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**Men in School-Centred Initial Teacher Training: An
Exploration of Issues and Experiences in One Primary
SCITT**

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Thesis submitted to The Open University for the degree of Doctorate in
Education

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Abstract

Poor retention of men is seen across all types of primary teacher training programmes in England. Previous research has largely focused on undergraduate and postgraduate university routes to teaching. This study concentrates on a small number of men in a one year school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) programme, a professional learning pathway to teaching which the government now actively promotes, to explore how these trainees experience the female-dominated environment of the primary school.

The research framework uses theories of identity (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009), including gender (Skelton 2003), communities of practice (Wenger 1998) and social constructivism (Vygotsky 1978) to explore the challenges male primary trainees encounter as they negotiate who and what they are , professionally and personally, as a teacher and as a man, within the primary school. Findings include: performing stereotypical gender roles in school appears to enable the participation of male trainees; men can feel excluded in the all-female social space of the school staffroom; men feel unfairly scrutinised in safeguarding discussions and training; mentors report difficulties in supporting men who are mature career-changers.

The research sits within a qualitative, interpretive paradigm and uses a case study approach; the male trainees on the SCITT programme constitute the case. The study uses mixed methods of data collection: semi-structured interviews with male trainees, documents profiling the characteristics of cohorts of men over five years, an all-male focus group discussion and mentor questionnaires. Although numbers are small, the study explores a problem which is replicated nationally and has persisted for generations, in the new context of SCITT.

The data suggest that school-centred training, where men are required to assume a professional role quickly, offers little preparation or space for thought about gender and masculinities. The study concludes with suggestions for SCITTs to consider how they can support male trainees.

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Acronyms

B.Ed	Bachelor of Education
BERA	British Educational Research Association
GTP	Graduate Teacher Training (a one year employment-based teacher training route)
INSET	In Service Training
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
NCTL	National College for Teaching and Leadership (2013 to present)
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate of Education
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
SCITT	School Centred Initial Teacher Training
TDA	Training and Development Agency (2005-2012)
TTA	Teacher Training Agency (1994-2005)
TA	Teaching Assistant (as used in Appendices 9 and 10)

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1. Introductory context

As a manager of a small primary school-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) programme, I initially became interested in the challenges that male trainees posed for us as a training provider when our retention and completion figures in relation to men were lower than for females. Retention and achievement of all trainee teachers, both male and female, is an important focus for every Initial Teacher Training (ITT) provider. Failing to comply with government and Ofsted requirements, in terms of successful retention and completion for all trainees, can lead to a reduction of allocated training places or even to the withdrawal of accreditation. As a small provider, a single trainee represents a high percentage of our intake and a successful Ofsted inspection rating relies on completion rates that are consistently high with high attainment outcomes for all trainees (Ofsted 2015). Looking at our figures in relation to men, over the first four years of our course, the data showed that although we were successful in recruiting men onto our programme, our retention rates for them were lower than for women. Looking at numbers over a longer period, between 2006 and 2013 our non-completion rate for men was 21.9% compared to 5.6% for women (Appendix 1 p. 208). The outcome results for males were never higher than 'Good' whereas we were able to train 'Outstanding' female trainees (Appendix 2 p. 208). This was the starting point of my research.

I conducted an initial study in my setting which began to explore the issues and experiences of male trainees in our SCITT. I reviewed historical data that covered a period of seven years. I looked at data that related to those men who had withdrawn and those who had completed the course. For those who had gained QTS,

I considered their outcomes, that is, whether they achieved a satisfactory or good grade, to see if there were any patterns in this data. The other main sources of data were semi-structured interviews with five men who had completed the course and one man who withdrew. The initial findings seemed to indicate that, for those interviewees, the presence of male role models did not seem to affect their attitudes about completing or withdrawing from the course. Although all had undertaken placements where there were other men on the staff, they did not all agree that this was an advantage, including the trainee who had withdrawn: one interviewee, who thought it was an advantage, commented that he felt that he could have different conversations with men. Another participant said that he enjoyed being a minority in the primary school and he felt that there could be an advantage to being the only male. The interviewees who had strengths in ICT and sport were more likely to achieve good outcomes and be accepted by the largely female staff of primary schools. My reading for the initial study (Moyle and Cavendish 2001, Jones 2003b) had identified that sport and ICT were subject areas that men were often expected to teach. From the findings of the initial study, men in my training setting seemed to be fulfilling these expectations.

In my role as Programme Manager I arrange placements for trainees and when looking for suitable schools, one of the factors that I take into consideration for male trainees is whether there is a male headteacher who would be able to act as a role model. My initial study did not identify the presence of such a role model as significant in supporting men to complete the course with good outcomes although it did indicate the importance of having male peer support in schools where the majority of staff were women.

For the main study of this thesis I decided to include perceptions of school-based mentors involved in the training of men because as mentors work very closely with trainees in schools, they would be well-placed to provide additional data about the experiences and challenges of male trainees. My initial research questions are introduced in the following section.

1.1. Initial research questions

My research questions arise from my long term professional experience working with recruiting and training male teachers within primary school-centred teacher training and the ongoing impact of the female-dominated workplace of the primary school on the presence of male teachers within this system. Throughout my thirty year teaching career, I worked with a small number of successful male teachers and when I moved into teacher training, it became clear that teacher training itself had an important part to play in supporting men to succeed in a female-dominated profession. The shortage of men in primary teaching and in primary teacher education is chronic and relevant in terms of the equality agenda. In 2017, although women have been able to enter and succeed in many male dominated professions, the situation for men entering primary school teaching does not seem to have changed. Therefore, although my research explores an issue that is not a new one, by focusing solely on the school-centred teacher training route, about which there is very little research literature, further understanding of how men experience training in primary education may emerge. The literature review from my initial study identified that there were a number of issues that male trainees may encounter, including their gender and minority status, as they enter the teaching profession and these influenced my research questions. The aim of my study is to contribute to the understanding of the challenges that face male trainees in my setting, and those in similar training

contexts. This may help to identify the extent to which the school-centred route is supportive for men considering primary teacher training. As this research has been undertaken when the present government has given a strong commitment to encouraging this route into teacher training, my study may be important and relevant to the future of school-centred initial teacher training.

My research questions aimed to investigate how men experience the SCITT course and what their perceptions of this are. The questions also aimed to explore the perception of the male trainees' mentors and the nature of support given to men.

1. What are the perceptions of men on a one year school-centred initial teacher training programme and of primary teaching?

2. What are the experiences of men on this school-centred programme?

2a How do their minority status and gender impact on their participation in school-based learning?

2b What other factors may impact on the participation of male trainees in school-centred initial teacher training and their completion of the course?

3. How do mentors support male trainees?

3a What are the perceptions of mentors in relation to male trainees' needs and do these influence the support given to them?

Questions 3 and 3a about mentors were added after the initial study. I further adapted my questions to specifically explore how gender impacts on men's experiences. As a Programme Manager, I also wanted to be able to explore what other factors may influence men during their training year.

Answers to these research questions will provide insight into the experiences and challenges faced by men in school-centred primary teaching training with the aim of improving participation and completion of the course. It was also hoped that there would be benefit to other Programme Managers and SCITT providers in terms of increased awareness about male trainees and effective mentoring practices in school-centred training.

1.2. Professional context

It is widely known that there is an under-representation of men in the primary school workforce. The most recent government figures for England state that in local authority and academy primary and secondary schools overall, men made up 26% of teachers but in primary, the figure drops to 15%, figures that remain unchanged from the previous year (DfE 2015b, DfE 2017). My research is exploring a well-known teacher education problem in an under-researched context, that of school-centred initial teacher training and aims to inform and improve practice in this route into teaching. When our SCITT was first accredited in 2006, and for the following three years, we were set targets by the government for male trainee teacher recruitment. Although we no longer have targets, our numbers are monitored and we are encouraged by the government to recruit as many men as possible.

As a SCITT provider offering a one year Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) course, rather than a university, our training is largely school-based with trainees spending time in schools every week. When we were initially accredited, trainees following our course spent a longer amount of time within schools than did those on a university's one year postgraduate course. The Initial Teacher Training Criteria (DfE 2016a) changed and for all one year initial teacher training postgraduate courses, the number of school-based days is the same, whether the provider is

university or school-centred. However, with our SCITT course, trainees are in their placement schools from the first week of the school term, whereas this is not usually the case with university postgraduate courses. The consideration of the two different routes into teaching is relevant to my research questions. It is possible that the SCITT route may attract some men because of the aspect of having the practical school experience immediately. Those that are career changers may see the university route as not the most appropriate for them, taking into consideration their experience of working in a different field for a number of years and their history of learning in a workplace.

In 2012 the English government introduced a route into teaching called School Direct. This route gives schools more responsibility than previously for training teachers as the trainees have most of the training in the schools, under their direction, with accredited providers delivering a smaller component of training. School Direct allows for salaried trainees, (these trainees are employed by a school rather than paying tuition fees), and aims to encourage career changers into teaching. Information published by the government (DfE 2015a) shows that there have been changes in the pathways selected for primary teacher training. In 2014-15 55% of all trainees chose to complete their teacher training through a university led PGCE route; in 2015-16 this figure dropped to 51%. Within the same time span, trainees on SCITT and School Direct routes increased from 45% in 2014-15 to 49% in 2015-16. Within this period the government also began to allow the accreditation of many more school-centred initial teacher training providers. In the last five years the number of school-centred providers in England has increased from fifty-six to one hundred and fifty five (House of Commons 2016) and so research in this specific area is needed to explore the ongoing problem of a lack of men in primary teaching.

Our SCITT course, alongside those of other school-centred providers, tends to be described as ‘learning on the job’ and is more practice-based in the classroom than some courses offered by universities which could be said to include more knowledge and theory. On our course, the centre-based training itself is delivered by teachers and senior staff from our partnership who have been identified by their schools and Ofsted as outstanding classroom practitioners. Throughout the course the trainees are working with people who are based within primary schools, whereas university postgraduate courses are generally delivered by lecturers who are not school and classroom based. For some trainees a university based course may be more suitable. A university is much larger than a primary school-centred provider and can draw upon a wide range of experience from staff and may be able to offer subject specialisms which a smaller provider is unable to match. Some trainees may also benefit from being able to have a training site away from a school, in a university, to support their reflection and evaluation with peers in a similar situation. A university provider, dealing with larger numbers, may also be able to offer the opportunity for trainees to work together and learn from each other. Wilson (2016) identifies universities as sites of research methods and knowledge which may enable trainees to develop a critical stance to their studies. Providing an intellectual environment in which to develop critical thinking is more difficult for schools where their daily focus is on practice rather than theory. The university route may also offer a broader view of teaching. Although professional expectations at the end of both one year courses are generally the same and the final primary teaching practice is 80% of a week in preparation for their Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) induction year, a university course provides a more gradual immersion into the classroom. This may be a more suitable route for some trainees’ first experiences of being in a

classroom. Research by the NCTL (2014) found that some candidates applying for a teacher training course did not feel ready to enter a school immediately and looked to the university to help them prepare for teaching experience. Although this could be relevant for men entering primary school teaching, especially if their pre-course school experience has been limited, for career changers who have been in the workplace for many years, the prospect of returning to university may not be so appealing.

1.3. Historical background and the wider context of initial teacher training and male primary trainees

Primary teaching has not always been seen as a feminised profession. This has been the situation for over a hundred years, not just in the UK but in other western countries (Skelton 2012). Drudy (2008) confirms that there is now a predominance of female teachers in most countries throughout the world and in European member states, linking the higher proportions of women teachers with the most developed countries. This is especially applicable at primary level. The research identified by Drudy (2008 p. 312) indicates that the feminisation of teaching is “a cumulative historical and social process”.

Before 1870, which saw the establishment of elementary state education in England, men would have almost exclusively been found teaching in public schools, schools which they themselves would have been educated in. Before 1870, education was not open to all, only to the rich and privileged and the women tended to be educated at home. The introduction of elementary state education meant men had the opportunity to become teachers in the state sector. Teaching became attractive to women as it enabled them to become independent, especially as many other occupations were not open to them. Teaching did not attract men in the same way as

they were already independent. However, in the nineteenth and early twentieth century teaching was not considered a high status occupation for men so although it may have been deemed suitable, intellectually, for middle class men, the low status may have discouraged them. Also, there was a belief that working class men should work in jobs that demonstrated physical strength, rather than intellect; this links to the social constructs of masculinity and femininity as working class men did not enter teaching because the constructions of masculinity for them centred on physical activity and strength, so teaching was not suitable. Therefore, “Teaching became women’s work, work that was rewarded by low pay, poor benefits and challenging working conditions,” (Coulter and Grieg 2008 p. 420). When discussing staffing in primary schools, a report by Hadow (1931 p. 144) stated that there should be “an adequate number of men”, presumably illustrating that there were already a large number of female teachers. This report was published between the two world wars of the twentieth century which caused an increase in women teachers in primary education as men were enlisted and sent abroad to fight whilst women stayed behind. Full employment and economic growth following World War 2 did not encourage men entering the profession. More recent changing economic circumstances such as high unemployment may have resulted in more men moving into and then out of teaching as employment prospects rose (Coulter and Grieg 2008) but generally primary teaching has long been deemed a profession for women, although it was not until the 1990s that the recruitment and retention of male primary teachers in England began to be a serious concern for the government. The policy to recruit more men into primary teaching led to a research focus on this. A number of research papers discussed this issue, not only in England but in Australia (Mills et al. 2004), New Zealand (Cushman 2007) and Sweden (Berge 2004). The earlier issue of low

status and pay was identified by Thornton and Bricheno (2008) as more of a concern for men than women because of a man's role as the 'breadwinner'. This should be considered in light of the publication of The Green Paper (DfEE 1998) that set out a new pay and career structure, which was presumably to help both men and women into teaching but this may have been seen as an incentive to encourage more men into the profession as it was at a time when the government were keen to recruit more male teachers. In the late 1990s research by Moyles and Cavendish (2001) was partly funded by the Teacher Training Agency and began looking at why few men entered primary education and why, of those that did, there was a higher withdrawal rate than females. This study found a range of issues linked to the high drop-out rate and failure of the male trainees including the lack of male role models in primary schools and trainees' perceived difficulties with planning and written work.

The motivation for research into this area was not only policy led. Skelton (2002, 2003, 2007, 2009, 2012) led the way in feminist and gender research in relation to primary teaching, alongside a number of other researchers including Smedley (1997, 2006, 2007) and Thornton and Bricheno (2008). The increase in this aspect of research led to what Skelton (2012 p.6) refers to as "backlash", a term used by feminists to describe the language, attitudes and actions of anti-feminists. This backlash movement from anti-feminists was affirming men's rights and opponents of feminism found issues about men and boys to be "fertile ground" (Connell 2005 p. 1806). One of the accusations from anti-feminists was that the feminist movement was responsible for the inequalities in education as they did not encourage men into primary teaching. This lack of men then contributes to the profession having a low status (Simpson 2005, Skelton 2012). Biddulph (2004) was one of the main proponents of this "backlash" who advocated that the emphasis should now be on

men's liberation. Whelen (2011) discusses Biddulph's essentialist position that simplifies gender and makes gross generalisations, especially in relation to the education of boys and the assumption that all men have the same experiences and attitudes and relate to pupils and their colleagues in a similar way. Haywood and Mac an Ghail (2013 p. 1) identify schools as one of the key institutional sites in which a "crisis of masculinity" is played out. They characterise this as the ways in which, in wider society, traditional forms of masculinity, those that position men as dominant in relation to women, are being challenged and how men may perceive that they have less control. They emphasise how cultural and social practices, such as the rise in the use of new technologies in the workplace, including the use of the internet, and the advancement of global communication systems, such as social media, all influence how gender may be perceived. They identify how, although ethnicity and class have important interconnecting identity positions, there is now more emphasis on masculinities being the main concept in gender relations, especially in the media. If primary schools are a key site of masculinities in crisis, and masculinities vary across different contexts, this may influence the experiences and challenges that men in school-centred initial teacher training face.

Following on from earlier initiatives, UK government policy from 2003 to 2008 explicitly focused on increasing the proportion of male primary trainees but the figures from the government's school workforce information are evidence that this was not particularly successful: the percentages of male teachers in primary schools in England during this time decreased from 16% to 15% (DfE 2016).

In 2009 a large scale study commissioned by the DfES (Hobson et al. 2009) was evidence of the government's continuing focus on teacher retention, both male and female: this was a six year longitudinal study (2003-2009) which aimed to

identify factors which promoted or hindered teacher retention. The study found that nine percent of men, compared to four percent of women, withdrew from primary phase initial teacher training programmes. Hobson et al. (2009) reported that the older trainees, who were more likely to have had a previous career before going into teaching, were more likely to withdraw from the course. Government initiatives to encourage career changers into teaching have had a distinctive male recruitment focus. In 2010 the government introduced the ‘Troops to Teachers Programme’ and encouraged members of the armed forces (army, navy and air force) into teaching by paying their tuition fees (DfE 2010). This was not presented as aiming specifically at men but the majority of the armed forces are male; in 2014 men made up 91.1% of the full-time forces (MOD 2014). 2015 saw the expansion of the scheme with the introduction of a two year school-based initial teacher training programme for those from the full-time armed forces, offering salaried positions to train in schools. The government has continued to encourage career changers into the teaching profession through their publicity and marketing strategies (DfE 2016b). However, despite recruitment drives and targets, the situation has not improved in terms of affecting the number of men in primary teaching. The percentage of men in primary schools remains at 15% (DfE 2017) and has not changed since 2007 (DfE 2008).

1.4. Background to the research setting

When meeting with representatives of other primary school-centred initial teacher training providers at national and local National College of Teaching and Learning (NCTL) meetings, it became clear that our school-centred provision was not the only one concerned about the retention and achievement of male primary trainees. Key factors in low retention and achievement of men, both anecdotal and formally analysed, are poor organisational skills and completion of the required

paperwork, such as planning, assignments and written evidence towards meeting the Teachers' Standards. These factors are included in end of term reports and mentor meeting notes that are part of our SCITT's documentary evidence for monitoring the progress of trainees. They are identified as areas for development for male trainees by mentors and other professionals who work alongside them who perceive that by addressing these issues, the men will be more likely to complete the course and gain QTS. Our improvement plan in 2010 implemented an additional support system, targeted at males but provided to both male and female trainees. This introduced a Record of Progress booklet which clearly set out, week by week, what the trainee should be doing, including tasks and assignments. Guidance was also given on planning for future work and activities. Although trainees had always had this information in their course handbook, by bringing it all together in one place, with explicit checklists, we hoped this would help men to stay organised and on track with their paperwork which would then lead to improved retention and an increase in good and outstanding outcome grades for male trainees. Success was seen in the cohort of 2010-11 in that no male trainees withdrew or failed the course (no females did either). An additional strategy introduced in 2011-12 gave male trainees additional support from the male headteacher of the lead school who visited them at their placement schools and involved them in one-to-one meetings with him. As there are more female than male teachers in primary schools, we considered that having a strong, successful male role model with whom to discuss their training and work expectations would also support male trainees to make good progress. During 2011-12 we saw a rise in male trainee outcomes in terms of achievement but had one male withdrawal. In 2012-13 both support strategies continued and although we had a rise in the achievement of our men, we also had the withdrawal of one male trainee.

The impact of the interventions seemed to be effective in raising achievement of these men who completed in relation to outcome grades.

Due to the shortage of men in primary education it is not always possible to place a male trainee where there is another male member of staff, however, I do endeavour to ensure that this happens in at least one of their placement schools so that the trainee has the opportunity to either have a male role model in the headteacher or a male colleague so that he does not feel totally isolated as the only man on the teaching staff. There are also factors that have to be considered when placing trainees including locality and ensuring that they have experience in two different types of schools, which is part of the ITT criteria (DfE 2016a), which allows the trainee to experience different approaches to teaching, school organisation and management. The personalities of both trainee and mentor also need to be considered so that there is not a clash. Therefore, although there may be male teachers who are willing to mentor, it is not always possible to pair them with a male trainee. By undertaking this research, I aim to provide further insight into whether, when this is possible, it is an appropriate strategy in supporting men to complete the course.

2. Literature Review

As my interest in the retention of male primary trainees was initially policy-led, I began my reading with studies commissioned by the government. These can tend to be under-theorised as their main aim is to influence policy and practice rather than to test or expand theory and so it was important to widen my reading in order to develop my understanding of the theories that underpinned practice in relation to studying men in primary teacher training. It began to become clear that the experiences of male trainees varied and the reasons why male primary trainees withdraw and may not achieve as well as their female colleagues were complex and there were many aspects to be considered. I focused on literature based on theories and themes that I identified as relevant to men in primary teacher training. In this section I begin looking at the theory of identity as this is salient in relation to how male trainees enter the teaching profession with a personal identity and are then expected to assume other identities, including those as a teacher and a learner. Theories relating to gender and the way in which masculinities are constructed within the primary school as an interactive training site are then explored in relation to social constructivism and communities of practice. Finally, I look at research concerned with child protection and mentoring because they are two themes that, although related to practice, are also linked to the theoretical aspects of establishing a professional identity and the importance of the collaborative nature of learning and social interactions that take place in the primary school.

The majority of literature concerning men studying on primary initial teacher training courses was published before 2010, although there is more recent research (Warwick et al. 2012, Mistry and Sood 2013, 2014, 2015, Burn and Pratt Adams

2015) which covers similar areas and men teaching in early years and primary schools. The majority of research has been focused on either undergraduate courses or postgraduate courses in universities. I was unable to find any published research in the UK that focused solely on primary school-centred teacher training programmes with the study specifically linked to male trainees. The large scale study by Hobson et al. (2009) included a range of ITT providers: they found that trainees following a school-centred training route were more likely to withdraw than those on a flexible postgraduate course but did not provide any suggestions as to why this might be so. The study involved men and women but the majority of the research involving men in initial teacher training and within primary schools is small scale because there are so few men to study in this context.

2.1. Professional and personal identities

As trainees enter the teaching profession, they have to assume a new identity, that of a professional teacher. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) concluded that the concept of identity is complex and they found that there were many aspects to understand in order to appreciate the full importance of identity development within the primary school environment. Initial teacher training programmes are seen to be pivotal in helping trainee teachers in developing their teacher identities as they are the first stage of constructing this professional identity (Izadinia 2013, Yuan 2016). Lee and Schallert (2016) also comment that there seems to be no argument that initial teacher training should contribute to the development of a teacher's professional identity but that it is not always clear what this training might involve. Knight and Moore (2012) identify the importance of mutual engagement within the community to assist beginning male teachers to form their identity and Walkington (2005) believes that teacher identity is based on one's core beliefs about being a

teacher and about teaching itself and found that being able to be reflective about their teaching played an important part in developing a teacher identity. The way in which teachers may have to reject or actively resist identities which do not conform to their existing identities is discussed by Kelly (2006). Another aspect to consider was raised by Pillen et al. (2013) who found that inherent personal characteristics that individuals have may influence the development of their professional identity.

Developing their identities can be considered as an added pressure on male trainees in the primary school: Haase (2010 p. 174) found that male primary teachers “can experience tension in reconciling masculine identities with the widely held view that primary teaching is women’s work” and this can lead to contradictory discourses throughout their training and teaching experiences. He identified an expectation that male teachers would be good at managing the behaviour of children and would gain respect from them because they were men. They would, however, also keep a social distance from children. By doing this they deliberately distanced themselves from children to protect themselves from allegations in relation to being a paedophile. Some men felt pressurised to adopt the aspect of “masculine performance” in relation to being a disciplinarian (Haase 2010 p. 180) along with teaching specific subjects including sports. Participants in Haase’s study did not always conform to this stereotype and worked to develop closer relationships with children and not to be authoritarian. Smedley (2007 p.370) states that there are “complex, contextualised relations between being a man and being a student primary teacher” in her study of ‘Terry’ a mature man who was able to construct a confident identity as a trainee teacher even though he was involved in different conflicting discourses. ‘Terry’ was a working class father, with his family dependent upon him, but as a student teacher he had to demonstrate that he was comfortable in a middle class, academic culture.

Simpson (2005) researched men in non-traditional occupations, one of which was primary teaching, and she also identified that tensions could exist between gender identity and professional role stereotyping; men could experience conflict and “role strain” (Simpson 2005 p. 371) as they maintain their masculine identities and meet the demands of the job which may include aspects that could be seen as more feminine, such as caring. The other careers that Simpson (2005 p. 376) researched were nursing, cabin crew and librarianship and found that role strain, where there is discomfort between the “masculine self” and one’s work identity, emerged as a common feature for men in all four occupations. For male trainees, at the beginning of their career when they first enter the primary school workplace, this tension and role strain may be even greater.

Foster and Newman (2005 p.341) adopted the term “identity bruising” to describe the “knock backs” that male trainees and newly qualified teachers received during their initial experiences of the culture of the primary school. Like my own small-scale study, theirs arose as a result of their concerns with the poor performance of men on their postgraduate university course. They looked at whether there were circumstances or traits that the men had in common. Smith (2007 p.380), comments that professional identities are, “now more likely to be seen as multiple, fragmented and prone to change” in his study of four teachers (three female and one male) in their training and first year of teaching. The study was concerned with a three year course with a focus on the teaching of Science but it is worth including the one male in primary teacher training that was involved. By the end of the study, ‘Richard’ had a coherent new identity which drew heavily on his previous experiences and beliefs which formed the basis of his identity as a prospective teacher.

Weaver-Hightower (2011) looked at the types of discouragement men faced and found that as men encountered these discouragements they constructed new identities and by doing so they unmasked the “socially constructed, performative, power-laden nature of gender” (Weaver-Hightower 2011 p. 100). The men had to negotiate their identities as the view was presented by their friends that because they were well-educated and intelligent, they should not be entering a profession that is defined by the high number of females and is not highly paid. The three participants were teased about their chosen profession and so when constructing identities as teachers they often asserted their masculinity, for example, ‘Stanley’, one of the participants, maintained his masculinity by setting himself apart from characteristics that could be defined as feminine such as “not putting smiley faces and rainbows on everything” (Weaver-Hightower 2011 p.106), by maintaining a more formal environment around the children and avoiding any display of affection.

2.2. Identities and personal histories

Men’s identities are shaped by many things, including previous experiences (Sargent 2000). Day and Leitch (2001) studied the complexities of the professional and personal self. They concluded that professional self is affected by personal history as well as the political and social contexts of teaching and so this has a strong influence on identities. These findings are supported by Braun (2011) who writes about how other factors, such as previous experience and social and cultural contexts, are instrumental and informative of the training situation. Troman and Raggl (2008) studied teacher commitment and the attractions of teaching and found that teachers, both men and women, displayed multiple commitments and identities. They found the factors of school and home/social life play an important part in sustaining or diminishing commitment and this has been my own professional

experience of supporting trainee teachers. They concluded that if teachers failed to juggle their multiple commitments, for example personal, professional and vocational, an identity crisis might follow. The factors of home and social life that might affect commitment and the support of family and friends for male trainees are also reflected in Weaver-Hightower (2011). Two of the male participants in this study were discouraged in their career choice of being a primary teacher by friends and family. 'George's' parents said that 'George' "could do more" (Weaver-Hightower 2011 p.108) and all three of the men in the study said that their fathers questioned their choice of teaching. 'Stanley' talked of being gently ribbed by a friend who implied that 'Stanley' was too smart for teaching and 'George' was teased by his friends about the ease of the coursework.

In Mulholland and Hansen's (2003) study, the men were more likely to be criticised by friends than by their families for their choice of career. Some of the parents were supportive once the decision had been made and one father promoted the career because of the holidays and the hours. In one of the interviews, 'Dale' said of primary teaching, "a lot of my friends saw it as a bit of a cop out....working nine to three and get 20 weeks of holiday a year," (Mulholland and Hansen 2003 p.216) implying that men are meant to work harder and longer than this, even though it is not an accurate picture of teaching. Another participant, an older man, experienced negative reactions to his chosen career from male friends outside the course and this was due to the friends' views of having to continue with academic study in order to become a teacher and then also having to manage a class of children; neither were seen as positive.

One of the "knock backs" in Foster and Newman's (2005 p. 347) study is described by 'Adrian' who, when he told a family friend about his chosen career,

was “knocked back” when she said “I am sure you can do something better than that”. A participant in Cushman’s (2005a p.330) study had the reaction of “That’s a girl’s job. What are you doing that for?” when announcing that he was planning to teach primary aged children. Other participants said that they “softened the blow” when informing friends that they were going into teaching by allowing them to think that it could be secondary school teaching or that they were aiming for a management position.

One of the explanations for men withdrawing from teacher training courses in Thornton’s (1999b) study was lack of support from friends and family in following a career that is perceived as stereotypically female. Hobson et al. (2009) discovered that the lack of social and psychological support was a contributory factor in decisions to withdraw from an initial teacher training programme. This is supported by Richter et al. (2013) whose study identified that psychological support was especially relevant at the start of the first year of teaching following their training year. Male trainees in Szwed’s (2010) research commented that their friends did not understand or appreciate the demands they were under whilst on the course which they felt gave them added pressure whilst studying.

As trainee teachers move through teacher education into their practice in schools, their identities are dynamic and influenced by a number of internal and external factors (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009). External factors are those which involve interactions that take place within schools and internal factors are those that are more personal to the individual, such as emotion. Hargreaves (2005) has referred to teaching as an emotional practice because it is a demanding profession with many challenges and teachers make emotional investments in their work. Emotion is a personal dimension of self and Day and Leitch (2001) researched the role of emotion

in practising teachers and identified that it can be an influential factor in a teacher's approach to their professional life and how they communicate and engage with colleagues and children; this may be different for men and women. Emotion was also explored by Demetriou et al. (2009) in their study of differences in teaching approaches of male and female newly qualified teachers in secondary school science. They found that female teachers were more likely to stay in the profession than the men. Some men had become very disheartened about their ability to manage behaviour and one teacher talked about his "slump" in confidence and how he "was hit hard" by a behaviour issue (Demetriou et al. 2009 p. 459). In this study there were instances of men who had left the teaching profession due to challenging circumstances in relation to pupil discipline and because of expressions of negativity from their colleagues about initiatives being continually introduced and having to cover too many lessons. The study concluded that there were differences between male and female teachers' teaching styles; women were more emotionally equipped by being patient and reflective and they were also able to tailor their teaching to individuals, more than men, when dealing with disruptive and disengaged children. Men were less patient and coped less well when faced with a lack of enthusiasm from pupils. Demetriou et al. (2009) suggest that this negative internalisation of emotion could affect a teacher's motivation which could then impact on a decision to continue in the profession.

Resilience can also be associated with emotion. Resilience, in the teaching profession, involves the teacher's ability to navigate challenges whereby their individual characteristics and their personal and professional contexts evolve, interact and change over time (Mansfield et al. 2016). It begins with their training year and may involve dealing with motivation, stress and challenging teaching

situations. The study by Mansfield et al. (2016) was not gender specific but they found that one of the key factors that can influence resilience is relationships. They considered how pre-service teachers in Australia had to establish relationships outside school with their family and friends alongside relationships in the school context with colleagues, course leaders and mentors. Although one should not assume that those who choose to leave the teaching profession lack resilience, within the context of my own study, it is worth considering the extent to which male trainees may struggle to form relationships for resilience inside and outside the primary school and whether this has an effect on retention and completion of the course. ‘Jamie’, a student in Braun’s (2011) study, did not take up teaching after his postgraduate study and sums up the complexity of developing a male teacher identity: “The PGCE year is...the most difficult, most taxing thing... involves so many different faculties you know: academically, organisationally, emotionally, physically” (Braun 2011 p.275).

2.3. Identity as a learner

Lee and Schallert (2016) add another dimension to the identities discussion in that they believe that student teachers have dual identities and have to move between the two identities of teacher and learner. The environment of the primary school, and the training centre, may disadvantage men, depending on how they learn. Men interviewed by Mulholland and Hansen (2003 p.223) felt that they were conspicuous as a minority in a predominantly female cohort on an undergraduate university course but were willing to complete the course although they had misgivings about “perceived female orientation”. By this “perceived female orientation”, male trainees referred to the academic content of the course. They felt that the written and oral communications necessary when planning and preparing for lessons, along with the

need to be well-organised, were more suited to females than males. They expressed preferences for practical and hands-on activities to enhance their learning rather than written work. They called this their way of learning and remembering. They also openly admitted to only doing the minimum amount of work to pass and were quite content with a straightforward pass or credit and were not aiming to achieve distinctions. One of the participants in the study by Weaver-Hightower (2011), 'Dean' described his project-based coursework as "female" and said he could not draw "little balloons and hearts around" but said that his skills coincided with the "more masculine, traditional methods of learning" such as "sittin' down and learnin' material and then takin' a test on it" (Weaver-Hightower 2011 p.105).

A number of studies found that whilst they were learning, male trainees experienced difficulty in asking for help. A "denial of difficulty" was identified by Thornton (1999 p. 45) for male trainees who have a tendency not to recognise, or hide any difficulties they might have and suggests this may be because admitting difficulties might appear to make them less of a "real" man. Moyles and Cavendish (2001) identified that men often did not seek help and when they did it was often too late. The later study by Szwed (2010) confirms these earlier findings as course leaders interviewed felt that generally males were not as forthcoming about seeking advice as females; this research mainly involved university students, undergraduate and postgraduate on ITT courses, with a very small minority on the employment based route, (the graduate teacher training programme), so the majority of the course leaders were involved with the university routes. In their study of beginning teachers, Demetriou et al. (2006) found that generally male teachers seemed to experience more difficulty in asking for help; if a trainee was in denial about how well they were doing, this may have an effect on how well they achieve and could lead to

withdrawal if it continued. As Demetriou et al. (2006 p. 463) state, they may find “themselves suffering the consequences”.

Age was a factor to consider in the success of trainees as those that were younger were more likely to be successful than older ones although other reasons were considered, such as degree classification (Smith and Gorard 2007). Skelton (2009) concluded that males tended to be less qualified than their female counterparts and therefore had more problems with the academic demands of the teacher training course. Lack of experience in schools prior to entry was identified as an issue contributing to the limited awareness of the challenges ahead for trainee teachers (Mulholland and Hansen 2003). Szwed (2010) found that female trainees had more realistic expectations of the course than male trainees and Chambers, Coles and Roper (2002) identified that reasons why secondary trainees withdrew were individualised and included being unable to cope with the classroom reality and pressure of the work. High workload was also mentioned by both men and women trainee teachers in Thornton and Bricheno’s (2008) study.

2.4. Multiple identities

Jones (2006) found that within the school context, multiple identities may be constructed for male primary teachers, which may be conflicting. In her study, within the Key Stage 1 environment where children are aged between five and seven years of age, women teachers interviewed wanted male teachers who could be caring and sensitive alongside being strongly heterosexual and macho. In the study, female teachers described some male teachers as “wet” or “wimpy” implying they were not “real men” (Jones 2006 p.72) and dismissed them in terms of their masculinity and their effectiveness as teachers. The qualities they requested of being macho and sensitive may seem contradictory but Jones considers the changes in the acceptable

definitions of masculinity such as being strongly heterosexual and macho, whilst including qualities such as sensitivity and caring, could mean it would be possible to have a “millennium man” (Jones 2006 p.73): a macho man but one who could also display characteristics that may be deemed feminine, those of sensitivity and gentleness. Male trainees may struggle to negotiate this range of masculine identities, one personal, as a man, and one professional, as a primary school teacher and carer. If so, there may be a conflict which could lead to a lack of confidence in their identity and sense of being a teacher. Caring is an aspect of the work of primary teachers, who have a professional responsibility to operate in the best interests of children in their charge. Smedley and Pepperell (2000) argue that emotional dynamics and interpretation of care are gendered and may raise tensions for male trainee teachers between stereotypical assumptions about masculinity and care. Vogt (2002) suggested care should be defined as being committed to teaching and to professional relationships with children so that caring is not linked explicitly to femininity. Braun (2012) looked at secondary trainees in relation to vocational habitus (Bourdieu 1977) and the importance of achieving a balance between the two roles of care and discipline as teachers. She explored the varied processes which shape the experiences of trainee teachers and found that a vocational habitus which emphasises teaching as a professional, rather than personal role, caused problems for some.

Trainee teachers are exposed to the “expectations of others e.g. teacher educators, colleagues, headteachers, the government through national standards” (Lamote and Engels 2010 p. 4.) These expectations may be diverse or they may be hegemonic; in either case, Lamote and Engels conclude that student teachers’ professional identities are shaped by both their learning and teaching experiences and

their professional identities are vulnerable when they are first introduced to teaching practice. In the study by Smedley and Pepperell (2000 p. 268), a male student constructs his identity differently in his professional work as a primary teacher to his “beer-swilling, rugby player” personal identity. School placements can challenge the trainee’s identity as there can be different cultures and subcultures within the schools. Skelton (2009) suggests that closer attention should be given to research on teachers’ identities as a whole rather than just focusing on various aspects.

2.5. Gender identities and masculinities

Gender role refers to the behaviour that each person has, whether masculine or feminine, and as gender is “in a constant state of flux”, (Skelton 2012 p. 2) there can be a combination of the two as there is a multiplicity of masculinities and femininities and one person may have a mixture. Gender is not fixed, it is fluid and can vary across different settings and time. Masculinity and femininity refers to the social construction of differences in behaviour. Men may draw on particular behaviours to emphasise their masculinities in different situations and in the same way women may emphasis their femininities. Research on women in male-dominated work environments (Williams 1989, Britton 2003, Cockburn 1988) identified that women working in these contexts emphasised the positive elements of being a woman. Levin (2001) found that women must perform gender in very specific ways. Women may also draw on what might be characterised as ‘masculine’ traits, such as being assertive in the workplace and men may draw on aspects of ‘femininities’, for example being passive in difficult circumstances when, as men, they could be expected to give strong opinions. Men teaching in primary schools may feel that they need to demonstrate a more feminine side to their personality such as nurturing or empathy. This is demonstrated by a male participant in Cushman’s

(2005b p. 233) study who wanted to provide a “holistic approach” towards teaching where he incorporated traits identified as both masculine and feminine so that he could demonstrate interpersonal and intrapersonal skills such as compassion and sensitivity. This fluidity of gender is increasingly evident in the world outside of primary school teaching. For example, more men can be seen wearing make-up and some women choose to have the types of tattoos that were traditionally seen on men. Grayson Perry, the award winning artist, is often seen in public dressed as a woman in brightly coloured dresses, high heels and make up. It could be said that there has been a shift in both masculinity and femininity which will, in time, hopefully be reflected within teaching.

Gender norms are learned from birth through socialising initially with parents and close family and then gender experiences evolve through schooling, friends and a wider society, including the media. The Church of England has recently issued new advice to its schools. It states that children should be allowed to explore the possibilities of who they might be, including gender identity, through choosing what they wish to play with, a tiara or a superhero cloak. This should be without expectation or comment from those around them (C of E 2017). This view is supported by Brownhill et al (2016) who identify that there are some people who have restricted views of what is appropriate behaviour for gendered individuals. Gender is constructed through a range of interactions and as the theory of social constructivism (Vygotsky 1978, Bruner 1990) sees the environment and the socialisation process as important, this links with how gender experiences develop. Vygotsky (1978) is the major theorist of social constructivism where a more experienced partner provides an intellectual scaffold. Bruner (1990) was influenced by Vygotsky and Bruner’s theory also emphasises that social interaction lies at the

root of good learning as constructing knowledge of the world is not done in isolation. Social constructivists believe that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. The concepts first develop on a social plain and then, as they are discussed and internalised, they become part of the individual's schema. They develop subjective meanings of their experiences which are negotiated both socially and historically and formed through interaction with others that they come into contact with throughout their lives.

This emphasis on how meaning is created through social interaction can be both complex and contradictory as an individual acts and speaks with the people around them. These social relationships shape one's understanding of what it means to be male and female. There are social and historical definitions of masculinity too such as being the breadwinner (Connell 2005). The issue of power and the dominant social position of men within society, known as hegemonic masculinity, has changed from a conceptual model to a widely used framework for research and debate about men and masculinities in a number of fields, including education (Connell 2005, Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Williams (1995) concluded that men are believed to possess qualities that are associated with leadership and they perform masculinities in very traditional ways. Hegemonic masculinities are associated with gendered power and in relation to this issue, Burn and Pratt-Adams (2015 p. 37) suggest that for some men, initial teacher training, at the start of their teaching career may be one of the few times when they feel "institutionally powerless in a female group". However, another perspective is that within the primary school context, men are able to exercise hegemonic masculinity by fast promotion to leadership and managerial roles.

Burn and Pratt-Adams (2015) also studied stereotyping and practices in primary schools. They suggest that there are gender barriers within the primary school and accept that gender is socially constructed and that it is constantly “under production within a specific social context” (Burn and Pratt-Adams 2015 p. 5).

Acker (1990) questioned the assumption whether organisations were gender neutral and her theory debates how gender has become embedded in social structures and institutions. Schools are part of social processes and Haywood and Mac an Ghail (2013) discuss how schools are perceived as central in reproducing gendered social relations of the wider society and so their importance is not just related to within the education context. This confirms Connell’s (2005) view that moving towards a society where there is more equity between men and women involves intense changes in institutions as well as changes in everyday life.

Braun (2011) researched secondary postgraduate trainees and discovered how deeply-rooted socially constructed, mainstream gender identities are in schools. The trainees conformed to these in different ways, including mannerisms and physical appearance. They performed and manipulated attributes to fit in with what was perceived as masculine and feminine. These gender identities may be narrow and quite restrictive as stereotyping is attributing specific qualities to each gender and there will be men and women who “uphold the ‘norms’ whilst others will seek to challenge them” (Burn and Pratt-Adams 2015 p. 40). This reaffirms Connell’s (2005 p.1812) comment in relation to men and boys varying or strategically using “conventional definitions of masculinity”. For instance, if discouragements were encountered, in order to overcome them, (Weaver-Hightower 2011), a man could use strategies such as limiting any behaviour that could be seen as too feminine, such as waving their hands around; they could assert their masculinities or negotiate

gendered pressures by making changes to their teaching career, such as, moving out of an Early Years class to teach older children.

Gendered identities are constructed and negotiated on a daily basis in different social contexts and interactions. The term, 'masculinities', covers a number of different attributes and the majority of these are based on traditional images of men. One definition of masculinity is that of having the qualities or attributes such as vigour, strength and virility; another is that of being in a position of power and control. Skelton's (2002) study suggested that conventional notions of masculinity and femininity had a firm hold in relation to teaching roles and responsibilities. She focused on the traditional stereotypical ideas held by many of the female students studying on a one year PGCE course. Within a primary school setting, where there are more females than males, this stereotyping may cause tension, or "role strain" (Simpson 2005 p. 371) within the workplace. If these stereotypical views, reliant on gender biases are upheld, it may be influencing perceptions of male trainees entering the profession. For men, subtle gender expectations such as being good at "artistic things" or having "teacherly flair" within the school environment may cause male trainees to face difficulties because these expectations may conflict with their personal aspirations as a teacher (Weaver-Hightower 2011 p.105). Hjalmarsson and Löfdahl (2014) conducted a study in Sweden in relation to the gendered division of labour in schools and 'Ralf', one of seven men interviewed in their study, commented about how women teachers ask men for assistance with manual tasks that are traditionally seen as male, such as hanging up pictures or carrying benches. Hjalmarsson and Löfdahl (2014) comment that this could be because both men and women act in gender-stereotypical ways when male teachers join a group of female teachers. They conclude that "gender borders" (Hjalmarsson and Löfdahl 2014 p.

289) seem important as male teachers think they would be questioned if they did not fulfil the expectations of others in relation to being a male teacher. This same expectation is referred to by a participant of Foster and Newman's study (2003 p. 26) who decided to apply for a place on a postgraduate teaching course as he realised that he "did not have to be there just to push the piano out, to play football."

Cushman (2008 p.123) asked 250 primary school principals in New Zealand what they were looking for in male role models. Of those asked, 63% were men and 37% were women: this reversal of the gender imbalance at the management stage supports the findings of Williams (1992) and Simpson (2011) that for men in teaching, their minority status can be beneficial to their careers. The majority of the school principals favoured men who exhibit a hegemonic masculinity (defined in Roulston and Mills 2000 p. 226 as "those which serve to naturalise the dominance of men over women") couched in heterosexual, rugby playing, "real men" attributes. The advantage that men have once qualified, in relation to promotion and management appointments, is also discussed in Mills et al. (2004) and Thornton and Bricheno (2000, 2008). Linehan and Walsh (2001), when researching female managers, in a range of different situations, found that female managers encounter more barriers in their career progression than their male colleagues. In relation to the teaching profession, the DfES (2007) report identifies that men are more likely to be promoted to headship. Skelton (2003) identifies two factors as to why men are more likely to be headteachers and senior managers in primary schools; the first is the positioning of some men as natural leaders in what is termed a patriarchal society. The second relates to individual male teachers who ensure they emphasise those aspects of teaching and one should consider whether this 'fast track' promotion for men could cause resentment or prejudice amongst female teachers. Burn and Pratt-

Adams (2015 p.25) confirm that this management discourse, along with those of “male sportsmanship, role modelsand discipline qualities continue to position the ‘scarce’ male teacher as a valued asset in primary schools” which, in their opinion, is contributing to the reinforcing of gender barriers. A study by Thomas (2006) related to secondary English trainees on two postgraduate university courses. Although it involved secondary trainees, it is relevant to my study as in many secondary schools English Departments are largely feminised. Thomas (2006 p.149) found that men in his study “redefined their masculinity” as they learnt to become teachers. He found that they had to renegotiate their position of being in the minority because they found their gender was now a problem. The men said that they experienced a loss of power when they entered the female-dominated environment and had to reconsider their masculinities alongside the renegotiation of relationships with both colleagues and pupils. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005 p. 852) discuss how heterosexuality and masculinity have become linked in Western society and how “Masculinities are configurations of practice that are constructed, unfold and change through time”.

2.6. Stereotypes

In relation to men in primary schools, being good at sport, technology and discipline are three qualities that are perceived to be desirable in male teachers (Burn and Pratt-Adams 2015, Cushman 2005b, Szwed 2010). In the study by Burn and Pratt-Adams (2015) men confirmed that the discourse in relation to sports is still current today as there was the definite expectation that they would be better at teaching sports than the female teachers. Eight out of eighteen male teachers openly disagreed with the sportsman script of male teachers being needed to teach football

and PE as they felt that sports should be inclusive and taught by women as well as men.

ICT in primary schools has developed greatly over the past ten years and is now a key resource in teaching. Moyles and Cavendish (2001) and Cushman (2005b) identified this as an area of perceived strength for male trainee teachers and Jones (2003b) wrote of the challenge for men teachers to be the ‘Superhero’: “supreme at sport, tantalising in technology”. Markauskaite (2005) explored gender differences in trainee teachers’ ICT literacy and found that female trainees were significantly less intensive users of technologies than men. She concluded that gender differences in the capabilities to learn about ICT autonomously (rather than with human help) could be caused by inequalities in trainees’ background characteristics and ICT experience. This study is now fifteen years old and may not reflect the present use of technologies by females in school. However, in my professional experience, from visiting and working in our partnership schools, the majority of ICT co-ordinators are men, although within our own SCITT provision, the lead subject adviser for ICT is female.

Behaviour management is a priority area given by the government for ITT providers and the Teachers’ Standards (DfE 2012) have a strong focus on this. All of Teachers’ Standard 7 is concerned with managing behaviour appropriately both within and outside the classroom. Teachers, including trainee teachers, are expected to have high expectations of behaviour, to manage classes effectively and to be able to use a range of strategies in doing so. Studies by Cushman (2010), Haase (2010) and Mistry and Sood (2013) seem to reaffirm traditional hegemonic masculinity with the male teacher being constructed as representative of male power and authority within wider society (Burn and Pratt-Adams 2015). Skelton (2007 p.682) identified

that “men teachers are perceived as (desirably) bounded by stereotypical masculine conventions which will allow them to motivate and inspire recalcitrant male pupils”. Sargent (2000) and Haase (2010) found that men were often expected to be disciplinarians. ‘Mark’, a participant in Haase’s (2010 p. 175) study is quoted as saying “I think that women naturally accept the fact that you are a male andyou’ll do the interschool sports and ...will be there for behaviour issues”.

Roulston and Mills (2000) and Francis and Skelton (2001) identified that male teachers used discipline to construct their masculinities in the classroom and in a similar way to Cushman (2005a), they believe that the issue of gender construction should be covered in teacher training to encourage trainees to examine their own beliefs and assumptions. Pupils’ behaviour was one of the most prominent reasons for men leaving the profession in 2005 (Thornton and Bricheno 2008) which would seem to contradict the perception that behaviour management is an area where male teachers excel. The research findings seem to confirm that a male primary trainee may find himself in a difficult position if he does not conform to the fixed normative notions of masculinity and the expectations of society. Haase (2010 p.173) summarises the male teacher position in that a “man can be valorised because they are in high demand, while simultaneously they can be subjected to intense heteronormative surveillance”.

Braun (2011) wrote about gender-specific dispositions and refers to Bourdieu’s (1977) concept of gender-specific and class-specific dispositions. This knowledge of how to dress and act is acquired as part of a habitus before entry into the labour market and illustrates the importance of the social and cultural contexts for trainee teachers. Braun’s (2011) study involved both men and women and she discusses how femininity, in both men and women, is most closely monitored and

judged: for men, their actions and mannerisms could not be seen as too effeminate and those interviewed described how they were “manipulated by the gendered imperatives that circulate within schools” (Braun 2011 p. 286). Men responded to these by wearing a suit so that they looked professional and some made a conscious effort not to wave their hands around as this was construed by pupils as a mannerism which a male homosexual teacher might have. She concludes that teacher education cannot afford to ignore the complexities of gendered dynamics in schools. Connell (2005 p. 1802) believes there needs to be profound institutional change in order to move towards a more gendered-equal society and men, as significant “gatekeepers” for gender equality, need to be willing to allow this move to take place.

2.7. Role models

Research identifies that there have been concerns expressed by the media and government ministers in a number of countries, including the UK, that boys should have male teachers in order for them to develop both academically and personally (Drudy 2008). One of the findings from the report of the All-Party Parliamentary Literacy Group Commission (The National Literacy Trust 2012) was that every boy should have weekly reading support from a male role model in order to raise achievement levels in reading. Two hundred and twenty-six schools and other settings were surveyed for this report and some teachers (number not given) who participated in this felt that reading was perceived as a female pastime and the lack of men in primary schools to model positive reading behaviour and attitudes was detrimental to boys’ achievement in reading. Whilst researching the need for male teachers for younger children, those aged between five and seven years of age, Jones (2006) identified that the overwhelming reason for recruiting more male teachers was because of the need for good male role models. This reason was given by a number

of public figures, including Members of Parliament, and linked to literacy skills: raised reading levels can lead to an improvement in writing and in the boys' abilities to be able to express themselves. Another reason given was that good role models might help to overcome some boys' "laddish behaviour" and their general "disaffection with school" (Jones 2006 p. 66). Jones interviewed female teachers working with children aged between five and seven years of age and they also agreed that there was a need for male role models. The qualities and characteristics that were described by teachers constructed a man that was "strongly heterosexual, a macho man who can display sensitivity and gentleness" (Jones 2006 p.79). They identified that this type of role model would be beneficial for boys. Brownhill (2015) discusses the ways in which male teachers can be good role models and help to discourage misbehaviour and disaffection for boys in school as well as help to raise academic motivation, behaviour and attainment. Sumsion (2000) found that some men welcomed the opportunity to provide children with a father figure. Carrington and Skelton (2003) question whether, when being a good role model, the male teacher should model qualities of a good male person or teacher. This links to the tensions between professional and personal identity. There is also the opinion that the absence of men within teaching may have negative implications for the profession itself; fewer men within the profession leads to it having a lower status (Simpson 2005, Skelton 2012). Carrington et al. (2008) argue that increasing the number of male primary teachers would help to break down gender stereotypes and make primary teaching a more inclusive profession. Foster and Newman (2005) discuss how more male primary teachers would make schools more gender balanced and more representative of society itself and this is also mentioned by Jones (2006).

2.8. Communities of practice

Wenger's (1998) social theory of learning proposes that learning is fundamentally a social phenomenon, rather than being an individual process as a result of teaching. The main focus of his theory is on "learning as social participation" (Wenger 1998 p. 4), building on the theory of social constructivism where meaning is created through social interaction. In a social learning system, competence is historically and socially defined; knowing how to be a teacher has been developed over time. Learning to teach is part of a social phenomenon, that is, what it takes to act and be recognised as a competent member of the profession has been established through social interactions. Trainees are active participants in the practices of different social communities and Wenger identifies participating not only as a kind of action but also as a form of belonging. Wenger's (1998) theory is that we all belong to communities of practice and as an integral part of our daily lives, may belong to several at any given time. These will change over the course of our lives and participation in social communities will shape an individual's experience as well as shaping the community itself. This is supported by Connell (2005) who describes how men live with a range of social relationships with women including for example their mother, sisters, wives and daughters. In a primary school environment, the majority of male trainees' work colleagues are female. Although having social relationships is not the same as working relationships, depending upon the social communities, including families, that the men have already been involved in and how it has influenced them, this may affect how they interact in a female-dominated workplace.

Communities of practice are to be found in all areas of society but a number of relevant studies have focused on educational settings which attend to learning that

occurs in shared work activities among a group of practitioners, (Takahashi 2011, Sim 2006 and Hodkinson and Hodkinson 2004. Patton and Parker (2017) researched the community of practice in professional development programmes in teacher education and the foundation that the community of practice provided a good foundation for collaboration amongst the participants. Paechter (2003) added a different dimension as she investigated masculinities and femininities as communities of practice, providing insight into the complex situation of how masculine and feminine practices are involved in constant production of gender.

All trainees have to negotiate different expectations in a range of sites and communities (Lamote and Engels 2010) but as primary teaching is a female-dominated profession, the influence that this may have on men beginning their teaching career should be considered by those involved in their training. They should be aware how this aspect of personal histories may affect how men interact with their female colleagues and construct their identities. The mutual engagement that happens within a community involves one's own competence and the competence of others and therefore, for trainers and trainees, it is important to be able to give and receive help. Male trainees are entering different communities of practice throughout their training year: the training centre itself and at least two placement schools. Engaging and participating in these will have implications for their own identity formation as well as shaping the communities themselves.

2.9. The social space of the staffroom

Within a primary school, the staffroom is where the majority of adult social interactions take place and so is important in light of Wenger's (1998) social participation theory because of the emphasis on participation. In the study by Mistry and Sood (2015 p.123) which looked at why there were still so few men within early

years in primary schools, one of the areas in which a male trainee looked for support from his mentor was by “helping me to feel comfortable within a large female staffroom”. One of the participants in Foster and Newman’s (2003 p. 25) study said that when walking into the staffroom “it was just a sea of female faces”. One man in Burn and Pratt-Adams (2015 p. 63) study is quoted as saying, “I find staff rooms alienating...Quite often male teachers will spend lunchtime in the four walls of their classroom.” A participant in a National Union of Teachers (NUT) report (2002 p.7) on men teaching in primary and early years, commented on how the gender imbalance in the staffroom seemed to influence who were the spokespersons as it “tended to be full of older women who led the discussion”. ‘Brian’ in Thomas’s (2006 p. 140) research about secondary teachers in an English department, felt uncomfortable about the conversations he heard about “traditionally female topics like babies and cellulite”; Thomas concluded that ‘Brian’ would therefore take longer than a female peer to settle into the social environment of being a teacher.

2.10. Peer support in a feminised environment

The term ‘feminised’ has been used by Lewis (2000) to identify that primary teaching is predominantly a female profession and Skelton (2002 p. 85) discusses different understandings of feminisation. She uses the term “statistical feminisation” for the predominance in numbers of women teachers in primary schools but number counting does not reflect individual experiences and the extent to which women enact a variety of roles that may be both masculine and feminine. “Cultural feminisation” is where the teaching environment may be seen to be biased towards females; she considers whether these two factors may lead to a pedagogy and school culture that favours girls and, if so, how this culture may actively disadvantage men. Skelton also refers to “backlash”, an anti-feminist accusation that the feminist

movement itself is responsible for the inequalities in education (Skelton 2002 p. 87) by not encouraging men into primary teaching.

Male trainees could also be members of a special type of community of practice, distinguishing it from others in terms of gender. The male students in Mulholland and Hansen's (2003 p.217) study appreciated "working together with other guys" because they were able to share their ideas and Mulholland and Hansen concluded that this gave them security and a context to seek help. A participant in Cross and Bagihole (2002) also appreciated having male peer support as did those in Carrington and McPhee (2008). In Szwed's (2010 p. 311) study a great many more males (73%) than females (16%) referred to the value of peer support and there was a comment about the "policy of the course to place men in groups with other men is very important to me." Foster and Newman's study (2003) gave participants the opportunity to work alongside male primary teachers before they actually enrolled on a teacher training course. The participants varied from Year 12/13 pupils to older male graduates considering a career change. The mentors of participants were given training which included issues relating to gender. The resulting relationships were described by one participant as "a feeling of being in a team together" (Foster and Newman 2003 p.24). An additional comment made by another participant was, "As there aren't many men, it's good to work with them...you feel a bit suspicious when you see so few men in the profession" (Foster and Newman 2003 p. 23/24).

Research by Warwick et al. (2012) focused on whether a male-only support group could benefit male trainees on a one year postgraduate course in the way that Hobson et al. (2009 p.300) reported that "facilitating mutual support through beginning teacher peer networks can enrich and extend the learning process". The support group in Warwick et al. (2012) was similar to the 'Men's Club' set up by

Thornton (1999a). Thornton's Men's Club for male student teachers had four meetings where the agenda was open, flexible and determined by participants; it was an "informal, issues based forum". This early study by Thornton identified that male initial teacher training students from a university failed, in disproportionate numbers, to complete their training courses satisfactorily. She did compare postgraduate and undergraduate routes and found that the former resulted in a lower failure rate. She raised some possible explanations including: male students feeling intimidated by a predominantly female peer group and lack of a male support network due to small numbers. Although the male support group in Warwick et al. (2012) had similarities to Thornton's Men's Club (1999a), with the same number of meetings taking place and the participants being male trainee teachers, there were also differences. The group in Warwick et al. (2012) always met on campus and the meetings were arranged by a male tutor with an identified focus. In comparison, Thornton's Men's Club held two of their meetings off campus in a local social club; these meetings had an open agenda and were led by a female tutor who was unknown to the trainees. None of the meetings in either study were held in a school and the men in the study by Warwick et al. (2012 p.58) said that they felt isolated during their school experience and one, 'Ben', who had had a placement in a very small rural school where he was the only male, said that he "felt like a freak show." So, although the male-only support group was not instigated within school placements, where this feeling of isolation was most apparent, male trainees in this study did find the male-only group was an effective strategy as it helped them to feel less vulnerable and for that year there were no withdrawals from the group. No other details about their experiences during their training year were included and so it cannot be confirmed that the male-only group linked directly to this, as acknowledged in the research in

terms of the male cohorts pre-course experience and maturity. Smedley (2006) suggested that men-only discussions as organised by Thornton (1999a) could encourage male trainees to reflect on themselves and Warwick et al. (2012) found that focused meetings could address some of the concerns of men and help to support their development within an environment where, in numerical terms, females were overwhelmingly dominant. In Burn and Pratt-Adams' (2015 p. 33/34) study there was a voluntary male student support group who "negotiated' the complex, emotional, contradictory, conscious and unconscious processes" involved during their teacher training year. Their meetings were held in university rooms and stereotyping and its effects were regularly discussed. The group grew and strong relationships were established. It took on the "role of self-therapy" (Burn and Pratt-Adams 2015 p.42) which could be said to link with Smedley's (2006) suggestion in relation to reflection, depending on how the group discussed their isolation and differences. This group also supported each other when individuals mentioned that they were considering withdrawing from the course.

These support groups specifically for males were set up due to the predominantly female staffing situation that is in the majority of primary schools. However, Skelton (2002) questioned whether primary schools can really be said to be feminised because of educational policy making, which has an emphasis on assessment and league tables, and the number of men in positions of authority as headteachers and senior members of staff. Haywood and Mac an Ghail (2001) argue that due to changes in school structure and organisation, such as formal testing and the role of curriculum co-ordinators in subjects such as ICT, schools have become more masculinised. They emphasise how masculine and feminine

discourses, such as men being disciplinarians and women being caring, seem to be embedded into policies and practices of primary schools.

2.11. Child Protection

Another aspect arising from the literature about men in primary schools and possibly acting as a barrier to retention involved concerns about allegations of child abuse. Carrington (2002) made the point that public anxieties about men working in the early primary sector needed to be taken into consideration because of the potential barrier to recruitment. Although this study is more than ten years old, concerns about child protection and men in primary schools are unchanged. Since Carrington's (2002) research was undertaken, after a number of high profile cases of child abuse, including that of Nigel Leat (Morris 2012) who was jailed for abusing children at a First School (age range four to eight years) in Weston-Super-Mare, procedures were put in place to ensure safer recruitment of all adults working with children. This includes checks made through the Disclosure and Barring Service which incorporates an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check.

In my professional setting, during child protection training, concerns have been raised by men on the course about this issue and whether they should have any physical contact with children. Occasionally this has also been raised by female trainees but, in general, fears of sexual abuse of children are not normally focused on females, although this has occurred, for example, in the case of Vanessa George in a Plymouth nursery (Morris 2010). Following on from the demand for more male primary teachers and the fear for some men of being accused of sexual abuse, Cushman (2009) studied three men teachers in three different countries, England, Sweden and New Zealand and how they responded to the dilemma of physical contact with children. The concern about attitudes of parents in terms of what was

acceptable practice was raised. Johnson and Weber (2011) concluded that issues of the limited number of males in primary teaching can be driven by cultural forces of sexism and homophobia. However, Thornton's study (1999b), along with Hobson et al. (2009), provides evidence that this may be an over-simplification because of other possible explanations for the low number of males in primary teaching such as lack of commitment and support. Foster and Newman (2005 p.350) identify a "cloud of suspicion" which may hang over male teachers. Male trainees in Warwick et al. (2012) raised concerns about being placed in certain situations such as girls getting changed for PE and on the area of the acceptable level of physical contact. This was also seen as a challenge to be overcome by male participants in Pollitt and Oldfield (2017). Jones (2003a p.187) explores the identity of a "safe" teacher in relation to physical contact with children: in one example a trainee had a male colleague who was dismissed for placing both hands on the shoulders of a pupil in order to guide him to a seat and the trainee felt that the requirements for being a 'safe' teacher seemed to contradict requirements of being an effective teacher. 'Terry', in Smedley's (2007) study, made physical contact with the children as much as possible as he felt that it was very important to do so without it being construed as inappropriate. Foster and Newman (2003 p. 23) believe that "Encouraging men to pursue a career in primary teaching is beset with difficulties" because there are stereotypical labels such as 'macho' or 'perverted' which have to be overcome in order to ensure that men are able to feel comfortable in their chosen career and able to provide a realistic, and positive, view about men in primary teaching. Men have to be able to be confident in their ability to discount any inferences about paedophilic intentions from other members of society especially as they may attract suspicion because by choosing to work with young children they are transgressing what is seen

as legitimate male scripts and in doing so are crossing gender barriers (Burn and Pratt-Adams 2015).

The findings in the study by Mistry and Sood (2014) contradict earlier research by Cushman (2009), Carrington (2002) and Foster and Newman (2005) and may signal a change in attitudes about men in primary schools: very few men and women trainee teachers and teachers in this study saw men as a source of suspicion and the men had not received any “derogatory comments” (Mistry and Sood 2014 p.10). This conclusion reflects my initial study as I did not find this was an area of concern for men interviewed, including the trainee that had withdrawn. Like my own study, Mistry and Sood (2014), was a small-scale investigation and these researchers acknowledge they should have delved deeper into this issue. By doing this myself in my main research, I discovered in fact that there was a problem.

2.12. Mentoring men

Mentoring men and mentoring in primary school-centred initial teacher training seem to be two areas that are under-researched. Although there is a range of literature on mentoring trainee teachers, my research could not locate any literature that specifically relates to practice-based mentoring of men or mentoring in primary school-centred teacher training. Mentoring is generally seen as part of the process whereby trainee and beginning teachers are brought into the community of practice of the school (Langdon et al. 2016). Effective mentoring involves relationships which can be complex as both personal and contextual factors need to be considered along with a range of tasks and tools (Walkington 2005). The perceptions of mentors and how they contribute to the success of male trainees is a research question which developed from my initial study. Kemmis et al. (2014) identified the importance of mentoring to assist early career teachers in situating themselves within the school

community. The study focused on newly qualified teachers rather than trainee teachers and likewise Langdon et al. (2014) identified a strong success link between newly qualified teachers, mentors and the school community.

Kemmis et al. (2014) identified that mentoring is understood and conceptualised in more than one way and that people relate to one another differently in the different forms of mentoring. They categorised mentoring practices in three ways: as supervision, as support and as collaborative self-development. In teacher training, the type of mentoring may change as the trainee progresses through the course so there is less support, more collaborative self-development and more supervision as the trainees become more experienced and take more responsibility for their practice class in preparation for having their own. Their study focused on mentoring in Australia, Finland and Sweden, not England, but their views have been supported by the work of Hobson et al. (2009) which was conducted here. Black (2016) confirms how important it is for mentors to recognise the different stages that a trainee goes through and refers to them as “survival, consolidation, renewal and maturity”. A study concerning secondary trainees on a postgraduate course by Chambers, Coles and Roper (2002) found that the trainee/mentor relationship was paramount. Much of their evidence suggested that the breakdown of the relationship with the mentor was a major factor influencing decisions to withdraw. This is confirmed by ‘Sam’, a participant in Hobson’s (2002) study, who stated that his lack of confidence in his mentor caused him to withdraw. Hobson concluded that problems for trainees in school were often connected with the mentor. Although this is clearly a factor to consider for both male and female trainees, the high numbers of women working in primary schools may affect how some men are able to establish successful and effective working relationships.

Langdon et al. (2014) studied primary and secondary mentors in New Zealand and looked at whether there was any difference in mentors' perceptions, depending on whether they had volunteered for their role or not and whether they were experienced mentors. Langdon et al. (2014) found that mentors who came to the role voluntarily and those that engaged with relevant professional development activities had more positive perceptions. The importance of mentor preparation was identified to ensure that they had the skills and knowledge required, along with opportunities to reflect on their own, and others' teaching. Cushman (2009) argued that the issues of sexuality and gender should be an integral part of all coursework during teacher education. Previously, Cushman (2005a) emphasised the importance of gender studies in teacher education to encourage trainees to challenge their own beliefs and assumptions but there was no apparent evidence of mentors of beginning teachers having gender awareness training from the 2005 study to this one. Langdon et al. (2014) found that previous experience of mentoring did not seem to be a key element. However, the data analysis of Roehrig et al. (2008) found that in the United States, more effective beginning teachers had mentors who felt more comfortable in the mentor role as they had had previous experience as mentors. Secondary female mentors in Thomas's (2006) study had specifically requested male trainees for their English department as there were so few male teachers within it and in the teaching of English in general. Male trainees that were placed in the English department found that they had been allocated classes that were deemed to be challenging in terms of boys' behaviour, by their mentors. By doing this, the mentors seemed to be reinforcing the concept that just because they were men, the trainees would be able to "exert forceful power" and "adopt a masculine style in the classroom" (Thomas 2006 p. 143). The trainees themselves seemed to lack confidence in their female mentors

sometimes referring to them as “girls” (Thomas 2006 p.147) and one of the men, ‘Matt,’ did not feel that he had learnt so much from observing women teach as when observing a male teacher.

Izadinia (2015a) studied mentoring relationships for secondary trainee teachers in Australia and found that when mentoring relationships were positive, trainees felt more confident. The issue of developing a teacher identity for men in primary schools where there are large numbers of women can be supported by mentors by helping to encourage a positive image of teaching and providing both emotional and academic support. ‘Eden’, a male participant in this study, did not have a good rapport with one of his mentors and Izadinia concludes that this lack of rapport and connection would have had a negative influence on developing his teacher identity and confidence, “I felt I did not exist as a teacher” (Izadinia 2015a p.6).

A further study by Izadinia (2015b) researched perceptions of student teachers and their mentors to see if they were the same. The student teachers felt that emotional as well as academic support was important in order to build their confidence whereas the mentors identified the feedback element as the most significant part of their role. In the context of my study, it is worth considering the extent to which male trainees receive emotional support from their mentors and whether mentors feel that this should be part of their role.

The review of Hobson et al. (2009) focused on initial teacher training as well as the first few years of teaching after gaining Qualified Teacher Status. They identified that the benefits of mentoring may include emotional and psychological support but their evidence of the direct impact of mentoring on teaching skill is limited. The study by Locasale-Crouch et al. (2012) on the role of mentoring focused

on beginning teachers in America and found that there was a link between self-efficacy and retention. Pfitzner-Eden's (2016) study, involving students at a German university, found that changes in teachers' self-judged efficacy during their school practice led to negative associations and their intention to leave the course. This may have been due to the trainee teachers initially being unaware of the reality of teaching and classroom management and once they had a greater understanding of the reality, and the challenges and difficulties ahead, this may have led to a decrease in self-efficacy. Thérèse and Ayşe (2010) found that those males that had developed a self-efficacy towards children seemed to be better prepared to face the challenges of the course. Moulding et al. (2014) looked at the part that support from mentors played in developing trainees' self-efficacy which Izadinia (2015a) also studied. She found that when the pre-service teachers had two positive mentoring relationships they had a higher level of confidence. Due to the lack of confidence that some trainee teachers may have at the start of their teacher training, they need extra encouragement and support to become confident teachers. Izadinia (2015a) concluded that the more confident they were, the more likely they were to stay in the profession. Therefore, for those trainees who were not confident, developing trainees' confidence in their ability to be successful teachers could play an important part in retention and completion of the course at a good or outstanding level.

Negative experiences in schools, including having a poor relationship with either their mentor or another colleague within the school were mentioned as reasons for withdrawal of trainees in Kyriacou et al. (2003), Hobson (2002) and Thornton (1999a). Kyriacou et al. (2003) believe that decisions to withdraw are strongly influenced by the individual schools in which trainees are placed. Moyles and Cavendish (2001) found that the high drop-out rate of male trainees was linked to in-

school teaching practices. Some male trainees commented that several female members of staff tended to overprotect the men. This “mothering” characterised by Moyles and Cavendish (2001 p. 16) seemed to be in relation to protecting men from issues connected to paperwork requirements, specifically planning. This meant that some problems tended to be hidden until later on in the course.

The literature review illustrates some of the complex issues which male trainees encounter when they enter the primary teaching profession. Key areas identified include men having to assume different identities and fulfilling gender expectations. The importance of social interactions that take place within training sites, particularly the primary school setting and the social space of the staffroom, is also a finding. In relation to my research questions, these themes are significant as I consider the experiences that men encounter in their training year. Although my initial study had not identified child protection as an issue, as it was prominent within the literature review and clearly was a concern for some men, I felt that it was a theme I should consider. There were also areas which seem to be under-researched in school-centred initial teacher training such as mentoring male trainees, their reluctance in asking for help and how they could be supported within the primary school setting where the majority of their training takes place.

3. Research questions reviewed and reprioritised

The literature relating on social constructivism (Vygotsky 1978) and Wenger's (1998) social theory of learning emerged as significant in relation to the data on the interactions between male trainees and their peers, mentors and colleagues. I was able to identify how the SCITT embodied Wenger's (1998) community of practice and the importance of learning but male trainees did not seem to be able to participate in the 'community' in the same way that female trainees were able to. Wenger's theory explores community, practice, meaning and identity as a framework for analysing learning as social participation; the SCITT, therefore, is a place where the creation of knowledge occurs. A community of practice is about people who communicate and engage with each other whilst working together, and this is what is meant to occur in school-centred teacher training but, for men, this creation of knowledge did not seem to happen as it should. My research questions aimed to explore the reasons for this lack of engagement and participation. Wenger's theory led to a range of research, based in educational settings, which emphasised how communities of practice can be useful in these specific areas because they attend to learning that occurs in shared work activities among a group of practitioners, Takahashi (2011), Sim (2006) and Hodkinson and Hodkinson (2004). Patton and Parker (2017) researched the community of practice in teacher education and Paechter (2003) investigated masculinities and femininities as communities of practice; both studies provided insight into the complex situation which men encounter when they begin their teacher training.

In theory, a community of practice gives newcomers access to competence (Wenger 1998). In the professional context of my study, male trainees are the

newcomers as they enter primary schools, learning from experienced colleagues and mentors, where much of the learning is active, learning through observing others and then practising themselves, rather than didactic teaching. Within this theory, male trainees become acquainted with the tasks, norms and values of the community and they gradually increase their participation and involvement. Mentors play an important part in supporting the male trainees to become accepted members of the community of practice. This is a salient point in relation to original research question 3 and how mentors respond to male trainees' needs and the support that they give them. As Programme Manager I had always been aware of the importance of good mentoring to support trainees and from the literature review I gained further insight into the different forms that mentoring may take. When mentoring is seen as supervision, support and collaborative self-development (Kemmis et al. 2014), it fits in appropriately with the community of practice theory. Support is also complex as there are a number of ways in which mentors may support trainees (Izadinia 2013, 2015a), including helping them to establish their professional identity. Wenger (1998) states that theories of identity focus on the social formation of the person and as male trainees begin their training, their identities are only tentative and so the interaction which male trainees have with their peers, as well as their mentors, is an important aspect to consider. Male and female trainees have to establish a professional identity quickly, in the SCITT programme, because they are expected to participate as apprentice teachers; for male trainees this is a situation where they are a minority and if they experience stereotyping when they enter the community of the primary school, this may hinder them in developing their professional identities. The literature review also highlighted the importance that personal histories (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009) and background factors (Braun 2011) can have on developing

professional identities; the majority of male trainees enter the SCITT training programme having worked in previous occupations, very few men begin the course straight from a full-time university course. The men's pre-course personal histories may affect how they are perceived by others in the workplace and how they communicate and engage in dialogue at a professional level.

My original research questions 2a and 2b were concerned with 'participation' which is a key element in a community of practice; in my study the male trainees are active participants in school-centred training. Question 2a was analytical and more complex, relating to minority status and gender and my literature review confirmed that gender construction is constantly under construction and this relates to Vygotsky's (1978) theory that environment and socialisation is important. Within the specific social context of school-centred primary education that is the focus of my study, gender stereotypes and expectations are some of the challenges that male trainees may have to overcome in order to successfully complete the programme. This question, 2a, relating to minority status and gender, moves theory into practice by investigating how male trainees experience school-centred training as a minority and how their gender affects their participation and engagement in learning. For male trainees, this may be the first time that they find that they are in a minority group and may be unaware of the expectations from others that they may be subject to. Although I did not reword questions, the relevance and importance of gender and being a minority prompted a re-prioritising of them so that there would be more focus on specific questions. The other area which became evident as central to male trainees being able to participate in the community of practice was the way in which mentors perceived the needs and attributes of their male trainees and the support they gave them; if mentors were unaware of specific needs of male trainees,

this would influence the support which they gave them. Also, if mentors have fixed stereotypical views about men and their characteristics, this may affect how they interact with their male trainees and social interaction in the workplace is a key element of a community of practice.

The focus on participation, interaction and learning in a community of practice and the challenges for male trainees in establishing professional identities led to the revised order of research questions:

1. What are the experiences of men on this school-centred programme?
 - 1a How do their minority status and gender impact on their participation in school-based learning?
 - 1b What other factors may impact on the participation of male trainees in school-centred initial teacher training and their completion of the course?
2. How do mentors support male trainees?
 - 2a What are the perceptions of mentors in relation to male trainees' needs and do these influence the support given to them?
3. What are the perceptions of men on a one year school-centred initial teacher training programme and of primary teaching?

4. Methodology

My intrinsic interest in this research is part of my “personal biography” (Denzin and Lincoln 2005 p. 21) and this helped to define my qualitative research process. This personal interest forms part of my conceptual framework. As a female researcher, coming from my previous role of a primary school teacher working alongside men as a minority in the workplace, I bring my own experiences and views to the research. Within my teaching career I worked in a number of schools in different localities. The majority of men I worked alongside taught older aged children in Key Stage 2, those aged seven to eleven years, rather than Key Stage 1 children, those aged five to seven years of age. I found that men tended to be at the extremes in my judgements in relation to their teaching ability or potential; either very good or needing quite a lot of support in different areas, including those of behaviour management and planning. Thomas (2006 p. 137) also found that his male colleagues in his secondary English departments were either “exceptionally good or noticeably weak”. I have also worked with men who have left the teaching profession and moved into careers in technology. The majority of men that I have worked with have undertaken specific roles within schools such as Maths, PE, ICT and Music rather than for example Literacy or Art. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) state that the researcher approaches the world with a set of ideas, a framework (ontology) with a set of questions (epistemology) which is then examined through the methodology and analysis.

Ontology is a vision of the world as it really is; it is concerned with the existence of relationships between different aspects of society including participants, culture and social structures. I am aiming to identify the relationship between men

and the culture of primary teacher training in relation to identities and gender. My research examines the way in which men experience the world of primary teacher training from their own particular perspectives. Epistemology is concerned with whether one can have knowledge of reality and in my research this is based on the experiences of men, as told to me, and although gender may be a significant identifier of their experience, it may not be the only defining feature. I am guided by a constructivist perspective as knowledge is constructed and varies over time and between social groups. This is important as it underpins my qualitative research paradigm and the need to understand the world of teacher training through the perceptions of those who are involved in it. I have tried to establish where I stand, how I view the world and what I believe to be the reality of men's experiences in primary school-centred initial teacher training in order to identify what I want to know and understand through undertaking this research. The reality is that a larger percentage of men withdraw from primary teacher training courses and those men that complete the course often do not achieve as well as their female peers. I know this through data and professional experiences.

The Record of Progress intervention (as discussed in Section 3c) my programme introduced in 2010 helped men (and women) to be organised on the SCITT course but it is too simplistic to consider that being organised with time and work tasks is the only thing that helped trainees to complete the course successfully because the participants are all individuals and bring different experiences and perceptions to their training. I have had experiences where, when interviewing prospective trainees, a number of men considered that they would be successful, just because they were male and because of the chronic shortage of men in primary

teaching. The reality of this, however, is that they may not have realistic expectations of what teaching entails.

I am constructing knowledge based on my professional and personal experiences and learning. My knowledge and understanding of the situation of men in primary teacher training is constructed through interactions with men and women involved; a constructivist paradigm. Learning is active and this stance leads to an interpretive epistemological position approach with the knowledge being socially constructed and being given meaning by the people involved, the male trainees and their mentors, building on their previous experiences. As a research paradigm, I am interpreting the words and actions of the participants in the primary school workplace, hoping to understand the experiences and issues involved, as they perceive them. I acknowledge and include the perspectives and voices of the participants involved in my research as understanding their views of the situation being studied is one of the aims of the research. I also recognise that my own background, personal and historical experiences may influence my interpretation. Using qualitative methods of data collection and analysis are most appropriate for this approach as not all aspects of the social world of education can be measured. Both schools and teacher training environments are interactive, with multiple participants who bring their backgrounds and experiences to the environments. The ways in which gender identities may be constructed within a feminised environment will reflect the interactions and expectations of participants. The notion of 'education' itself is a social construct; it refers to a range of experiences and activities throughout the social world. How one person might perceive an educational experience may differ to the view of another. Different people understand what may be the same social world in different ways and use a variety of terms to interpret and

evaluate their experience (Poulson and Wallace 2003). In a feminised workplace such as the primary school, there may be different interpretations of what occurs, varying from male and female, old and young, trainee and experienced members of the community. This aspect should also be considered bearing in mind my role as the researcher as “every researcher speaks from within a distinct interpretive community” (Denzin and Lincoln 2005 p.21). My conceptual framework has included a constructivist, inductive paradigm which can help to develop and construct theory. Although it may not be possible to find definitive or clear cut answers to my research questions, considering the previous research that has gone before, I hope to theorise the factors that emerge from the data and help to move the discussion forward by expanding on the existing theoretical perspectives. By adding a fresh view to the issues in a different and highly relevant context, that of school-centred primary teacher training, my research is both relevant and innovative. Primary teacher training and primary teaching itself continue to be highly gendered environments and stereotypical views of males in primary schools are still prevalent. Very little seems to have changed within primary education in relation to male staff although there have been moves to try and increase the number of men entering the profession. My research expands theories related to identities, gender and male role model expectations. There is also insight into the importance of social networking and the views of men and their mentors on safeguarding. All new relevant insights can make a valid contribution to the existing field of educational theory, however small. “Each interpretive paradigm makes particular demands on the researcher, including the questions the researcher asks and the interpretations he or she brings to them” (Denzin and Lincoln 2005 p. 22). My study is not positivist as within that framework results are usually quantifiable and the researcher is independent and has

little interaction with the participants. I am not aiming to test theory so my framework is not deductive and I am not testing or intending to provide hypotheses. The flexibility of the case study can contribute to the generalisation of a broader theory or can add to the expansion of theory which can help to understand similar situations. One of the aims of my study is to contribute to the understanding of the situation of male trainees in my setting and those in similar training contexts.

4.1. Research design

When considering my research design, it was important to look at the research questions very carefully so that the methods used were appropriate to them. Planning how to conduct the research, so that the data yielded the most productive information in relation to the research questions, was also a salient point to consider. In my study, due to the unpredictable research context of not knowing in advance how many male trainees would be able to be part of the research, I decided to include data from previous male trainees. This was found through documentary evidence. Analysing the information given in the documents would help to answer the research question that related to other factors that may have affected retention and completion of the course. I looked at the documents to find out about the backgrounds and profiles of the men in previous cohorts to see if I could identify any patterns in the data. Information from the documentary analysis informed the interview schedule for trainees and the questionnaire for mentors. There was a social context for the research which involved trainees participating in an interactive and fluid situation and so I concluded that gaining their perceptions through interviews and a focus group would be appropriate methods. As a practitioner-researcher, the timing of when the data should be collected, as well as how, had to be considered. A focus group allowed for consolidation of the interview data as well as allowing the

participants to discuss aspects relating to the research questions without the presence of the practitioner-researcher. Using these data collection techniques would allow for the research question about trainees' perceptions of the course and primary teaching to be considered alongside the questions relating to gender and their minority status. Gaining perceptions of mentors was also important as one of the research questions directly related to this and questionnaires allowed them the opportunity to do this independently.

Research questions should gather information on the central phenomenon and narrow the purpose into specific areas of inquiry (Creswell 2012). My central phenomenon was the retention and completion of the course for male trainees and their experiences and challenges in primary school-centred teacher training. The literature review and my own professional experience identified specific areas of inquiry which included identities.

4.2. Background to the research design decision

The intervention strategy, namely the Record of Progress booklet implemented in 2010 in my setting, was an additional support system to help trainees with organisation and completion of paperwork. It was planned and evaluated in line with an action research approach. The intended outcome was improved completion rates and a rise in achievement outcomes for both men and women. More rigorous action research was initially considered to investigate the problems further and find solutions to the chronic problem of male underachievement and retention. However, one of the main purposes of action research is to work towards practice change during the actual research cycle and there was not sufficient time to plan, implement and evaluate interventions in a thirty-eight week course especially as the numbers of men that potentially would be able to participate cannot be predicted and numbers

could not be guaranteed as they tend to fluctuate from year to year. This situation also led to my decision to include documentary evidence from previous cohorts in my research.

Ethnographers study a culture, a sharing group at a single site and look at them with a broad lens. In one aspect, this could be deemed a suitable approach as I was studying a group, where I know the participants and was looking for understanding of a larger issue. However, due to the time span, I did not have time or the opportunity to “have long term access” to “build a detailed record of behaviours and beliefs over time” (Creswell 2014 p. 490) or complete observations and field notes which are important elements of the data collection for ethnographers. A narrative approach, where there is a focus on oral narratives talking about personal experiences, was also considered. Although narrative research can capture every day, normal data, there is a focus on individual stories so in some ways could be said to be a “micro analytic picture” (Creswell 2014 p. 530). With narrative accounts, interviews are viewed more as a conversation and have more in common with ethnography and with my interviews I wanted to concentrate more on the question and answer model, using open-ended questions. As I also wanted to include perceptions and information from mentors and to focus on specific aspects, I discounted this approach. The following section provides justification for selecting the case study method.

4.3. Case study approach

Each year our course admits a relatively very small number of male trainees onto the thirty-eight week programme. In this context, a case study approach was identified as appropriate to investigate the research questions and explore the experiences of a small number of participants who are training for just nine months.

Case study is a strategy where the focus is on a case although there is some controversy over what should be regarded as a case which could be an individual, an organisation or an event or a programme (Burton 2000). It is one approach to flexible design research that is frequently used within social sciences. Case study is appropriate for my research as a small number of men in the school-centred initial teacher training programme constitute my case. Although there are only a small number of men involved, they have two commonalities; their gender and their place as trainees on our school-centred initial teacher training programme. This is important as one of the aims of the study is to shed light on a larger population, that of men in school-centred teacher training. In the training year each trainee has experience of at least two schools whilst on placement and the centre-based training provides a foundation for the school experience. These locations, with their different participants and practices will influence the trainees' experiences. I am using multiple methods of data collection which is typical of a case study and no single source of information has a complete advantage over all the others (Yin 2014).

The case study is frequently used by teacher-researchers and teacher-educators as it presents a view of inquiry and knowledge that is pragmatic and acknowledges the richness of the living worlds being studied in education (Thomas 2013). There are, however, problems with this approach that Thomas acknowledges, for instance, a case study could lack integrity and purpose. Gerring (2007) asserts that a case study is most usually defined as an intensive study of a single case and when the emphasis shifts from an individual case to a sample, this becomes a cross-case study. In relation to Gerring's definition, I am looking at my case in an intensive way in that the sample is small and provides some depth in a small scale exploration of men in school-centred initial teacher training but it cannot provide breadth. It

could, however, shed light on a phenomenon, and this is an important aspect of a case study and so this would give it a purpose which could then lead to an improvement in practice. As my research has the purpose of studying men's experiences in school-centred initial teacher training with implications for practice for SCITT providers, this is suitable for a case study approach.

My research questions relate appropriately to a case study approach. Yin (2014) states there are three conditions that need to be considered when selecting the most suitable research method. The first is linked to the form of research question. 'How' and 'why' questions are likely to favour a case study approach as they are exploratory and can be traced over time rather than frequencies or incidents. 'What' questions can also be exploratory and 'how many' could also be used in case studies. My question relating to gender and minority status is 'how', as is the question relating to support that mentors provide, allowing for an exploratory focus. The other 'what' questions explore perceptions and experiences and consider other factors that may influence participation in school-centred initial teacher training. The two other considerations that Yin (2014) identifies for selecting a case study research method are that it focuses on contemporary events and the researcher has little or no control over the events, that is, relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated as in an experimental design. In my study, I, as the researcher, have no control over the number of men on the course and whether they decide to complete the course and as I am not able to manipulate relevant behaviours nor are there any interventions, it conforms to Yin's concept of a case study. As Programme Manager, however, I do have considerable influence in areas such as school placements and this dichotomy in role must be acknowledged within the conceptual framework of this research and taken into consideration when reflecting on the data. Wenger (1998) cites

communities of practice as complex social entities where the behaviours of the participants are not controlled by the researcher. The shared practice within the community connects participants to each other in ways that are both diverse and complex and the mutual engagement between them is part of the context in which they interact; as a researcher I was not part of their community of practice, however, as Programme Manager I do interact as I deliver centre-based training, visit and observe them in school and support them both academically and pastorally.

This case study is exploring a new context for an ongoing phenomenon: previous research in this field has taken place in university settings. Hyett, Kenny and Dickson-Swift (2014) state that the case is an object to be studied for an identified reason that is peculiar or particular: in my case study the identified reason is that male primary trainees have been found to be more prone to leaving teacher training and underachieving compared to female trainees and as the school-centred training is a growing route in teacher training, an exploration of these issues was the springboard for my research. This is supported by Creswell's (2014) statement that a case study starts with a single focus on a central phenomenon rather than a comparison or relationship which can often be found in quantitative research. Quantitative data involves numbers and measurements of variables. This is not appropriate for my study as I am collecting information about the world of primary education for male trainees and the majority of information for this type of research is not quantifiable. A strength of case studies is analytical generalisation rather than statistical inference (Burton 2000) and the aim of a case study case is to expand and generalise theories, not "to extrapolate probabilities (statistical generalizations)" (Yin 2014 p.21). With a case study there are different levels of analysis that portray the complexity of the central phenomena. Yin (2013) states that the distinctive need for

case study research arises because of the desire to understand complex social phenomena which can identify with the complex social entities of Wenger's (1998) communities of practice. My research reflects these ideas through its exploration of the complexities of the workplace of the primary school and challenges that exist for male trainees and teachers in our SCITT partnership. My small scale context is congruent with a characteristic of case studies: to restrict the scope of the research in order to facilitate the construction of detailed understanding (Hodkinson and Hodkinson 2001). Gerring (2007) states that a case study should have identifiable boundaries, that is, parameters that define the extent of the subject, as introduced by Ragin (1992). The boundaries in my case study exist through the small group of men, a specific time span and the limitations of the training sites and my own research decisions in relation to data collection. Simons (2009 p.21) has a clear definition of a case study which supports my justification of this approach,

“an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity.....of a particular project.....in a ‘real-life’ context. It is research-based, inclusive of different methods and is evidence-led.”

She continues that the primary purpose of a case study to be “to generate in-depth understanding of a specific topic (as in a thesis)...and/or inform...professional practice.” My study, although only having two perspectives, that of men training and of mentors, is dealing with male trainees in a specific context which is real and has a purpose of informing practice alongside gaining greater knowledge of the situation in social environments, naturally occurring where the variables are not being controlled. It could be said to be a “local knowledge case” (Thomas 2011 p. 77) in that it is a situation in which, as Programme Manager, I am already familiar, which Thomas (2011) believes is a ready-made strength for conducting a case study.

Burton (2000) identifies case studies as being a flexible method of conducting research. The flexibility of the case study can contribute to the generalisation of a broader theory or can add to the expansion of theory which can help to understand similar situations. Flexibility is central to my study as the participants move between different sites during their training year: two schools and the training centre for each of the male trainees. The complex research sites involved, along with the variety of male trainees who participate in different learning situations with different peers, mentors and supervisors was challenging to research as it involves multiple, unpredictable relationships in different settings. Although a case study may not always have the breadth of coverage, there can be a deeper understanding of the issue being studied. In my research the focus is on school-centred initial teacher training and experiences of male trainees. There are disagreements about the value of case study research in education and its wider applicability (Thomas 2013). If looking at cases, one should not expect to generalise but it is possible to make sense “without generalising which involves putting ideas together, drawing from experience and making informed judgements (Thomas 2013 p. 50). Bassey (2001 p.10) identifies “fuzzy generalisations”; “one that is neither likely to be true in every case, nor likely to be untrue in every case, it is something that *may* be true.” He believes that fuzzy generalisations can lead to fuzzy predictions which may provide a powerful tool for communication. This concept is important for my research because it suggests that the findings may be applicable to other school-centred initial teacher training providers. The importance and usefulness of transferability is discussed by Punch (2009 p.316) who states that the “concept of transferability is often preferred to generalizability in qualitative writing” and the context should be thickly described so

that this transferability can take place. The personal experiences of the male trainees provide some “thick description” (Punch 2009 p.161) in my research.

Although, by definition, case studies can make no claims to be typical (Hodkinson and Hodkinson 2001), previous research, my own professional knowledge about initial teacher training, along with the numerical facts show that there is a chronic shortage of men in primary teaching. My study aims to provide insight into some of the experiences and issues involved in the specific context of school-centred initial teacher training. Flyvberg’s (2011 p. 305) work on the case study supports my aim with the stance that “knowledge can be transferable even where it is not formally generalizable”. Therefore, although my sample is small, my research aims to be seen as relevant and useful in a paradigmatic context, highlighting general characteristics about male trainees and their training experiences within the feminised workplace, enabling trainers and institutions to reflect on such factors within their programmes.

Stake (2005) identifies three types of case study and one of these is “instrumental”. He uses this term when a case is examined mainly to provide insight into an issue, as does Creswell (2012). An “intrinsic” case study is undertaken because one wants better understanding of the particular case and there is intrinsic interest in it. (Stake’s third type of case study is collective, which does not apply in my research context, as this relates to a number of cases studied jointly). My study can be said to be both instrumental and intrinsic and it is important as it has a focus on the school-centred initial teacher training route. It is instrumental in having “the purpose of illuminating a particular issue” (Creswell 2014 p.493), that is, providing insight into the experiences of male primary trainees generally. However, my research originally began as an intrinsic study as I was looking for better

understanding of the experiences of men within my setting and I have a professional stake in meeting targets for the recruitment and retention of men in my SCITT. The research therefore began because of my interest in it but it also aims to provide insight into an issue that is not confined to my institution. This reflects Stake's perspective that the bulk of case study work is done by people who have intrinsic interest in the case but also that there is no "hard and fast line" which distinguishes intrinsic case study from instrumental case study as they can be said to have a combined purpose (Stake 2005 p. 445).

An inductive approach to the research is appropriate as I am studying human respondents and it is mainly male trainees who provide the data, with their mentors as an additional data source. This type of approach is also suitable as at the outset it was not clear how many male trainees would be available to be interviewed and it was important to be flexible and to respond to participants as appropriate when I was interacting with them. "No single method can grasp all the subtle variations in ongoing human experience" and so having the mentors contribute to the data through completing a questionnaire on their experiences of mentoring male trainees helps to provide "ways to make more understandable the worlds of experience" being studied (Denzin and Lincoln 2005 p.21).

Researchers should demonstrate rigour through an adequate description of methodological foundations (Hyett, Kenny and Dickson-Swift 2014). Throughout my case study I needed to "theory-build" (Thomas 2013), by developing a framework of ideas which were in-depth and reflective. My conceptual framework was generated from research literature which included identities, gender, communities of practice and role-models, alongside my own reflections and professional experience. By "interrogating the literature"(Trafford and Lesham 2008

p. 44) I have been able to find out what other researchers have written about to help form my theoretical perspectives. The feminised workplace of the primary school is a community of practice (Wenger 1998) which can present complex social phenomena confirming Yin's (2014) comment that the distinctive need for case study research arises because of the desire to understand these. By asking men about their experiences and perceptions during their training year, my case study aims to discover more about the cultures within participating schools and the training centre and how men construct their identities within these workplace learning contexts. My research question that is concerned with gender and the minority status of men reflect some of the issues that are involved within the culture of schools. My case study has a definite purpose, which is to advance understanding of the issue of men in primary teacher training and to improve prospects for male primary trainees and male teachers. Research should attempt to analyse, synthesise or theorise and should not just be about illustration. My study aims not just to illustrate but to explore some of the underlying issues driving the shortage of men in primary education so that initial teacher training providers may be able to improve retention and achievement of male trainees, with specific reference to SCITTs.

Creswell (2014) identifies five process steps in qualitative data collection. The first is identifying the participants that can best help understand the central phenomenon; in this study they are male trainees and their mentors. Access to the site, Creswell's second step, is usually more important in qualitative research than in quantitative; qualitative research often involves interviewing and participation from people within a site whilst quantitative research may deal with surveys and similar on-line tools where participants can respond from any location and from a distance. Through asking open-ended questions in interviews and questionnaires, the views of

the participants are not restricted and information collected is organised in a format designed by the researcher. The collection of data is Creswell's third step. Following on from the collection is the recording of the information supplied. The final step is in connection with ethical issues of gathering information face-to-face and researching in participants' workplaces. These steps will be considered in the following section.

My initial study helped to refine my research questions and to consider the questions and topics for the interviews, questionnaires and focus group which were my three main methods of data collection. In semi-structured interviews, the same types of questions are able to be asked but rephrased if necessary which helps to provide a coherent system through the organisation of diverse views and opinions (Miles and Huberman 1994). In addition to the three human data sources, I also used documents previously compiled by members of SCITT staff for our own data analysis which forms part of our Self-Evaluation Document (SED). Using different data collection techniques aims to convey the full picture; a term which is sometimes used to capture this is "thick description" (Punch 2009 p.161) which can allow a comprehensive examination of an issue or a phenomenon. Also, this triangulation of data from the interviews with the men, questionnaires from the mentors and from the focus group will add credibility and serve to clarify meaning (Stake 2005).

4.4. Ethical considerations

It is important to consider ethical issues throughout all stages of the research process and as a practitioner-researcher, I need to consider the ethical implications from the point of view of the professional area in which I work (Costley et al. 2013). The main ethical consideration is that of my own position because the participants initially knew me as their Programme Manager, one who taught and

assessed them and then my role changed to that of researcher. Although all researchers begin their study from some position or other, the practitioner-researcher can bring disadvantages, including bias and subjectivity. For many involved in educational research “the researcher persona has to work in tandem with the practitioner persona” (Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier 2013 p.65) and this dichotomy reflects my position. I am closely involved with the participants right from the beginning of their teacher training. I interview them, induct them, arrange school placements and manage the course overall. In a quantitative study, the researcher is usually in the background, as a third person reporting and explaining the results. Creswell’s (2012) view is that in a qualitative study, the researcher is typically present and the use of “I”, alongside personal experiences of collecting data, are predominant. This could be a generalisation in relation to all qualitative studies but is relevant in this case. My presence, as both researcher and Programme Manager, will have had an effect on how the trainees as participants respond, especially in interview situations, because of the relationship I have with them as manager of the course. When there is a change in the relationship such as this it is important to acknowledge when one is the researcher and when one is the Programme Manager to ensure that the ethical considerations such as confidentiality are clear. There are different ways in which the position of the researcher may affect the study. To begin with, my view about the experiences of male primary trainees may affect the language that I use, how I ask questions and how I analyse the data. For example, it is important that I report on the full range of findings, even if they are not as I expected or are not complimentary to the SCITT. As Programme Manager, the nature of researcher and the researched may affect the information that the participants are willing to share. It is important to gain valid data and promote the

integrity of the research even when a power imbalance does exist. Other challenges when conducting research in one's workplace are in relation to the researcher's status within the institution and what the researcher represents to the participants of the study (Drake 2010). The added familiarity of the researcher to those being researched adds a relationship dynamic which means that the issue of power dynamics was salient. Men interviewed, and mentors who completed the questionnaires may have felt obliged to co-operate with my research. Also, as a practitioner-researcher, I have access to secondary data and this knowledge could affect analysis and evaluation. It is difficult to say how much this knowledge may have influenced me as I tried to ensure that all analysis and evaluation was based on the data provided and to not be prejudiced in any way.

The issue of the researcher as an insider or outsider to the group being studied in an educational context has been discussed by Mercer (2007), Drake (2010) and more recently, Unluer (2012) and Hanson (2013). Dwyer and Buckle (2009 p.55) state that as the researcher plays "such a direct and intimate role in both data collection and analysis", the issue of researcher membership in the area being studied is relevant to all approaches of qualitative methodology. Some researchers may claim that they are insiders and indicate that they share cultural membership with the group under investigation. As a female and manager of trainees, I cannot be said to be an insider in relation to gender and position. However, I am not a complete outsider in that I do have knowledge of the sites and of the course involved (Dwyer and Buckle 2009). I position myself in the way that reflects with Merton's (1972) suggestion that the insider and outsider doctrines are fallacies because researchers are rarely completely an insider or an outsider. My research decisions and my study also confirm Drake's view (2010 p. 98) that researchers "often choose their project as a

result of several years of experience of working with the issues” and in my situation, being familiar with the context of my research, I am hoping to enhance practice within the context of school-centred initial teacher training as well as the study having academic value. Dwyer and Buckle (2009 p. 59) feel that the insider/outsider status is not the key ingredient but rather an ability to be “open, authentic, honest, deeply interested in the experience of one’s research participants” is core to the study. Keeping these qualities at the forefront of the data collection and analysis was my aim.

Taking the Programme Manager/trainee relationship into consideration, I decided that the best time to interview the trainees was very near to the end of the course when they already had confirmation that they were going to be recommended for QTS. My aim was to ensure that the dynamics of the hierarchical Programme Manager/trainee relationship did not have a negative influence on the participants. If I had interviewed the trainees earlier on in the course, there was a risk they may have felt under more pressure to participate. Mercer (2007 p.4) confirms how important it is to acknowledge that there are power relationships with which “the researcher and the researched co-exist.” It was important to also consider that those interviewed knew me and so they may have had pre-formed expectations of what I was looking for, which would in turn influence their responses (Trowler 2011). Interviewing them at the end of the course meant that they would be able to look back on their whole training year and their experience in their placement schools. During the interviews I ensured that I repeated the men’s answers and comments back to them, if I thought there was an ambiguity in their answers or needed further clarification as to what they meant. This “member checking” (Punch 2009 p.315) is an important part of internal validation as it involves checking the information with the participants of the

study who are involved in the data collection. Although I carefully considered when to interview the male trainees, when they knew they had passed the course, the power imbalance between myself and those interviewed may well have still had an impact on the data collected.

Researcher bias can be addressed by “describing in detail how the data was collected and analysed and what role they adapted in the field” (Arthur et al. 2012 p.81) although it is unlikely that all effects of bias will be eliminated. Reflexivity is when the limitations of a research study are acknowledged and this may be in terms of a number of aspects including location, subjects and the process itself. Reflexivity is a way of being reflective about one’s own practice and means “turning of the researcher’s lens back onto oneself to recognize and take responsibility for one’s own situation and the effect it may have” (Berger 2015 p.220). My perspectives as a researcher are acknowledged and I have been reflexive in that my position as Programme Manager is part of the world that I am researching and consideration has been given as to how to limit the effect that this may have on the data. By being aware of my role and any biases, from the beginning, I can hope for an honest and ethical account of my research.

Before I began the research I had to consider other ethical principles because the study involved collecting data from people about people and their workplace. Stake (2005 p. 459) emphasises the importance of this when he writes, “Qualitative researchers are guests in the private spaces of the world. Their manners should be good and their codes of ethics strict.” Arthur et al. (2012 p.167) state that the “most fundamental principles of ethical research are informed consent and the protection of confidentiality”. Prior permission was gained from the gate-keeper, the Chair of the Strategic Board, before commencement of the research. A gatekeeper is one who

controls access and they may wish to use the research for their own purposes. As one of the aims of my research is to inform practice and the gatekeeper has a prominent role in the managing of the school-based teacher training provider, he had a vested interest in the outcomes of the study. Due to this vested interest, it was important to ensure that when the data was reported, all aspects were included. The purpose of the research was explained and the methods of data collection to be used were presented for approval. I also gained permission from the Open University's Human Research Ethics Committee. There needed to be informed consent from the participants involved in the research. Informed consent respects the rights of the participants and requires them to have full information about what the study involves including the purpose and what is expected of them. The right to withdraw or not to participate in any part of the study must be respected. I established a research ethics protocol with the use of an information sheet (Appendix 3 p. 209).

Before being interviewed, each participant had the research explained to them, was given the opportunity to ask any questions and to read through and to sign a consent form (Appendix 4 p. 210). The focus group participants had all been interviewed as part of the initial or main study and so had had the research explained to them and they had previously signed a consent form. I reconfirmed that pseudonyms would be used within the study. Before each interview took place, the purpose of the interviews and how they would be conducted, including how the responses would be recorded, were made clear to participants. Ethical considerations were explained, specifically confidentiality and anonymity, following BERA's (2011) Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research. I endeavoured to ensure that participants clearly understood what they were consenting to by asking them to describe to me their understanding of what my study was about when giving their

consent. By clearly explaining everything, there was hopefully less risk of the participants choosing to withdraw: they were reminded of their right to withdraw at any time before interviewing and before taking part in the focus group. It was important to develop a trust with them in relation to the research. In following BERA's guidelines I ensured that I was not involving people without their knowledge or consent, nor withholding information about the nature of the research or otherwise deceiving them (Robson 2011). These were all important points to ensure that they were fully informed when they gave their consent and that there was no deception. Those interviewed were also aware that their original application forms had been used to gain information about them in relation to pre-course experience, qualifications etc. and access to records in relation to their progress during the year. A key principle of confidentiality was followed by confirming that the information collected would only be used for research purposes. Also, using pseudonyms throughout the data collection ensured anonymity and some confidentiality although in a small institution, some participants may have been able to identify themselves in the final thesis, especially when the sample interviewed was also small and specific. The aim was to make it as anonymous as possible. Trowler (2011) recommends asking an independent reader to assess the study for 'traceability' and this was an area of good practice that I followed.

Before the completion of the questionnaire, the respondents needed to have assurances of confidentiality and anonymity. I explained the purpose of the research and that their responses would be non-traceable and also included a covering statement at the start of the questionnaire so that they could actually read through it themselves (Appendix 5 p. 211). The following chapter discusses the different data sources used in the research.

4.5. Data sources

4.5.1. Documents

Initially I began looking at the documentary evidence on pre-course experience, qualifications and school placements for male trainees who had withdrawn and for those who had completed since 2010. Documents can represent a good source of information for a qualitative study, providing a range of data for analysis and the advantage is that they are ready for analysis without the need for any transcribing which comes with observations and interviews. The other advantage is that they are stable evidence and can be reviewed if necessary. Documents may also be considered objective and authentic especially if they were not originally written for research purposes. In conjunction with the other forms of data collection, the documentary evidence is important for triangulation. There were two sets of documents used; the application forms for entry to the course and information about trainees' school placements and course outcomes from the provider's tracking records. By looking at the application forms and course paperwork I firstly wanted to identify whether there were any commonalities in age, pre-course experience, qualifications, interests and skills along with their school experiences whilst on the course. The literature review had identified that some of these areas could be important when considering the experiences of male trainees and so I wanted to explore these in relation to men in our SCITT. For those trainees who were interviewed, I was able to ask to use some of the information from their application forms in the research in relation to their age, degree and previous experience. At times, during the interviews, specific reference was made to them and so trainees were aware of how the information was being used. For those earlier trainees whose application forms were no longer available, I looked at the course paperwork. My

insider knowledge as Programme Manager allowed me to identify specific trainees from previous years, even though names were not included, and the paperwork was all anonymised. I analysed the data to see whether any links to retention and course outcomes could be identified over the past six years. It was possible to identify some tentative patterns which were then considered in the interviews. Table 1 in Appendix 9 (p. 217) provides information about the five male trainees who have withdrawn since 2010. Table 2 in Appendix 10 (p. 218) gives information about the male trainees who have successfully completed the course since 2010. All participants have been given pseudonyms and so are anonymised.

4.5.2. Interviews

I interviewed five men who were successful in completing the course and two men who withdrew. Yin (2014) identifies three types of case study interviews: prolonged, shorter and survey. My interviews cannot be classified as prolonged as they did not take place over an extended period of time of more than two hours; each one took less time than this. My interviews used semi-structured interview questions, rather than a more structured questionnaire as in a survey interview. Due to these reasons they can be classified as shorter case study interviews.

Interviewing male trainees to gain their perceptions and thoughts about the themes identified in the conceptual framework was chosen as being a suitable form of data collection to ensure their views were gathered. Interviews have both advantages and disadvantages. They provide information that is not available from documents. They allow participants to give detailed answers and questions can be asked specifically to elicit this. Semi-structured interviews in the initial study enabled me to probe for further information and elaboration and to ask for clarification if necessary, whilst remaining open to the trainees' responses as

discussed by Creswell (2012). A few minor amendments to the questions were made to the interview schedule after the initial study to ensure clarity and to endeavour to gain as much information as possible to inform the research questions (Appendix 6 p. 213). One of the disadvantages of one-to-one interviews is that they are time-consuming but the wealth of data that can be gained from a single interview ensures that it is a worthwhile method. Also, the subjectivity and bias from the interviewer must be considered. The interview should not reveal biases or values and the interviewer should not be judgemental (Cohen, Manion, Morrison 2011). Acknowledging the nature of the practitioner-researcher position, I needed to ensure that I did not bring any pre-conceptions or assumptions based upon my previous professional experience into the interviews. The purpose of the interviews in my study was to gain personalised information about how the trainees viewed the world of primary teaching and the communities they were part of and so qualitative, open-ended questions would help to elicit these views. In a semi-structured interview, one should also consider the prompts and the probes that might elicit clarification on areas or for elaboration on their responses. However, considering the need to prevent bias, Fowler (2009) suggests that the more the interviewer probes, it may mean that there is greater possibility of this affecting the interview so this was something I had to be aware of and to avoid a conversational nature to the interview.

In the initial study I took notes during the interviews but for the main study interviews, I recorded and then transcribed them to ensure I did not miss any comments. I also took notes at times to record any non-verbal communication such as body language, as interviews should be seen as a social encounter and not just a data collection exercise (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2011). Recording the interviews does give an accurate account of what was actually said and can be

replayed whereas with just taking notes, as I did in the initial study, there is the possibility of missing something and one is not able to hear it said again when analysing the data. Practical considerations such as where and when the interview would take place were also considered. It would not have been ideal if there were interruptions and within a primary school environment it is often difficult to find the physical space and time to conduct an interview. All interviewees were asked for the most suitable time for them to be interviewed, when there was less likelihood of being interrupted and the use of a private office in the SCITT building was obtained for those who were nearing the completing of the course. I chose to interview them in their professional context so for those men who had completed their training and were in teaching posts, I arranged to interview them in their own classrooms so that they felt comfortable within their own environment and could experience the interviews as convenient.

Those interviewed were part of two different cohorts, 2013-14 and 2014-15. Three of the successful men interviewed, were from the 2013-14 cohort, and were nearing the end of their NQT (Newly Qualified Teacher) year, so were in their first year of teaching. The interviews took place during the Summer Term of 2015. The other two interviewees, from the 2014-15 cohort, were in their final week of training, in July 2015, and so a range of experiences of the training programme and teaching itself were able to be included. I interviewed one of those who had withdrawn as part of the initial study. This interview took place at the SCITT centre, which in hindsight, may not have been the best place as he may have felt disillusioned but also under pressure to give the answers that he thought I wanted. This data has been included to gain a fuller picture of reasons for withdrawal. There was only one other male trainee who had withdrawn whilst the main research was

being undertaken. He was interviewed during Autumn Term 2014, after he had taken the decision to withdraw, away from the school and the training centre, in a location of his choosing, near to his home. Both trainees had 'exit' interviews to ensure that they were happy that they had made the right decision and had not decided to take a temporary deferral. Interviews of these trainees took place before the main data collection interviews of the successful trainees and the mentors had begun and so at that time I could not be sure as to which themes would become more relevant to my study. The interviews covered a range of questions (Appendix 6 p. 213) as this was probably going to be the only opportunity I had to discuss their experiences whilst training and their reasons for withdrawing; I did not want to find out at a later date that I had not covered a specific area which was emerging as an important theme. Corroborating interview data with information from other sources provides validity and by using multiple methods I was aiming for a collection of rich data to analyse.

4.5.3. Focus group

During an Open University Day School, a focus group was suggested to provide additional data without the possibility of my position as researcher and Programme Manager affecting the responses in the same way that an interview might. Focus groups are, at the broadest level, collective conversations or group interviews (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005). Yin (2014) identifies focus groups as the group counterpart of a single shorter interview when a small group of respondents is convened. One of the benefits of focus groups is that they can provide access to a number of interviewees in a short space of time and can allow one to collect quite a lot of data quickly (Burgess, Sieminski and Arthur 2006). A common problem with focus groups, which I also came up against, was organising a convenient time when all the participants were available to meet. They had all

completed their training in 2014 and were in their first year of teaching. They had all been interviewed as part of the study. The men all had teaching posts and as well as teaching full-time, they also ran a number of after school activities and so there were very few times in a school week when all were available. By negotiating with all of them, a convenient time (after school) and place (a classroom in a partnership school) was eventually arranged for the focus group discussion to take place. The focus group took place in July 2015. I was not present when the focus group met. My aim was to encourage them to be relaxed and open in their comments and to encourage discussions amongst peers to reveal their opinions and perceptions in an honest way. Focus groups bring together a number of people with someone acting as a facilitator in order to discuss particular issues. A facilitator is useful to guide the discussion and keep it on track to ensure that useful data emerges from it. As the focus of the discussion centred around men in feminised environments, the first decision was that the facilitator should also be male to help the dynamics and group interaction to generate the most forthcoming and honest data. An important consideration for me was who would be suitable as a facilitator. I asked one of the men who had been interviewed as part of the initial study to be the facilitator so that he would be able to contribute to the discussions as well as lead it. As he had been part of the initial study, he was already aware of my research and I discussed with him his facilitator role and how he would be able to guide the group's discussion. Questions or statements can be provided for discussion. The discussion in my study was guided through a number of statements (Appendix 7 p. 216). The session was recorded and then transcribed and analysed. My focus group, by necessity, did not involve large numbers; there were four participants, including the facilitator so the issue of being able to identify a large number of voices did not apply. The small

number of participants gave everyone the opportunity to contribute their views and was easy to manage whereas in a larger group there might be some members that dominate and make the group discussion harder to manage. Kamberelis and Dimitriadis (2005) identify that focus groups enable researchers to explore social discourse in ways that are not possible through individual interviews and can be used to “cultivate new kinds of interactional dynamics, and, thus, access to new kinds of information” (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005 p. 903)

4.5.4. Questionnaires

I sent questionnaires to ten female mentors of male trainees and nine questionnaires were returned. The purpose of the questionnaire in this study was to gain the perceptions of mentors who had worked with male trainees (Appendix 5 p. 211). It was important to be specific and clear with the questioning so that it could provide appropriate data. They are, in a sense, an interview without the presence of an interviewer (Campbell, McNamara and Gilroy 2004). I decided to use questionnaires rather than further interviews as some of the mentors were based in very busy schools, spread over quite a large area geographically so practically, interviews would be very difficult to arrange.

Questionnaires with less structured and more open-ended questions can be an attractive method of data collection for smaller scale research and in a site specific case study may be appropriate as they can capture the specificity of a particular situation (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2011). The semi-structured questionnaire can be said to be similar to the semi-structured interview because it allows those participating to answer the questions in their own terms as although there is a structure, some of the questions are open-ended.

When planning a questionnaire, there is a need to identify the areas that relate to the purpose of the research so in this study some of the questions covered the same areas as that of the interview schedule for the trainees: gender and the workplace, but there was also an additional slant with questions relating specifically to mentoring contributing to the framework (Appendix 5 p.211). There can be drawbacks with open-ended questions, in terms of coding and analysis. Therefore it was essential to ensure the responses related to the themes, so there was a direct link to the research questions (Creswell 2014). Having awareness about how the data would be analysed would help structure the contents of the questionnaire (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2011).

It was important to pilot the questionnaire so that it could then be refined if necessary. I had direct access to nine mentors who had worked with male trainees over the past two years. One other mentor no longer worked within our partnership. As it was a small sample, a less structured, more open and word-based questionnaire would be better in obtaining useful data (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2011). I hoped for comments from those that completed the questionnaires, “to catch the authenticity, richness, honesty and candour” which are the “hallmarks of qualitative data” (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2011 p. 393). So, although open-ended questions may enable those completing the questionnaire to explain and expand on their answers, it is also possible that irrelevant information may be given so it is important not to make them too open-ended. Answering too many open-ended questions may also be very time-consuming for the mentors and the time taken to complete the questionnaire is another point to consider. As there were only a small number of mentors who were eligible to participate, that is, they had mentored a

male trainee, I needed to ensure their participation so made the questionnaire as brief and manageable as possible whilst still gaining access to useful data.

I began the questionnaire with a few short questions to help motivate the respondent as they were easy to complete. The first questions referred to how long they had been teaching and whether they were a first time mentor (Appendix 5 p. 211). These were then followed by some closed questions which helped provide contextual information, such as whether they had volunteered for their role and whether they had been given sufficient time to complete their role well. More open ones then followed which allowed the respondents to develop their answers as they felt appropriate. The questions about adapting their strategies and the types of support given were examples of open questions. Questions should not show a bias towards any particular view. The questionnaire was administered at the end of the Summer Term 2015 and involved mentors who had mentored in both first and second placement schools. By giving it to them at this time, their mentoring role had been completed for the year so they were hopefully feeling relaxed, ready to be open with their answers. They were given the option of completing a hard copy of the questionnaire or returning it by email. For three of the mentors, I was in close proximity whilst they completed the questionnaire. This had both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages were that any queries could be answered by me, the researcher, and I could also ensure that all questions were answered as these could be checked. However, it should also be considered that having the researcher in close proximity might cause the respondents to feel uncomfortable or under pressure and perhaps not be so revealing in their answers. To help counteract this, although I was nearby, I moved to another room so was available for any questions but was not sitting alongside them, which could potentially put them under pressure to complete

the questionnaire. I also gave them the option of leaving the questionnaire in a neutral place rather than handing it back to me directly, although none of them actually did this. Those that completed a hard copy gave their completed questionnaire to me personally and three chose to email theirs to me.

Nine questionnaires out of ten were returned. Those returned were from mentors who were still working in schools in our partnership. The one that was not returned may have been because the mentor had moved school and was no longer working within the partnership area. They were completed anonymously and were all completed by female mentors who had mentored men. Their experience in teaching ranged from four years to over thirty-five years. All the mentors had attended mentor training and all but one of them had volunteered for their role or shown an interest in mentoring. Three had previously mentored for another initial teacher training provider. Three were at the beginning of their mentoring career and had only mentored males so were unable to make any comparisons. The rest had mentored both men and women and so were able to comment on any differences if appropriate. Two of the mentors who had mentored both men and women, had each previously mentored a male trainee who had withdrawn from the course. At the end of their completed questionnaires, both had consented to being contacted again for any additional information and so I conducted follow up semi-structured interviews with them both, specifically relating to the male trainees who had withdrawn and factors that may have influenced their decisions. Initially I only had data from female mentors through the questionnaires. Due to the lack of male teachers in primary schools, the majority of those who do mentor are female. As this research was concerned with men in the primary school, it was important to try and include perceptions of a male mentor and so I approached a male teacher who had previously

mentored both male and female trainees for the SCITT. He had not been part of the group of mentors who had completed the questionnaire as we had no male mentors in that year who had mentored men. As he had previously mentored a male trainee and was mentoring again for the SCITT programme in 2015-16, I took the opportunity to interview him about his experiences of mentoring men. The male trainee that he mentored had been successful at passing the course at a satisfactory level. The semi-structured interview questions were based on the original questionnaire to support the data analysis and the themes that arose. The findings from all the data analysis are presented by themes that emerged rather than by research method which corresponds with the discussion chapter. Some of the themes link strongly to those that emerged from the literature review whilst others less so. The following section explores data analysis before presenting the themes.

4.6. Data analysis

Analysis of the data is an integral part of the research process and it must be fit for purpose. I needed to be able to find a way of understanding my data and analysing it so that I was able to provide a response to my research questions. Data analysis is concerned with identifying patterns, themes, categories, consistencies and inconsistencies. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) discuss the importance of exercising caution and self-awareness when conducting qualitative data analysis to ensure that findings are about the data and not about the researcher. Reflexivity should therefore be part of the data analysis process. Through my research questions I hoped to find some insight into a problem and the analysis methods needed to also link back to the issues identified through the literature review. As the choice of research questions can indicate the method of analysis, using research questions could be said to be the most straightforward way of beginning to analyse data and a

major feature of qualitative research is that analysis often begins early on in the data collection process. The data analysis from my initial study helped to provide a rationale for the strategy used in the main research activity which was coding and categorising.

Thematic analysis is seen as a generic approach to data analysis (Fox 2004) and allows data sources to be analysed through themes. Themes may be defined as categories that provide an overall structure to the data. Braun and Clarke (2006) identify thematic analysis as a foundational method for qualitative analysis and feel that as it provides core skills that would be useful when conducting other forms of qualitative analysis, it should be the first method that researchers should learn. It is a flexible method for identifying and reporting patterns or themes within data because it can be applied across a range of theoretical approaches. A theme identifies something that is important and meaningful in relation to the research questions. Along with Braun and Clarke (2006), Vaismoradi et al. (2013) identify thematic analysis as distinct from content analysis although there are overlaps. Content analysis defines the process of summarising and reporting written data as it involves taking written data and analysing it, using both pre-existing categories and emergent themes to generate and test a theory. It includes a systematic set of procedures for the examination and verification of written data. It is possible that the researcher may know in advance what they are looking for in content analysis but it does also allow for other themes to emerge. My research did not set out to test a theory but to contribute to theory development by pointing the way for future research and if appropriate, to build new theories out of the data gathered. Content analysis was therefore relevant particularly because in this type of analysis the data were in a permanent form through written data and in my study this was the documentary

evidence, questionnaires and transcripts of interviews. As the data was in a permanent form it was possible to verify aspects through re-analysing; in some cases replication was also possible (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2011) such as data from the documents and responses from interview questions. The similarities between thematic analysis and content analysis, such as searching for themes across the data do not always provide clear boundaries between the two approaches and the issue of the different approaches can become even more complex when one considers that Ryan and Bernard (2000) believe that thematic coding is a process that takes place within other analytical methods such as grounded theory.

Grounded theory is a method of data analysis established by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and a more recent advocate of this specific form of analysis is Charmaz (2011 p. 360) who defines grounded theory as a method of qualitative inquiry in which data collection and analysis “reciprocally inform and shape each other through an emergent, iterative process”. Arthur et al. (2012) agree that it is a general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data. The data shapes the research process and it is systematically gathered and analysed. Grounded theory is more inductive than content analysis, so the theories tend to emerge from the data, rather than having the researcher pattern them. Grounded theory prompts the researcher to look at and interact with the data by going through different levels of data analysis in a comparative process of inquiry. In grounded theory there is an emphasis on theory construction which influences how the researcher interacts with the participants involved and the questions posed and so this inevitably involves reflexivity (Charmaz 2011). It enables the researcher to test ideas and check emerging concepts by conducting data collection and analysis simultaneously and by analysing actions and processes. There have been a number of criticisms of grounded

theory, as discussed by Thomas and James (2006) and Arthur et al. (2012). One of the concerns of Thomas and James (2006 p. 790) is that important points could be missed or dismissed through using grounded theory as it involves a rejection of simple understanding through, as they argue, “its hankering after order”. It should also be considered that in many instances, such as a case study, data analysis is not necessarily generating theory but is providing an opportunity to apply existing theory to a new setting or in a new context. My study did not encompass the grounded theory methodology as I did not conduct the data collection and analysis at the same time and I analysed themes rather than actions and processes. It is, however, possible to use grounded theory strategies whilst using a variety of data collection methods and so this was suitable for my study. I was able to use grounded theory coding strategies, such as sorting and summarising, as a more general method of analysing. Both grounded theory and content analysis proceed through a systematic series of analyses which includes coding and categorisation.

Coding is probably the most basic analytical tool and one of the most extensively used. One of the reasons for this may be because coding provides a mechanism for dealing with large quantities of raw data. Coding enables a researcher to identify similar information as well as to search and retrieve information. Qualitative data can generate a large amount of words and as the words provide a “very rich vein of data” (Burgess, Siemnicki and Arthur 2006, p. 82) it is important to have a good organising system and to be systematic and meticulous so that unstructured data are broken down into manageable chunks and sorted into what is useful for the research area being studied. A code is a name or a label that is given to a part of a text that contains an idea or information on a particular area or subject. The first codes used should be a close fit to the data and can use actual words so one

of my first codes was 'wary' and was used when any comments were made by or about male trainees feeling uncomfortable or wary when they were left alone with young children. These first codes can then be used to identify relevant themes. Some of the other initial codes included 'help', 'confidence', 'mates' and 'stereotype'. "Codes should enable the researcher to catch the complexity and comprehensiveness of the data," (Miles and Huberman 1994 p. 111). Single words, short phrases and codes can have limited power so it is important to carry the data analysis to the next stage which is developing categories. When creating categories, one is grouping concepts together that have similar characteristics under a more general heading. So, my initial codes such as 'wary', 'not left alone', 'girls PE' all came under the category 'Safeguarding'. Categories should be meaningful so that the words, phrases and sentences from the transcribed text and questionnaires can be placed within them in a relevant way so that conclusions can then be drawn. Moving from codes to categories builds in layers, or levels of analysis which allows the researcher to return to aspects of the data at different times during the research and by doing this it helped to strengthen my analytical framework.

My preliminary form of analysis, the first layer, involved listening to the interview tapes and then, once transcribed, going through the text highlighting specific words and phrases. When transcribing, each speaker had a pseudonym and I was able to record any hesitations or inflection in their voice. Hycner (1985) suggests that after transcribing, a researcher should listen to the entire tape to gain a sense of the whole meaning and to read the transcription a number of times in order to provide a context for any emerging themes. This I did with each of the interviews and the focus group. Using different coloured highlighter pens for different themes that were arising enabled me to identify those that repeatedly arose and also anything

that was emerging that was unexpected which could lead to new categories or themes emerging. It was important that I was consistent when applying codes and that no data was excluded to aid the retrieval and categorisation of the data. As Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011 p. 560) confirm, coding is a process which is “iterative and requires the researcher to go back and forth through the data on maybe several occasions to ensure consistency and coverage of codes and data.” I found that I did do this as I was continually returning to the transcribed interviews and focus group along with the questionnaires and then I would refer back to the admissions, retention and outcome records to confirm comments made about schools and numbers of male members of staff. This movement between the data is a normal part of qualitative data analysis (Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier 2013). It was important that I was prepared to revise categories if necessary and to look for any rare or unusual findings as well as commonalities. Although I did not have to revise any categories, I did develop them as necessary as a number of codes were included. There was the practical issue of organising the data, specifically the documents. Once the interviews and the focus group discussion had been transcribed, these were documents that needed to be indexed along with the other documentary data and the questionnaires. I did not use a computer-aided package but kept physical copies that were annotated as I went through them with thoughts and comments.

Document analysis is a systematic procedure that allows for data to be examined and interpreted and in my study it complements other data, that of the interviews, questionnaires and focus group. The documents provided background information and an insight into the context of the school placements, backgrounds and outcomes of trainees. Documentary analysis in my initial study identified some questions to be asked, for example, in terms of pre-course school and work

experience. There are both advantages and limitations to documentary analysis. Bowen (2009) summarises the advantages of document analysis as being an efficient method, ease of availability, the cost-effectiveness, coverage and stability and lack of reactivity. This last point is important when considering the reflexivity of the researcher as, although it is dependent on the type of documents, it is less likely to be an issue, as it is generally straight forward data analysis although the researcher does have to interpret the data. One of the limitations of using documents is that because they have been produced for another purpose, not for research purposes, they may not always provide sufficient detail. This is not an issue with the documents that I have analysed as data that has emerged from them has been factual and more quantitative than qualitative, for example, ages and degree classification of male trainees. Bowen (2009) identifies document analysis as combining elements of content analysis and thematic analysis whilst also being important in grounded theory research.

All qualitative data analysis involves “interplay” between the researcher and the data (Campbell et al. 2004 p. 125) as the researcher brings to it their own knowledge of life and of the literature, so it is very important to be aware of any personal biases and preconceptions that may affect the data collection or analysis. Being clear about the way I have analysed my data should hopefully help to eliminate some of the problems that arise with bias. My own attitudes, experiences and perceptions of the processes involved should be acknowledged. As the selection of the data to be included is to some extent in the researcher’s control, I needed to ensure that I was not over-selective or unrepresentative in the choice of data and the interpretation placed upon it. I also felt that it was important to keep the flavour of the original data and so I have reported exact phrases and sentences which I feel are

more illuminative and direct than any rephrasing that could have been included. Also in this way I wanted to draw out the story and bring the research to life (Bassey 1999). Being conscious of the values and beliefs of the researcher ensures that there is reflexivity and recognises that the construction of knowledge takes place in the world and is not apart from it and allows for the provision of an honest and ethical account. A degree of objectivity should also be maintained as one of the key measures of the validity of any research is the clarity and logic of the approach to the analysis of data (Hamilton and Corbett-Whittier 2013).

5. Findings and discussion

This chapter will detail findings from the data analysis and relate the analysis and discussion to the literature. The research questions will be addressed within each section with a final summary at the end.

5.1. Themes from the data

Through the initial coding and the development of categories, three broad thematic areas emerged: isolation and exclusion, gendered roles and mentoring support. Within these themes, a number of topics became evident and the data have been organised into these areas. Under the theme of isolation and exclusion the areas are; being a ‘novelty’ male, exclusion in the staffroom, the role of male peers and safeguarding. For the theme of gendered roles, the sections are sport, ICT, being a disciplinarian and role model, stereotypical tasks, professional identity and fast track to leadership. Mentoring support, the third thematic area, has sections relating to mentors’ and male trainees’ views. Other factors that emerged from the data are also discussed; these are family support, prior academic achievement and degree subjects, vocational background and pre-course school experience and expectations of the course.

Data collection dates are included in Appendix 8 (p. 216). One to one interviews were carried out with five men who had completed the course and with two men who had withdrawn. By organising a focus group discussion with four men who had gone on to gain QTS, I have tried to ensure that the perceptions of those actually involved in the research played an important part of the data collection. Unlike the interviews, where power dynamics may have influenced how the participants responded, the men may have been more empowered in the focus group.

Questionnaires from nine teachers, all female, who have recently mentored male trainees have allowed for their perceptions to be considered. The follow-up conversations with two of these mentors, who had previously mentored males who then withdrew from the course, provided further insight into the challenges that those particular men had encountered, which led them to withdraw. Finally, an interview with a male teacher who had previously mentored one male trainee, and three female trainees, all of whom had gained QTS, has been included. Findings from documents on age, degree, skills, pre-course school and work experience, along with completion and withdrawal data for the SCITT programme between 2010 and 2015 (RQ 1b) follow a discussion of the three thematic areas.

The three broad areas of isolation and exclusion, gendered roles and support and mentoring, responded to my research questions about experiences and perceptions of men on the course (RQs 1, 1a and RQ 3). RQ 2 and RQ 2a were concerned with the support that mentors provided and their perceptions in relation to the needs of the male trainees and whether this influenced the support given to them.

The thematic areas appear to problematise somewhat the community of practice theory for men in the SCITT context of my study. Social interaction and participation are key elements of a community of practice and the men in my study, as a minority, seemed to struggle to become full members. They were often more of a “peripheral member” (Paechter 2003 p. 72). When discussing localised communities of practice, that is, those communities which organise their practices in response to both local conditions as well as wider influences, Paechter (2003) comments how masculine and feminine practices are involved in the constant production and negotiation of what it is to be a man or a woman. As gender is not fixed but socially constructed and varies between situations this gives rise to a

“multiplicity of masculinities and femininities inhabited and enacted” (Paechter 2003 p. 69) by different people at the same time. Being a minority, and being assigned narrow gender roles, can impact on how men develop their professional identities as well as influencing the nature of support that they need and get.

The SCITT operates as a community of practice that is a concrete example, rather than a theoretical model, where the socialisation and interaction of those involved are important in enabling themselves to become accepted members of the community. Patton and Parker (2017) found that when researching professional development programmes in teacher education, engagement in a community of practice provided a foundation for collaboration and reduced isolation for the participants. As one of the themes that emerged for my analysis was isolation and exclusion, this seems particularly relevant to my study. My research data indicates what men have to do in order to become accepted into the community.

The SCITT is a living context where there is a creation of knowledge as the trainees, the newcomers to the community of practice, become acquainted with the practices, values and norms of this.

5.2. Theme 1: Isolation and exclusion (RQs 1, 1a)

5.2.1. Being a ‘novelty’ male

When male trainees enter a primary school, they are joining a community of practice where they are a minority. Being a male in an all or largely female workplace was an area for discussion through the interview questions. Jimmy said that as a male he was “the oddity”. Jack had two different school experiences,

“If you are the only male in the school, you are the novelty male; I think they enjoyed having someone different in the primary school....in the second school, I was with three men so was not the novelty, saw me as a professional, as a teacher.”

He also appreciated having the opportunity to observe another male teacher in his second placement and said that,

“In terms of settling in I found it to be an advantage, definitely, to have that camaraderie amongst friends, other males, you almost tend to gravitate towards them because they are male because it is dominated mostly by females, you do gravitate towards them”.

Subsequently, Jack gained employment as an NQT in a school with a number of other men on the staff. Within a few months the staffing situation in this school changed, in that two of his male colleagues gained teaching positions in other schools. As I was aware of this I was able to ask him an additional question in the interview about how he felt after his male colleagues had left.

“For a while I started to feel a bit isolated, there was another male teacher but (he taught)...another age group (from me) and it changed the dynamics completely.”

Jack mentioned that “dynamics” “changed” when the two men left but then he reported becoming friendly with some female teachers who, “are more, for want of a better word, a bit ‘maley’ in terms of humour, a bit blunter and funnier” but it is still a recently employed male PE teacher that is Jack’s “go to teacher”, when he wants company. In relation to the centre-based training, Jack originally thought he might feel isolated; he reported that the similarity in personalities of the men helped to facilitate the group of men working together. He did not expand on what these

similarities were. Jack did also say, however; *“that being said, I sat at a table full of girls, we (men) did not all sit together”*. Jack appeared to feel at ease sitting at a table full of girls and this may be because he saw it as a way of being able to fit into the community of practice.

Adam seemed apparently positive about his minority status,

“I think it is great...I found it very interesting to have different outlooks between male and female.”

Although he did not specifically say why, in the focus group Will commented that he excelled better *“in environments that are female rather than male.”*

These men seemed to be agreeing with ‘Andy’, a participant in the study by Thomas (2006 p. 142) who said he liked being the “token male”. None of the men in my study said that they found being a “scarce male” (Burn and Pratt-Adams 2015 p. 25) a problem. Although Harry had one other male teacher in one of his placements, in his interview he said that *“I did feel a little isolated at times”*.

The data show that being a minority and the “novelty male” can lead to feelings of isolation although two men commented that they were able to work well with women (RQs 1, 1a). It is difficult to say whether this minority status had a negative effect on those trainees that withdrew as neither of those interviewed mentioned this as a challenge of the course, however, they may have found this difficult to discuss with me because of the power relations and because I was female.

5.2.2. Social exclusion in the staffroom

One of the challenges that men in my study faced was a feeling of exclusion in the staffroom and they were not always comfortable with conversations that took place within it. Jack said,

“There are certain subjects that come up like childbirth and stuff like that, menstruation, when I try and switch off and zone out. Conversations about babies, lots of pregnancies” and

“they come into the staffroom and pass the baby around, that makes me feel uneasy and awkward.” (Interview transcript Appendix 11 p. 221)

This is similar to ‘Brian’, a participant in Thomas’s (2006) study who felt uncomfortable about hearing conversations about babies, which he felt were traditionally female topics. When the men in my study were asked if there was anything they did not do in the school as a male, they all said that there wasn’t, except for Will who commented that he did not go to baby showers. Open invitations for him to attend these were given in the staffroom but he clearly saw these as for females only and it was part of a social network that did not include him. Will did not actually say that he felt left out and it seemed to be his choice that he did not attend but perhaps because he felt that it would be inappropriate and he felt uncomfortable with this, in the same way that Jack was with conversations about female topics.

Jack also felt that, in a school where he was the only male, he did feel that in the staffroom, he became an object of derision,

“they talk about their husbands being lazy and so all males must be like that, that’s just natural joking and you kind of become the centre of that almost”.

A similar comment was made by a male primary school teacher in Cross and Bagilhole’s (2002 p. 218) study who said, “We’re the targets, especially if there’s only one of us in the room” and ‘James’ in Pollitt and Oldfield’s research (2017 p.34) said that “as a bloke you do get the tag of being a little bit lazier”. Jack was

young, unmarried, and isolated as the only male in his placement school. Female staff may have felt that it was acceptable for them to talk and joke about their husbands and men in general because they usually worked in an all-female environment and were more powerful than Jack who was a newcomer and a trainee. Within primary schools, women have never experienced being a minority; they may have been oblivious to how Jack may have been feeling and did not consider the effects of their behaviour. Jack obviously felt unhappy with the situation but did not feel that he was in a position to comment, challenge or change the conversations that took place.

It is possible that being a “*novelty male*” in a primary school could lead to feelings of exclusion and the men in my study were asked about whether they felt that having other men on the staff was an advantage. In his interview Harry said that it changed staffroom dynamics and although when asked what he meant by this, he could not say how specifically, he just said it was for the better. The focus group discussed the staffroom. Colin, the facilitator of the group, thought that it was important to have male support in the staffroom, not so much professionally with the “*planning, teaching, team-teaching*” and Jack endorsed this view saying that it helped with morale and “*you need to have a joke with another man*”. He also mentioned that interaction in a “*school full of women*” may depend upon the age of the women when Colin said that he felt that it was harder to have a joke with a room full of women. This could imply that it was more difficult if the women were older because as younger men they found it easier to joke with women who were nearer to their own age. As it was a remark made in the focus group, there was no further elaboration or opportunity to follow this up so it is not known whether there would be more interaction if the women were younger and of a more similar age to the men.

In the NUT report (2002 p.7) there was a similar comment made by one of the participants; “The staffroom tended to be full of older women who led the discussions.” The men in my study did not specifically say that they found staffrooms alienating, unlike a participant in Burn and Pratt-Adams (2015 p. 63) who commented that “Quite often male teachers will spend lunchtime in the four walls of the classroom” because they found the staffroom “alienating”. In Thomas’s (2006 p.140) study involving secondary male trainees in an English department, one of the men said that entering the English office was “like entering a coven.” The comments from men in my study about the primary staffroom, although they expressed concern and felt uncomfortable at times, although similar, were not as negative as this.

The staffroom is important to the community of practice in that it is the main place where teachers socialise and interact with other members of the community. Mistry and Sood (2014 p.8) quoted a female teacher who said that “men tend to get less involved in staffroom politics compared to women.” The men in my study were not specifically asked whether they became involved in staffroom discussions and they made no specific comments about staffroom politics but considering their stated need for male camaraderie, it is possible that they felt less confident than female teachers to engage in staffroom ‘banter’ and form supportive alliances. Their apparent social exclusion from the staffroom based on their minority status and gender are therefore likely to impact on their experiences and participation in school-based learning (RQs 1, 1a).

5.2.3. The role of male peers

During the focus group discussion Will commented that he worked well in environments in which there were more females. There were, however, times when he, along with all the others interviewed (except for Jimmy), found that having other

males in school helped in terms of providing a support network and having someone in a similar position to empathise with. Male colleagues as peers could be significant because the men have to negotiate entering communities of practice in their primary schools at the beginning of their training.

Jack commented that, although he felt that females are usually more empathetic,

“there were times when you needed to have a joke, a laugh with another male.....empathise with other male teachers.”

Jack was the trainee who mentioned about being a “*novelty male*” and he went on to add that he thought it did help working in a school where there were other males because it provided a support network. He also commented, “*not sure what I would feel if there were no males and if having a tough time...*” (*sic*). Will’s comment was “(It) *helps with the male teacher’s sanity being able to talk to other like-minded people*”.

A participant in Cross and Bagihole’s (2003 p. 218) study said that having the opportunity to talk to male peers “blows out the cobwebs and lets out steam”. Male students in Mulholland and Hansen’s (2003) study also appreciated working with other men as it meant that they could share their ideas. During the focus group discussion, Adam stated that there were certain times of the year, when specific topics were discussed,

“when we would speak together, that we wouldn’t have talked about to females. Certain things that would be easier to approach that conversation with.”

Adam had not found it difficult to integrate into either of his placement schools, even when there was only one other male and his thoughts on being a man in a female-dominated workplace were positive as he believes males bring a different aspect to

the team but he clearly also thought it was important to have a small group of other men as a support network.

Being in a minority, however, does not necessarily mean that men are drawn together or that they would form a community. Those interviewed were trained over two different years; the 2014-15 cohort had only two men and so, being isolated in the workplace, it might be expected that as the only men they would be drawn to one another for camaraderie but this did not seem to be the case. Both of these men stated that they did not bond with each other; they were two different personalities and did not spend time together at all, professionally or socially. Jimmy said, “*Never ever has been a group, more of two individuals on the course, surrounded by women*” (interview). In his interview, Harry agreed, “*We are both very, very different, we both have our own niche, I enjoy working in my own niche.*”

The comments from these two men, who were isolated and outnumbered, reflect the argument that men, even those of a similar background and social class will not necessarily share the same values (Foster and Newman 2003). As Programme Manager, I observed both these men in the training centre and although there were some similarities in their background in that they were married and had children, their pre-course experiences were vastly different and their personalities seemed very divergent; Jimmy came across as confident and outspoken whereas Harry was quiet and rarely contributed to training centre discussions unless prompted.

During the focus group, the men discussed how, at the beginning of the centre-based training they naturally gravitated towards each other as they had more in common, “*or should have*”, and spoke frequently. However, as time went on, Jack said they did “*spread out more*” and Will said, “*Yes, we put ourselves about a bit*”,

meaning that they mixed more with the rest of the cohort who were female. At the beginning of the course, as a minority, the men seemed to find support within the community of practice at the centre from each other but as time went on, they did not stay together as a group of men but began to work alongside female trainees. In the study by Thomas (2006), six out of the seven men stayed as a group for all their seminars and lectures but found that things changed when they went into their predominantly female English departments in a secondary school. The men had not thought that their entry into a primarily female department would be problematic which Thomas (2006 p. 140) attributes to “their privileged gender, race and class”, implying that as men, they had not previously needed to be aware of their gender. They were not aware of the gendered nature of society, unlike women who have always been aware (Simpson 2011). The men in Thomas’s (2006) study discovered that it was difficult to become part of the circle of female colleagues and some found it harder to settle because of the lack of contact with other men. Although not a primary school, the situation is very similar in that female teachers were in the majority and therefore Thomas’s finding is relevant to my study in terms of men having to negotiate their entry into a community of practice when they are a minority and experience feelings of isolation and exclusion.

Colin trained in a year when there were originally three men on the course and then one withdrew and in the focus group he said that it did tend to bring the two remaining men together but on more of a social rather than professional footing, “*I found myself talking more, again social, to the other guy.*” Adam liked the idea of having a “*sounding board*” (interview). These are similar remarks to those made by men in Carrington and McPhee’s (2008) study. In Szwed’s (2010) study 73% of the men referred to the value of peer support whereas only 16% of the women did. This

peer support may be more important and necessary to some men as they are the minority.

The comments made by the majority of men in my study demonstrate how they found it useful having a support network of other males in school. It helped them to feel less isolated; the men were all in a similar minority position and could empathise with each other. Being able to do this may have helped them to cope with any “knockbacks” (Foster and Newman 2005 p. 341). The voluntary male students group in Burn and Pratt-Adams’ (2015) study supported each other in negotiating challenges during their training year and although the men in my study did not set up a specific support group, the majority did appreciate support from other men.

Cushman’s (2012) study identified that teacher training can be challenging and lonely for male trainees, although the comments made by the majority of men in my study do not specifically mention that training or teaching could be lonely experiences. They did allude to loneliness through their comments in relation to feelings of isolation and the need for male camaraderie. Although Harry said he felt comfortable as a solitary male during centre-based training, he did feel that it was important to have other males in the school to provide variety as well as support so that there would not be a feeling of isolation, as he had experienced himself in one of his placement schools.

In my study, Jack commented that the “*atmosphere and conversations changed*” in school where there were males and that he had to adjust and find a way to fit in to his two placement schools. Jack said that one way he did this was by learning people’s behaviours and humours. After being the “*novelty male*” in his first school, he was pleased to be able to observe a male teacher in his second placement because, “*being male myself, helped me see and adopt some attributes*”, although he

did not expand on what these attributes were. The respondents in Knight and Moore's study (2012) indicated that beginning male teachers wanted to see more male colleagues and felt that this would also help with breaking down male stereotypes in the workplace.

In my study, having a male peer support network to help prevent feelings of isolation, seemed more significant than having supervising role models in schools, such as the headteacher. None of the men interviewed commented on the need for a male headteacher or senior member of staff as a role model. Although all the men who successfully completed the course had some kind of contact with at least one other man in their placements, as peers or supervisors, there were different outcomes. All but one of the five men who achieved an outstanding grade at the end of the course had placements in schools where there were male teachers; the one exception had placements in two schools with male headteachers. For those that achieved satisfactory grades at the end of the course, two out of three had male headteachers but no male peers; the third had both male teachers and a male headteacher.

The document analysis showed that out of the five men who withdrew in the initial and main studies, two had experience in a school where there were no other males, two had placements in schools where there were male teachers and one had had one of his placements in a school with a male headteacher. There is, however, no record of how much contact the trainees had with these male colleagues, or even whether they were working with the same age group of children and so it is not possible to draw any conclusions from this. This lack of information about the amount of contact applies to all the trainees and it is difficult to correlate between achievement grades and access to other male staff, although having school placements where there are other male members on the teaching staff appears to

support male trainees in being successful. 15 out of the 17 successful trainees had the opportunity to be alongside male teachers in at least one of their placement schools. Considering the comments from the men in interviews in relation to having male peers for a “*sounding board*”, it should be considered whether placing a male trainee in a school where there is a male headteacher helps with diminishing the feeling of isolation. Having a supervising male role model (the headteacher) for the male trainees themselves does not necessarily mean that they will achieve well, however, having male peers in the same situation does seem to make a difference for those trainees who successfully pass the course at an outstanding level.

This finding about having school placements where there are other male members on the teaching staff is important and responds to RQs 1, 1a as being able to socialise with other men, so they felt less isolated, seemed to be one of the reasons that enabled trainees to cope with a challenging year.

5.2.4. Safeguarding: men under scrutiny

Within the interviews and focus group, the men used the term ‘safeguarding’ rather than child protection. Safeguarding is a relatively new term and encompasses protecting children in a wider sense as in the Department of Education’s definition (DFE 2108). It is a broader term than the previously used one of child protection which is the activity that is undertaken to protect children. Safeguarding is the term that trainees were introduced to within their training and so they used this rather than that of child protection. Child protection is a term that has been used for many years and this was used in the literature review. Child protection is part of the larger definition of safeguarding, so is incorporated within it. As the men talked about safeguarding, this is the term that I have chosen to use.

The literature review had identified that the issue of safeguarding and physical contact with children was a significant barrier that male trainees had to overcome (Pollitt and Oldfield 2017). This was not mentioned by Mac or Peter, the two trainees who had withdrawn. However, in interviews with those men who had completed the course and the focus group, safeguarding was mentioned unprompted at some point by all of the participants.

One of the issues in relation to safeguarding that arose from the literature review was that the men thought that they were under greater scrutiny than women (Pollitt and Oldfield 2017, Foster and Newman 2005). In relation to centre-based training on safeguarding, during their interviews, Jack said that he felt under more pressure to listen during the training, *“I felt that I had to,”* and Will felt that men were the explicit subjects of teaching about safeguarding and that females were never characterised as being capable of putting children at risk; *“A lot of the safeguarding issues were aimed at us, issues that arose were about men.”*

The safeguarding training was for all trainees but these two men are stating that they felt that they were under more scrutiny to pay attention to it than their female peers. In the focus group Will also commented that things were slightly different for men during the safeguarding training as *“a lot of things were aimed at the bad man.”* This is similar to one of those interviewed by Sargent (2000 p. 418) who said that, although all teachers attend, *“the emphasis is always on us as men”*. This awareness is evident in my study. In Sargent’s (2000) study, during focus group discussions participants revealed some resentment in relation to the extra scrutiny. The men in my study did not actually voice any real resentment although their comments demonstrate that there were some feelings of injustice. When looking at the content of safeguarding training in our provision, although the male trainees

commented that they felt the training was aimed specifically at them, there were incidents within the session that were recounted by the tutor which involved women, as well as men, as potential dangers to children. So, although the men may have perceived that the training was aimed at them, this was not necessarily so. This seems to be an area in which men feel that, as a minority, they are being targeted even though there is no apparent discrimination against men in the content of the training. This may have been due to the way in which the media often portray men as discussed by Jack in his interview, *“the media....the way they portray abuse cases.....males at the front of abuse cases”*.

Although it had not deterred those interviewed, when asked why more men do not enter the profession as primary school teachers, in his interview Will said because of safeguarding and the *“stigma attached...men working with children.”* He felt that some men may want to enter the profession but are deterred from doing so as people might say that *“it is a bit funny working with children.”* Will’s comments are confirmed by the findings from Cushman (2005) who identified that male teachers have sometimes had their motives for pursuing a career in primary education questioned. Pollitt and Oldfield’s (2017) study found that this was a salient barrier that men had to overcome and confirmed that men had to demonstrate resilience.

Safeguarding also appeared to be a factor in some of the responses these men hear when they tell people they are a primary school teacher, specifically from other young men, *“some of them are a bit stereotypical, joking, oh, a man working with children”*(Will, interview) and this type of comment was also mentioned by Jack (focus group), *“I have got a lot of lad mates, they will say something related to safeguarding, they think it is hilarious.”* With Will’s *“stereotypical”* responses when he tells other men what his job is, he noted that other men, although joking,

have made suggestive comments about his work with children, specifically that Will has chosen to work with young children because it puts him in a position to molest children. Jack's, "*lad mates*" joke about child protection and find his work with young children is "*hilarious*", whereas Jack himself realises that safeguarding is a serious matter within the school. Colin, the focus group facilitator, said that he felt "*almost judged more*" when discussing safeguarding than when discussing the curriculum with other members of staff and had to be more careful "*with a bunch of women.*"

Safeguarding issues were also mentioned by participants in relation to things that they would not do as a male in the primary school,

"more careful when it comes to when the children are getting changed for PE and swimming, females just go in and tell them, I open the door with my back on it Having to go and get someone else in the classroom, that's the stand out one."

(Will, interview)

Will is saying that the main thing he would not do as a man is to be left alone in the classroom when the children change for PE and would always want another adult present. Will was presumably feeling uncomfortable at being left alone with children in his class whilst they were getting changed because it could put him in an awkward position if a child asked him to help them to get changed and in the worst case scenario, put him at risk of allegations of child molesting and being a paedophile.

In his interview, Harry said that, as a man, he did not take girls to get changed or coach girls at sports although he did help out with the boys' football and said there was a "*major factor... covering yourself, more as a male*".

This theme also arose in Jack's interview when asked if there was anything he did not do as a male; "*Coaching girls' sports, they were a bit funny with*". The "*they*" he refers to that were being "*a bit funny with*", are his colleagues within the primary school. Jack also talked about always having the door open and

"as a male teacher you have to double check yourself and be a bit more protected. Subconsciously, either because of media portrayal or past events."

He also felt that it was a

"conversation I had to have with the PE guy when he came in, be very cautious, especially with the girls getting changed, be extra cautious."

All these comments and the precautions the men in my study took to ensure they were above reproach are similar to those of participants in Pollitt and Oldfield (2017) who regarded these types of safety precautions as a protective factor and helped to maintain their resilience in challenging circumstances.

For Jack, the issue of safeguarding arose with two different groups of people, his "*lad mates*" and his work colleagues, and although it did not seem to affect him in terms of successfully completing the course, other male trainees might not be so resilient. Other men may decide that they would not be able to overcome this type of reaction or find that they are unable to cope with suggestive comments, even if only made as a joke. This could therefore have an effect on retention. These 'hidden' factors such as suggestive comments or jokes from their friends and colleagues may put retention at risk because these types of jokes and comments, although justified as harmless, could actually effect men in a negative way and influence them in their decisions as to whether to continue or withdraw from the course. The experiences that men in my study had demonstrate that men need to have the resilience to be able

to ignore or overcome these types of comments. In my study, Jack was able to ignore the “*silly taunts*” from his friends. Jones (2003a) stated that trainees have to learn how to engage in a series of sanctioned practices and have to manage risks. Out of 36 male teacher trainees in the research by Jones (2003a), only six said touching children was not an issue and four of those said that they would keep children at a safe distance, so the majority of respondents did feel that safeguarding was a concern for them. My finding on safeguarding is different to those of Szwed (2010), whose respondents gave little attention to child protection and Skelton (2009 p.48) where male student teachers did not have “concerns about having to work in situations that might lead to allegations of child sexual abuse” and was not a reason for withdrawing from primary teacher education courses.

However, in earlier research by Skelton’s (2007 p. 685) student teachers agreed that being a male teacher was perceived as being a “risky business” where physical and emotional contact was concerned. The men in my study were very careful not to provide an opportunity where their actions could be misinterpreted or where there was the possibility of misunderstandings. They tried to avoid any situations where physical contact with children might happen. Sargent’s (2000) findings also reflect my study. He found that the majority of male teachers in his study spoke of their reluctance to be physically in contact with children in school because the action might be misconstrued. Men in these contexts are operating under a “burden of constant scrutiny” (Sargent 2000 p. 414). Considering Sargent’s study was 18 years ago, the issue does not seem to have changed, which implies that the perceptions of men working with young children in primary classrooms in relation to safeguarding have not altered despite the increased checks that all those who work with children have to undergo.

The scrutiny of male trainees in relation to safeguarding seems to contribute to men adopting distancing behaviours that could be called ‘safe’ around children and Sargent (2000 p. 429) asks whether this is a self-fulfilling prophecy as men retreat into patterns of behaviour that are “distinctly stereotypically masculine and clearly contradictory to our perception of motherly (teacher) behaviour”. Apart from adopting distancing behaviours, the men in my study did not comment on other types of ‘safe behaviour’ but Jimmy’s immediate thought if “*a child puts their arms around me*” was who else might be observing this, demonstrates a need to be aware of these. ‘Terry’, the student teacher in Smedley’s (2007) study insisted on making physical contact with children, albeit carefully. Smedley (2007 p. 381) identifies this as ‘Terry’s’ way of coming to understand himself as a teacher in the face of diametrically opposed discourses of masculinity that emphasise the “caring, sensitive” man and the “perverted, predatory” man. ‘Terry’ can be seen to be reacting to Sargent’s (2000 p. 415) observation that the reluctance to have any physical contact “does not provide the kind of close attention or emotional support” that children need and it can give the impression that men are not nurturing.

The findings show that men in my study felt under more scrutiny than their female colleagues in relation to safeguarding. They were aware that their behaviour could arouse suspicions and they took actions to distance themselves from contact with the children in the classroom and around the school. Some men had to overcome or ignore derogatory comments from their friends as a man entering primary education (RQ 1, 1a).

5.3. Theme 2: Gendered roles (RQs 1, 1a)

My initial study identified two skills sets that may have enabled four of the male trainees to achieve well and are aligned to gender stereotypes: confidence in

using ICT and their sporting abilities. The documentary analysis for the main study confirmed that the majority of those who had completed the course with good or outstanding outcomes had sporting qualifications or skills (12 out of 17) and eight of the 17 had ICT skills. Only one out of the five who withdrew had a sporting skill and two out of the five had an interest in ICT. Of those that withdrew, Terry was the only man of those who withdrew who had both skills sets. Only one of those who completed and achieved a good or outstanding grade (Will) did not have either of these identified through his degree or hobbies although it became clear that he did have interest in both these areas. These two skills sets were mentioned in the literature review and correspond to RQs 1 and 1a concerning men's experiences and participation in school-based learning. I explored these themes further both in the interviews and the focus group. The themes that emerged from the interviews and the focus group discussion appeared to further confirm these initial findings in that ICT and PE are two subject areas where men are frequently asked to support other staff.

5.3.1. Sport

Not all those interviewed or in the focus group had a background or skills in sport but the ability to lead or contribute to PE within the school seemed important, and was sometimes assumed, especially where female staff were less confident in this area. During the focus group discussion, Jack said that in his main placement, the women said,

“Oh you are good at PE because you are male”, “they assume you are going to be good at PE.”

Colin also agreed that *“it was assumed”* that he would be involved in sport and he thought that PE was one of the subjects that men are *“shoe-horned”* into

(Appendix 12 p 232.). None of the men commented that they were unhappy about it being assumed that they would become involved in the teaching of PE. The way that it was assumed that they would be involved supports the suggestion by Burn and Pratt-Adams (2015) that the discourse of male sportsmanship is continuing to reinforce gender barriers, maintaining gender differentiation, with these stereotypes and expectations and for some men in their study, there was an expectation that they would be better at teaching sports than women teachers. For 'Dan', one of the men in Cushman's (2010) study, there was an assumption that men would take part in sports such as rugby and soccer which again confirms this view. It also relates to Hjalmarsson and Löfdahl's (2014 p. 289) "gender borders" where men think that they would be questioned if they did not fulfil the expectations of others in relation to being a male teacher.

Jimmy, when asked in the interview if sports skills helped to contribute to his success on the programme and his subsequent teaching job, said that such skills were not necessary but he also mentioned that the school where he obtained his first teaching post, asked him to take on the football coaching as soon as he started in September. Jimmy's comment was that,

"I think people have a gender bias in-built" in relation to sport (and also ICT).

One of those interviewed did state that sports skills were clearly an asset. In his main placement,

"because I was male, they (the staff) were looking for me to do PE, especially in the school where the female teachers were not confident at teaching it." (Jack, interview)

Will did not feel that having PE as a skill was particularly necessary and one reason for this could have been because, in one of his placement schools, all the PE taught was female-led. He also did not have any specific sporting skills. However, as Programme Manager I was aware that he did enjoy teaching PE and supporting after school sports clubs. It should be considered that being able to take on a gendered role, such as that of sport, may help men to become accepted into the community of practice of the primary school as they enter as a newcomer. The sporting aspect may also be about demonstrating their masculinity in a female environment. Through the SCITT route men enter the primary school environment very quickly and these assumptions could affect how the men interact within the community in which they have just entered.

As Programme Manager I am on the interview panel for candidates applying for a place on the course. As part of the interview process, trainees have to give a presentation on an interest or hobby that they feel will benefit their teaching career. A large number of men choose to present on sport and they highlight that, as many sports involve being part of a team, the skill of working together as part of a team and being positive about setbacks that may occur will support them in their teaching career. This resilience to deal with any setbacks and presumably being in fairly good physical health are also aspects to include when considering how having sporting skills may have an influence on whether men complete an ITT course. Neither Peter nor Mac, the two trainees interviewed who had withdrawn, had any sporting skills or interests so this may have influenced how they became accepted into the school community. From the data, four out of the five who withdrew did not have any sporting skills.

Sargent (2000) found that parents expected men who taught boys to have an interest in athletics. Although the perceptions of parents were not considered in my study, this may be another positive for those men who do have sporting skills in that the parents of children would be supportive and help men to feel that they belonged in the school community. The experiences and the participation that men had in relation to sport and gendered roles will be considered further at the end of this chapter (RQs 2, 2a).

5.3.2. ICT

Findings from my data analysis identified that ICT was also a skill that appeared to be an advantage and participants reported that, in a similar way to sport, there was a certain 'stereotype' that men are good at ICT which helps to give them a defined role in the school.

In his application, Will was not identified as having any specific ICT skills but he did feel that ICT was a skill that was an advantage to have, as it *"helped me with people, because I can be helpful to other people having a problem"* (interview). During the focus group discussion this was confirmed by his comment, *"They will come to you as a male, not necessarily because you are good at computers."* This supports Jimmy's comment in the interview, *"Standing joke at the (training) centre, Jimmy come and sort this stuff."*

"Stuff" was referring to issues that arose with the computers or interactive white board in the training classroom. In relation to a skill that may be advantageous, Adam said,

"Yes, ICT a great deal, was recognised by mentors and gave me a purpose...mentors were turning to me for advice" (interview).

This could be seen to relate to becoming accepted within the female-dominated primary school environment with the men performing an expected masculinity to fit in with the situation in which they found themselves (Paechter 2003).

In his interview Harry said that he felt that it was an advantage and they “*assume you must be good at ICT*” but was not that clear as to whether it was because he was a male or whether it was because they quickly got to know him and his skills set. It must be remembered that his degree was ICT based and the school would have had this information before he began his placement. The men in Hjalmarsson and Löfdahl’s (2014) study thought that they would be questioned if they did not fulfil other people’s expectations of them as male teachers and ICT skills seemed to be included in the expectations of the male trainees in my study, along with sport. Skelton (2009) considered the research of Smedley and Pepperell (2000) and Mulholland and Hansen (2003) which found that some men became irritated or annoyed at having “appropriate male traits” imposed upon them (Skelton 2009 p. 43). This is similar to the men in Mills et al.’s (2004) study. The men in my research did not seem irritated or annoyed and these skills helped them to participate. It was agreed that having good ICT skills could help in becoming organised with the paperwork and as workload was identified as one of the main challenges the trainees had to deal with whilst on the course, this could be seen as an advantage. It would however, be an advantage whether male or female.

Mac and Peter, the two trainees that withdrew, did have an interest in ICT through their music and their degrees, Music Production and Music Technology. The content of these degrees, however, may have been too specialised to have a positive impact in helping to establish themselves as a newcomer into the community of practice of the primary school.

Assumptions by members of staff about ICT (and sport) and the role that men play in these, could affect how the men interact within the community which they have just entered. The men in my study seemed to be accepting of these particular gendered roles and in some cases said they were pleased to be appreciated for specific skills as they were happy to take on the role of the football coach and to support with ICT and their comments did not demonstrate resentment. This may have been because they did not want to contradict the gender assumptions that are associated with demonstrating specific masculinities or, in my role as a female researcher, they did not want to admit to me that they were unhappy with these assumptions.

Stereotypical expectations in relation to ICT still seemed to be widespread in primary schools (RQs 2, 2a), although having these specific skills could benefit the men and be a positive factor in allowing them to participate more fully in school-based learning. This will be discussed further in the concluding section of this chapter.

5.3.3. Being a disciplinarian and role model

Dealing with behaviour management was another area in which there were stereotypical expectations. In his interview Jack commented that “*children, if messing around are sent to me*” which reflects Skelton’s (2009 p. 682) finding that there were “stereotypical masculine conventions” for male teachers in relation to dealing with behaviour issues, especially in relation to boys misbehaving. Haase (2010), Cushman (2010) and Mistry and Sood (2013) also identified this to be the case. Jack was being constructed as the representative of male power and authority (Burn and Pratt-Adams 2015), reaffirming traditional hegemonic masculinity, even though he was very young and had only just completed his training. It was not as if

he were an older more experienced teacher. Jack did not feel that the behaviour management strategies that he used were different from female teachers but he did mention his use of voice,

“I also have the luxury of being able to project my voice further potentially.”

“I use my voice a lot....it’s clear and strong. I can go up and down, the children really respond to that.”

This was a “*real skill*” that Jack felt he had developed since the beginning of the course and clearly helped him with behaviour and classroom management. His comment corresponds to one made by a male primary school teacher in Simpson (2011) about a male’s voice being deeper and being able to be used to convey power and authority and a male primary teacher in Cross and Bagihole (2002 p. 218) also remarked on differences between men and women, “differences in discipline-different use of the voice.”

Jack also commented that he felt that his gender was valuable when it came to class control; *“I think the children show you more respect because of being male as it’s rarer.”* Although being a male in a primary school is “*rarer*”, this may not be the only reason why children may show men more respect; it may be because in general, men may be more respected than women because of the traditional roles they have had in the past, those of being the head of the family and the breadwinner or because men may be seen as more authoritative. Simpson (2011) states that there is a dominant discourse within society in relation to the construction of leadership as masculine and Williams (1995) comments that men are believed to possess qualities that are associated with leadership and they perform masculinity in very traditional ways; being a disciplinarian may be one of these ways.

This focus on being a disciplinarian was not mentioned by other men who were successful in completing the course, nor did they say that it was seen as a challenge, so perhaps these other men were not being positioned in the same way. Also, experiences in diverse schools with different children and behaviour policies may have influenced this. Behaviour management, however, was one of the main reasons given by Mac for his withdrawal; he found that children did not respond to him and he could not “*control*” them. He withdrew in his first term of training so if he had continued, his classroom management may have improved but Mac felt that given his placement was in a small Church of England village school, where there were no apparently significant discipline problems, if he could not manage behaviour there he would not be able to do it anywhere.

In his interview Mac mentioned behaviour management a number of times, stating that children did not respond to his requests. He said that he felt good behaviour management strategies were vital for success in the classroom. His reason for withdrawal links to Thornton and Bricheno’s (2008) study that pupils’ behaviour was one of the most prominent reasons for men leaving the profession in 2005. There is also the possible additional pressure from others around that, as men they are expected to be a disciplinarian, as written about by Haase (2010) and Sargent (2000.) As Mac seemed unable to use effective discipline to construct his masculinity in the classroom, as discussed by Roulston and Mills (2000) and Francis and Skelton (2001), perhaps Mac could see no other option than to withdraw. Peter did not say that behaviour management was a reason for withdrawal but this does not mean that it did not have an influence on his decision. If Peter was finding this aspect of teaching difficult, he may not have wanted to admit this to me as he may have thought that it would undermine his masculinity.

The interview and questionnaire data showed that the men in my study are expected to be role models for children, specifically boys. All those interviewed agreed that it was important to have male teachers in the primary school. Many of our placement schools are based in an area of high unemployment and social deprivation (DCLG 2015) where many have very low career aspirations. This confirms the views of male trainees themselves as the majority of men interviewed mentioned the need for a positive role model but in terms of being one for the children themselves, not for other men, because many children did not have a “*paternal role model at home*”, (Jimmy, interview) and “*lots of children from families that are broken now do not have that role model*” (Jack, interview). He also talked about having lots of comments from people such as, “*Oh, you are a role model for that child, if they haven’t got a father, you’re that role model.*” This expectation of having to be a role model is confirmed by a participant in Pollitt and Oldfield (2017 p. 35), “you’ve got a lot of kids that...may not have a father...you are trying to be a role model”.

There is clearly some pressure on the men to be appropriate role models for the children. The men interviewed in my study were aware of the expectations that they should be a good role model. However, their view of being a role model in school seems quite limiting, that of being a positive role model for children because many did not have one at home. Brownhill (2014) identifies the ambiguity which surrounds male role models as teachers in schools and discusses how this ambiguity can cause problems when trying to establish an understanding of the characteristics and qualities required. Sargent (2000 p. 418) comments that “there is not a single image of the male role model but several, and these often conflict with one another”. The men in my study were quite specific as to how they saw themselves, as a

paternal role model. Being a paternal role model is not part of the job as a teacher, however, the views of the men in my study do resonate with previous research. This is similar to 'Andy' in Roulston and Mills (2000) study who constructs himself as an ideal role model so that boys are able to identify with him. Sumsion (2000) also found that some men welcomed the opportunity to provide pupils with a father figure. The NUT report (2002) found that not all men welcomed this opportunity and some male teachers did not like the perception that they should be role models and did not want this added pressure. The men in my study did not agree with this.

In Cushman (2012 p. 786), 'Ronnie' mentioned the need to provide one boy with a more positive role model, "not one that promoted violence." Comments suggest that these reflect the argument made by Sargent (2000) that there can be more than one single image of a role model; likewise Brownhill (2015) suggests that definitions of role models are shaped by context and situation. Female teachers interviewed by Jones (2006 p. 79) agreed that there was a need for male role models for boys and that the men should be "strongly heterosexual". They wanted a "macho man" but one who would also have the attributes of sensitivity and gentleness.

Cushman (2008) found that school principals in New Zealand did not see reasons for having stronger male presence in the classroom for improved academic outcomes or behaviour management but for the need to provide children with role models that largely reflect dominant masculinities. The men in my study did not necessarily reflect dominant masculinities but there were those who were 'sporty' and, although young, Jack did have children sent to him in relation to behaviour issues. There are clearly pressures on men to be a role model and although those involved in my study thought that being a good role model for young children was important, it was based on a model of men either being absent from children's lives

at home or not being good fathers. These gendered expectations in relation to behaviour management and being a role model respond to RQs 1, 1a.

5.3.4. Stereotypical tasks

Findings from my study identified that some of the men were asked to do tasks that in his interview Jimmy called “*very stereotypical but reality based*”. He is referring to being asked to do things such as open coffee jars, move heavy objects and reach things from high shelves. Jimmy seemed positive about this as he remarked, “*It is nice that you are the only one. You are asked to do things.*” Jack also said that, as a male, female staff expected him “*to do heavy lifting.*” This is similar to the study by Hjalmarsson and Löfdahl (2014) in which Ralf commented how women teachers ask men for assistance when hanging up pictures or carrying benches.

By “*reality based*”, Jimmy may be commenting that this is the real world, while although it seems very stereotypical, this is what actually happens. If there were originally no male members of staff, the female staff would have had to do these things for themselves but when male trainees arrived, they were then asked to do these tasks. The women may have considered it was easier for the men as they were perceived as being taller, stronger than themselves, reinforcing the stereotypical view of heterosexual “*macho*” (Jones 2006 p. 79) man or it could be that women expect that this is just what men do or that they want to do. The men, and women, in my study are upholding the “*norms*” (Burn and Pratt-Adams 2015 p. 40) rather than challenging them: Jimmy and Jack seemed to be accepting of these types of tasks.

Although they seemed to be accepting of these stereotypical tasks, Jimmy and Jack may have felt that they could not say otherwise to me, as a woman and their Programme Manager. As a minority, the men in my study did not seem to

wish to undermine gender stereotypical norms and this may have helped them to become part of the school community more quickly than if they had resisted. By completing tasks given to them, they may have felt that they retained their masculinity, in a similar way to women working in male-dominated contexts, such as the Marines and prison guards, who emphasised the positive elements of being a woman, as discussed in Williams (1989) and Britton (2003). The men in my study did not comment that they felt “institutionally powerless in a female group” (Burn and Pratt-Adams 2015 p.37) and they did not specifically mention power. The comments that the men in my study made were about environments where there were a number of women and about the outlooks of these women, such as having stereotypical views. In relation to these environments, Haywood and Mac an Ghail (2013) discuss power relations and schools as central in reproducing gendered social relations of the wider society. The SCITT, and primary schools, in terms of power, do not reflect aspects of wider society because, in primary teaching, women are usually in the majority and so could be said to generally be in control. In most societies around the world there is still inequality between men and women, women only hold a minority of decision-making positions in public and private institutions (Simpson 2011). Men enter the SCITT programme coming from a society with opposite power relations. With female mentors working with male trainees, these reverse gender power relations may be a challenge for some men as they find themselves in a situation which is entirely new to them. The stereotypical views and expectations that male trainees encountered could be said to reflect some aspects of wider society, such as being assigned narrow gender roles. This acceptance, however, does not work towards fostering an environment that rejects preconceptions

of masculinity or help to support the social or cultural transformations in primary schools that Haywood and Mac an Ghaill (2013) discuss.

The finding that there still seems to be gendered roles and stereotypical assumptions (RQs 1, 1a) embedded in primary schools and how men have to deal with these and power relations will be discussed further in the final section of this chapter.

5.3.5. Professional identity: becoming a teacher

Considering the evidence of gender stereotyping that men seem to experience in primary schools, the development of teacher identity for them within a female-dominated workplace could be complex and challenging. Trainees enter the teaching profession with a personal identity and are then expected to assume other identities, including those of a teacher and a learner. The teacher training year is seen as the first step for trainees in constructing their professional identities (Izadinia 2013, Yuan, 2016 and Lee and Schallert 2016). The concept of identity is an important component of Wenger's (1998) community of practice and he makes a clear link between the personal and professional self of a teacher. Knight and Moore (2012 p .69) identify mutual engagement within the community to enhance interaction as being in a "community of practice may assist beginning male teachers to form their identity." Their identities would only be tentative as they first enter the community, which then has an impact on identity development. Theories of identity focus on the social formation of the person and, in a SCITT, men are entering into a new community of practice where they have to establish a professional identity as a teacher which may not concur with their own personal identity which would have been created through their pre-course life experiences. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) reaffirm how complex the concept of identity is with different aspects to

understand and, for men, one of these aspects may be linked to gender stereotype assumptions that still seem to be prevalent in primary schools.

The inherent personal characteristics that individuals have may influence the development of their professional identity (Pillen et al.2013). The men in my study said that having the right attitude and specific personal qualities could help men to achieve in the training. Comments made in interviews were,

“that they wanted to succeed, and had no doubts that they would”, (Adam)

“being bloody-minded”, *“like a dog with a bone”*, (Jimmy)

“willing to make sacrifices”, (Jack)

“determination to reach the end point” (Will).

These phrases confirm that the men were all determined to complete the course whatever happened so being resilient and adaptable, would help them to succeed.

Jack thought you needed to have the attributes of enthusiasm, persistence and adaptability. Will believed that men had to be open-minded and said, *“I don’t think men are particularly good at being open-minded.”* When discussing qualities and attributes, Adam said that men should be open and accessible and

“as a male it can be very easy to be perceived as unapproachable” and *“generally females may come across as having a more caring nature.”*

He thought that it was important to be seen as approachable rather than assertive and did not identify any tensions between these two qualities. Being approachable may help a male trainee become more accepted into the community of practice which is made up of females. Women may be more willing to accept a man into the

community if he was approachable. However, if one considers how difficult the men found it to be accepted into the staffroom, where the data indicate that women dominated the conversations, made fun of men and were the ones in power, being approachable may not be the most important quality for men to have. Good communication skills would seem to be central as male trainees have to negotiate and work alongside a range of different people in order to become an accepted member of the community of practice; they also have to communicate with women who are in a more powerful position than the men themselves and this might be a position in which the men have never found themselves before. For mature men, especially if coming from previous careers where men have been in dominant positions, this may be a challenge for them.

Skelton (2012) identified tensions between qualities and characteristics required of a primary school teacher such as having empathy, patience and good communication skills as being at odds with stereotypical constructions of masculinity such as competitiveness and assertiveness. These tensions could be connected to role strain as found by Simpson (2005) as men in primary teaching try to maintain their masculine identities alongside meeting the demands of the job which could be seen as more feminine, such as caring. In his interview Will said that because of working with children, *“you have to do away with your kind of masculinity”* which shows that he is aware that he may not be able to maintain elements of his masculinity as they were not qualities that were required in a primary school teacher. This could possibly lead to tensions creating challenges for men trying to establish a professional identity. Sim (2006) found that establishing a supportive community of practice for pre-service teachers could be beneficial in enabling tensions to be examined and developing the participants’ sense of professional identity. Pillen et al (2013) derived

13 categories of professional identity tension for beginning teachers which varied across different points in time and coping strategies depended on individuals. Smedley and Pepperell (2000) also identify that there may be tensions for male trainee teachers in relation to stereotypical assumptions about masculinity and care. Will stated that when dealing with a crying child he adopted more of a female type of behaviour which “*some people may call camp*”. Will is not retreating into a pattern of masculine behaviour described by Sargent (2000), he is showing care, even though he acknowledges himself that it may be seen as not a masculine trait. By demonstrating a caring attitude when a child is upset, Will is showing that caring for children should be neither inherently masculine nor feminine and he is confident in his own identity to show this trait even though there may be others who have “limited and restricted views on what is appropriate and inappropriate for their behaviours as gendered individuals” (Brownhill et al. 2016 p. 5). Will could also be said to be presenting a “holistic approach” (Cushman 2005b p. 233), demonstrating interpersonal skills such as empathy and caring. Adam also thought it was important to demonstrate a caring nature and in his interview he commented that “*men ought to give that impression straight away*”. Adam did not say specifically how he would give that impression or whether it might be challenging but he seemed to be in agreement with Will about showing a caring attitude and presumably felt it was important to show this early on because it is not always an attribute that is associated with men.

Adam and Will, although aware of different qualities and types of behaviour as teachers, did not say that they found this difficult or a problem to deal with. The men interviewed in my study did not specifically identify any of these qualities and characteristics mentioned by Skelton (2012) as being required to become a primary

school teacher although this may not mean that they did not think they were important. They were aware of the need for having a range of qualities including being open-minded and adaptable. Being determined, persistent and enthusiastic were also mentioned.

‘Jamie’, a student in Braun’s (2011) study, sums up the complexity of developing a male teacher identity: “The PGCE year is...the most difficult, most taxing thing... involves so many different faculties you know: academically, organisationally, emotionally, physically” (Braun 2011 p. 275). Lamote and Engels (2010) concluded that student teachers’ professional identities are shaped by both their learning and teaching experiences, demonstrating how a complex situation can arise and this is without considering the possible conflict between professional and personal identities. By adopting different behaviours, such as caring, Will and Adam are clearly confident in their own masculinities and identities to be able to adopt behaviours which may cause comments from those around him. This is in comparison to ‘Andy’ in Thomas (2006) who was conscious of appearing overtly more masculine and creating a heterosexual masculinity through his male dominated humour. Developing a professional identity may be considered an additional pressure on male trainees as they may experience tension in reconciling their masculine identities with “the widely held view that primary teaching is women’s work” (Haase 2010 p.174) and responds to RQ 1a.

5.3.6. Fast track to leadership

The men in my study acknowledged that there was an advantage to being a male in primary teaching. They recognised that their minority status may help them in their career progression. By taking on a senior management role they would be able to reaffirm a hegemonic masculinity, gaining power and a more dominant

position and at this time they may also become the family breadwinner (Connell 2005). In his interview, Jimmy reported that “*being a male is more of an advantage than not*”.

Jimmy liked being the only man. In terms of whether being a man helped them in gaining employment, Jack commented in the focus group discussion that “*even my hairdresser said you’ll be snapped up*” and Colin agreed that it is easier to find a teaching job as a man. ‘Brad’ in Pollitt and Oldfield’s (2017 p. 34) research made a similar comment, “a lot of people assume that you’re going to progress quickly...just because we’re male”.

In terms of career progression, Will was planning to be a head in ten years’ time. By emphasising that he wanted a career, which could be identified as a traditional masculine trait, Will is maintaining sense of himself as a man, even though he is working in what is seen as a non-traditional job for men, according to Cross and Bagilhole (2003). Harry had no plans to move out of the classroom at the time of his interview.

In the focus group, Jack commented that “*it was not easier for women in terms of career progression.*” This corresponds to the findings in the study by Linehan and Walsh (2001) which highlighted that many female managers, in a range of situations, encounter more barriers in their career progression than their male counterparts. Will’s aim to be a headteacher within ten years implies that his career progression will be swift. Jack and Colin’s comments acknowledge that it is not as easy for women in terms of career progression and being a man does have advantages in relation to this. These men are aware that they are a “valued asset” (Burn and Pratt-Adams 2015 p. 25) and that their gender does offer them privileges in relation to career progression in primary education. This is confirmed by a number of studies

including Thornton and Bricheno (2008) who report that men in teaching have a marked tendency to move quickly up the career ladder, occupying higher paid and higher status positions in a disproportionate number to women. Skelton (2002) also identified that there were a large number of men in authority as headteachers and senior members of staff in primary schools. In Cushman (2008), the majority of the school principals favoured men who exhibited a hegemonic masculinity and this finding is supported by Skelton (2003) who found the positioning of some men as natural leaders is a factor in why men are more likely to be senior managers in primary schools, in what is termed a patriarchal society, one which is dominated by men. Williams (1992) found that, for men in teaching, their minority status can be beneficial to their careers and Simpson (2011) confirmed this privileging of men in primary education. More recently, 'Brad' in Pollitt and Oldfield's (2017 p. 34) research found that "a lot of people assume that you're going to progress quickly...just because we're male".

The DfES (2007) report identified that men are more likely to be promoted to headship: at that time, while only 16% of nursery and primary teachers were male, 34% of headteachers in those schools were male. Although there are successful women headteachers, the disproportionate promotion of men is one of the reasons why, for a significant number of women, their career development can be limited (Thornton and Bricheno 2000). The men in my study acknowledged the advantages of their gender on the SCITT programme in relation to their career progression (RQs 1, 1a) and, for those who were looking towards becoming a senior leader, this was to be embraced.

5.4. Theme 3: Mentoring support (RQs 2, 2a and RQ 3)

Mentoring is part of the process whereby trainee teachers are brought into the community of practice of the school (Langdon et al 2016) and so the experiences and relationships that male trainees had with their mentors was an important part of their training year. Kemmis et al (2014) also identified the importance of mentoring in assisting early career teachers to situate themselves within the school community. For men, entering an established community of practice as newcomers and as a minority, the interaction and relationship with their mentors may influence how quickly they are able to become accepted into the community. Sim (2006) researched the community of practice for pre-service teachers which included guiding students on how to interact within a school's community of practice. As part of this she emphasised the impact of mentoring approaches on student teacher development. In my study, some men had different mentoring needs to others; some mentors adapted their approaches for male trainees and some mentors found male trainees to be less open and responsive to guidance than female trainees and were not so able to admit that they found things difficult. There were some tensions between mentors and mentees and there were also some differences in their perceptions as well as a few similarities.

5.4.1. Mentors' views

Mentors in my study identified that giving the trainees confidence was an area for support. Wenger's (1998) community of practice theory identified that confidence was an overarching interacting component which related to classroom practice and access to knowledge and support resources. Izadinia (2015a) found that positive mentoring experiences gave trainees confidence which highlights the importance of having good working relationships between mentor and trainee.

Mentor Two found that male trainees were less confident in a class situation initially in comparison to females, although by the end of the placement it tended to be the reverse and they were more confident than females. Black (2016) emphasises how important it is for mentors to realise that trainees will go through different stages as they progress through their training course and developing confidence is an important aspect of becoming a teacher.

Two mentors commented that some men tended to be over-confident because of their age (over 49 years) and previous careers and life experiences. Over-confidence was not seen as a positive quality by the mentors and they connected it with not being receptive to feedback and advice and it took longer “*to develop a harmonious working relationship.*” Mentor Six commented that “*some male trainees can tend towards arrogance, especially those that have had a previous career*”. Moyles and Cavendish (2001 p. 10) also found that some men showed “arrogance” or appeared over-confident and the more mature men were more likely to succeed. This second point is not confirmed by my research as in my study it was the younger men that the mentors found were more responsive and acted on feedback, which mentors identified as key characteristics of a good teacher. These younger men went on to achieve good or outstanding outcomes by the end of the course. Mentor Three found that both younger men and women were more responsive. The male mentor said that his trainee was confident in the classroom and he had good presence. He was also confident when dealing with parents probably because “*he was used to dealing with adults*” in his previous career. The male mentor in my study did not find that his male trainee was over-confident and the trainee acted upon advice and feedback given by himself and a male headteacher. Previously this male trainee had been mentored by female teachers who stated that he had not acted upon their

feedback and so it is clear that the trainee felt more comfortable taking advice from other men. Lack of confidence by men when dealing with pastoral issues was also mentioned by Mentor Two. No further details were given about these pastoral issues in the questionnaire but within my professional experience, considering the issues that often arise within the school community, these may be related to children having to cope with family issues such as parents that are separated or friendship groups in the playground.

Mentors confirmed that the staffroom was an important aspect of the female-dominated workplace. The mentors reported that male trainees needed help to socialise and Mentor Nine specifically mentioned helping them by “*getting to know other members of staff*”. Mistry and Sood’s (2015 p.123) quote from one of their male respondents who looked to their mentor to help them “feel comfortable within a large female staffroom” supports this. However, when considering the data relating to the feelings of exclusion and isolation that the male trainees in my study commented on when discussing the social space of the staffroom, helping them to feel comfortable could be challenging.

When asked whether they changed their mentoring approach when mentoring men, Mentors One and Three reported that they adapted and used strategies to suit “*personality and individuals*”, not gender. Walkington (2005) identifies that effective mentoring involves relationships which can be complex as a range of factors need to be considered, including personal and contextual. These two mentors are clearly aware of this. Kemmis et al (2014) identified that because people relate to one another differently, it is important to use different strategies when mentoring as one approach may be suitable for one trainee but not another.

Mentor Five reported that she did use a different strategy with men and was very clear on the approach she was inclined to use,

“...more direct and didactic; they have needed to be led from the front-knocked down first, to be got up again.”

This implies that female trainees do not need this type of approach and perhaps need less direction. However, it may be that mentors prefer working with trainees who are more compliant and more accepting, whereas more mature trainees who have worked in other fields at a high level may be more likely to challenge the accepted norms of education.

Only one mentor, Mentor One, who had mentored both men and women, had not found any real differences that were gender specific but were dependent on the individual trainee. Mentor Six said that more mature male trainees find it *“hard to let go of their previous high status in a previous career”*. There were some strong comments from some of the other mentors,

“The men were not prepared to admit they found anything difficult; one in particular challenged judgements,” “one of the main differences is openness to guidance”, “the men tend to be more assertive.”

Mentor Six commented that women trainees tended to be *“more compliant”*. Mentor Seven, who had only mentored an older male trainee, found that he was not very *“open to guidance”* and this mentor identified the right *“attitude to learning”* as being one of the key attributes that trainees should have if they were to succeed. Mentors Four and Five both worked with male trainees who withdrew and commented that those trainees *“did not have the right mindset”* or *“attitude”*. They did not specifically say what the right *“attitude”* was although they also mentioned

the importance of being responsive and open to feedback, skills which they had not observed in these men. They also reported that these trainees had not been reflective which may have prevented them in becoming accepted members of the community of practice (Walkington 2005, Wenger 1998).

These points can also be linked to resilience and whether the men were committed and motivated enough to be able to develop professionally and succeed on the course. Mentor Four had very strong opinions as to what makes a successful male trainee including,

“not having pre-judgements, is prepared to listen and act upon advice...and willing to be part of the school life.”

This mentor commented that it did not apply in the same way to female trainees as in her experience they did listen and act upon advice and *“did the extra”*. This may be due to the issue of power for some male trainees who did not feel comfortable taking advice from a female and were wishing to demonstrate aspects of their hegemonic masculinity.

“A receptive attitude would make a male trainee a joy to mentor” was an additional comment made by Mentor Seven. These two mentors clearly felt very strongly about some of the issues surrounding mentoring men and one should give thought to whether there was some prejudice here. All mentors, however, when asked about the importance of having men teaching in primary schools, were in favour of this because of the need to have positive male role models for the children; the term *“positive”* was used by three mentors. One mentor stated that they thought that male trainees could act as a father figure whereas another commented that although they cannot replace a father figure, they could go some way to being a

positive influence in the children's lives. This view was reinforced by the comment made that due to absent fathers and female-dominated households, many children of both genders have an unbalanced view of male adults and this reinforces the importance of having positive male role models. Another mentor believed that the men were likely to get boys on side through the use of humour and interests such as football. This is similar to a comment in the NUT (2002) report and suggests that the mentor is perpetuating the particular stereotype of men and sports within primary schools and communities of practice that are established within them.

Managing the behaviour of the whole class rather than individuals was commented on by mentors as being an area with which trainees needed support, including controlling low level disturbances such as children talking over the teacher and not responding to appropriately different behaviour management strategies (RQs 2, 2a). The two mentors of other male trainees who had withdrawn commented on the poor behaviour management skills of those trainees. Mentor Four said that "*he wanted to be 'mates' with the children and so immediately lost their respect*" and Mentor Five said that for her trainee "*behaviour management was non-existent; he expected them to behave and was quite naïve.*" Mentors Three and Seven had modelled organisational and time management skills, "*ensuring they met deadlines*" and "*creating useful documents*" to support this. Eight out of the nine mentors said that one of their main areas of additional support required for male trainees was helping them to be organised with all the paperwork that goes with teaching alongside the evidence for their files. Mentor Five, who had mentored a man who had withdrawn, said that he had "*no organisational skills and I had to help him with files*". The male mentor found that his successful male trainee was "*incredibly well-organised*" and this was not an area where he had to provide support. In relation to

the female workplace, as well as the mentor reporting that male trainees needed help to socialise, Mentor Seven said that they had supported their male trainee in relation to his emotional needs and “*talking through their perception of things.*” Mentor Two had supported their trainee with liaising with parents.

All the mentors who completed the questionnaires were female as there were no male mentors mentoring male trainees within that cohort. This is a reflection of the gender imbalance in primary education and schools. Perceptions of men by female mentors may influence their interactions with them and how the mentors approach their role. Before meeting their trainees, mentors are given information about their trainees in relation to their degree qualification, pre-course school and work experience and so for those mentoring career changers, it may seem a daunting prospect working with an older male who has been very successful in his previous career. However, it is important to consider that a female mentor may not realise how the male trainee has to establish himself, drawing on his previous experiences, as ‘Richard’ did in Smith’s (2007) study.

Relationships, personalities and age should also be considered. Mentor Seven had only mentored one male and had clearly not had a positive experience. Mentor Eight, however, who had only mentored males, had found that they had been proactive and self-reflected well. The male mentor commented that his male trainee, Steve, found the primary school culture “*very difficult*”. The trainee had come from a very male-dominated profession (the police force) in which he held a position with a high level of authority. He was a leader and he had to “*start back at square one*” when he began the teacher training course. The trainee found it quite difficult to mix with female members of staff. He had been placed with the male mentor in a third placement school and the mentor said that this was because “*he had particular needs*

which had to be addressed'. The mentor was referring to the trainee's original placement school where, although there had been other male members of staff, the trainee had not been able to have a constructive working relationship with many of his female colleagues, including his mentor. After his second placement, again with a female mentor, it was decided to offer a third placement in a different school with the male mentor, who described himself as, *"6ft 3, likes rugby and is able to teach Key Stage 1 children."*

Within this description the mentor was implying that it is unusual for the first two points to go with the third and he was accepting that this was an uncommon situation in a primary school. The mentor felt that the trainee had benefitted from having a male mentor and his own experiences of being a man who had encountered comments such as *"Are you in the right room?"* when attending early years training, implying that the male teacher was surely in the wrong place. The assumption was that the men do not voluntarily teach young children or choose to go on courses relating to early years teaching.

When the male mentor was asked whether the male trainee was receptive to advice and feedback offered, his comment was

"yes, he did respond to this from myself and also from the male headteacher" because *"we were older males that he could relate to"*.

In relation to trying to support older male trainees, Mentor Six said that she tried to

"explain diplomatically that while they might have been in a senior position in a previous career, this is not the case now and although some skills are transferable, they have a lot to learn."

Another comment related to men finding it hard to let go of their previous career meant that “*more mature men are challenging*”.

Perhaps these older male trainees found entering the feminised workplace of primary teaching difficult to come to terms with, along with having a female mentor to guide them through their school placements. This may be because as Burn and Pratt-Adams (2015 p. 37) suggest they felt “institutionally powerless in a female group”. The men in Thomas’s (2006) study also experienced a loss of power when they entered the feminised environment and had to reconsider their masculinities alongside negotiating relationships. The relationship between mentor and trainee may well have been affected by the fact that the trainee had come from a previous career where he had had a high level of responsibility and the mentor may have been daunted by this.

Awareness of the scrutiny which men feel they are under, in relation to safeguarding, is another area where it may be useful to guide mentors as there would appear to be some differences in what male trainees and those who support them perceive as important. Safeguarding concerns were only mentioned by one of the mentors in the questionnaires (Mentor Two) and that was in relation to their male trainee feeling uncomfortable when children were changing for PE. This was in a KS 1 classroom where the children were six and seven years old. Mentor Two also made a comment about male teachers in general feeling “*more open to allegations as a man and feel uncomfortable in certain situations.*”

In the follow-up conversation with the two mentors who had mentored male trainees who had withdrawn, safeguarding was not mentioned as a possible factor in causing them to withdraw. This indicates that mentors, most of whom are female, may be less aware of the scrutiny under which men in the primary school find

themselves and the type of issues and experiences they face during training and in their future careers. In my study safeguarding was identified as a real concern for the men. These findings are salient in relation to mentors' perceptions of trainees' needs (RQ 2a); mentors seemed unaware of the stereotyping and scrutiny that men experience, and, if this is the case, mentors might not be able to support men in this key area of teacher training. The perceptions of mentors and the guidance they provide for male trainees is a key element in supporting male trainees to deal with the challenges of a SCITT programme, (RQs 2, 2a). They are the main point of contact for the men and have to guide them through a range of experiences to enable the men to become accepted and full members of the community of practice in the primary school.

5.4.2. Male trainees' views

During the interviews, the men were asked how they thought their mentors had supported and helped them to achieve well. "*Being a good coach*" was mentioned specifically by two of them and in the same way, "*being able to work with you rather than just tell you what to do*" was also mentioned. The ability to give constructive feedback and inspire confidence were also given as important skills for mentors to have. Lacking confidence was mentioned by two men when discussing expectations of the course; "*I wanted to be confident*" (Adam, interview) and "*need a confidence blanket*" (Jimmy, interview). Good mentoring skills can help the trainees to be confident which would support them in achieving well. This links to the findings from Izadinia's (2015a) study that positive mentoring experiences gave the trainees confidence.

Mac said he had felt supported by his mentor and members of the SCITT staff and did not feel that any lack of support from them contributed to his reason for

withdrawing. Peter had said that he had been supported by the school and centre staff and it was not lack of support from either of those sources that had an impact on his decision to leave. One of the older secondary male trainees in the study by Thomas (2006) felt that he was not mentored sufficiently by his female mentor but none of the males in my study had commented that they felt that this was the case. The two men interviewed who had withdrawn, said that their mentors had been supportive although this does not necessarily mean that they had experienced good mentoring skills. It should also be acknowledged that in my position as Programme Manager, as well as a researcher, they may have been reluctant to criticise those working within the programme.

Jimmy, who had previously withdrawn from a one year initial teacher training course, mentioned that primarily it was where he was placed and the lack of support there that had caused him to withdraw from that course. He did not specifically say that he had a lack of confidence in his mentor, unlike 'Sam' a participant in Hobson (2002) who said that it was lack of confidence in his mentor that caused him to withdraw. When asked an additional question in the interview as to why he thought he had succeeded with the school-centred initial teacher training route and not with the Graduate Teacher Programme, he replied,

“if I am entirely honest, here it was supportive, I have had ups and downs as well here....but the structure is supportive.....GTP did not spend time trying if they did not fit in.”

The GTP was an employment-based route into teaching which Jimmy clearly did not feel provided the support necessary to succeed. This route into teaching no longer exists and the School Direct (salaried) is the most similar route to this. With the GTP, there was an expectation that trainees on that route would be able to start

whole class teaching at a much earlier stage than those training to teach on a fee paying course. This could cause problems in that trainees may not be well enough prepared to take on this role without good support and although it applies to all trainees, for the male trainee moving into a feminised workplace, this could cause further problems.

The importance of a good working relationship was identified in Chambers, Cole and Roper (2002) as paramount and if the trainee/mentor relationship broke down, this could lead to withdrawal. In his interview Jack commented that *“Everyone’s got to appreciate that it’s a working relationship. It’s a team and you have to work as a team.”* Harry (interview) appreciated the social role that his mentors played by *“getting me involved with school life.”*

Jack (interview) made some interesting comments when asked a subsidiary question about his age in relation to mentors,

“I think being a younger person, they (mentors) were more trusting, if that makes sense, they were more settled around me. I think if I was an older male, that may have upset the balance, they (older males) have more life experience, more opinions potentially, being younger I was a blank slate, I was learning more, I hadn’t constructed my opinions, hadn’t constructed my beliefs.”

Also in relation to support, in interviews, two men seemed to find asking for help difficult. Will said that in one of his placement schools,

“they hassled me to ask them for help, it’s not that I thought that asking for help was a sign of weakness but I had to show them that I could do it for myself but sometimes I couldn’t.....imposing their support on me rather than me taking the macho stance”.

Will's description of showing that he "*could do it for myself*" and "*taking the macho stance*" illustrates how he felt he needed to reinforce his masculine behaviours within the feminised workplace; he wanted to perform masculinity in a traditional way (Williams 1995) and at first seemed reluctant to ask for support. Jack mentioned independence. Although he felt he was quite independent and was able to ask for support, perhaps for some men it was a "*a case of pride*" that they did not ask for help in a challenging year. Moyles and Cavendish (2001) identified that men often did not seek help and when they did it was often too late and course leaders in Szwed (2010) felt that male trainees were not so forthcoming about asking for help as female trainees. A "denial of difficulty" was identified by Thornton (1999b p. 45) for those men who had a tendency not to recognise or to hide any difficulties they may have. Not being able to ask for help may present problems for male trainees as it could prevent them from participating fully in school-based learning, and as Demetriou et al. (2006 p. 43) state, they may find themselves "suffering the consequences".

When the male trainees were asked about the SCITT course itself and whether they felt that the programme could be improved in relation to supporting men further, the only suggestion was that perhaps more male teachers could be encouraged to become subject advisers. Presumably trainees felt that having contact with more men as they delivered centre-based training would be beneficial, perhaps to give them a man to whom they would be able to go to for support or to ask for help.

Unlike the mentors, the male trainees did not mention mentors providing emotional support, or support with dealing with parents. Their perceptions generally seemed to be related to actual teaching in the classroom, only one mentioned his

mentor helping him to become involved in school life. The perceptions of men were that it was important that mentors are able to be a good coach, to give constructive feedback and to develop their trainees' confidence when teaching (RQ 3). The mentors discussed wider aspects of school life, not only supporting trainees with their teaching, perhaps because mentors are more aware of these and the importance of these wider aspects in helping men to become accepted into the school community.

5.5. Other factors

RQ 1b considered other factors that may affect the participation of male primary trainees in school-centred initial teacher training and their completion of the course.

5.5.1. Family support

With a heavy workload and difficulty in managing a good work-life balance, support from partners and family was key. For Will, this was emotional as well as financial, "*without my wife, I wouldn't be able to do it.*" Harry remarked that "*my wife is a teacher...she understands what I am going through.*" As a teacher his wife may have been able to offer a similar type of support that mentors provide as she would be aware of the many different aspects involved in becoming a member of the teaching profession.

Jack had "*great*" support from his mother and girlfriend although not so much from his "*lad mates*" who gave him "*silly taunts*" about his chosen career. Two of the men in Weaver-Hightower's (2011) study, 'Stanley' and 'George' were teased by their male friends in a similar way to men in Foster and Newman's (2005) research and this tallies with Jack's comments. Jack's resilience in not allowing these

taunts and comments to affect him is clear; the important factor was the support he received from his family.

Jimmy had support from his wife and Adam had his parents and sister. A number of the men clearly had support from females around them including wives, mothers, sister and girlfriend on entering into a feminised profession. Mac, a trainee who had withdrawn said that he had had support from his family when he made the decision to join the course and they also supported his decision to withdraw, if he felt that this was the right decision. Peter, the other trainee who had withdrawn, said that he had had support from his wife on joining the programme and she would support him in his decision to withdraw. He implied that she would be pleased if he did not continue as it would mean that they would have more time together as he was spending so much of his time planning and completing paperwork. These concerns about the heavy workload and the implication that his wife was not supporting him with this led to his withdrawal. Troman and Raggi (2008) studied teacher commitment and the attractions of teaching and they found the factors of school and home/social life play an important part in sustaining or diminishing commitment. This is supported by Weaver-Hightower (2011) who found that the perceptions of family and friends were very important in supporting male trainees. Peter found that although he had expected to work hard, the time and work commitment was much harder than expected; “*juggling everything*” was difficult. This implies that along with lack of support from home, his commitment to the course and the teaching profession had diminished. My study emphasises the importance of male trainees having empathy and support from home and being resilient. This finding is concerned with the experiences the men have (RQ 1) and support from family and friends is a factor that seems to have an impact on their participation and completion

of the course (RQ 1b). Although a number of other specific reasons were given as to why respondents felt that they had been successful on the course, support from all three areas, peers, school and family was clearly very important in helping trainees to complete the course.

5.5.2. Age

Age does not appear to be a major factor in retention. Four out of the five men who withdrew were between 21 and 24 years of age; the fifth was aged 30. Five out of the six successful men who gained an outstanding grade were aged between 21 and 24; the sixth was aged 36. The two men who achieved a satisfactory grade were aged 50 and 22 years of age. The majority of those who achieved well were in the younger age group.

5.5.3. Prior academic achievement and degree subjects

Prior academic achievement does not appear to influence course withdrawals. All five men who withdrew had achieved a 2:1 classification so it seems unlikely that the actual academic demands of the course were factors for withdrawal from our SCITT programme. The subjects of the degrees varied but none of those who had withdrawn had studied a specific early years or childhood studies education course. The link between degree classification and outcomes varied for the successful men. Two out of the seventeen had a first class degree but their outcomes on the course were different. Steve completed with a satisfactory course grade whereas Jack was outstanding. I did not compare male and female qualifications as in Skelton (2009) who concluded that males tended to be less qualified than their female counterparts and therefore had more problems with the academic demands of the course. My data, however, show that the men who had withdrawn were well qualified. Smith and

Gorard (2007 pg.472) found that nearly 90% of students (male and female) starting a postgraduate course with a first or second class degree, were very successful in gaining Qualified Teacher Status. With those who had left before the completion of the course, there was no robust pattern in relation to prior degree. They also make the important point that there are difficulties with using degree classifications as a fair measure for prior attainment as they could be said to be an unstandardised form as they vary from institution to institution.

In my research Jack and Will had both studied on an Early Years or Early Childhood Studies course and both achieved well in their teacher training, Jack achieving an outstanding grade. It is possible that their confidence in working with young children was already established through their university course and the placements in schools and other settings which formed part of the course. Thérèse and Ayşe (2010) found that of those males enrolling on Early Childhood Educator courses in Canada, those that had developed a self-efficacy towards children, reflecting confidence in working with them, seemed to be better prepared to face the challenges of the course. Jack strongly believed that his Early Years degree helped him, as he said “*massively.....and has continued to help me*”, especially in his infant school placement. Jack and Will may have been the “right kind of man” (Jones 2006 p. 71) as they had an understanding of early years’ philosophy and realised the importance of the underlying values and principles in early education such as the significance of play and enabling environments.

Having already had experience of working with young children on the Early Years programme, Jack may have already overcome some barriers; he would presumably be in a minority whilst studying on this course. This belief that the degree subject helped him, would have developed his confidence and whilst on

placement in an infant school, given his mentor confidence in him which thereby helped to establish a good working relationship. Moulding et al. (2014) identified a relationship between mentoring and teachers' sense of efficacy but this was only mentioned by one of the mentors in my study. Takahashi (2011) found that the community of practice theory considers how teachers are able to co-construct understandings of their efficacy with their colleagues. This could then lead to positive beliefs about their efficacy. There does not seem to be any relationship in my study between academic achievement, efficacy and success on the course which implies that their previous academic achievement does not contribute to their efficacy. Although small, my study confirms the findings of Thérèse and Ayşe (2010) in that men studying on courses that cover early childhood studies may begin their teacher training feeling more confident about working with young children.

For the two men in my study who had achieved first class degrees, there were differences in their outcomes: Jack achieved an outstanding grade and Steve was satisfactory. The other trainees who had achieved an outstanding grade at the end of the course had studied social anthropology, drama, psychology and law. My study therefore, found that there was no link between degree subject and outcome and for those that were successful at achieving an outstanding grade, the degree subjects were very diverse. It is, however, worth considering that the trainee who had studied drama may have been able to find that his acting skills gave him confidence in the classroom and also enabled him to be comfortable with taking on different roles as he went through his training year. Also, law and psychology are two areas of study that may have helped the trainees to be able to cope better with the overall academic demands of the teacher training year. In my study, although degree subject and classification do not seem to be major factors in the achievement of male trainees, it

is important to remember the link that sport and ICT seem to have: six out of the seventeen successful males had a degree subject connected to either sport or technology.

5.5.4. Vocational background and pre-course school experience

Pre-course primary school experience varied and did not appear to influence achievement. Two out of the five who withdrew had previously worked as Teaching Assistants and two others had had the minimal experience required of a few weeks in school before the commencement of an initial teacher training course. The fifth trainee who withdrew had worked as a volunteer in a primary school on a regular basis for over a year. Mac and Peter had both had different pre-course experiences in relation to the school experience. Mac had only had minimal experience in a primary school and one should consider whether he just “drifted into (teaching) and left when faced with the workload” (NUT 2002 p. 7), alongside his difficulties with pupil behaviour. Peter had had experience of working as an LSA in a primary school but working with small groups and in a one-to-one situation is very different to taking whole classes so he may well have also “drifted into” teaching and then when the reality of the workload and the long hours became clear, decided to withdraw.

Pre-course school experience also varied for the successful trainees in my study and did not seem to have an impact on outcomes. Five had previously worked in a primary or junior school as a Teaching Assistant, either full or part time, although only two of those had worked in that role for longer than a term. One had worked as a Teaching Assistant in a secondary school. The other 11 had all gained primary school experience either as volunteers or through their university or work experience. Two of them had only had a minimal amount of primary school experience and one of these, Tom, achieved outstanding by the end of the course.

The men who gained QTS came from a range of vocational backgrounds. Four out of the five trainees who withdrew came from sales backgrounds; the fifth, Henry, came straight from university. The importance of “background factors” (Braun 2011 p.275) such as a previous career, should not underestimated. Although I only looked at certain aspects of trainees’ personal histories, they seemed to be quite crucial in establishing relationships within the primary school, especially in relation to the older men, such as Steve and Jimmy, who had had previous careers where they had been in positions of authority.

5.5.5. Expectations of the course

All of the men interviewed who successfully completed the course said that they had fairly realistic expectations of the course and the workload but even so “*the reality did hit hard*” (Jack, interview). Adam’s comment in his interview was that, “*It’s like driving, until you get behind the wheel, you don’t really know what it’s like.*”

Time management and being organised were key skills but there was more to it than that, you need to be able to “*juggle*” (Adam, interview). Only one of those interviewed, Will, when asked whether the reality matched his perceptions, said it was “*no-where near as bad as expected*”. Peter (interview) said that the workload was much more than he expected and was the reason given for his withdrawal. The heavy workload was also an issue for Mac and although he had realised the course would be difficult, the reality was harder. Moyles and Cavendish (2001) comment that males may withdraw as they are not really committed and are less prepared to become teachers and are therefore less able to cope with the pressures of training. It is difficult to assess whether this may have been the case in relation to all the men in my study who withdrew. From the data, two cited workload as the reason and two

other men were unable to cope with children's behaviour and classroom management; the fifth one did not give a specific reason. Those that completed the course did find that the reality of the course expectations and workload generally fitted in with their pre-course perceptions of what the training would involve whereas those who had withdrawn seemed to have not anticipated the workload. Not having realistic expectations of the course and paperwork, therefore, could be a reason for withdrawal which is confirmed by a mentor in Foster and Newman's (2003 p. 24) study who comments on the need to give "a realistic view of what it means to be a primary school teacher", implying that if men had a clear understanding of what the course and job actually involves before beginning the programme, they may be less likely to withdraw.

Other factors that might impact on the participation of male trainees in school-centred initial teacher training and their completion of the course (RQ 1b) seem to relate to having realistic expectations of the course, rather than prior academic achievement, pre-course experience and vocational background. Completing an Early Years degree, however, may provide a good foundation of knowledge in relation to early education. Although age does not appear to be a factor in retention, the majority of the male trainees in my study who achieved well passing with a good or an outstanding grade were in the younger age group, 21-24 years old. Jack's comment about him being "*a blank slate*" as he was so young and he "*hadn't constructed his opinions...hadn't constructed his beliefs*" suggests that older more mature men would have done so and this may be a factor that affects their participation in school-based learning.

5.6. Summary of findings relating to the research questions

5.6.1. Research Questions 1, 1a: What are the experiences of men on this school-centred programme? How do their minority status and gender impact on their participation in school-based learning?

Safeguarding emerged as a key issue for all the male trainees as it explicitly affected their behaviour in school and how they were perceived by others. For the men in my study, safeguarding was seen as a distinct challenge because they felt that they were always under scrutiny. As well as the centre-based training, some schools reinforce this training with school-based training and all trainees have a task to complete to find out about safeguarding procedures in their placement schools, emphasising the importance of this aspect of teaching. Although safeguarding was not seen as a factor for withdrawal for the men in my study, the worries that it seemed to cause them could possibly affect their participation and confidence. The obvious concerns of the male trainees who participated in my research about this issue identifies that this may be an area that affects the recruitment of some men into primary teaching.

The data show that some men found the culture of the primary school very difficult to become part of and they appreciated having a support network of male colleagues whilst they were on school placements: this helped them to meet the challenges of working in a female-dominated environment where, at times, they felt isolated. The staffroom is an important part of the workplace and my study has identified this as playing a crucial role in helping the male trainees to become part of the school community. Sometimes, because of the topics and conversations that took place in the staffrooms, men felt uncomfortable and excluded. The findings identified that having support from other men and being able to hold conversations

with them helped the trainees with morale and being able to cope with any “knockbacks” (Foster and Newman 2005 p. 341). Having support and empathy from male peers in a challenging year was found to help them to succeed on the course itself. Being able to have constructive working relationships with colleagues, as well as socialising with other men, helped the men with confidence, morale and being able to cope with a complex teacher training year.

For the two trainees who withdrew, being a minority in a feminised workplace was not specifically given as a reason that led to their decisions to withdraw and so it is difficult to say what impact this may have had. In relation specifically to school-centred initial teacher training, although they withdrew before the start of their first full teaching practice, they would have begun to be immersed in the culture of the school, joining a community of practice there, very early on in their training, but not yet becoming full, participating members.

The data showed that there were some instances when men were positive about being a minority. This was in relation to elements of their school-based experiences where, at times, they felt valued and felt that their gender gave them an advantage. They were also aware of the advantages their gender offered them in terms of their career progression. The men in my study did not seem to resent having to respond to and enact specific stereotypes although the findings demonstrate that these stereotypes are still prevalent in primary schools and so could have a detrimental effect on some men if they were not comfortable with these expectations. These stereotypical expectations included being good at PE, being proficient in ICT, skilled at behaviour management and helping with tasks such as moving heavy objects. The men in my study did not seem averse to participating in this way.

Given the evidence of stereotyping, for male trainees, developing a professional identity alongside their personal identity was challenging. Identity is dynamic and complex and is influenced by both internal and external factors (Beauchamp and Thomas 2009).

Although the male trainees were aware of the expectations of being a good male role model for children and all agreed that this was important, it is not clear as to whether this had an impact on their completion of the course at a good or better level and there is no evidence to show that this could affect retention.

5.6.2. Research Question 1b: What other factors may impact on the participation of male trainees in school-centred initial teacher training and their completion of the course?

The data identified that there were other factors that could affect the completion of the course at a good level: support from family and friends, resilience, workload and the ability to manage this and to be organised with paperwork. My research also found that age was a factor in achieving good outcomes as the younger trainees achieved outstanding and good grades as opposed to the older trainees who achieved good and satisfactory grades. Degree classification did not have a significant impact on achievement although those that had degrees which were sport based achieved good or outstanding grades. For two trainees, studying for an Early Years degree seemed to give them confidence in establishing themselves in a primary school setting and developing their professional identities. Out of five who withdrew, workload was given as the reason for withdrawal by two of them and not being able to have effective classroom and behaviour management was given by two others. Another factor that might possibly affect retention was pre-course work experience; four out of the five who withdrew came from a sales background and as

the retail industry is very different from primary teaching, this could indicate that they may not have had a realistic view of the hours and workload involved in primary teacher training or have an awareness of a primary school setting and culture.

The findings, therefore, relating to factors that may impact on male trainees' participation in school-centred teacher training and their completion of the course, indicate that there are a number of elements to consider.

5.6.3. Research Questions 2, 2a: How do mentors support male trainees? What are the perceptions of mentors in relation to trainees' needs and do these influence the support given to them?

The findings show that mentors in my study supported male trainees in a number of different ways and had varied perceptions of them. Female teachers who mentored mature men found them more of a challenge than younger males and female trainees and some of their comments were quite negative: they were less positive about the mature male trainees' ability to be responsive and to act on feedback and advice from themselves. They reported that mature men were resistant to suggestions to improve their practice. Some female mentors' perceptions were that older male trainees, those that had worked in positions of power and authority, were also reluctant to ask for help and were not able to admit that they found things difficult. Comments by some men confirmed that this was the case. For those who had mentored men who had withdrawn, they said that the men were not reflective; not being reflective about their teaching could prevent male trainees from making progress in their development as a teacher.

This negativity may well have influenced how the mentors supported the trainees. The male mentor did not find that his male trainee was over-confident and

said that he did act upon advice and feedback. Only one mentor demonstrated an awareness of how men may be perceived in relation to safeguarding and so others may not have been aware of how to support them in this area. This is an important finding as it does not correlate to the perceptions of the male trainees themselves in relation to the scrutiny which they felt they were under.

Some of the ways that mentors supported male trainees would be important for all trainees, such as giving them confidence and providing good feedback through coaching. In relation to male trainees specifically, one mentor said that they had to use a more direct and didactic approach with men as they need more direction, implying that they do not use this approach with female trainees who were described as being more compliant. Some mentors helped their male trainees to be organised with paperwork. Providing emotional support and helping men to become part of the school community, including socialising in the staffroom were additional ways in which some mentors supported men. Other mentors said trainees needed help with behaviour management and one mentor supported their trainee in liaising with parents. These are two aspects that again, may not be specific to men and it did depend upon individuals as one male trainee was confident dealing with parents which his mentor suggested was because of dealing with adults in his previous career. Mentors of male trainees who had withdrawn specifically commented on having to provide them with behaviour management support.

Some men found it difficult to ask for help; this may be because they felt that, as a man, they should be able to deal with situations as they arose and did not want to display what they felt would be a sign of weakness.

5.6.4. Research Question 3: What are the perceptions of men on a one year school-centred initial teacher training programme and of primary teaching?

The male trainees' perceptions of the centre-based training, in relation to safeguarding, were that they felt that it was aimed at them. Safeguarding is one of the key training sessions that takes place during the induction days. The men did feel that there was more focus on themselves as males. In terms of their perceptions of primary teaching, the men felt that this scrutiny of them continued into their first teaching practice and were very aware of ensuring that they did not put themselves in a vulnerable position with the children when they were changing for PE. In relation to the school-centred route into teaching, this aspect is important as men are entering into schools at the beginning of the course when they may lack confidence and may perceive this scrutiny as more heightened than it is.

The men's perceptions on the advantage of being in a minority were in terms of career progression. They were all aware that they seemed to be in a positive position if they were interested in becoming members of a senior management team or headteacher and some men had aspirations to do so.

The male trainees were positive about the course and in general they said that they did not feel that there were any areas that could be improved or developed in relation to their training that would impact on their achievement. These comments are considered in the limitations of the research as they were responding to me as their Programme Manager. They clearly acknowledged that the course and primary teaching itself are female-dominated and were generally accepting of this although there was the suggestion from one male trainee that more men brought into the training to deliver subject specific sessions would be beneficial. For those that had

been successful in gaining QTS, their perceptions of the course had been realistic in relation to the challenges of the workload and paperwork.

6. Conclusions

The study set out to explore the experiences of a small number of men and the issues that might influence how successful they were in completing a school-centred initial teacher training programme. A key conclusion is that, as a minority, men face challenges as they try to become full, rather than peripheral, members of the community of practice. Three main indicators of a community of practice, shared repertoire, mutual engagement and joint enterprise (Wenger 1998) take place through social interactions and collaborative learning with other members of the community. For men entering primary schools as they begin their teacher training and trying to move towards the heart of the community, the importance of these interactions is highlighted as they attempt to deal with times when they feel vulnerable and at risk.

A serious challenge that men face is that they are seen as a danger to children. Safeguarding is still an area of concern for men working in primary schools and the situation does not seem to have changed for over ten years. Through the SCITT route, men perceive that, as a minority, they are under scrutiny right from the beginning of the course, during induction at the centre and then as soon as they move into their placement school. Men make sure that they do not put themselves into positions where they could be open to allegations. They ensure that they are not left alone in the room with children when they change for PE and do not take girls to get changed for PE. Men also avoid having any physical contact with children so that their actions cannot be misconstrued. There is a difference between what mentors and men identify as a challenge in regard to safeguarding; only one mentor commented on this. Female mentors do not always seem to be aware of the intense scrutiny that the men feel they are under when working with primary aged children.

The perceptions of others, both in and outside of the teaching profession, for example, lad mates and female colleagues, can be “knockbacks” (Foster and Newman 2005 p. 341) for male trainees and so they must be resilient and be able to ignore derisive comments, some of which may be in relation to why men choose to work with young children. Support from family and friends, as well as school support is important in helping men to succeed in completing the course.

Men value the opportunity for dialogue, both socially and professionally, with other men in a similar situation, especially in the school setting. Male colleagues in the staffroom can be beneficial as this is a location where men may find that they need support with morale as the staffroom is full of women. Having a support group at the training centre does not seem so relevant; it is when men enter the communities of their placement schools that they find they need the camaraderie and support of their male peers. Women may not consider the need for peer support in the same way as men as in the primary school they always have other females around them to talk to and have discussions with. For men, having a supervising male role model, such as a headteacher, does not necessarily mean that they will achieve well according to my small study. Having male peers in the same situation, however, does seem to make a difference for trainees who successfully pass the course at an outstanding level.

A further conclusion is that for men there is confusion about having to enact dual gender roles such as being caring and asking for help but also having to be a disciplinarian who is good at ICT and sport. Men in my study were asked to do stereotypical tasks such as moving furniture and there were assumptions that they would teach specific subjects. They were expected to exhibit care and empathy with

children but to also maintain a physical distance from them. These contradictions may be completely new to men and become a challenge for them to overcome.

Some men find it difficult to ask for help; in my study this was acknowledged by two men and this was also raised as an issue by some mentors. Asking for help, although a necessary professional quality and an important aspect of being a learner, may not be seen as a 'strong' masculine trait by some men and it may conflict with their sense of masculinity. It could, therefore, cause tensions with the masculine identities that men are expected to assume in primary schools, such as being a disciplinarian. Navigating dual gender characteristics may present another challenge for men as they begin their teacher training. Establishing themselves within the schools by performing stereotypical roles would be maintaining "gender borders" (Hjalmarrson and Löfdhal 2014 p. 289) but it may help some men to be accepted into the community which could in turn help them to become effective teachers. Male trainees and mentors all seem to be in agreement that it is important to have positive male role models for children in schools. Men are being positioned as male role models in relation to the deficit of men and fathers in the wider community which the children are part of, and also, in some cases positioned as disciplinarians. This can be seen as another challenge for men to overcome and for some it can lead to withdrawal from the course.

Due to gendered expectations from others, men may face tensions and barriers when co-constructing a professional teacher identity which could include more feminine characteristics. Such factors appear to be heightened in the school-centred training context because of the men having to begin to develop their professional identity at a very early stage of their training when their identities are only tentative. Initial teacher training providers are the first stage of constructing

teacher identities (Izadinia 2013, Yuan 2016) and in SCITTs men enter schools at a much earlier stage than some other routes. Student teachers' professional identities are vulnerable when they are first introduced to teaching practice (Lamote and Engels 2010) so this becomes even more significant in a SCITT as the practical teaching element is introduced early on. Establishing a professional identity as a teacher as well as retaining their personal identity can lead to conflict for some men as they encounter stereotypical expectations of a male teacher which may not necessarily be in line with their personal identities or with the more feminine aspect of primary school teaching that of 'caring'. The expectations and assumptions of other members of the community of practice and how they may perceive male trainees can affect the men as they begin to try and position themselves as participating members.

Men may not specifically cite gender as an issue, in terms of finding themselves in a predominantly female environment. However, it may be that men suddenly become so much more aware of their gender when they enter primary schools. Women are already much more aware of their gender; they have had to become so because of the way in which they are portrayed in wider society and so are more familiar with gender dynamics (Simpson 2011). Due to this awareness, women have a language to discuss gender whereas, for men, perhaps entering into a female-dominated environment for the first time, they are in a new situation and it may not be a discourse that they are able to contribute to. Not being used to having to reflect on and talk about their gender, may mean that men do not have the language to discuss issues relating to this. It may have been why the men in my study did not mention gender as an issue but it also may have been a challenge that they decided not to discuss with me.

In teacher training, learning and professional development are inherently collaborative and co-constructive because of the different relationships that are established as part of the workplace learning, including that of mentor and trainee. Skills of mentors should support all trainees, whatever their gender, but most importantly, for men as a minority, mentors can help trainees to become accepted into the school community, including the staffroom where men often experience feelings of isolation and exclusion. Mentors have knowledge of the community of practice and within a social space such as the staffroom they would be able to pass on any information about any unwritten rules and share ways of engaging in doing things, an important element of a community of practice. The role of the mentor is vital in supporting the male trainee to successfully pass the course, especially in school-centred initial teacher training when they are the main point of contact for the trainee as soon as they enter their placement school at the beginning of the course.

As men enter the teaching profession, their pre-course life knowledge becomes important as they all bring different experiences into the communities that they are joining. Day and Leith (2001) and Smith (2007) identified how the professional self was affected by personal history as previous experiences and beliefs formed the basis of the identity of the prospective teacher. For mature career-changers in school-centred training this is particularly significant; being older they will have more life experiences to bring to their new profession. This may be considered a benefit in other professions but in primary teaching, in some circumstances, this may not be the case. If men have been in senior positions in their previous careers where they were not a minority, although they may have transferable skills such as management, leadership and working to deadlines, establishing their masculine and professional identities in the primary school could

be difficult and (in the words of mentors in my study) they could be “*arrogant*” and “*overconfident*”. This may be connected to the issue of power because if men come from positions of authority in their previous careers, they may find it difficult to adjust to this loss of power and status in the primary school. Also, female mentors may react in a negative manner because of the men’s previous roles confirming how the perceptions of others within a community of practice can affect the engagement of its participants. Trainees have dual identities, as a teacher and as a learner (Lee and Schallert 2016) and my data provide some insight into this in training that is specifically work-based and relating especially to mature male trainees.

6.1. Reflections on the study

As a researcher, I had to learn to step back from my role as Programme Manager and to look at the situation of men in my programme in an exploratory way, considering the challenges and experiences that they encountered. I undertook the research aiming to find out how, as a provider, I could support the men who chose to train with us to achieve well. My professional journey as a researcher developed as I read more widely and, as I did so, I was able to reflect on the ideas and theories that I discovered. I became more aware of the gender stereotypes and expectations that still seem to be widespread in many primary schools. Becoming more reflective has also enabled me to be more critical in relation to the research literature that I have read and to recognise there are usually limitations to a study. As a researcher, I have considered how I interpreted the interview data that I had as part of the study. I have become more aware of the importance of not taking what participants say at face value as those interviewed may have said what they thought I wanted to hear, rather than what they actually felt about the situation. In relation to this, I realised that those interviewed may not always be telling the whole story so it is important to consider

what they are not saying, as well as what they do say. As an example, they may not have been as forthcoming in relation to specific aspects relating to their schools and mentors, knowing that as Programme Manager I had organised these placements for them. As Programme Manager there was an issue of power to consider, between myself and the participants in the study. Some of the mentors, however, seemed to be very forthcoming on their views, especially in relation to mentoring men. The timing of the completion of the questionnaire, at the end of the year, may have helped them in feeling able to express themselves in this way. As Programme Manager I have additional knowledge of mentors and trainees which I had to acknowledge may have influenced my views, for example being a principal marker of the trainees' written assignments provided me with insight into their views on their school experiences.

As well as reflecting on my dual roles of researcher and Programme Manager, I also needed to consider the gender difference. As a female researcher, I was studying the experiences of men and the gender issue was an area which I learnt to reflect upon as I completed my work. As well as the power dynamics perhaps contributing to what participants said, or refrained from saying, the differences in gender may also have influenced them. The complexities of gender and stereotypical assumptions became apparent to me, especially in relation to the primary school setting. Simpson (2011) discusses how women are much more aware of their gender; and Skelton (2007) identifies that some men have to focus on gender because it is being attended to by others. This may have been a challenge that these men decided not to discuss with me as a female researcher.

When analysing the data and organising the findings into themes, I found many interconnecting aspects emerged and at times it was difficult to clearly define them into separate themes and to present the data in the most coherent way. Initially

mentors' experiences was a section on its own and was not included in the section on support; the importance of having male peers could have been included under the theme of support, along with family support but it was an important aspect of trying to overcome the feelings of isolation that men experienced so that was the theme that it finally came under. There were also other interrelating aspects in relation to the experiences that men had such as gender, masculinities, stereotypes and being a minority which confirmed for me again, how complex the situation is.

If I were to begin this study again, there are a number of practical things that I would do differently. The focus group was useful in gaining the perceptions of men without my presence, however, once transcribed, I would have liked the opportunity to discuss and ask for further explanation of some of their comments. If the focus group had been held earlier in the data collection process, I would have been able to do this. Also, although the small number of male trainees in the main research year was beyond my control, I could have interviewed male trainees in the next cohort or had another focus group discussion with this cohort. Despite only being halfway through their training, it may have been possible to gain some of their perceptions of the course so far, of their first school placement and the type of support they felt they needed. I had not realised the importance of focus groups for my study. Safeguarding emerged as a challenge for male trainees and as only one mentor seemed aware of the scrutiny which the men perceived they were under, this aspect could have been explored further with mentors. The research was about male trainees but comparative data on female trainees' qualifications, prior experience, retention and outcome rates could have been included in the study. This could have shown whether male trainees had the same level of qualifications and experience as female trainees, they were not disadvantaged when starting the course. When reviewing the literature, I looked at

communities of practice in other occupations that are traditionally seen as feminised, such as nursing. Although I did not develop this aspect to investigate men's experiences in these other professions, this wider perspective could have enhanced my study. Simpson (2011) found that in nursing, men were valued for providing balance and this was seen as adding strength to the nursing profession. This view did not emerge from my data and perhaps I could have considered whether women in primary schools had the motivation to encourage more men into this profession because men seem to have the advantage in terms of career progression.

The research has impacted on my understanding and my activities as Programme Manager. I have realised that factors which may affect retention and the success of male trainees are complex. I began the research with preconceptions that in general, men were unorganised and were unable to cope well with paperwork but also realised that this was not the only reason why some men decided to withdraw from the course. I have become much more aware of the challenges the male trainees face in the social space of the staffroom. The findings have highlighted the importance of ensuring that all those involved in the training of men are aware of the complexities and difficulties that may arise. This has influenced how I plan for mentor training. I will include activities to raise awareness of issues that male trainees will face, especially in relation to safeguarding as it has become clear that mentors do not seem to see this as a concern for trainees whereas for male trainees, it is an important issue. Ensuring mentors are aware of how they might be able to support male trainees in navigating their way through professional and personal identities and roles will also be an important aspect of future training. This could be done by sharing examples of how mentors have worked well with male trainees at different stages of their training; this could include successful trainees as well as

those who are seen as at risk of failing or withdrawing or are particularly challenging. I hope to develop and cultivate resilience in the male trainees by planning pastoral sessions at key points during the year so that they are prepared, positive and confident. I need to reflect on how to give men the opportunity to ask for help and advice in a way which they feel is appropriate. When placing trainees in schools, I need to consider the availability of male peer support and having a social network of collaboration to help counteract feelings of isolation. I can identify and invite male teachers to become involved in our SCITT programme and to mentor male trainees. As the majority of those we train gain employment in our partnership schools, I can identify past male trainees to participate in training male teachers.

6.2. Limitations of the research

There were only two male trainees on the course in the main research year. This was beyond my control as a researcher but it does confirm the ongoing problem of a chronic shortage of men in primary teaching. This issue is also seen in another limitation of the study, the perceptions and views of only one male mentor.

Whilst I have acknowledged roles as Programme Manager and researcher and although I interviewed the successful trainees at the end of their training year, when they knew that they had achieved QTS, the power relationship may still have meant that they did not always tell the whole truth or were inhibited in what they said. This may also have applied to those trainees who had decided to withdraw and they may not have been as honest as they could have been about the support they experienced in schools. The difference in gender between myself and the male participants cannot be ignored and men in my study may have been reluctant to discuss gender-sensitive issues with me. Also, the lack of information about the amount of contact that trainees had with male colleagues on placements is another limitation.

The feelings of mentors were not explored in detail, specifically in relation to how they felt about mentoring mature male trainees who had had previous careers. Some teachers may have been daunted about mentoring them and may not have felt so confident in their role, especially if they were young female teachers. Although my data included information about how long they had been teaching and whether they had mentored before, more insight into how successful they had been at mentoring and the range of individuals they had mentored could have been useful in gaining a fuller picture of their experiences. Considering whether the mentors brought any prejudices to their role in relation to the men would also have been another area to explore in greater depth.

The research involved people, who all have their own personalities, views, preconceptions and individual traits. The decision to withdraw by one male trainee may be more about the candidate himself than the course or training provider. Personality differences play a part in trainees developing identities within the communities of practice. It should also be considered that male trainees who took part in my study may not be representative of all male trainees in school-centred ITT. Those participants who were interviewed and were part of the focus group were all in relationships with women, so assuming this indicates that the men were heterosexual, the experiences of gay men within the feminised primary school have not been considered. The men were all white and middle class so minority ethnic and other socio-economic class experiences have not been included.

6.3. Contribution to theory

My research was influenced by Wenger's (1998) community of practice theory and the study has provided useful insight into how male trainees, as a minority, experience the community as they begin their teacher training year.

Engagement in the community of practice is necessary if men are to become full, participating members and my study has identified that this theory is not as straightforward in practice as it may initially have seemed; just becoming a participant does not necessarily mean that one becomes a member. Also, communities of practice are everywhere; they are not confined to one area of education or society so the possibility of widening knowledge about this theory for others is relevant. Men in my study were in a minority and there are other minority groups within society who are likely to experience the same type of peripheral participation in communities of practice in other workplaces and so the contribution to theory goes beyond the confines of school-centred initial teacher training.

My research also raises the question as to whether it should be the community of practice that changes to ensure that it is inclusive for all its members or whether the male trainees (or any minority group) should be the ones to adapt. The social structure and perceptions of the established members of the community have an effect on how quickly new entrants become engaged and more knowledgeable. By responding to expectations of teaching sport and ICT positively, men seem to become more easily accepted into the community of practice although this does reinforce gender stereotypes. Within a community of practice there can be problems for those who enter as they begin to become skilled and one of the challenges that should be considered is that of power relations. My study highlights that mature men who have held posts of responsibility in previous careers found entering into workplace training where their mentors were female a challenge and they found it difficult to respond to advice and feedback from the women.

My study also contributes to theories relating to role models. All those who participated agreed that it was important for men to be role models for children

because of the scarcity of good male role models at home and in the community. There did not seem to be the expectations of being a role model in other ways, it seemed to be based on a deficit model of men that the children experienced in their home life. Furthermore, they did not associate being a male role model with raising academic standards for boys as identified by Drudy (2008) so my study demonstrates how perceptions of being a male role model seem to be focused on the single concept of children lacking positive male role models in their home life.

As a minority, male trainees experienced stereotyping and gender assumptions in primary schools and my study contributes to understanding how gender and masculinities operate within a community of practice where women are in the majority. Primary school teaching, however, is not the only profession where there are minorities within the workplace, it goes beyond teaching and so my research adds to theories of gender in relation to these stereotypical assumptions. There have been a number of studies concerning women as minorities in the workplace and the gendering of jobs (Britton 2003, Cockburn 1988). If a female entered a male dominated profession such as engineering, although she would be expected to be able to successfully complete the work, there are perhaps, not the same expectations to act like a man in other ways such as a different use of language or demonstrating physical prowess. Acker (1990), however, identified that if women did attempt to fit in at work they may receive benefits such as gaining respect and earning promotion. Other research on women in male-dominated work environments suggests that women must perform gender in very specific ways and an explanation has to be given if a woman excels under pressure in a male-dominated workplace (Levin 2001.) This confirms how complex the situation of being a minority in the workplace is and my study contributes further to this area of research.

As men, and as a minority, there is an underlying issue that the men have to deal with, that of safeguarding. They are seen as a potential danger to children and mentors do not seem to have an awareness of this which is an important point when considering mentoring practices. Some female mentors also found mature men challenging and their views on mentoring men also contribute to these theories.

There have been previous studies that explored different careers and the role strain that minorities may experience in the workplace (Simpson 2005, 2011) and professional identity tensions (Pillen et al. 2103). My research makes an original contribution to these theories by expanding on the complexities of developing a professional identity for men and, within the SCITT programme, the importance of this when male trainees enter schools very early on in their training. My study also ascertains how pre-course histories, such as career, influences identities, as evidenced with the mature male trainees who found it difficult to act upon advice and how this can cause further tensions and complexities in relation to establishing a professional identity. The younger men, as a “*blank slate*” (Jack), responded and acted upon feedback and achieved well by gaining outstanding and good grades. Moyles and Cavendish (2001) found that more mature men were likely to succeed whereas in my study it was the younger men so my research is contributing to developing theories relating to how pre-course histories can affect the development of identities as a learner and as a professional.

6.4. Contribution to practice

The context of men following a primary SCITT programme is under-researched and so my findings are relevant and important. My study indicates there are a number of strategies and interventions that could be considered in a primary

school-centred programme that could more effectively support male trainees. There are two areas of practice involved: the schools and the training centre.

Initial teaching providers should consider how they can better prepare male trainees for the challenges ahead of them in terms of how they may be viewed and stereotyped in the primary school and the possible conflict between professional and personal identities. Centre-based training can encourage trainees to reflect on their professional identities as male teachers as they progress through their training year. The trainees should be given the opportunity to consider how their previous life experiences have already affected and helped to establish their personal identities and so may influence their behaviour and development of their professional identity. By discussing potential tensions with them, men may be able to become more prepared as they enter the primary school community of practice. Gender issues and stereotypes should also be discussed, and not only with the male trainees. It is important to challenge an assumption that masculinity is necessarily aligned with men and femininity with women and training should be included which would allow both men and women to consider the expectations and stereotypes that still seem to be prevalent in some primary schools. Scenarios could be put to all trainees, for example, one about asking a man to move furniture, to see how they would react with a discussion about this type of request. This could also be discussed as part of mentor training. Warin and Wernesson (in Brownhill et al. 2016 p. 5) argue that neither men nor women should be disadvantaged by “limited and restricted views of what is appropriate and inappropriate for their behaviours as gendered individuals” and if more men could be attracted into early childhood education, a more gender-equal society may begin to be established.

Course leaders and tutors, alongside the mentors, should be considered as important influences on identity development and should also be aware of gender issues within the teacher training year. Strategies to support the way in which male trainees can develop their resilience should be included within the programmes. Providers could incorporate open discussions about trainees' emotional health and resilience at different points of the training year. Including an awareness of these issues in mentor training and developing more in depth training for mentors on the kinds of experiences and concerns men have, gender identities and masculinities, would enable them to support trainees more effectively. Impact studies in relation to men who had successfully overcome different obstacles to complete the course, such as feeling isolated, lack of support at home or finding the move to a new career difficult could be shared. Appointing mentors who volunteer for their role and are keen to fulfil their commitment, as well as ensuring that they are all able to access training, will encourage the relationship between trainee and mentor to have the best possible start.

As men with skills and interests in both sport and ICT seem to achieve well and these attributes appear to facilitate their acceptance in the feminised school environment, initial teacher training providers should consider this in their recruitment drives. Train to Teach events could be advertised at sporting venues as well as universities. Although this presents a dilemma for providers in terms of reinforcing gender stereotypes, my study has shown that having sporting skills can be a very positive factor in helping male trainees to feel confident and become accepted and achieve well in a primary school and as the aim is to have good teachers, whatever their gender, it is a possible way forward. It would also be appropriate to signal to men that although being good at sport may be an advantage, it may also be

limiting. The events would also hopefully attract females too. Having sporting abilities may indicate skills and qualities such as determination, team spirit and being able to overcome setbacks and so would be of benefit to those embarking on a teaching career. For those female trainees who do not have sporting or ICT skills, providers should ensure that they have sufficient training in these subjects to support them to feel confident to teach these subjects so that they are not seen as areas in which only men teach.

The findings show that having support from male peers can be beneficial because it lessens the likelihood of the trainee feeling isolated. Placing male trainees in schools where there are other male trainees or teachers, however, is not a straightforward solution for practice. Due to the chronic shortage of men in primary schools and on teacher training courses, peer placements cannot always be organised. For those whose role it is to place trainees in schools, there should be a concerted effort to ensure that at least one placement has a male teacher who is willing to mentor or provide support for the male trainee. Male peer support was found to be more important than having a male headteacher as a role model and this finding could encourage a change in approach for providers when placing trainees. School-centred ITT providers could encourage men practitioners to help deliver the centre-based training so that the male trainees have the opportunity to meet and talk with them; male trainees could then have the opportunity to observe these teachers back in their own classrooms. Opportunities such as these could help to build networks to support male trainees.

With the increase in numbers of small school-centred ITT providers, with perhaps only one or two male trainees each, it is worth considering how providers can work together to create opportunities for men to meet and discuss common areas

of concern. Informal support groups of male trainees and qualified male teachers could be set up for groups of schools within a training cluster. Meetings could be held off-site so that they are more of a social occasion where experiences, help and advice can be shared. These meetings could be held each term or half-termly, depending upon specific needs, with an agenda to encourage men to discuss school matters and establish a sustainable social and professional network that could also include on-line support. If schools were supportive of this, perhaps meetings could be held in school time. A man involved in training the trainees could lead these meetings. Being aware of potential areas such as safeguarding and gender expectations would enable ITT providers to guide the initial agendas of these support groups. In my professional experience, all trainees and newly-qualified teachers appreciate the support of their peers, although this does vary from individual to individual and so it would be important to consider the purpose of these meetings each time.

Encouraging men to follow an education degree pathway if they want to become a primary teacher is a practice implication for providers to consider as there were successful men in my study who had this educational background. Although there were successful males who studied other subjects, two men in my research who had education degrees found that the subject matter prepared them well for teaching; their placement schools also found this to be beneficial. If providers could work with younger students, whilst they are still at sixth form and attending career fairs at this level, it may encourage young men to consider an education based degree in readiness for applying for a place on a teacher training programme in the future. Providers could continue to work with potential young male trainees by offering

school experience and short placements in their partnership schools alongside practising male primary teachers.

With the increase in school-centred and school-led teacher training programmes, trainees are in the primary classroom right from the beginning of their course. Men in these training contexts are seen as role models straight away. School staff may have gendered expectations of their capacities to manage pupils, teach boys, play sport or understand digital technologies. They do not have the opportunity to work alongside other men to observe how they perform these roles before becoming a male role model themselves. Male trainees will need to develop an awareness of this expectation and be given opportunities to consider how they should react to it. As part of their centre-based training, providers could plan in sessions led by male teachers with a focus on real-life experiences and responses.

For men in primary teaching to feel that they are not automatically scrutinised in relation to safeguarding and to address some of the tensions surrounding this issue, perceptions of others need to change. For providers this could mean acknowledging in courses and in open discussions with school staff and male trainees, the pressure trainees may feel. Centre-based training and school-based mentoring could help men prepare for and respond to messages about safeguarding. Mentors should have specific training to become more aware of the intense scrutiny men feel and education of the whole school staff through INSET may help to alleviate the situation. Changing the perceptions of the outside world is more complicated. The media is powerful and many are influenced by it, including parents. Schools and the government could disseminate positive case studies and images of men working with young children and deliver a campaign that teaching is a career for both men and women. All children should have the right to have their education delivered by both

genders and there should be employment equity within primary teaching, which includes leadership and management roles.

Government policy is to attract career changers into teaching and there has been a specific “Troops to Teachers” recruitment drive since 2010. The focus on encouraging men from military and masculine professions to teach is linked to concerns about boys not having appropriate role models, boys’ underachievement and classroom management. My research shows that this may not be the right approach. Mature male trainees, in my study who were career changers, did not achieve as well as younger men. The current recruitment drives may be aimed at the wrong sector and demographic. For men who have been in senior positions, for example in the police or the armed forces, the move into the feminised primary teaching profession where they must establish new identities and ways of interacting may present real challenges. Schools and training providers should consider whether these hyper-masculine stereotypes are the only acceptable ones within primary schools; very successful trainees in my study, those that achieved outstanding outcomes, did not come from this type of background and were not militaristic role models. If government policy continues to encourage career changers from the more masculine professions, ITT providers need to consider how they can support these men so that they achieve well. This may be through additional guidance during induction, before beginning school placements, as well as continual support once trainees are in school. Providers should consider this in the recruitment and selection process.

6.5. Recommendations for further research

Due to the continuing lack of a gender balance in primary schools and the increase in school-centred teacher training routes, further research is needed across

these intersecting domains. This would enable school-centred providers to respond knowledgeably to changes in government policy recruitment requirements and provide opportunities for discussion in relation to these changes.

Further studies could investigate aspects of gender, such as gendered roles, in school-centred teacher training. These could either be large or small scale like my own. There may also be variations in different parts of the country such as inner cities and coastal areas and small scale studies in these areas would be valuable in identifying if recruitment and retention of men is more of a problem in specific areas.

A large scale study could involve a number of SCITTs and school-based providers which would give a greater sample size and a larger and broader set of data which may be useful if more statistical information was required. This type of study could be similar in size and scope to those commissioned by the government in the 1990s to research initial teacher training. Such a study would be able to consider the effect of the increase in school-centred teacher training on male retention and achievement outcomes across a range of schools and identify the types of primary school provision and contexts where men achieve well.

All ITT providers offering a one year postgraduate teacher training course must now offer the same number of days in school, 120, which is approximately two thirds of the course. Being in school is the major proportion of the course and research could explore how school communities and attitudes and social spaces such as the staffroom can support men to successfully complete the course. Investigating how minorities experience communities of practice and how they can become full, participating members, whether they need to adapt themselves or whether the community itself would need to change to enable true inclusion would be another area of study. Research in relation to male trainees specifically could aim to identify

trainees' personal coping strategies and how they would like to be supported within the primary school environment. Such research could enable SCITTs, and other providers to help male trainees develop emotional resilience. Exploring success strategies for those men who complete the course would be research worthy, as these could be shared to support other trainees and those who mentor them. The attitudes of female teachers to men in primary schools and a whole school ethos and policy in relation to gender equity for staff are potential areas of research.

Although this research did not focus on recruitment and selection for school-centred initial teacher training providers, this is clearly an important first step for those interested in ensuring there are more men in primary teaching, therefore further studies would be relevant. Identifying how and why men who completed the course decided to apply for a school-centred teacher training programme, then following through the selection process may ascertain elements of a recruitment procedure that could be considered by school-centred providers. Further research into why male trainees withdraw from school-centred initial teacher training programmes would also be useful.

Further studies are needed regarding the mentoring of men in the primary school as there is very little research in this area. There have been a number of studies concerning teacher identity but these are generally not gender specific and many have focused on secondary trainees or were undertaken in other parts of the world where cultural differences may also have an effect on establishing identities. Mentors can be pivotal in helping trainees to succeed and further research on how they can help men feel secure in seeking emotional support in order to establish a teacher identity would contribute to the theory and understanding of effective and gender-sensitive mentoring. It would be worthwhile gaining perceptions of male

mentors and how they see their role when mentoring men. The attitudes of female mentors and in particular their attitudes towards men, including mature men who have been successful in other fields, could be a further aspect of such potential research. Research to explore differences between same sex and different sex mentoring in teacher training may also be valuable to identify as to how much effect gender may have on the success of the trainees.

My small scale study indicates that male trainees in primary schools feel under a cloud of suspicion in relation to safeguarding. The majority of mentors in my study did not give any indication of this; only one mentor mentioned safeguarding in relation to the trainee himself feeling uncomfortable. It seems urgent, therefore, to undertake further research in this area exploring the perspectives of male trainees, male teachers and of others within the school to develop a shared understanding and potential strategies for solutions in relation to school-centred initial teacher training where men are positioned as teachers early on in the training year, and seem to have little preparation for this role.

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8. Appendices

Appendix 1: Completion and withdrawals of male trainees since 2006

Cohort	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
No. of men	7	3	5	4	4	3	6
Withdrawals	1	1	1	2	0	1	1
Completion	6	2	4	2	4	2	5

Appendix 2: Comparison of outcomes for male and female trainees

% of males graded satisfactory since 2006: 34.4
% of females graded satisfactory since 2006: 14.5
% of males graded good since 2006: 40.6
% of females graded good since 2006: 62.9
% of males graded outstanding since 2006: 3.1
% of females graded outstanding since 2006: 16.9

Appendix 3: Information sheet

As Programme Manager of since the accreditation as a teacher training provider in 2006, I have worked with a large number of Trainees. Each cohort has been unique, bringing different challenges. One thing that has been consistent is that although we have been successful in recruiting men onto the programme, our retention and success rates for them have been lower than females. I have been accepted on to the Ed.D. programme with the Open University and my research will be a study into the factors that influence the retention and achievement of men on our course. The main methods of collecting data will be through interviews, questionnaires and documents.

If you are willing to participate I will ask you to sign a consent form. There are some points that are important:

- **I will guard your privacy:** your participation will be treated in strict confidence in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Your contribution will be used for research purposes only. Individuals will not be identified in the final report.
- **I will respect your wishes:** participation in the study is voluntary. If you do not want to take part, just let me know.
- **I will answer your questions:** I will be happy to answer any questions you may have about the research.

Lynn Walker

Appendix 4: Consent form

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH CONSENT FORM:

participant serial number:	
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Consent to be interviewed by Lynn Walker:

I confirm that I have had the aim of the research project explained to me and have had any questions answered to my satisfaction.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

I understand that interviews may be recorded and then written out word-for-word later. The recording will be securely stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Questionnaire data will also be securely stored.

I understand that anything I say or write will be treated confidentially and only used for research purposes, in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

I agree to take part in the study of the factors that influence the retention and achievement of men in primary school-based training research study.

Name of participant:

Date:

Signature:

Name of researcher:

Date:

Signature:

Appendix 5: Mentors' questionnaire

I am studying for my Ed.D and the focus of my research is the factors that influence the retention and achievement of men in school-centred primary teacher training. I would appreciate your time in completing this questionnaire as I am seeking the views of mentors on men in primary teacher training. Anything you write will be treated confidentially and only used for research purposes and all data will be stored securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Questionnaire

1. How long have you been teaching?.....years
2. How long have you been mentoring for?.....years/terms
3. Have you mentored for any other ITT providers? Yes/No
4. How many trainees have you mentored, include those you are currently mentoring if appropriate? Male.....Female.....
5. Did you volunteer to mentor or were you put forward by your headteacher?
6. Were you given release or additional time for your mentoring role? If not, did you receive payment or time off in lieu?
7. Have you attended mentor training? Yes/No
8. If yes, were there any specific gender aspects included in the training? Yes/No

If yes, what were these about?

9. If you have mentored both men and women, what differences, if any, do you identify?

10. Do you adapt your mentoring approaches/strategies for male trainees?
If yes, please describe what you do:
11. For male trainees, what are the main aspects of your support?
12. Are there any other areas in which you support male trainees?
13. What do you think makes a successful male trainee?
14. Is this the same for female trainees? Why or why not?
15. Do you think being a man in the primary teaching profession is an asset? Please explain your answer.
16. Are there any other comments you would like to make about mentoring male trainees?
17. Would you be willing to be contacted if I have any further questions about your role in mentoring men in primary teaching?

Appendix 6: Interview questions for male trainees

Choice of career and training experience

1. What led you to want to become a primary school teacher?
2. When you were a child in primary school, did you have any male teachers?

If so, can you recall how many and in which school years?
3. Were there any individuals who influenced you in your choice of career? How did they do this?
4. What support do you have from family and friends about being a primary school teacher?
5. Why did you choose our particular route into teaching?
6. Why did you choose primary rather than secondary?
7. Did you consider any other professions?
8. Can you give me an example of your previous work with children? (not just within school) Do you have any younger siblings?
9. Prior to the course, how did you gain primary school experience?
10. What were your expectations of the course before you began?
11. Did the reality match your perceptions?
12. What were the challenges you faced during the course?
13. How do you find the record-keeping that goes along with being a primary school teacher?
14. A larger percentage of men compared to women, to do make it through the course. Why do you think you succeeded?

15. You were supported by mentors in your placements. How do you think their mentoring helped you to achieve well? Was there anything they specifically did that you felt was key to your success? What do you look for in a mentor?
16. Were there any other individuals who contributed to your success, either within school or outside?
17. You were in different placement schools and were at the centre. How did your behaviour change from one place to another? Can you give specific examples?
18. How well did the course prepare you for your first teaching position/NQT year?
19. What are your career goals from now? Where do you think/hope to be in ten years time?

Experience as a minority in the profession

1. What reactions do you get when you tell people you are a primary school teacher?
2. What are your thoughts about being a man in a female-dominated workplace?
3. How did you feel as one of the few men on the course? Worried, cautious, isolated, confident, happy, careful?
4. What did you do to make sure you fitted in to your schools and at the centre?
5. How did the expectations of you differ in your two placement schools? Describe these differences.
6. What did you do in school specifically because you are male?
7. What did you not do in school specifically because you are male?
8. Do you think there was anything in centre-based training that applied to you differently because you are male?

9. If you were in a school where there were other men on the staff, was this an advantage? Why or why not?
10. In order to be a successful teacher you have to adopt certain kinds of behaviours which could be classed as 'female' or 'male', do you agree?
11. Do you think in order to be a successful male teacher you have to do certain jobs such as PE and computer programming? Which skills do you have that you used in your placements? Do you think these skills were helpful to your success? Why/why not?
12. Do you think being male helped or did not help your employment chances? Why or why not?
13. Do you think it helps being placed/ employed in a school where there are a number of male members of staff? Why?
14. What can the SCITT do to support men in primary teaching?
15. What would you say it takes to succeed as a male primary school teacher?
16. Why don't more men go in for primary school teacher training?
17. Does it matter that there are so few men primary teachers?

Appendix 7: Statements for focus group:

- Women have it easier in their school experience as there are more of them.
- My mentors really helped me to succeed in my placements.
- I think having sport and/or ICT as a skill and interest helped me to do well.
- There were times in the centre-based training when as a man I felt uncomfortable as I was in a minority.
- Having other male teachers within my placement schools helped me to settle in and establish myself.

Appendix 8: Data collection dates

- Interviews with those trainees that withdrew:
 - Peter: January 2014
 - Mac: December 2014
- Interviews with trainees: Harry and Jimmy: July 2015
- Interviews with NQTs: Adam, Will and Jack: May 2015
- Focus group: July 2015
- Questionnaires to mentors: July 2015
- Interview with male mentor: May 2016
- Follow up interviews with two female mentors who had mentored trainees that had withdrawn: May 2016

Appendix 9: Male trainees who have withdrawn since 2010

Name of male	Degree subject and classification	Age at start of course	Pre-course school experience	Sporting interest/skills	ICT interest/skills	Other previous work experience	School experience on course	Reasons given for withdrawal
Jake	2:1 Fine Art	24	Regular volunteer in primary school over a year	No	None	Sales assistant	Large infant school; small primary; no male staff	Unable to cope in the classroom; behaviour and classroom management
Terry	2:1 Marketing	22	TA in primary school (one and a half terms)	Yes	Yes	Supervisor and sales assistant	Two primary schools; one had a male head teacher, no other male staff in either	No reason given
Henry	2:1 English and American Studies	21	Volunteer: minimal in primary school	No	No	N/A straight from university	Two primary schools; one had male head teacher and three male teachers	Workload
Peter (interview)	2:1 Music Technology	30	TA in primary school (one year)	No	Yes	Sales assistant	One primary school with one male teacher	Workload
Mac (interview)	2:1 Music Production	23	Volunteer: minimal in primary school	No	Yes	Sales and bureau de change assistant	One small primary school with no male members of staff	Behaviour Management

Appendix 10: Male trainees who completed the course since 2010

Name of male	Degree subject and classification	Age at start of course	Pre-course school experience	Sporting interest/skill	Music interest/skill	ICT interest/skill	Other previous work experience	School experience on course: a minimum of two schools	Final teaching grade
Alex	2:1 Multimedia	36	Volunteer in a primary school	No	No	Yes	Website designer	1.Primary school with no male staff; 2.Primary school male headteacher	Satisfactory
George	2:2 Geography	22	Assemblies and RE lessons as part of work experience for CYM in primary schools	Yes	Yes	No	CYM intern youth worker	1. Primary school with male headteacher and one male teacher 2. Primary school with male deputy-head	Good
Joe	2:1 Sport and Exercise Science	22	As sports coach and volunteer in primary classroom	Yes	No	No	Sports Coach	1. Infant school with one male teacher 2. Primary with one male teacher	Good
Colin (focus group facilitator in third year of teaching)	2:1 Social Anthropology	22	School football club and volunteer in primary classroom	Yes	No	Yes	Sales assistant	1. Infant school with two male teachers 2. Primary with no male staff	Outstanding
Ryan	2:1 English with Creative Writing	22	Volunteer over a year in a primary and junior school	No	No	Yes	Hospitality	1.Junior school with no male teachers 2.Primary with male headteacher	Satisfactory

Name of male	Degree subject and classification	Age at start of course	Pre-course school experience	Sporting interest/skill	Music interest/skill	ICT interest/skill	Other previous work experience	School experience on course: a minimum of two schools	Final teaching grade
Tom	2:1 Sports Studies	24	Volunteer: minimum in primary school	Yes	No	No	Hospitality	1. Primary school with a male headteacher 2.Primary school with a male headteacher	Outstanding
Richard	2:1 Law	22	Volunteer and then p/t TA for term in junior school	Yes	No	No	Sales assistant	1. Junior school with no male teachers 2.Primary school with one teacher	Outstanding
Max	2:1 Sport and Exercise Science	23	p/t TA for term in primary school	Yes	No	No	Lifeguard	1.Primary school with four male teachers and a male headteacher 2. Junior school with three male teachers and male headteacher	Good
Martin	2:2 English Creative Writing	34	Volunteer in a primary school	Yes	No	Yes	Marketing Director Residential support for disabled	1.Primary with no male teachers 2.Special school with five male teachers and male headteacher	Good
Steve	1 st Maths	50	Volunteer in a primary school	Yes	No	No	Police	1. Infant school with two male teachers 2. Primary with one male teacher 3. Primary with four male teachers and male headteacher.	Satisfactory
Luke	2:1 Social and Economic History and Business Management	31	Volunteer; minimal in a primary school	Yes	No	No	Vocational training	1.Primary with one male teacher 2. Primary with one male teacher	Good

Name of male	Degree subject and classification	Age at start of course	Pre-course school experience	Sporting interest/skill	Music interest/skill	ICT interest/skill	Other previous work experience	School experience on course: a minimum of two schools	Final teaching grade
Jack (interview as NQT and focus group)	1 st Early Years	21	Placements as part of degree course in primary schools	Yes	No	No	N/A straight from university	1. Infant school with no male staff 2. Junior school with three male teachers	Outstanding
Will (interview as NQT and focus group)	2:1 Early Childhood Studies	31	Volunteer and one term p/t paid TA in primary school	No	No	No	Sales executive	1. Primary with one male teacher 2. Primary with a male teacher and male headteacher	Good
Ed	2:2 Psychology	36	TA in junior school	Yes	Yes	Yes	Website designer	1. Primary with one male teacher 2. Primary with three male teachers and male headteacher	Outstanding
Adam (interview as NQT and focus group)	2:1 Drama	22	TA in secondary school	No	No	Yes	N/A	1. Primary with one male teacher; 2. Special School with male deputy and another male teacher	Outstanding
Jimmy (interview in training year)	2:1 Learning Technology Research	52	HLTA in primary school	Yes	No	Yes	Army	1. Primary with one male teacher 2. Primary with one male teacher	Good
Harry (interview in training year)	2:2 Film and video	32	Volunteer in primary school	No	No	Yes	Catering; EFL teacher	1. Primary with male headteacher 2. Primary with three male teachers and male headteacher 3. Primary with male deputy-head	Good

Appendix 11: Transcript of interview with Jack

Choice of career and training experience

1. What led you to want to become a primary school teacher?

I have a big interest in sport and team-working and so even before I began university, I did coaching of kids' football and from there I really enjoyed it and I got another school placement through a friend, realised I really enjoyed working with children, saw the benefits and rewards of working with them.

2. When you were a child in primary school, did you have any male teachers?

I had two male teachers.

If so, can you recall how many and in which school years?

Year 4 and Year 6. Why can you remember this so clearly? Because they were male in a primary school, I didn't have a dad growing up, my mum made a big thing of it, oh, you've got a male next year.

Because of the male role-model? *Yes.*

3. Were there any individuals who influenced you in your choice of career? How did they do this?

Because I got a couple of school placements from before my university degree, a couple of teachers said you would be good and gave me a couple of books, would help me out and support, prompting, praise. Kept me going through university with enough people to say to keep going, teachers on the placements too.

4. What support do you have from family and friends about being a primary school teacher?

Not so much from my friends; respect the idea of being a teacher and understand the workload that goes with it, girlfriend was very supportive, very understanding, my main support was my mum, she was the one that looked out for me, researched courses.

Do you think your friends would think differently if you were a secondary school teacher?

Yes, I think so, a lot of my friends are male and think it is a bit of a doss teaching primary school children, bit younger.

5. Why did you choose our particular route into teaching?

Offered two places, went for a PGCE, went for the SCITT, had heard about the SCITT from schools, reputation of being in school more often, as more time spent in school chose SCITT rather than PGCE, offered both didn't want to go back to university, more in school to apply the theory.

6. Why did you choose primary rather than secondary?

Honestly? Secondary school children do not have the enjoyment of school but lose eagerness, in primary schools, children are eager to please, haven't been through education for so long, haven't been in school for so long. Also, short, my height and being so young were also factors. In secondary schools I think you get more respect if you are older.

7. Did you consider any other professions?

Police force, public services

8. Can you give me an example of your previous work with children? (not just within school) Do you have any younger siblings? *Only child*

Monkey at parties, first part-time job

9. Prior to the course, how did you gain primary school experience?

Through my degree, prior to that through friends of teachers.

How do you think your degree, in Early Years helped you?

I think it helped me massively, especially in an infant school, when I worked in an infant school they were really happy with my Early Years degree, having Early Years background, and it has continued to help me, having that background.

10. What were your expectations of the course before you began?

I expected to explore the curriculum; I expected it to be challenging, a lot of people had pre-warned me about the paperwork involved in teaching and the course, expected to be put in front of a class and to learn by doing it in front of the children, learning, trial and error with the children, bit like a test case.

11. Did the reality match your perceptions?

Yes it did, it did. The reality hit harder with the workload than I thought it would but the standing in front of the class and learning from there was as expected.

12. What were the challenges you faced during the course?

Workload; work /life balance; real challenge was finding time for friends, girlfriend, to know when to stop working and have a social life, giving up a lot of my weekends for work.

13. How do you find the record-keeping that goes along with being a primary school teacher?

Laborious most of it; some of it is important, actually enjoy planning lessons helps me get round where I am going, where I am going next: not sure marking books, I know that next steps depends upon the child, whether they are going to respond to it, their ability; reports, 3 in a year, bit pointless alongside parents evenings

14. A larger percentage of men compared to women, do not make it through the course. Why do you think you succeeded?

Willing to make sacrifices; having the support network there, I am quite independent but can also be dependent upon other people, upon my mum, case of pride for some but I was more dependent on my mum in that year than in the previous three years. Cooking and cleaning, males, that balance is difficult, more friends, found it challenging.

15. You were supported by mentors in your placements. How do you think their mentoring helped you to achieve well? Was there anything they specifically did that you felt was key to your success? What do you look for in a mentor?

Regular and constructive feedback; enough praise to keep you going, need praise to keep the fire burning; I think empathy is important, my first placement was a lot more welcoming and understanding of the course, looking back, learnt more in the second placement as had to do it myself, carry out extra research into that year group. Knowing I had a good placement to go back to with observations consistently helped and support network from course peers, not going through it alone.

16. Were there any other individuals who contributed to your success, either within school or outside?

Enjoyed meeting other new people within schools, TAs, quite a good benefit, if they are welcoming you feel better, who are more away from the teaching side of it, despite having a good mentor in the first term, more enjoyed watching male teacher in the second term, being male myself, helped me see and adopt some attributes.

17. You were in different placement schools and were at the centre. How did your behaviour change from one place to another? Can you give specific examples?

Without a doubt; if you are the only male in the school you are the novelty male; I think they enjoyed having someone different in the primary school, I think a lot of parents were interested in their children having a male teacher. In the second school, I was with three other men so not the novelty, saw me as a professional, as a teacher.

18. How well did the course prepare you for your first teaching position/NQT year?

Transition year for the SCITT course because of the new curriculum; hard with changes, regular observations allowed me to be strong enough; first term behaviour, second planning, third term, something else is how it was put to me.

19. What are your career goals from now? Where do you think/hope to be in ten years time?

Want to mentor; would be interested in progressing quickly; also interested in teaching abroad; would like to progress whilst young, whilst I am still adaptable, in ten years time, curriculum co-ordinator, phase leader, looking towards a deputy role.

Experience as a minority in the profession

1. What reactions do you get when you tell people you are a primary school teacher?

Surprise, as a young male teacher, not really many young male teachers, wow that's awesome, they are impressed but it is a shock. Historically, men are more selfish so difficult for them, worried that I may have the stigma of them.

2. What are your thoughts about being a man in a female-dominated workplace?

I think obviously having another male teacher in the school with you gives support, can empathise with other male teachers, really good support, not sure what I would feel if no males if having a tough time, females usually more empathetic but times when you need to have a joke, a laugh with another male.

3. How did you feel as one of the few men on the course? Worried, cautious, isolated, confident, happy, careful?

Dependent on personality; on what sort of person you are; used to only having my mum, have girl mates, depends on how people see you.

Nervous, especially starting the SCITT course, thought I might be isolated, if only one or one of a few I would find it challenging, small little group had similar personalities so that really helped, but that being said, I sat at a table full of girls, we did not all sit together.

4. What did you do to make sure you fitted in to your schools and at the centre?

Wouldn't say I did anything different, worked hard, adapted, learnt people's behaviours, humour. You find a way to fit in. Atmosphere and conversations changed in the school with males, you have to adjust.

5. How did the expectations of you differ in your two placement schools? Describe these differences.

Because I was a male they were looking for me to do PE, heavy lifting aspect, oh, you are a strong man, PE. Especially in a school where the female teachers were not confident at teaching it. When I went across to the other school, there were no stereotype expectations, there were other males.

6. What did you do in school specifically because you are male?

Well, whenever you walk into a primary school, it's always a man in a primary school is a very rare thing. Immediately given sport, or expresses a preference for you to do sport. I don't know whether that's because I am a male or that I do like PE, probably more so because I am a male. While I was training I was asked to do the boys football and the football teams and then it was the same when I joined the school here, the PE guy encouraged me to do it.

7. What did you not do in school specifically because you are male?

In the second school, coaching girls' sports, they were a bit funny with, a couple of teachers made comments that it was strange helping with girls netball, can help out with the boys football, major factor covering yourself, more as a male, making sure doors are open. When a child is crying, TAs can go and put their arms around them, empathy.

I get the boys changed for PE, when I have had mixed classes getting changed, I always had the door open, I assume every teacher does it but as a male teacher you have to double check yourself and be a bit more protected. Subconsciously, either because of media portrayal or past events. That's a

conversation I had to have with the new PE guy when he came in, be very cautious, especially with the girls getting changed, have to be extra cautious.

8. Do you think there was anything in centre-based training that applied to you differently because you are male?

Safeguarding, I felt under more pressure to listen, I felt that I had to, seemed more geared towards female teaching, insecure, so many cases where male teachers or staff meetings so did feel it impacted.

9. If you were in a school where there were other men on the staff, was this an advantage? Why or why not?

In terms of settling in I found it to be an advantage, definitely, to have that camaraderie amongst friends, other males, you almost tend to gravitate towards them because they are male because it is dominated mostly by females, you do gravitate towards them.

You did go into an infant school on one of your placements, how did you get on there?

I won't use the word isolated as they did work really hard not to make me feel that, it was different, it was different because I was the only man in there. Some topics that would come up in the staffroom like being a mother, stuff like that, and then you are the token male and they talk about their husbands being lazy and so all males must be like that, that's just natural joking and you kind of become the centre of that almost, in a way, if that makes sense. There are certain subjects that come up like childbirth and stuff like that, menstruation, when I try and switch off and zone out. Conversations about babies, lots of pregnancies and they come into the staffroom and pass the baby around, that makes me feel uneasy and awkward.

Do you think it helped that you were younger?

I think being a younger person, they were more trusting, if that makes sense, they were more settled around me. I think if I was an older male, that may have upset the balance, they have more life experience, more opinions potentially, being younger I was a blank slate, I was learning more, I hadn't constructed my opinions, hadn't constructed my beliefs.

10. In order to be a successful teacher you have to adopt certain kinds of behaviours which could be classed as 'female' or 'male', do you agree?

Yes. I think as a male in a primary school I get lots of comments from people, oh, you are a role-model for that child, if they haven't got a father, you're that male role model, also behaviour, children if messing around, are sent to me, because I am a male, more of an authority figure.

So, with behaviour, are you different to the female teachers?

I don't overly think the behaviour management strategies that I use are different, I think the children show you more respect because of being male, as it's rarer, they are not used to it, naturally show you more respect. I also have the luxury of being able to project my voice further potentially, have a bigger impact.

11. Do you think in order to be a successful male teacher you have to do certain jobs such as PE and computer programming? *Yes, I do think you have to, in this school, changes and has never been a female ICT co-ordinator, two more males are taking it on.*

Which skills do you have that you used in your placements? *PE, yes definitely.*

Do you think these skills were helpful to your success? Why/why not?

I use my voice a lot, all about energy in my teaching, I can sell myself to the children, I think if I use my voice, that its clear and strong, I can go up and down, the children really respond to that and I think that's a real skill that I have developed.

12. Do you think being male helped or didn't help your employment chances? Why or why not?

Improved them. Without a doubt.

13. Do you think it helps being employed in a school where there are a number of male members of staff? Why?

Yes, support network for each other, covering each other, not being a novelty is really important.

How did things change when two of your male colleagues left the school?

For a while I started to feel a bit isolated, there was another male teacher but of another age group and it changed the dynamics completely, fortunately I have made friends with some female teachers that are more, for want of a better word, a bit "maley" in terms of humour, a bit blunter and funnier, also we have recently employed a male PE teacher who is absolutely fantastic and he is now my "go to teacher". In a smaller school, I could definitely have felt isolated in some circumstances. It's the social side mainly, professionally potentially, I haven't experienced this but I do have male friends in primary schools that have come across this. Good to be able to talk to someone, vent yourself.

14. What can the SCITT do to support men in primary teaching?

Take more men on but only if they are good candidates, having more male mentors would be helpful but they need to have an understanding, more male subject advisers.

15. What would you say it takes to succeed as a male primary school teacher?

Adaptability, persistence, enthusiasm. I think you have to be a hard worker, regardless of whether male or female, you have to want to do well, to improve. You have to use your colleagues around you, as a male working with a female teacher, from outside people may view it as a bit strange but it's no different than a female working with a female teacher. Everyone's got to appreciate that it's a working relationship. It's a team and you have to work as a team.

16. Why don't more men go for primary school teacher training?

Because of media, stereo-types, challenges for this, have silly taunts from my friends, that is the stigma, the stereotype, males at the front of abuse cases. How could this change? Media, the way they portray abuse cases.

17. Does it matter that there are so few men primary teachers?

Yes, old adage of having male role-models, speaking from my own experience, lots of children from families that are broken now do not have that male role-model.

Appendix 12: Transcript of focus group

Did you find it easier to establish yourself if there was a male teacher in your placement school?

Adam: Firstly, I didn't find it any different, whilst training, one of my schools was majority female, with one male and I didn't find any difference in integrating between that school and C.....

Will: There were certainly times when I probably excel better in environments that are female rather than males to be fair but I think it did help to have another male maybe to speak to when there were times, you know...

Jack: I agree, when you are at school full of women I think there are things when you need to have a joke with another man, it's harder when it is a placement full of women, depends on the age of the women I think too, (Colin: more social then?) absolutely, for support, you are in placements in schools, another male helps as single male can be seen as more vulnerable easier for you to talk about things like that. I think that at times as a male teacher you are given more respect.

Colin: I find that, especially in the staffroom, in the staffroom mainly (Jack: morale as well) in the classroom, when I am working professionally, planning, teaching, team-teaching, it doesn't make any difference to me whether there are other males.

Centre-based training?

Will: I think I went out of my way even more than I probably normally would to try and get round to speak to people because there were less of us, so you kind of had to fit in.

Jack: I sat on a table full of girls, five guys on the SCITT, I think we all knew on the SCITT course that we were going to be surrounded by women, (Will: Yes) we were prepared for that. Obviously early on you need to make friends with the trainees you are working with and I gravitated towards the males at the beginning, but I ended up sitting with a group of girls, I think you end up with those that you think you will get on with, something in common with.

Colin: There were only three men in my year and one dropped out so only the two of us and that sort of drew us closer together. I found myself talking more, again social to the other guy.

Will: When we were doing things like safeguarding, a lot of the things were aimed at the bad man, from that point of view was slightly different.

Adam: I think there were certain points, times of the year, certain topics when we had discussions, when we would speak together, that we wouldn't have talked about to females. Certain things that would be easier to approach that conversation with.

Will: I've done this, done this, the other males in the group would say, yes, I've done that too, things that we have done in class differently.

Colin: I agree with what you said about child protection, I feel almost judged more, say talking about the curriculum, Science or Literacy, had to be more careful, with a bunch of women, maybe that was just me.

Jack: Yes, I felt like that too. I think in the SCITT you naturally gravitate towards the men, you have that in common with them or you should have, we did at the start, spoke quite a lot then spread out.

Will: Yes, then we put ourselves about a bit.

Women have it easier?

Will: I don't think it makes a lot of difference.

Colin: I don't either.

Will: It doesn't matter what you are If you are a good teacher.

Colin: In terms of finding a job I think it is much easier as a man.

Jack: Token man, being a man in a primary school is not enough, I feel that I have worked hard and I have earned my place. As a male, I think at times you actually get more respect, as we are rare, you come in, that's different. I think if I had come in as a female teacher, I'd be just another trainee. I think being male has helped me. I have always been told, men in primary schools, you'll do well. That's generally a statement that I have had from both my placement schools, even my hairdresser said oh, you'll do well, you'll be snapped up. Not easier for a woman in terms of career progression. When I went on the Maths training, it was not that well received by some others on the staff, not sure whether it was because I am male or because I am young.

Adam: I think that is the case to a certain extent at the same time but all comes down to should be the right person the day. That isn't necessarily how it happens.

Will: I think women are accepted more as a primary school teacher, if you speak to someone, as a women accepted, as a man, oh you work with children.

Jack: I think with my TAs, as a young male, they almost mothered me a little and once I realised this, I did start to play on it a little and they helped me more. I do think that's an advantage of being young and being a male. I don't see many young

female teachers being treated in this way so I think it's because I am male. The TAs do help me out but it does help me, I don't complain. They go out their way to help me, they like to help out, they want to help out. The younger female teachers that I work with don't seem to be mothered in the same way.

Colin: When I meet someone new and say I am a teacher they instantly ask me what subject, presuming that I teach secondary. There is definitely an idea as to what a male primary school teacher is like, I have heard one of my friends talking to another of my friends, did you ever think that Colin would become a primary school teacher, and he said, absolutely not, no way. There is obviously a profile, he doesn't fit that model.

Jack: I have got a lot of lad mates, they will say something related to safeguarding, they think it is hilarious.

Will: I think they really admire you deep down.

Jack: There is a stigma that they play to.

Skills before?

Jack: Let's look at it now, when I went into the primary school full of women, they said oh you are good at PE because you are male, they assume you are going to be good at PE, Will, you've been given ICT, you had ICT before, three men, you are a man as you are good at it.

Colin: Is there a reason why I would do ICT?

Jack: Yes, you are a male.

Will: We put ourselves forward didn't we, if we hadn't, we probably would have been approached.

Colin: I think there are specific subjects that you are shoe-horned into, look at this school, Maths, male coordinator, PE male coordinator, ICT co-ordinators, two males and I cannot remember the last time a woman did it, perhaps two years ago.

Adam: It would be interesting to take a cross section of schools and see how much it happens across the board. I have been into schools where the ICT co-ordinators were female but was that because of the lack of male teachers.

Will: Previously, it has helped me fit in. I often get asked, I am no good at computers, can you help, and I am sure you do too Adam, can you help me with the computers. They will come to you as male, not necessarily because you are good at computers.

Colin: At the end of my NQT year, in the summer term it was just assumed that I would become ICT co-ordinator, get you involved in sport, never actually said I like it, I do, but was just assumed.

Mentors?

Colin: When I was at O..... I know my mentor helped make me 100% into a better teacher much, much better.

Will: Well I had good and bad. My main school were very good, she really did help me (Colin: Both female?) both female, main one, very good, took an interest in everything I did, let me make mistakes, take risks, middle school it was the complete opposite, she didn't come to any of the meetings, the folder when I gave it to her, went into the cupboard and didn't come out, absolutely terrible and my own performance, feeling about the course, reflects that in both instances so I think it is important to have a supportive mentor.

Colin: I had two female mentors, male training manager and I probably felt closer to my mentors rather than my training manager.

Will: They are a lot closer to you, aren't they, everyday, what you do, they know more about you.

Jack: I worked with a male classteacher in my Spring Term and I found it hard. He was friendly but I got less support in a way.

Colin: Was it because you were another man?

Jack: Maybe he thought he's a bloke just get on with it, kind of attitude, whereas in the first term I had more guidance, hands on, do this do that.

Will: Adam, did you have female mentors?

Adam: I had female mentors, but same as Jack, I did work with a male teacher. The mentors were equally encouraging and the classteacher presented me with opportunities, seemed more laid back whether that was because I was a male, that idea of a male or...

Colin: I personally believe it is more down to the personality of the person you are working with, not a male or female thing, whether you just get on with them, suppose it just comes down to you or them.

Jack: But do you think men are offered less support because they are men?

Will: By another man?

Jack: Yes, by another man or by another mentor?

Will: Because he wants to make it harder for another man?

Jack: I don't know. I definitely had very good support from my female mentors. The male classteacher, probably because he wasn't officially my mentor,

didn't offer a lot of support with the actual teaching. I felt that if I was female, would he have been more hands on with me or more supportive?

This last comment caused a great deal of laughter from all the participants and the recording ended.