used (and at times avoided) in conversations with children so as to encourage thinking about their behaviour but mitigate feelings of distress. For example, children were encouraged to think about how their behaviour had affected others, not how others may have been hurt.

The concept of restorative justice was originally developed from within the justice system. This has created some challenges when applied to the field of education. For myself, there is some discomfort with the original terminology used in restorative justice, for example, the terms ‘victim’ and ‘perpetrator’. From my epistemological perspective I feel that drawing such distinctions is reductive and suggests a binary simplicity which I feel is at odds with the complexity of social interaction. Furthermore, such an approach contributes to a culture of

blame which is unhelpful in the restoration of relationships and the process of moving forward. Whilst originally restorative justice involved the victim (as in Figure 6), current practices vary across a continuum (Wachtel and McCold, 2001), I believe that the application of the other principles of restorative justice, without the victim focus, is also likely to be effective. This is the basis of the research intervention.

For the purpose of this research the underlying ideas from restorative justice that will be emphasised will be the understanding that we are relational beings, and that behaviours may be changed, and relationships restored, by the recognition that we are acting within complex social systems. Restorative approaches will refer to the emphasis on restoring relationships through considering how unwanted behaviours have an effect on others. For an in-depth review of the history and application of restorative justice please see (Pranis, 2007).

Study rationale and focus

As Orsati and Causton-Theoharis (2013) and Kaufman and Moss (2010) point out, discipline is not an end in itself. Bow Lane's OFSTED report suggested that improvements in behaviour were needed to support learning opportunities for all students. Furthermore, discussions with staff indicated that behaviour was a significant cause of anxiety and stress for teachers; a serious concern given that perceived student misbehaviour is closely associated with staff turnover intentions (Tsouloupas *et al.*, 2010). Given the 'dismal' outcomes for children labelled with behavioural difficulties (Mihalas *et al.*, 2009), the impact on teacher experiences (Elik *et al.*, 2010), as well as the effect on learning for all children, it is apparent that teacher-student relationships are worth researching further. Research is needed to ensure that school structures and policies, particularly those for behaviour, support the development of these relationships.

This study has been inspired by the research question of Vaandering (2014a), who asked: 'what does [restorative justice] *look* like, *sound* like and *feel* like in schools' (p. 68). This research will address the question: what effect can a restorative conversation have upon teacher-student relationships when addressing unwanted behaviour?

Method

Research strategy and design

This research will be described as a case study of the behaviour policy at Bow Lane. Whilst I recognise the challenges of generalisability and subjectivity bias in case study research I, like Flyvberg (2004), think that the richness possible with this approach (Gomm *et al.*, 2000; Yin, 2013) makes it appropriate to the context and research question addressed here. As a practitioner I have ‘intimate knowledge’ (Thomas, 2012, p. 76) of the research context and recognise that my position as a member of the wider school community results in active interpretation of the research data. Indeed, following the action research paradigm I have seen myself and the school staff as ‘co-learners’ (Baumfield *et al.*, 2008, p. 9) in the process of exploring and developing Bow Lane’s behaviour policy.

Research processes and information gathering

The research processes (presented in roughly chronological order in Table 9) took place between October 2014 and February 2015. Missed play sessions were attended by all of the children who had received verbal warning and final warning between the end of break time on the previous day and the start of play time on that day. As such, missed plays involved children from years 1 to 6, and the group size varied dependent on the number of children who had demonstrated unwanted behaviour since the last missed play session.

Table 9: Research processes

| Research processes and <i>intended outcomes</i> | Information gathering | Analysis |
|---|--|---|
| Initial negotiation of research procedures with Theresa and ethical approval procedures | | |
| 1. Baseline observations of missed play (without restorative conversation) (n=3): <i>To explore how missed play is being carried out in practice.</i> <i>To consider how practice relates to school policy.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observations of three missed plays led by different teachers – Field notes based on observational prompts developed from discussions with staff and behaviour policy | Observation field notes compared to missed play with restorative conversation to identify qualitative similarities and differences between the two approaches |
| QTI measure developed in consultation with Theresa (adjusted for local dialect) | | |

| Research processes and <i>intended outcomes</i> | Information gathering | Analysis |
|--|--|---|
| <p>2. Embedded case studies (n=2):</p> <p><i>To identify the impact of behaviour approaches on teacher-student relationship.</i></p> <p><i>To exemplify the effect of changing the behaviour approach on children in the school.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaire on teacher interpersonal behaviour (QTI) measure on a neutral day when the child had not missed play • QTI measure after missing play (without restorative conversation) • QTI measure after missing play (with restorative conversation) – NB: this occurred during stage 5 • Discussion with the child regarding the restorative conversation and behaviour at school | <p>Comparison of scores for influence and proximity for each of the three conditions</p> |
| Training teachers in use of restorative conversation | | |
| <p>3. Observations of missed play with restorative conversation (n=3):</p> <p><i>To make comparisons to missed play without restorative conversation</i></p> | <p>As stage 1</p> | <p>As stage 1</p> |
| <p>4. QTI measures pre- and post-missed play with restorative conversation (n=10):</p> <p><i>To identify the impact of restorative conversations on the influence and proximity in teacher-student relationships.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QTI measure immediately before the child missed play • QTI measure immediately after the child missed play with restorative conversation | <p>Wilcoxon signed ranks test (2 related samples) due to small sample and non-parametric data</p> |
| <p>5. Semi-structured interview with Theresa:</p> <p><i>To identify changes following introduction of restorative conversation to missed play.</i></p> <p><i>Member checking</i></p> <p><i>To plan next steps for the school.</i></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion regarding school context • Discussion of the findings of other information gathering tools and the outcomes of restorative conversation during missed play • Discussion regarding policy • Planning of future involvement regarding training | <p>Semantic themes. Quotes related to other research processes to aid interpretation of findings.</p> |

Whilst conducting this research I maintained dialogue with staff regarding school policy, student behaviour and the research process. Patterns and contradictions that emerged through cycles of *hot and cool reflection* (Metcalfe and Mischel, 1999) were recorded as field notes. These field notes were discussed during the interview with Theresa to ensure 'reasonable and representative' (Baumfield et al., 2008, p. 103) interpretation of the findings.

Tools and procedure

The early elementary school version of the QTI by Zijlstra *et al.* (2013) was used to identify the perception of students aged six to nine years regarding their teachers' interpersonal behaviours (Appendix B). The early elementary QTI involved twenty questions to establish levels of *proximity* (opposition-cooperation) and *influence* (dominance-submission). Half of the items were reverse coded so that the term *always* could mean scoring high or low on the construct, depending on the question. The questionnaire was carried out verbally by a teaching assistant on a one-to-one basis (as described in Figure 7).

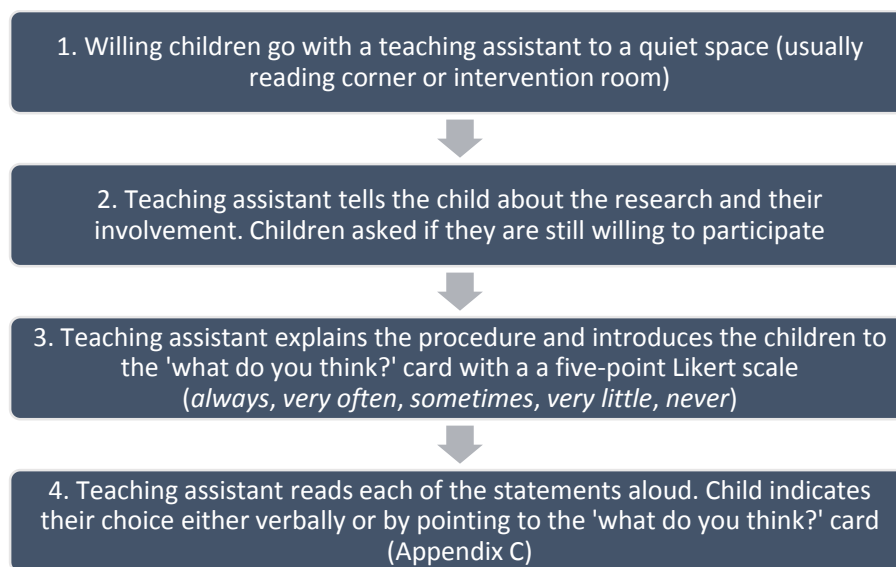


Figure 7: Procedure for QTI measures

Two minor adaptations were made to Zijlstra *et al.*'s original measure in consultation with Theresa. Firstly, to reduce bias over repeated measures the QTI questions were presented in a randomised order (Howitt and Cramer, 2007). Secondly, the language of two questions were altered to take into account the local dialect and to ensure that questions could be fully meaningful to the children in this research (Adderley *et al.*, 2015). This included the term 'mess on' for 'fool around', and 'talk over the teacher' for 'talk out of turn'.

For the intervention, teachers carried out a restorative conversation based upon restorative justice literature (see Pranis, 2007). The restorative conversation aimed to: prompt thinking about those affected, imagine what others might have felt or thought, consider alternatives for future behaviours, and brainstorm what could be done to make up for it. The guidance (Appendix D) was developed following observations of missed play practice. It emphasised the importance of supporting the child to express their own ideas, actively listening, being empathetic, and being solution-focused. The restorative conversation intervention (Figure 8) was carried out within the pre-existing structures of missed play at Bow Lane.

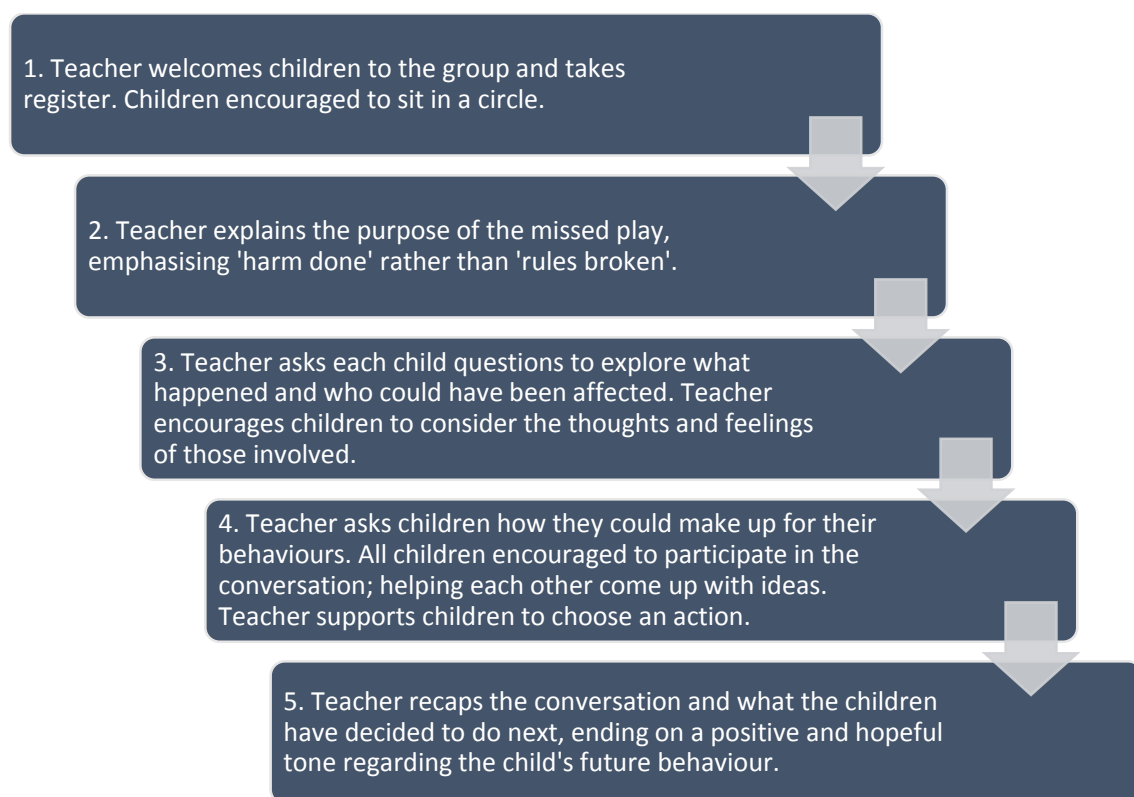


Figure 8: Procedure for missed play with restorative conversation

I prepared each teacher for the missed plays with restorative conversation during one session (maximum 30 minutes) on a one-to-one basis. This involved a discussion with staff regarding the idea of restorative justice and an introduction to the restorative conversation procedure, with a copy of the restorative conversation guidance and information sheets. In addition to this I also:

- Supported the teacher by briefly going over the restorative conversation guidance before the missed play;
- Attended the session to provide support and more ideas for if the teacher became stuck;
- Held a debrief after the session to hear their thoughts and discuss any concerns or difficulties that they had had.

The research also required the development of prompts for missed play observations (Appendix E) and the loosely structured interview (Appendix F).

Involvement of participants

The following individuals were involved in this case study:

- Two focus children, Bella and Andy (pseudonyms for identity protection), chosen as they had missed more than five playtimes (the policy's trigger point).
- Ten children from years 1 to 4 (6 boys, 4 girls) completed QTI measures pre- and post-restorative conversation based on an opportunistic sample of those who missed play during the intervention.
- Class teachers for years 1 to 4 were observed delivering the school's missed play before the intervention, and worked jointly with myself to carry out the missed plays with restorative conversations.
- Theresa, as the senior staff member responsible for behaviour, was interviewed.

Ethics

A process of nested consent was used in which appropriate consent was gained for all participants. The head teacher gave written consent for the research to be conducted in her school and for me to access anonymised school data. Participating staff and the parents of the two focus children, with whom I worked directly, read information sheets (Appendix G and Appendix H) and completed consent forms (Appendix I). The focus children also gave verbal consent to participate after I had explained the research in child friendly language. For example, I explained how I was a learner like them and that I wanted to find out about behaviour in the school and how students and teachers got along by asking them questions. In these conversations I avoided the term 'harm' and instead explained that if they took part there would be a conversation about what other children think or feel about their behaviours.

The school adopted the QTI measure (completed with a member of staff) to monitor children's experiences of missed play, thus I had no direct contact with the other children involved in the intervention including those who completed the pre- and post-intervention QTI measures.

Written consent was given by the head teacher of the school to confirm that the data collected by the school during this research could be anonymously used in this thesis.

Each QTI completed by the students was held by Teresa (the teacher responsible for behaviour in the school) in her office. On collecting the paper QTIs I transferred the data onto the Newcastle University computer system and destroyed the paper copies through confidential waste. Student data, once on the university system, was password protected.

This project received ethical approval from Newcastle University. I maintained reflectivity on ethical issues throughout the project, and conducted the research following my own core principles of authenticity, responsibility and respect.

Findings and interpretation

In this section I consider the effects of the restorative conversation on teacher-student relationships. Firstly, this involves making observable comparisons between baseline missed plays and missed plays with the restorative conversation intervention, and considering these in light of relevant literature. The findings from the QTI measures of influence and proximity are then investigated for the two focus children will be discussed, before being extended to ten children to see if a pattern emerges illustrating how the restorative conversation might have affected the teacher-student relationship when addressing unwanted behaviour.

Comparisons between missed play with and without the restorative conversations

Table 10 compares features of the missed plays with and without the restorative conversation intervention. During baseline observations interactions between adults and children were largely characterised by the adult asking the children narrow, usually loaded, questions such as: “*Are you going to make a good choice next time?*”. This reduced opportunities for children to express themselves and problem-solve. Closed questions did not allow for active listening and empathy to support the development of relationships (Mihalas *et al.*, 2009). In these conversations adults controlled the conversation and made judgements regarding whether these behaviours were wanted or unwanted (Vaandering, 2014a). The open questions and time given to children’s views in the restorative conversation provided further opportunities to establish care and empathy.

Despite assertions in the behaviour policy that the school was not primarily concerned about rule enforcement, during baseline observations, staff often reiterated school rules. Discussions with children around rule enforcement during baseline observations of missed play did not recognise the purpose of wanted behaviours (i.e. to learn, to make friends, for the benefit of others) and instead inappropriately placed intrinsic value on perceived good behaviour (Danforth, 2007). In ending the missed play sessions adults often reflected on the session as a punishment, for example: *“You don’t want to do that again do you, or you’ll miss play again won’t you?”* Again this suggests that the purpose of wanted behaviours is to avoid punishment. During the restorative conversation there was an emphasis on problem solving to help the child establish strategies for future behaviour, as well as finding ways to make up for any harm they had caused.

Although baseline observations included some mentions of the feelings of others, this was a specific focus of the restorative conversation, which intended to encourage the idea that unwanted behaviours have social and emotional consequences. Rather than serving a punitive purpose, it was hoped that this discussion would allow children to consider their behavioural choices in relation to others, and thus have a preventative role on future unwanted behaviour.

Table 10: Observable comparisons between missed play with and without restorative conversation

| | Missed play without restorative conversation | Missed play with restorative conversation |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| Exploration of the situation | <p>“Why have you had to miss play?”</p> <p>“Why did you make that choice?”</p> | <p>“What happened?”</p> <p>“How did you feel about it then?”</p> <p>“What did it mean for other people?”</p> <p>“Did you mean to do that?”</p> |
| Types of questions | <p>Mainly closed questions with some open questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Is it good to not do work?” • “Who are you going to say sorry to?” • “Are you going to make a good choice next time?” • “That’s not good, is it?” | <p>Mainly open questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What do you think you could have done differently?” • “How can you put it right?” • “How would you feel someone did that to you?” • “What do you think makes you a good friend?” • “How do you think you can be a good learner this afternoon?” |
| Responding to emotions | <p>“You look very sad. Is that because you know you made a bad choice?”</p> | <p>“You look upset. Why do you feel like that?”</p> |
| Discussion about relationships | <p>“What are you going to do to make your teacher happy?”</p> <p>“Would you want to be friends with someone who hit you?”</p> | <p>“Who else in the class do you think was affected?”</p> <p>“What do you think the teacher thought about that?”</p> <p>“How do you think your Mam will feel?”</p> <p>“What do you think makes a good friend?”</p> |

| | Missed play without restorative conversation | Missed play with restorative conversation |
|---|--|--|
| Dynamics and body language | <p>Children sit in a line and wait to be spoken to.</p> <p>Child sat at a desk and told: “sit quietly and think about what you have done”.</p> <p>Teacher shakes and tilts head giving a disapproving look.</p> | <p>Children encouraged to sit in a circle and to join in the conversation.</p> <p>Children move around the room doing a role play and practicing calming techniques.</p> <p>Teacher has relaxed body language. Varied facial expression. Echoes children’s emotional expressions</p> |
| Teacher judgement | <p>“We are not impressed”</p> <p>“That’s really bad!” (lists all the possible negative outcomes of the behaviour)</p> <p>“Other children in other year groups are being good”</p> | <p>Teachers avoid judgemental sentence but some responses contain judgement: “oh dear”, “that’s a shame”, etc.</p> |
| Information given to the students by the teacher | <p>Repetition of school rules: “don’t raise hands or feet to anyone in the school. It’s a big rule.”</p> <p>Ideas about how to fix it: “you can say sorry”, “maybe you can tell the teacher next time?”</p> | <p>Ideas about how they could keep calm next time: “what about if you walked away?” “you could try taking 10 deep breaths and counting”</p> |
| Finishing point | <p>“Am I going to see you here again?” – children shake their heads</p> <p>“It’s sad to miss play time. I’m sure you don’t want to be here either”</p> <p>“You don’t want to do that again do you, or you’ll miss play again won’t you?”</p> | <p>“We’ve had some good ideas about what we can do better next time, haven’t we?”</p> <p>“Ok, let’s be the best you, you can be this afternoon”</p> <p>Teacher chats with students as they walk out of the hall.</p> |

Findings from work with the focus children

Through interrogating the missed play data two children were identified as possible embedded case studies to initially explore the behaviour policy in practice and the effect of the restorative conversation. To make these comparisons Bella and Andy completed the QTI on three occasions (Figure 9).

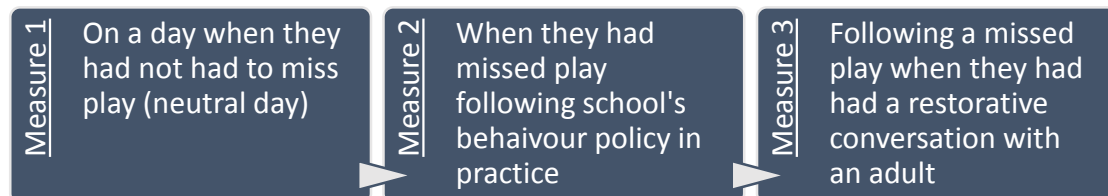


Figure 9: QTI measures for focus children

Bella, in Year 1, had reached the trigger point of five missed plays early in the term, whereupon her mother had been invited into school to discuss Bella's behaviour and had agreed to the use of the behaviour chart which school staff had proposed. Andy, in year 3, had missed more playtimes in the school year than any other student. Andy's class teacher was a newly qualified teacher who was suffering from work related stress and felt unable to address his behaviour. Andy's teacher revealed that she had "been told to go in harsh" at the start of the year but did not feel that this had worked. Andy, who had once been the 'star of the week' for having a 'fantastic attitude towards learning in both Maths and English', missed many play times due to his behaviour. During the interview Theresa was shocked at the extent of the problem, exclaiming: "I can't believe that that one child missed 23 ... that is awful isn't it".

Figures 10 and 11 illustrate the total scores that they gave their teachers in the QTI measure for proximity and influence where five-point Likert scale questions meant that the highest score for each dimension would be 50 and the lowest would be 10. During a neutral measure, on a day when they had not had to miss play, Andy and Bella scored their teachers highly on both influence and proximity. Nevertheless, having to miss play reduced their view of the teachers' proximity and influence, although more so for Andy than for Bella. When talking about behaviour at Bow Lane both Bella and Andy were able to accurately describe the behaviour procedures suggesting that the school's behaviour policy was being explained appropriately to the children.

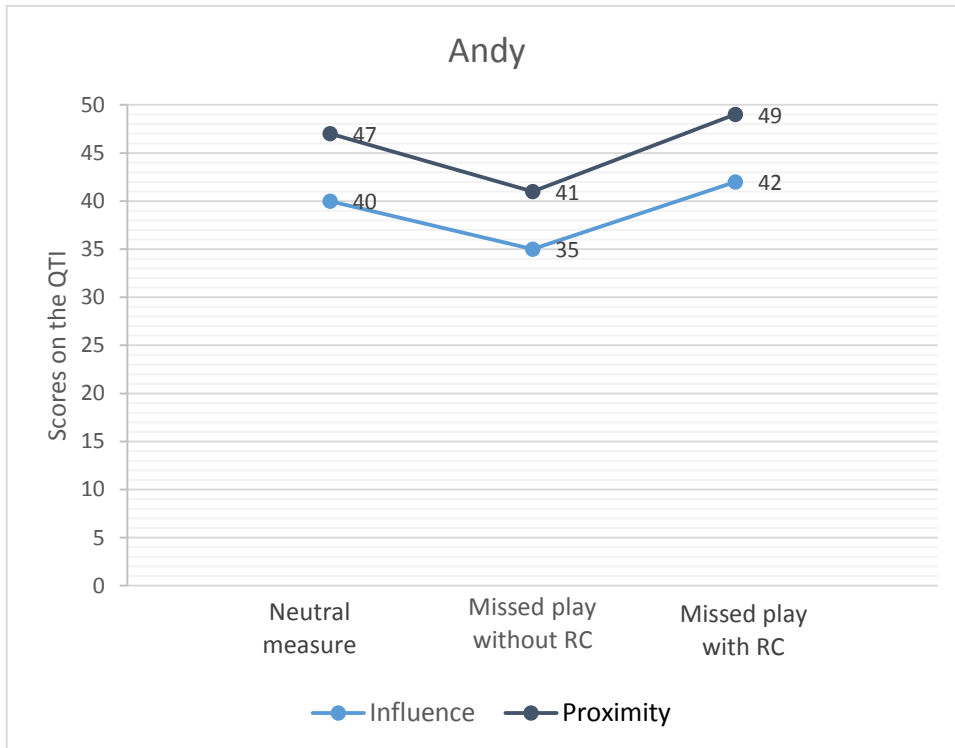


Figure 10: Influence and Proximity scores using the QTI in three conditions - Andy

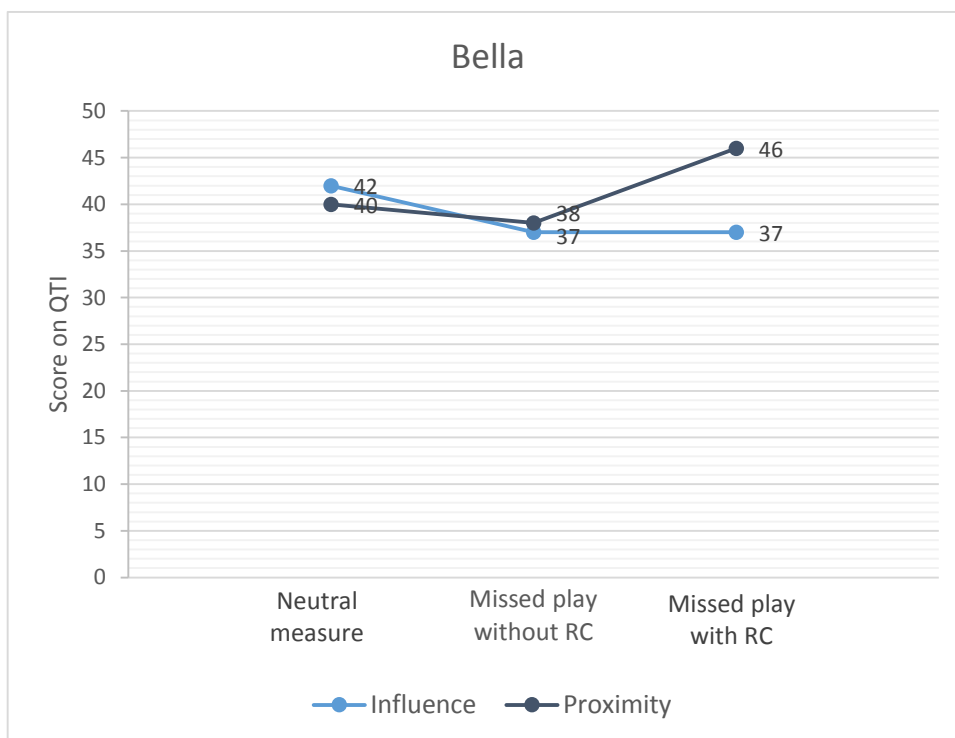


Figure 11: Influence and Proximity scores using the QTI in three conditions - Bella

Bella's QTI scores indicated that her feelings of proximity towards her teacher was highest when she held a restorative conversation with an adult. This means that despite the negative effect of missing play, having this conversation made her feel closer to her teacher than on a day when she had not received a sanction (a neutral day). Bella's view of her teacher's influence did not seem to change with the restorative conversation. For Andy, the restorative conversation increased his view of his teacher's influence and proximity to an even higher score than on a neutral day. Andy consistently reported feeling stronger proximity than influence from his teacher. By contrast, Bella's scores for influence and proximity were similar in both neutral and missed play without restorative conversation conditions, but became quite different after the restorative conversation, as she reported feeling much greater proximity than influence from her teacher.

There appeared to be similar effects of the restorative conversation on Bella and Andy's views of their teachers' influence and proximity. The pattern suggested firstly that missed plays (without the restorative conversation) led the students to feel more negative about their teachers' influence and proximity, and secondly, that the restorative conversation improved this.

Comparisons of influence and proximity before and after restorative conversations

Having identified a slight pattern in how Bella and Andy responded to the restorative conversation I wanted to establish whether this pattern was repeated for other children in the school. The QTI measure was used before and after a missed play with a restorative conversation (see Figure 12) with ten children who had shown unwanted behaviours in class to assess how the intervention affected children's perceptions of their teachers' *influence* and *proximity*.

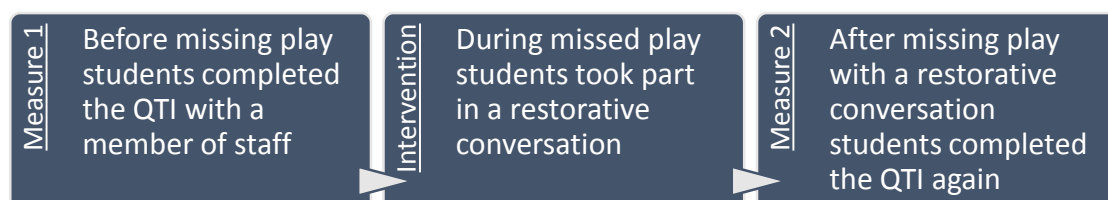


Figure 12: Procedure to compare QTI scores (influence and proximity) before and after restorative conversation

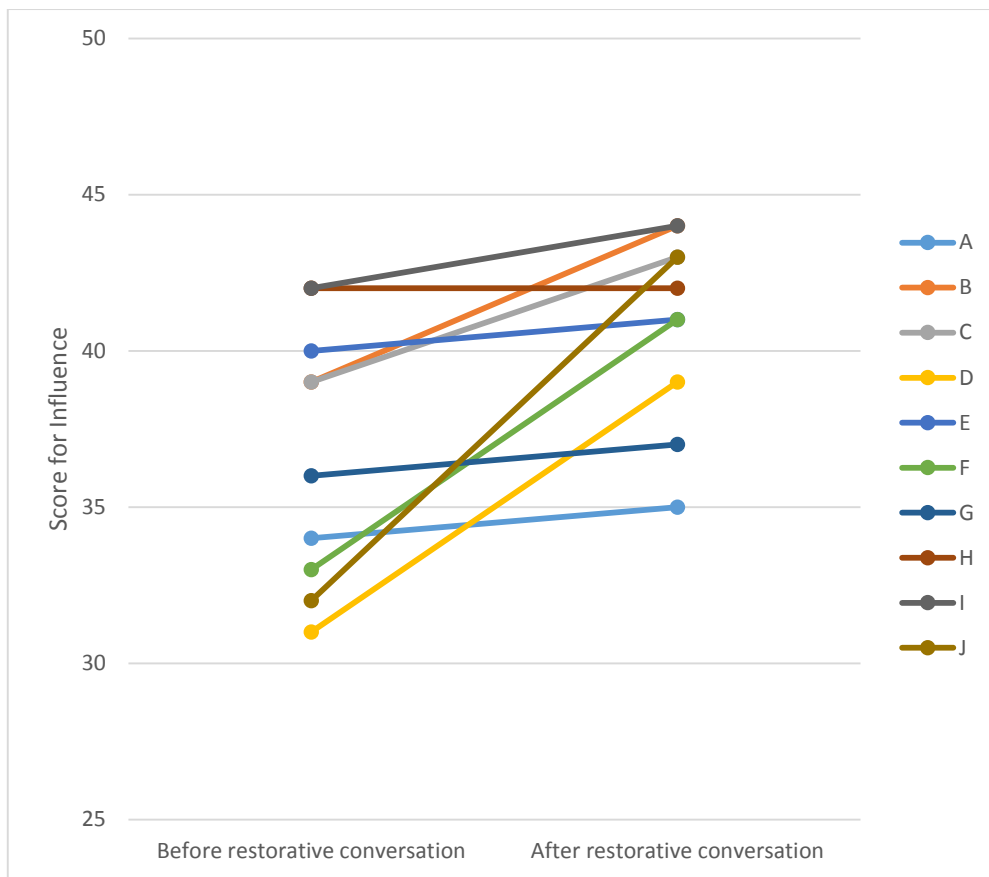


Figure 13: Influence scores before and after restorative conversation using the QTI

From Figure 13, there appears to be a pattern of increased perception of influence following the restorative conversation. Overall the children appear to think that their teachers have a high level of influence, with no child giving a score of less than 30 out of a possible 50 either before or after the restorative conversation. Nine of the children increased in their perception of teacher’s influence, with one child not perceiving their teacher’s influence differently after the restorative conversation.

A Wilcoxon signed ranks test (2 related samples) was conducted to compare children’s scores for teacher influence as measured before and after the restorative conversation. A significant difference was found between influence before the restorative conversation ($M=36.8$, $S.D.=4.13$) and after the restorative conversation ($M=40.9$, $S.D.=3.04$) ($Z=-2.677$, $p=0.007$). Children felt that their teacher was more in control of the class situation and managed their behaviour more after they had had an opportunity to reflect upon their relationship with their teacher.

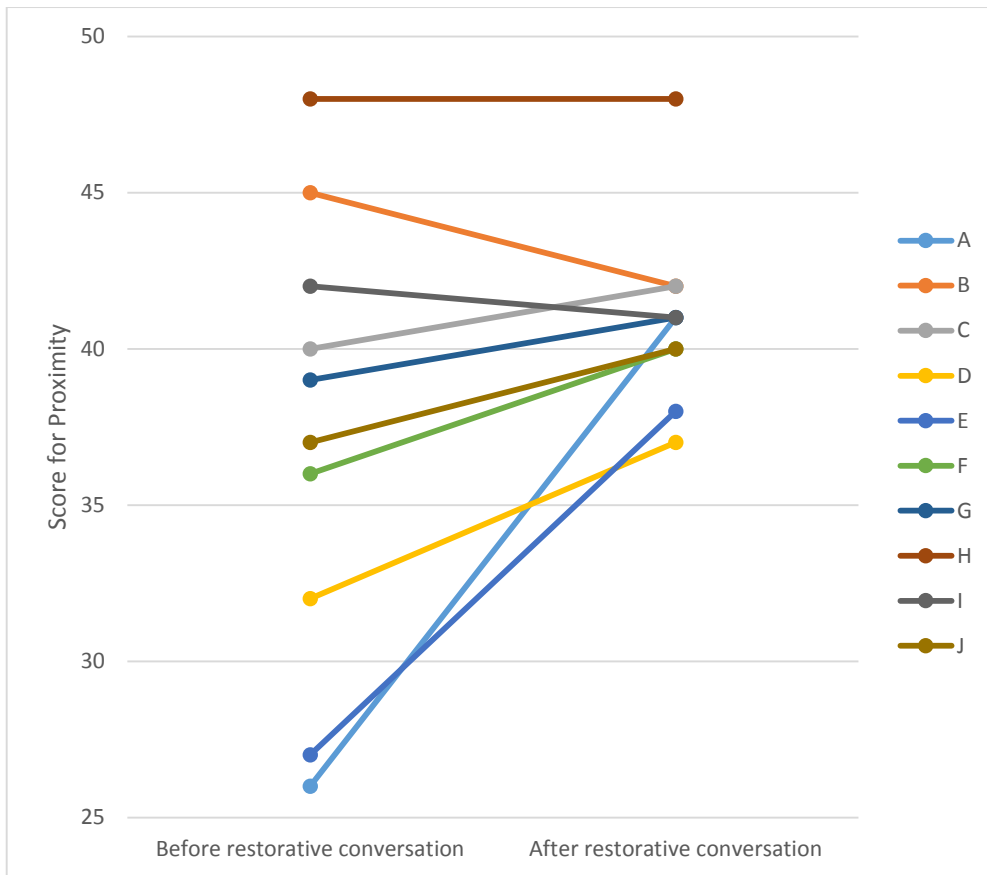


Figure 14: Proximity scores before and after restorative conversation using the QTI

In comparison to children’s perception of their teacher’s influence (Figure 13), there appeared to be greater variation in children’s perceptions of their teacher’s proximity (Figure 14). Seven of the children feel more emotional closeness to their teachers after having had the restorative conversation, two of which increased proximity scores by over 20%. Two of the children’s scores dropped slightly after the restorative conversation, and one child gave the same scores for proximity before and after the intervention.

The Wilcoxon signed ranks test indicated that the implementation of the restorative conversation had a significant effect on proximity ($Z=-2.677$, $p=0.007$), with children feeling emotionally closer to their teacher after the restorative conversation ($M=41.0$, $S.D.=2.93$) than before ($M=37.2$, $S.D.=7.22$). When the standard deviations for proximity before and after the restorative conversation are compared it is interesting to note that there is less variation in scores after the restorative conversation than before. This may suggest that children who felt less emotionally close to their teacher before the conversation, felt greater proximity towards

their teacher after the intervention, however, children who already felt close to their teacher did not change.

The findings in Figures 13 and 14 should be considered with caution for several reasons. Firstly, Bow lane's consequence system means that children missing play will have presented unwanted behaviour between 24 hours before and moments before play time. As such, the different children in missed play may have had different lengths of time to reflect or possibly forget what had happened. This is supported by literature from the systematic review (particularly Mainhard *et al.*, 2011) which found that children's views of the behaviour incident and teacher response was affected by whether the event happened during an immediate lesson or a previous week. Secondly, the children who missed play will have presented different unwanted behaviours. This may have effected how 'fair' children perceived the teacher's response to be (as found by Lewis *et al.*, 2012 in the systematic review). This may also have affected how anxious the children were of the missed play. Finally, the efforts made to ensure that the missed play was a pleasant experience (as reflected in the observations in Table 10) may have made the children feel happier when completing the QTI, which may have affecting the scores they gave their teachers.

Despite these limitations to the QTI measure, as with the two focus children, Bella and Andy, the QTI scores for ten more children who had displayed unwanted behaviour seems to suggest that the restorative conversation does affect how the children view their relationship with their teacher. Like the systematic review literature (particularly de Jong *et al.*, 2014) this research found that children's perceptions of their teacher's influence and proximity differed. Nevertheless, teachers' influence and proximity were both perceived to be higher by students after they had participated in a restorative conversation than before they did.

Discussion and conclusions

Changes in influence and proximity in the teacher-student relationship

Considering the pattern of findings within the context of Bow Lane Theresa commented that: "*it doesn't surprise us but it shows the importance of having that high quality conversation with them*". Theresa felt it was valuable that, overall, students had a high opinion of their

teachers and suggested that both influence and proximity needed to “*play alongside each other*” to achieve the best outcomes for children. Theresa said that “*for these children the emotional closeness, I think that’s important*”. She made the link between perceiving high proximity in their teacher and increasing emotional adjustment (Breeman *et al.*, 2014). It is interesting that children who displayed unwanted behaviour still felt emotional warmth from their teachers. It may have been that the opportunity for students’ views to be heard views during the restorative conversation demonstrated to the children that adults felt care and empathy towards them (e.g. Bozkurt and Ozden, 2010; Newberry, 2013).

Theresa felt that there may be a tension between proximity and influence. Theresa suggested that the QTI measure did not take into account “*how the children perceive and see that you are doing things for them that are for their own good*”. This relates to Newberry’s (2013) definition of teacher-student relationship as interactions ‘whereby the adult does what is best for the welfare of the student’ (p.110). Theresa hypothesised that this may be related to the background of the children in Bow Lane’s catchment area. She recognised that many children from inconsistent households who “*are left to their own devices and make up their own rules*” may associate this low influence with love. This follows the argument from Mihalas *et al.* (2009) that building positive relationships with children is particularly challenging when the values at home are not cohesive with those at school. For these children home may be characterised by low influence and thus at school, where there is high influence, teachers’ attempts to address unwanted behaviour is viewed as less caring, and thus perceived proximity is reduced. Nevertheless, by having a restorative conversation with the children the staff could help the children explore why there was a need for structure at school. Perhaps improved communication and consistency between home and school may develop children’s understanding of how proximity and influence are related. The increased proximity and influence suggested that the restorative conversation allowed children to see that teachers could be involved in addressing their behaviour *and* be emotionally close to them.

Other changes following the restorative conversation intervention and research

Findings indicated that the restorative conversation improved relationships between the teachers and students, but Theresa also considered this intervention effective in terms of behaviour: “*it must be having an impact because the number of missed playtimes are reducing*”. The children’s experience of missed play seemed to have changed significantly with Theresa observing that “*you see them all sitting relaxed ... crossed legs ... sitting in a circle and*

chatting". Theresa also commented that the nature of the dialogue had also moved on, now prioritising "discussion rather than being spoken to".

Interestingly, I feel that the biggest impact was within the school system following changes in staff attitudes. Whilst Theresa recognised that "*you'll never have everyone fully on-board*" she also felt that the research "*made us think about improvements that we need to make*". During this period I saw staff question their understanding of behaviour management and experiment with different ways of discussing behaviour with children. My hope was that I could create a 'safe psychological space' (Harris, 2008, p. 376) in which staff would feel able to consider their practice. For Theresa I feel that this involved reflecting on her policy and how it had been applied from her old school to Bow Lane at a time of tension following the OFSTED inspection. She remarked that my research in the school "*has made us think we went too fast, we expected staff to be able to do that without giving them the skills*". Theresa concluded that she needed to revisit the policy: "*I need to go back and think about it*".

Summary

This empirical research was conducted in a primary school as part of my practice as a trainee EP. The case study approach used involved a multitude of information-gathering tools to gain an understanding of how Bow Lane and the school's senior leader for behaviour addressed unwanted student behaviour. By considering the school's behaviour policy, and reflecting on its use in practice, it was apparent that the aims of consistency and fairness were achieved when children missed play as a sanction for unwanted behaviour. Nevertheless, it was also apparent that the relational aims of the policy were being neglected in practice. As was found in the systematic review (particularly de Jong *et al.*, 2014, Lewis *et al.*, 2008b, and Mitchell and Bradshaw, 2013), measures of influence and proximity around the missed play discipline procedure suggested that receiving a punitive discipline had a negative effect on the teacher-student relationship.

The introduction of a restorative conversation, based on the ideas of restorative justice, allowed children to talk about how their behaviours affected others and what they could do to make up the harm they had caused. Observations and the questionnaire on teacher interaction (QTI) were used to answer the question: what effect can a restorative conversation have upon teacher-student relationships when addressing unwanted behaviour?

Measures using the QTI indicated that the restorative conversation intervention increased students' perceptions of both proximity (emotional warmth) and influence (competency and management). It was hypothesised that this was due to opportunities for children to be empathetically listened to, and for children to recognise that their behaviour affects others. From dialogue with staff it is thought that this practitioner research supported discussions between staff around the school's behaviour policy. Staff reported that there were improvements in student behaviour following the intervention and that certain children had developed improved relationships with their teachers and peers. The research also emphasised the need for the behaviour policy to address *harm done* rather than *rules broken* in order for children to consider themselves as relational beings.

Limitations, implications and future directions

This case study had some limitations that should be considered. Vaandering (2014a), amongst others, argues that restorative justice cannot be fitted into punitive structures or be used to address behaviour as there is a clash of values. I, like Segrott *et al.* (2013) feel that there is a need to work within school structures in order to enable small changes, with the hope being that this can lead to greater opportunities in the future. Having worked closely with Bow Lane staff it is apparent that the research has helped them identify further needs and to consider a wider change to policy. This suggests movement through the stages of change (Prochaska and Diclemente, 1986) which I have found possible only by interweaving a new idea (restorative justice) within present school structures (missed play).

The method and approach I took also lent to certain limitations. Firstly, the sample involved, of a dozen children and a handful of teachers in one school, was small and thus findings cannot be generalised. Nevertheless, generalisability is not necessarily an aim of case study research (Flyvberg, 2004; Thomas, 2012; Yin, 2013), which for this empirical study involved exploring one context in depth. Secondly, my involvement in the study was not as an objective outsider, but rather as an involved practitioner. Whilst this may have meant that my own values, experiences and relationships affected the interpretations, I also feel that this action research approach (Baumfield *et al.*, 2008) has allowed for richer data and a more meaningful piece of research which effected change for those who contributed towards it, as well as many others in the school. The context within which the research was conducted cannot be repeated as it tells the story of a school and the relationships within that school during a particular time of transition.

In terms of implications, this study suggests education professionals need to carefully consider the outcomes of behaviour approaches, and specifically how their response to unwanted behaviour can have an effect on relationships. This research has given teacher opportunities to restore their relationships with children who are displaying unwanted behaviours, and may create such opportunities in the future. From my solution-oriented perspective as an EP, I also feel that this research has the positive implication of findings solutions to unwanted behaviours through considering relationships. This study purports the value of practitioner research which is context-dependent and supports change. The systemic thinking and unique relationships with schools, which appear to be common to EPs, enabled me to consider both the practice of individual teachers and the system that supported it. This research indicates that EPs may have a particular role to play in supporting behaviour policy in order to promote relationships whilst addressing unwanted behaviours. In moving forward I am continuing to work with Theresa and other school staff to develop the behaviour policy so that it reflects both the findings of this research and the hopes of all those at Bow Lane.

Final thoughts

The style of research undertaken required an involved practitioner who was able to work to address the systems as well as the practice of individual teachers. This was possible due to my position as a trainee EP and my relationships with staff across the school. This research supports the idea that relationships should be the organising principle of practice within schools both between adults and children, and between professionals.

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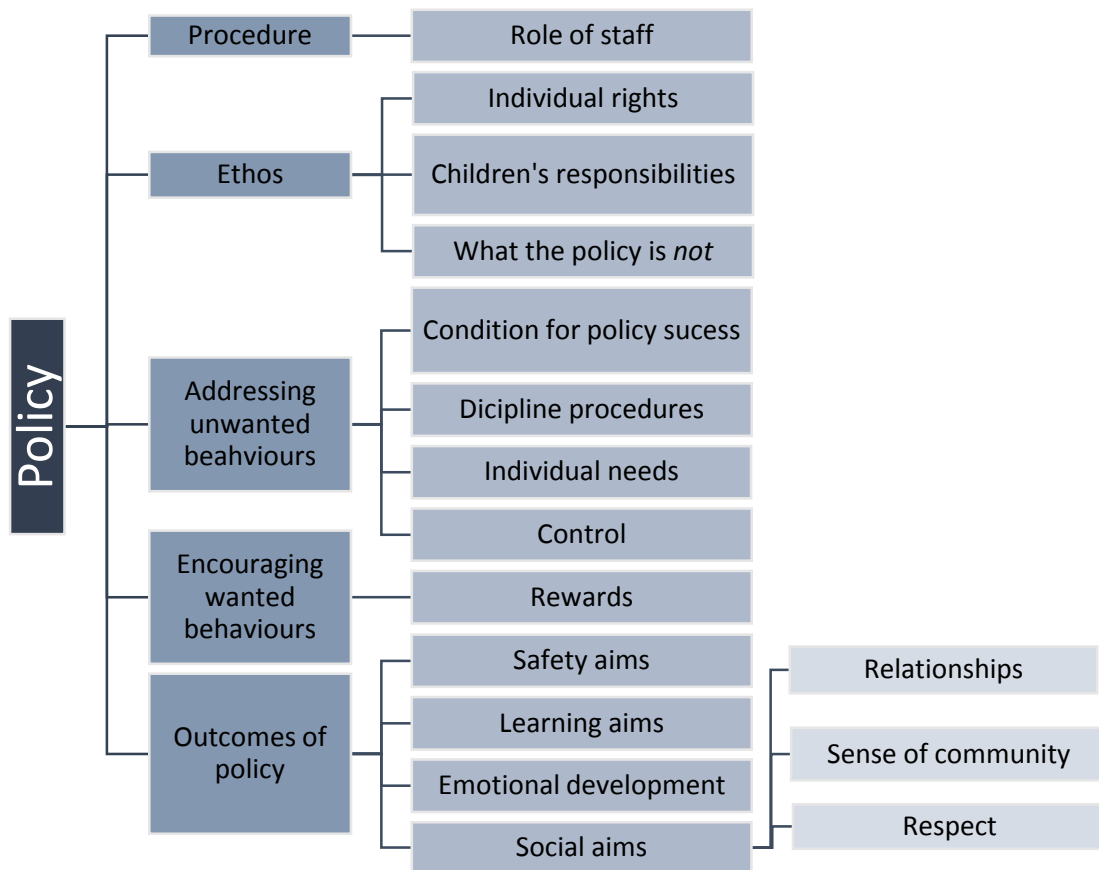
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Appendices

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| Theme | Sub-theme | Examples |
|--|---|---|
| Procedure | Role of staff | 'review effectiveness' and 'record incidents' |
| | | 'collaborates actively with parents' |
| | Individual rights | 'right to learn well' and 'right to enjoy' |
| | | 'fairness' |
| Children's responsibilities | 'responsibility for ensuring ... a positive learning environment' | |
| | 'Duty to show kindness and respect to EVERYONE' | |
| Establishing what the policy is <i>not</i> | 'It is a rewards-based rather than a punishment-oriented ethos' | |
| | 'our behaviour policy is not primarily concerned with rule enforcement' | |

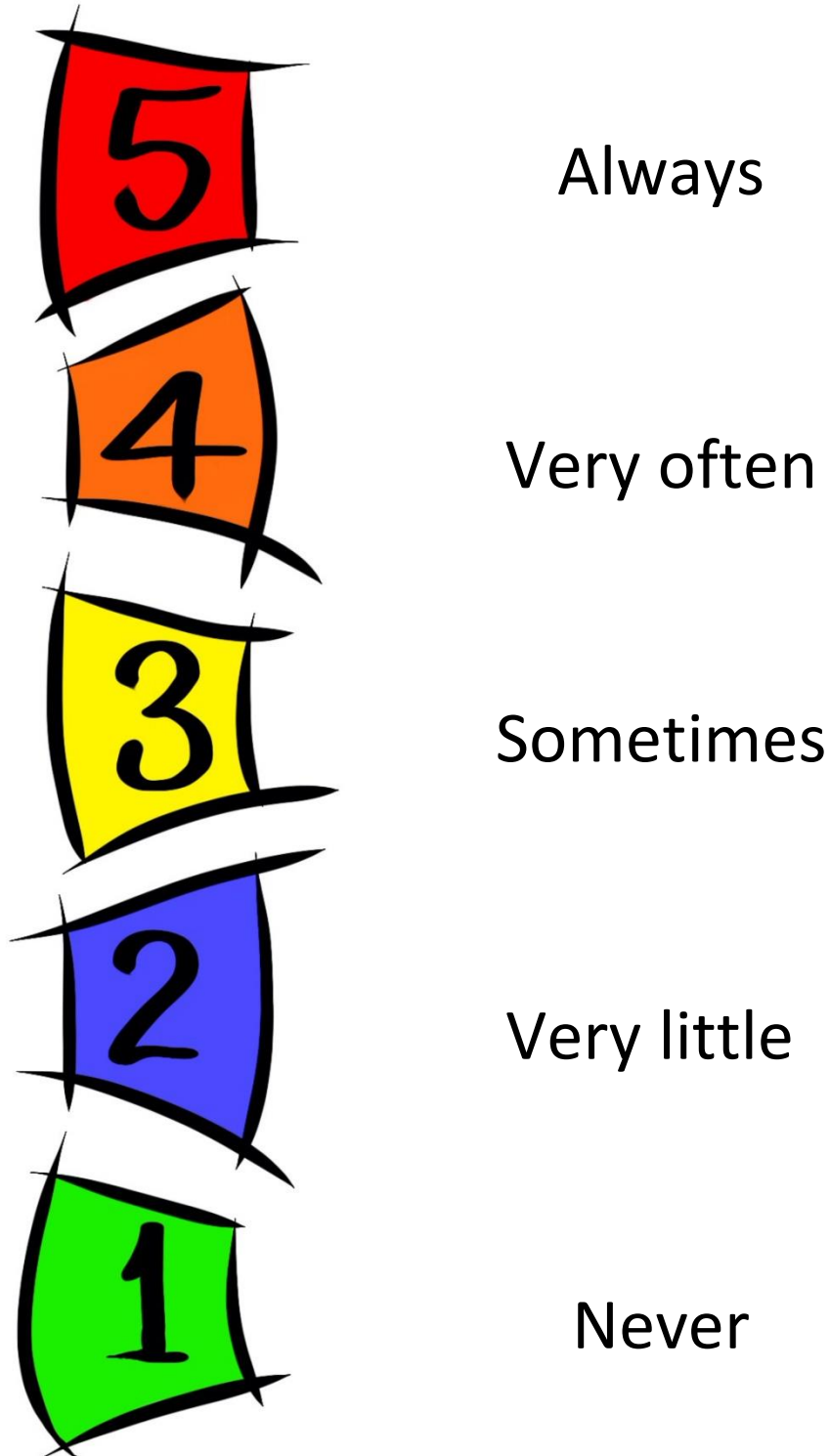
| Theme | Sub-theme | Examples |
|--|--|---|
| Addressing 'undesirable' behaviours | Conditions for policy 'success' | 'clear, consistently used systems' 'followed at all times' 'reduce uncertainty' |
| | Discipline procedures | 'consequences' including 'verbal warning, final warning ... missed play' 'sent to senior member of staff' |
| | Understanding individuality and individual needs | 'reason is recorded [so that] pattern identified' 'have their voices heard, be listened to' |
| | Control | 'conform', 'manage', 'controlled' 'taught and reinforced' |
| Encouraging 'desirable' behaviours | Rewards | 'recognise with star of the week' 'positive behaviour ... noted and celebrated' |
| Outcomes of the behaviour policy | Safety aims | 'safety to be ensured' 'secure environment' |
| | Learning aims | 'work to the best of their ability'. 'promote an appropriate climate for learning' |
| | Emotional development aims | 'feel happy, safe and secure' 'sense of pride and achievement' |
| | Social aims - Relationships | 'to promote good relationships' 'working together' |
| | Social aims - Sense of community | 'ethos of kindness and co-operation' 'pupils feel they belong to the community' and can 'contribute to something bigger' |
| | Social aims - Respect | 'take care of books, equipment and the school environment' 'enhance each individual's own sense of value and worth... learn to value and respect others' |

Appendix B: Questionnaire on Teacher Interpersonal Behaviour - Elementary Scale

| Coding | Factor | Questions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----------|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reverse | Influence | *If Mrs. X says we have to be quiet, the kids keep talking. | | | | | |
| Reverse | Influence | *Children are naughty to Mrs. X. | | | | | |
| Reverse | Proximity | *Mrs. X shouts at us. | | | | | |
| Reverse | Influence | *Children mess on in class. | | | | | |
| Standard | Proximity | Mrs. X acts friendly toward children. | | | | | |
| Standard | Influence | All children learn a lot from Mrs. X. | | | | | |
| Reverse | Proximity | *Mrs. X gets mad if children make mistakes. | | | | | |
| Standard | Proximity | Mrs. X is a kind teacher. | | | | | |
| Standard | Influence | Mrs. X explains things clearly. | | | | | |
| Reverse | Proximity | *Mrs. X nags us. | | | | | |
| Standard | Proximity | Mrs. X is friendly. | | | | | |
| Reverse | Proximity | *Mrs. X thinks that mistakes are bad. | | | | | |
| Standard | Influence | If Mrs. X makes a promise, she also follows through. | | | | | |
| Standard | Influence | Children pay attention to Mrs. X. | | | | | |
| Reverse | Influence | *We do things that are not allowed in class. | | | | | |
| Reverse | Influence | *Children talk over the teacher. | | | | | |
| Standard | Influence | Mrs. X explains everything well. | | | | | |
| Reverse | Proximity | *Mrs. X gets angry. | | | | | |
| Reverse | Proximity | *Mrs. X complains. | | | | | |
| Reverse | Proximity | *Mrs. X gets angry quickly. | | | | | |

What do you think?

Think about your teacher and decide if they do this...



Restorative conversation guide: Some questions about what happened

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- What do you think and feel about it now?
- What did it mean for other people?
- Who else was affected?
- What can you do to put it right?

Guidance for teachers:

- Use some of these questions to help you discuss a specific incident of behaviour with the child.
- Try to let the child answer the question but you can give your perspective after they have given an answer to help extend their thinking.
- Adapt or explain the language as appropriate to their understanding.
- Try to avoid blaming language i.e. “what did you do wrong?”.
- Keep questions open (avoid yes/no answers).
- Help them think about how their behaviour impacted on... other children in the class, students or staff in the school, family at home, you, etc.
- Help them come up with ideas about how they can put it right, and what they can do to avoid it in the future.
- Ask if they need any help from you to put it right or change in the future.
- Avoid being at all judgemental. Think about body language and tone of voice.
- Keep relaxed and show you are caring.
- End on a positive!

Observation Prompts

- What language or body language can be observed?
- Is this a bi-directional conversation? (Open or closed questions? Democratic or autocratic? Etc.)
- What relationships are referred to?
- How are emotions addressed?
- Does the conversation support change or plan for the future?

Additional notes:

Interview prompts

- Tell me about the context of your school (demographics, recent OFSTED, staff attitude and moral, parents, etc.)
- Tell me about your behaviour policy – where did it come from and what is it trying to achieve?
- What thoughts do you have on the methods I have used for the research?
- Please have a look at the findings of the research – what interests or ‘jumps out’ at you? What do you think it means? Does anything surprise you? How can the results be interpreted given knowledge of your school context?
- What conclusions can we draw?
- What are our next steps?

How can we / should we disseminate the outcomes of this research?

Teacher Information Sheet

The Relational Discipline Project

Rationale:

Research has widely suggested that the relationship between a student and their teacher plays an important role in students' academic achievement and wellbeing (e.g. Brophy, 1998; Davis, 2003; Mainhard, Wubbels and Brekelmans, 2011). Unfortunately, research has also indicated that some traditional discipline approaches (in which punishments are given to dissuade 'unwanted' behaviours) can damage the teacher-student relationship (e.g. Lewis, Romi and Roache, 2012; Pomeroy, 1999). Alternative approaches to discipline are now being explored. In one approach, teachers work with the child to talk about the impact of their behaviour on other children and how the teacher and child feel about what has happened. A relational conversation such as this will be explored in this study.

Current Study:

In this study I will explore the effect that a relational approach to discipline can have on the teacher student relationship. To do so I intent to compare how students feel about their teachers after having missed play time (traditional discipline) or following a restorative conversation with their teacher (relational discipline). This study will also seek to understand how students and teachers view their relationship, and their thoughts about traditional and relational discipline.

This study is the doctoral level research project for my Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology at Newcastle University.

The Study:

This case study aims to involve six students in your school who have recently received several instances of traditional discipline.

Stage 1: Recruitment

Teachers are approached to see if they are willing to participate. Potential students are identified through discussions with school staff. Consent is sought with both parents (written consent) and the students themselves (verbal consent).

Stage 2: Intervention

- a. Baseline: Students are introduced to the study and complete a brief questionnaire about how they feel about their teacher (Questionnaire on Teacher Interaction).
- b. Traditional discipline: When a 1st behaviour incident occurs the student follows their usual discipline procedure before completing the questionnaire.
- c. Relational discipline: When a 2nd behaviour incident occurs the student and their teacher completes a guided restorative conversation before completing the questionnaire.

Stage 3: Interviews

I will meet with teachers and students to discuss their views on discipline and their relationships.

Ethical considerations:

The nature of education research leads to multiple ethical issues particularly those of child safety and consent. As I am working with children I have attained a clear check from the Criminal Records Bureau. I have gained ethical clearance from Newcastle University and the school of Education, Communication and Language Sciences. At all times I will follow the British Educational Research Association (2011) ethical guidelines and will also adhere to any ethical requirements of the school and its' board.

Consent with children is a complex issue. Permission will firstly be gathered from the school, with the headmaster or mistress acting as gatekeeper for the institution as a whole. Secondly, parents will be informed and will give written consent for me to work with their children. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, the students I speak with will be told who I am, what I am doing and if they would like to take part. Teachers who are involved in the study will also be asked for written consent. For all parties, the right to withdraw at any time (including after data has been collected) will be emphasised. All data collected will be anonymous and any voice recordings will be deleted once they have been processed. Data will never be stored with participants names or any other identifying information.

Outcomes:

It is intended that this study will have three outcomes:

1. To provide individual students who often receive discipline (i.e. missing playtime) following behaviour incidents with an opportunity to build more positive relationships with their teachers
2. To provide a school with the opportunity to explore alternative approaches to discipline and to develop a dialogue around relational approaches.
3. To contribute to the research fields of teacher-student relationships and relational approaches to discipline

Parent Information Sheet

The Relational Discipline Project

What is this project about?

I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist on the Doctorate of Applied Educational Psychology at Newcastle University and this project is my Doctorate level project.

Research has widely suggested that the relationship between a student and their teacher plays an important role in students' academic achievement and wellbeing (e.g. Mainhard, Wubbels and Brekelmans, 2011). Unfortunately, research has also indicated that some traditional discipline approaches (in which punishments are given to dissuade 'unwanted' behaviours) can damage the teacher-student relationship (e.g. Lewis, Romi and Roache, 2012). Alternative approaches to discipline are now being explored. In one approach, teachers work with the child to talk about the impact of their behaviour on other children and how the teacher and child feel about what has happened. A relational conversation such as this will be explored in this study.

What will participation involve?

Before starting I will speak with your child about the project and ask if they are willing to take part. I will explain that they do not have to participate and will inform them that they can withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

Your child will be asked or helped to complete a short questionnaire about their relationship with their teacher. They will do this questionnaire at the start of the research, after they have followed their usual disciplinary procedure (i.e. missing play time), and after they have experienced the alternative discipline procedure. I would then like to meet with your child and their teacher to discuss how your child feels about different sorts of discipline and what they think about their relationship with the class teacher. With your permission our informal interview will be recorded (a sound recording only).

Are there likely to be any drawbacks of participating?

I am mindful that interviews can be stressful for participants; however I plan for this to be more of an informal chat where your child can voice their views on discipline and their relationship with their class teacher.

This project has received ethical and project approval from my university.

What privacy will participants receive and who will read the research?

Information from questionnaires will not be directly shared with staff at school. An audio recording will be made of the short interview and I will be including a written copy of this in my final report. All of your data will be stored on the university system only and names and personal details will be removed. The final report will not contain any information which could identify your child as a participant.

When this research is finished it will be passed along to my department (for marking) and a review of what I have found will be made available to both the school and yourself.

Can I withdraw from this study?

Yes, you have the right to remove yourself or your child from this study without giving a reason. This can be done at any time, including after data has been collected.

Consent Form

The Relational Discipline Project

- What is your role in this project (please circle): TEACHER / PARENT

- Have you read and understood the information provided about the project?

YES / NO

- Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and been given satisfactory responses?

YES / NO

- Are you aware that you can withdraw from this study at any time, including after data has been collected?

YES / NO

- Are happy to take part in this study and give your informed consent?

YES / NO

- Do you also give permission for YOURSELF / YOUR CHILD to take part in this research

YES / NO

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Contact Information

The Relational Discipline Project

If you have any questions or want further information about this project my name is xxxxx xxxxxx and I am happy to respond to any concerns via email. My address is xxxx@ncl.ac.uk

If you wish to contact my supervisor at any time please contact him by post or email at the following addresses:

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